

Bus Service Improvement Plan For Hertfordshire County Council



June 2024



Foreword By Councillor Phil Bibby

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) fully supports the ambition of the National Bus Back Better strategy. It is HCC's central ambition to ensure we are a cleaner, greener, and healthier county of opportunity and public transport is at the heart of that ambition.

Buses in Hertfordshire enable our residents to access employment, education, and social and leisure activities. It is now more vital than ever to ensure a strong bus network, focused on the passenger experience, that is reliable and efficient. We were delighted to be awarded £29.7 million in 2022 to deliver our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which has enabled us to start making improvements towards this vision.

Following the network review, commissioned in 2021 to help inform the development of our BSIP, we have successfully delivered a programme of enhancements to the existing bus network such as accessible bus stops, increased real-time information screens and community shelters.

We introduced a number of improvements on key corridors with new services and increased frequencies, promoting this through a bespoke brand, Connect Herts, to demonstrate to residents the key transport connections we are making. In addition, we have implemented improvements to our ticketing offer with the expansion of reduced travel for all residents with the Hertfordshire SaverCard, and enhanced our Demand Responsive Transport brand, HertsLynx, with the service now available in additional areas of the county.

Our current Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) investment programme has already generated passenger growth across our county of average 18% per year since 2022, in line with the national average and we now have plans to accelerate this growth. To achieve pre-Covid 2019/2020 patronage levels, a 27% increase would need to be achieved.

Updating our BSIP allows us to take the progress made to the next level and focus on outcomes rather than outputs. Moving forward, it is essential that our BSIP enables our residents to have an attractive passenger transport option, regardless of whether this is by scheduled bus services, demand responsive buses, mass rapid transport systems, trains, or coaches. Hertfordshire wants to go further and encourage the modal shift that the Bus Back Better strategy seeks. Our first BSIP sets out this ambition and we want to build on the success of what we have already delivered and set out our vision to ensure that buses are an integral part of a sustainable transport network that gives everyone a choice of connected travel options for most journeys made within Hertfordshire.

However, we do not see this plan as an end point, but rather the start of a process to improve the passenger transport network in the short, medium, and long term. Further work will be conducted to develop ideas in key areas such as rail/bus integration, decarbonising the bus network, walking and cycling for seamless end to end journeys, and accessibility over the coming months.

Hertfordshire County Council welcomes feedback on this Bus Service Improvement Plan and looks forward to engaging at both a local and national level to ensure that the bus network remains a core part of mobility in the county for generations.

Cllr Phil Bibby

Executive Member, Highways & Transport
Hertfordshire County Council



Contents

Forword by Councillor Phil Bibby	2
Section 1: Our bus vision (for improved bus services)	
How we will deliver Our Bus Vision and measure success.....	5
Our BSIP and the Local Transport Plan.....	6
Section 2: Current offer to bus passengers (progress since 2021)	
Hertfordshire in Context.....	12
The Hertfordshire Bus Network Summary.....	13
Bus Operators.....	15
HertsLynx (DRT).....	17
Park and Ride.....	17
Passenger Journeys.....	18
Service Operation (million kms).....	19
Bus Fleet in Hertfordshire.....	19
Network Punctuality and Reliability.....	20
Bus Stop Density.....	20
Bus Stop Facilities and Real Time Information.....	21
Network Accessibility.....	21
Modal Share and Travel to Work.....	23
Fares and Ticketing.....	24
Concessionary Fares.....	25
Section 3: Improvements programme to 2025 (actions for delivery from present to 2025)	
Introduction.....	27
Our Delivery Plans.....	29
2021/2022 – Current Delivery Programme.....	29
Programme to March 2025.....	32
Visualisation of Current BSIP Programme.....	34
Section 4: Ambitions and proposals for 2025 and beyond (plans for future delivery)	
Introduction.....	37
Service Level and Network Coverage.....	38
Bus Priority.....	43
Improvements to Fares and Ticketing.....	45
Improvements to the Bus Passenger Experience.....	47
Bus Passenger Charter.....	52
Improvements to our bus fleet.....	53
Longer term transformation of the network.....	54
Section 5: Targets, performance monitoring and reporting	
Putting our Performance into context.....	59
Our plans to increase monitoring.....	61
Section 6: BSIP schemes and proposals overview table	63

The image shows a woman with short dark hair, glasses, and a red and blue backpack standing at a bus stop. She is looking at a tall, vertical information sign. The sign is divided into several sections. The top section contains a grid of bus routes with columns for route numbers and destinations. Below this is another grid. The bottom section is a white notice with a red header that reads 'IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR PASSENGERS'. The notice title is 'St Peter Street, St Albans Festival Event'. The text below the title says 'Closed on Friday 27 September from 12:00'. There are several lines of smaller text below that, including a warning about the event and a note about the bus stop. At the bottom of the sign, there are logos for 'information' and 'information'.

Route	Destination
1	St Albans
2	St Albans
3	St Albans
4	St Albans
5	St Albans
6	St Albans
7	St Albans
8	St Albans
9	St Albans
10	St Albans
11	St Albans
12	St Albans
13	St Albans
14	St Albans
15	St Albans
16	St Albans
17	St Albans
18	St Albans
19	St Albans
20	St Albans
21	St Albans
22	St Albans
23	St Albans
24	St Albans
25	St Albans
26	St Albans
27	St Albans
28	St Albans
29	St Albans
30	St Albans

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR PASSENGERS

St Peter Street, St Albans Festival Event

Closed on Friday 27 September from 12:00

St Albans City and District Council is pleased to announce that St Peter Street will be closed to traffic from 12:00 on Friday 27 September to allow the St Albans Festival to take place. The closure will be in place from 12:00 to 18:00. Please be aware that this may affect bus services. Please contact your local bus company for more information. Please be aware that the closure will be in place from 12:00 to 18:00. Please be aware that this may affect bus services. Please contact your local bus company for more information.

information

information

Section 1

Our Bus Vision

Our Bus Vision

Buses that are an integral part of a sustainable transport network, giving everyone a choice of connected travel options for journeys made across Hertfordshire.

How we will deliver Our Bus Vision and measure success

Buses are fundamental to achieving the county council's aims of achieving a cleaner, greener, and healthier Hertfordshire by providing a sustainable choice of travel. However, the county has a complex settlement pattern and travel demand which presents a challenging environment in which to increase levels of bus use.

The county council is in a strong position to meet this challenge as it has:

- Clear policies to support and develop the bus network in its Local Transport Plan (2018)
- An established Intalink Enhanced Partnership (2020) with bus and train operators
- Experience in delivering successful schemes as part of the current BSIP
- A commitment from district and borough councils to support bus network enhancements through the Hertfordshire Growth Board's Transport Mission (2024)

The current programme of initiatives being delivered through BSIP have focussed on providing a successful start to the Intalink Enhanced Partnership, countering the negative impact of Covid on patronage levels, and establishing the building blocks for a longer-term aim of improved public transport for all. Our current BSIP has already generated strong passenger growth across the county of 18% per year since 2022.

This next stage of BSIP looks forward to building on this initial success and taking further steps towards the longer term aims. These aims include ensuring that the public see passenger transport as a seamless system which provides an attractive alternative to the car, regardless of whether the actual mode of transport is a scheduled bus, demand responsive transport, mass rapid transit, coach, or train. This is not an instant fix and will take a long time to achieve, but some key elements such as the Demand Responsive Transport system (HertsLynx) and the initial concept for the Hertfordshire Essex Rapid Transit (HERT) are already in place. All the measures set out in this BSIP are designed to deliver immediate benefits whilst also building towards these long-term aims.

The longer-term aims are designed to deliver the following:

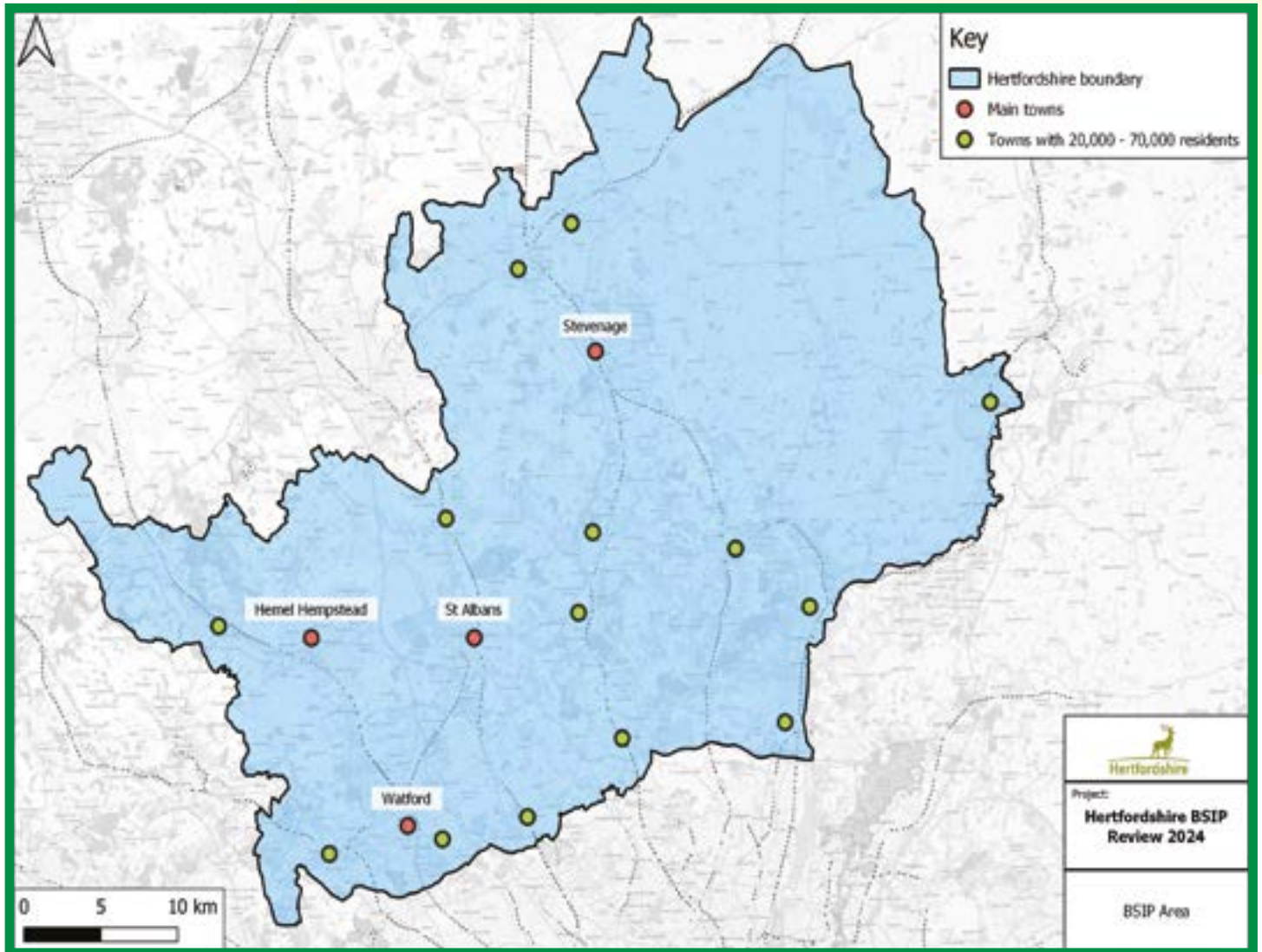
- ensuring 100% of services run on time and 95% of bus services are reliable by 2029/30.
- ensuring passenger journeys return to, and exceed, pre-pandemic levels from 2025.
- increasing passenger satisfaction consistently to over 90%.
- aiming for 100% buses being zero emission by 2050.



Our BSIP and the Local Transport Plan

Our BSIP covers the whole of Hertfordshire, a two-tier shire authority area immediately to the north of London. The county has a large population of over 1.2 million, but there is no single major settlement on which bus services can be focussed. The largest town, Watford, has a population of 130,000, and there are three other towns which have over 70,000 residents (Hemel Hempstead, Stevenage and St Albans). There are a further 14 towns which have a population of over 20,000, as shown in Figure 1.1. The county also immediately borders on to the major settlements of Harlow (93,000) and Luton (258,000).

Figure 1-1 - Our BSIP Area



The Local Transport Plan (2018) (LTP) sets out the overall direction for ensuring that transport supports the countywide aims of a thriving economy, better air quality, reduced carbon emissions and access to key services. Buses are identified in:

- Policy 1: Transport User Hierarchy, which prioritises sustainable transport over private motor vehicles.
- Policy 9: Buses sets out the overview of how the county council will promote and support bus services, and there is an Intalink Bus Strategy as a supporting document within the overall LTP suite. The Intalink Bus Strategy sets out the overall framework for improving bus services by Hertfordshire County Council and its Intalink EP partners.

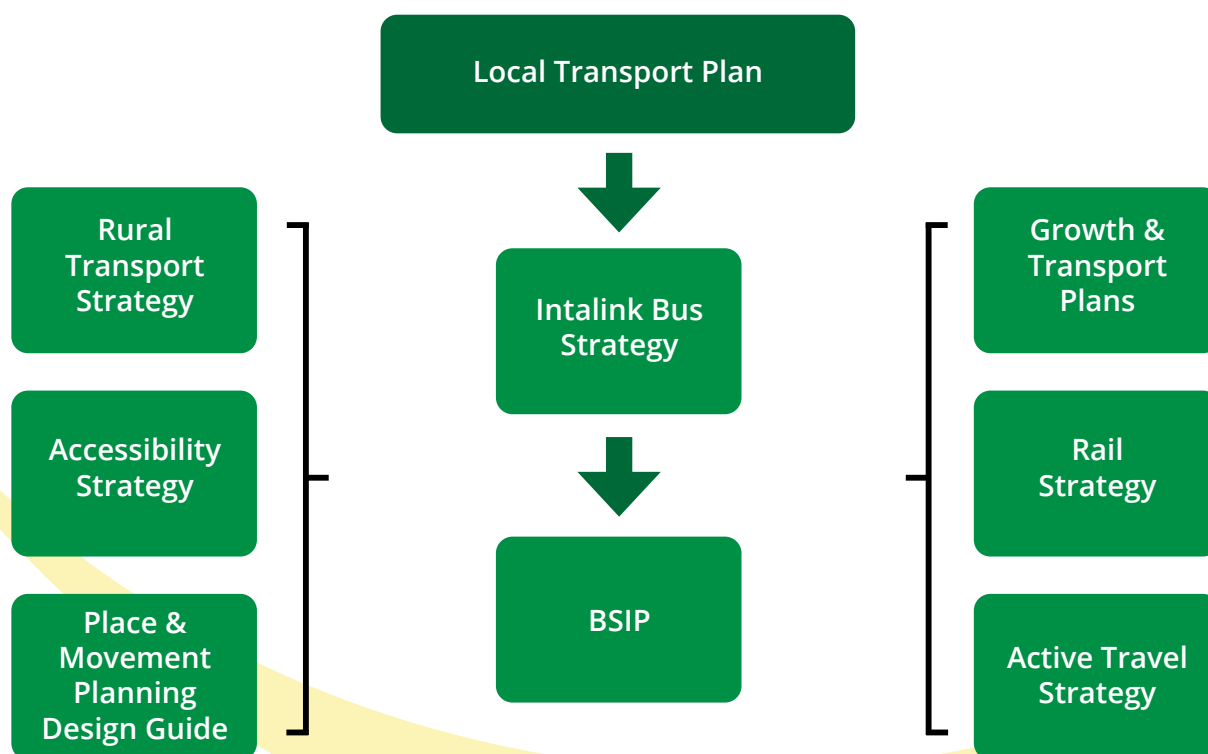
The LTP also identifies the need to deliver improved East West passenger transport connectivity, which has subsequently been developed into the HERT concept. We have taken the opportunity through this BSIP to focus on the bus priority measures that are needed as a foundation to support HERT in the future including feeder services.

Local delivery of schemes which deliver countywide policies are set out in five Growth and Transport Plans (GTP), which are supporting documents to the LTP. The Growth and Transport Plans ensure that bus improvements are integrated within the wider transport needs for the area. Types of bus-related improvements outlined in the GTPs include new bus routes, frequency increases, ticketing initiatives, further marketing approaches, bus stop and interchange enhancements, and bus priority measures. Some improvements have already introduced as part of BSIP1, including implementing new routes and ticket products.

The BSIP process was initiated after the publication of the LTP, but it is the intention that the BSIP will be fully integrated within the next iteration of the LTP.

Figure 1-2 identifies the structure of our policy and strategic approach, showing the relationship between our BSIP and all other relevant local policies and strategies.

Figure 1-2 - BSIP Policy Context



An Enhanced Partnership (EP) covering the BSIP area commenced in April 2020. It is structured to include principal bus and rail operators and is a partnership between the county council and ten district / borough councils within Hertfordshire, ensuring informed and constructive dialogue at all political and operational levels achieves consensus on decisions. We also work closely with neighbouring local transport authority areas, including Transport for London (TfL) to deliver important cross-boundary service to strategic locations such as Heathrow and Stansted airports as well as significant cities and towns such as Cambridge, Luton, Harlow, Enfield, and Aylesbury. Working with locations outside of the county can enable us to access funding to support service improvements that benefit the whole route, including the sections running in Hertfordshire.

As shown in Figure 1-2, some of the inputs to the BSIP are from the LTP supporting documents including Rural Transport, Accessibility and Growth, and Transport Plans. These documents include buses as a key element in enabling residents to access key services, including healthcare and employment. This is especially important for those on lower incomes or newly entering the employment market who are less likely to be able to afford a car, and hence for whom the bus may be the only transport option. As well for the welfare of the individual, it is also essential for countywide growth that these residents are not excluded from contributing to the local economy.

The BSIP supports the Hertfordshire Growth Board's 'Transport for Hertfordshire Mission' (2024). The Growth Board is a partnership between the strategic authorities in the county, and its transport mission has two specific actions related to BSIP:

- Support the development of an integrated bus and passenger transport network across Hertfordshire, building on the existing Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- Secure investment to deliver the Hertfordshire Essex Rapid Transit (HERT) network, providing connections to local and regional bus and rail networks to address east-west passenger transport challenges and connect the county.

This BSIP covers the period up to 2033/34, setting out Hertfordshire's proposals for the local bus network, and its relationship with connecting modes, demonstrating progress to date, looking forward over a four-year period from 2025/26 to 2028/29 and with its longer-term ambitions across a ten-year horizon and beyond.

The BSIP will be reviewed and updated in the Autumn of each year following submission of data required through the annual Bus Connectivity Assessment (BCA) process. The BSIP will then be published on the Hertfordshire County Council and Intalink websites. Our monitoring and reporting processes will align with DfT's new annual monitoring approach through the BCA process, replacing former six-monthly reporting cycles.



The outcomes will also be monitored in the wider context of the Local Transport Plan annual progress report and in the Growth Board Transport Mission to help ensure that buses are fully contributing to wider transport, health, and economic ambitions.

Our BSIP and the National Bus Strategy

The National Bus Strategy (NBS) sets out a clear vision for buses across England. To meet this vision, it sets out goals for each local transport authority to aim for. Table 1-1 overleaf summarises the county council's current and continued approach to meeting the NBS goals.



Buses play a greater role in the east-west cross-county connections.

As home working has become more established, more local trips are being made away from the 'traditional' commute.

This could present new challenges and opportunities for the sector.

Table 1-1 National Bus Strategy Goals and Hertfordshire’s Approach to Meeting Them

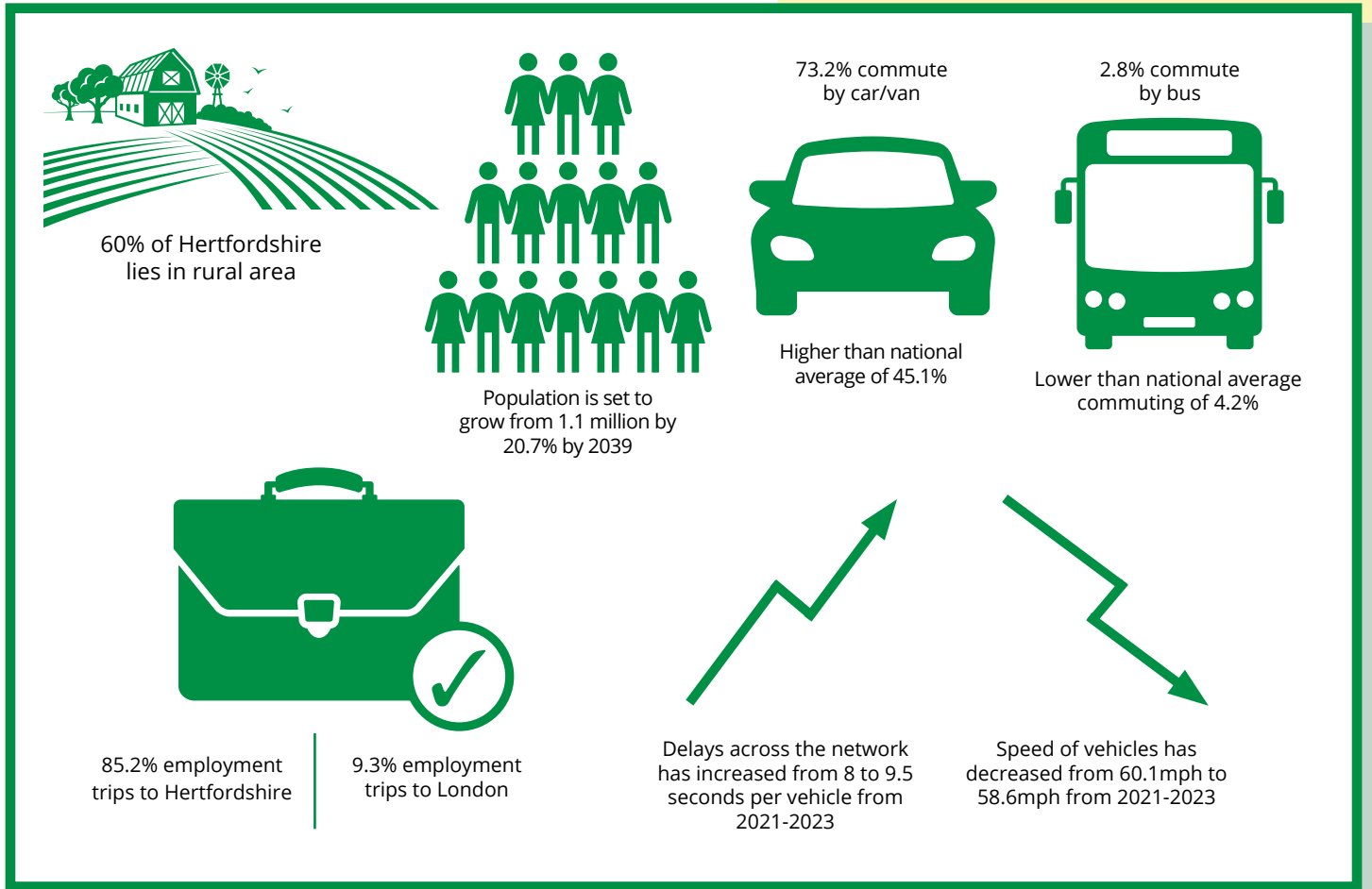
NBS Goal	Hertfordshire Approach
More frequent	Additional bus services have been added on Sundays and late evenings and additional routes to core towns were added to continue existing bus services along these corridors. (References: Section 2 Figure 4, Figure 6, Table 1).
Faster & more reliable	We plan to invest more in bus priority to make buses faster and more reliable. Our ambition is to develop required infrastructure for the HERT service to provide a unique fast and reliable connection across the county.
Cheaper	In 2023/24 passenger savings on a range of initiatives have been rolled out, reduced fares, saver card discounts and extend ticket ranges to enable more people to gain savings on fares.
More comprehensive	DRT operating time has been extended in the evenings along with increased frequency, and the 33% fleet increase. (References: Section 2 HertsLynx DRT case study)
Easier to understand	To increase the level of passenger feedback, a new comprehensive passenger satisfaction survey is being developed. New marketing campaigns are due in 2024 for free bus days and communications on public consultations for the developments in bus priority.
Easier to use	Additionally, the Intalink Explorer and BUSnet tickets have been made available in extended versions as four-week period tickets. Contactless payment methods on buses are in the pipeline to be delivered in 2024.
Better to ride in	The average age of Hertfordshire’s bus fleet is 12 years , reflecting ongoing efforts to maintain a balance between old and new vehicles. This has not significantly changed since 2021 and is in common with many comparable local transport authority areas.
Better integration with other modes	The Intalink Smart Ticketing Strategy includes integrating bus and rail ticketing. The project is at the stage of negotiation with the Rail Delivery Group. Aspirations to make bus and rail integrated tickets available by 2025. (References: Section 4)
Greener	The regional bus fleet uses a 51% of Euro 5 and 6 diesel buses, both of which help improve air quality. Hertfordshire has also been successful in a Zebra bid and is awaiting of delivery of 27 battery electric vehicles.
Accessible & inclusive network	To support passengers with hearing and sight difficulties, as well as those unfamiliar to the area, almost 100% of bus stops have been fitted with audio and visual announcements.
Innovative	We will further develop HertsLynx DRT to close transport gaps in rural areas and connect to the core network. It will continue to allow local communities to develop and initiate their own transport solutions in response to the specific needs of their community. (References: Section 4)
Safe mode of transport	Our bus passenger safety audit evaluates and records the safety of bus stops and walking routes. Our proposals now focus on developing a safer travel partnership and combining this with accessibility proposals, to ensure safety is consistently designed in.



Section 2

Our Bus Network

Hertfordshire in Context



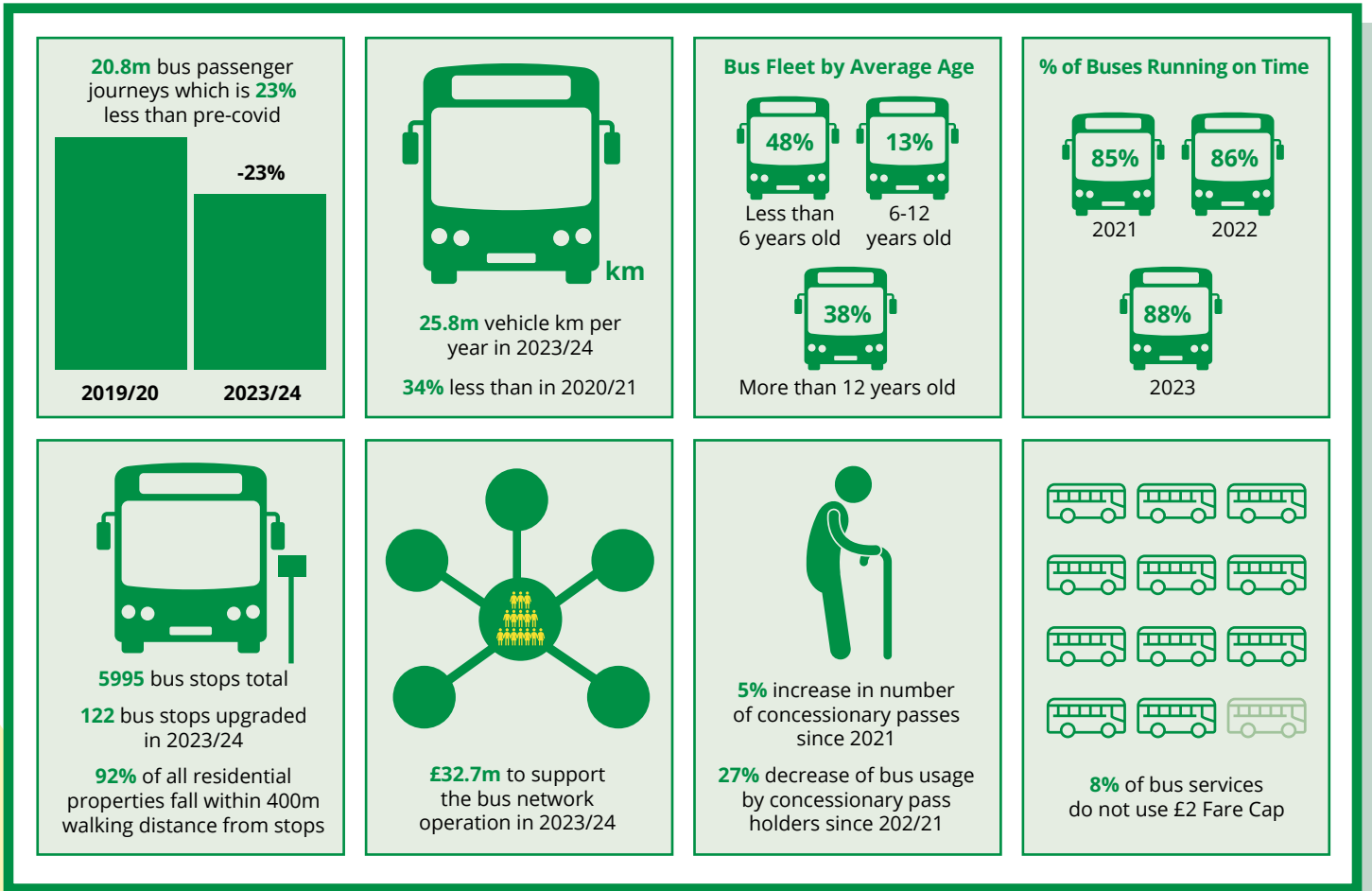
Hertfordshire is a diverse and polycentric county with many medium-sized urban centres, but rural areas make up 60% of the county. There are four principal towns; Hemel Hempstead, St. Albans, Stevenage, and Watford where most of our population reside.

Due to the large proportion of rural areas and complex movement patterns, most people rely on cars to travel to work. Therefore, rural areas face transport challenges including increasing congestion levels and limited sustainable public transport options leading increasingly to cases of social isolation.

Population growth in future years, will drive increased travel demand for both urban and rural areas, providing a challenge in terms of competition between cars and public transport. However, with urban centres such as Stevenage and Watford having lower car ownership rates, there is a potential to encourage further modal shift, particularly for short-distance commuting, as over 25% of residents travel less than five miles to work.

Rural areas present a different challenge with more dispersed and lower density populations, making attractive regular bus frequencies, difficult to maintain at a financially sustainable level. One solution has been the HertsLynx DRT bus service. This is a flexible, on-demand bus that operates across a wide rural area and takes people between rural locations or to their nearest town to access essential services or the core bus network. Early performance of the HertsLynx service has been impressive with over 34,000 passenger trips recorded between August 2023 and March 2024. The service is now set to expand as more people consider the service as an alternative to car use, with recent survey data suggesting that 28% of people feel HertsLynx is more convenient than the car, 25% cheaper than the car and 20% stating that it saved finding a parking space at their destination. Over 63% of users said that their main transport mode was private car (driving) suggesting that many are making the switch for some journeys to HertsLynx.

The Hertfordshire Bus Network Summary



Hertfordshire’s bus network provides good levels of coverage across the county, operating across urban, suburban, and rural geographies at varying degrees of service density and financial sustainability. A total of 263 local bus services are operated as shown in Figure 1 below. It is notable that many of our commercial services operate across our county boundary to locations including Luton, towns in Essex and Bedfordshire as well as into the Transport for London (TfL) area. We already work closely with neighbouring local transport authorities (including TfL) and with commercial operators through our existing Intalink EP to ensure these services are retained.

Figure 2 shows all local bus services in the BSIP area, including Hertfordshire sections of cross-boundary services.

Figure 2 – Current bus network in the Hertfordshire BSIP area

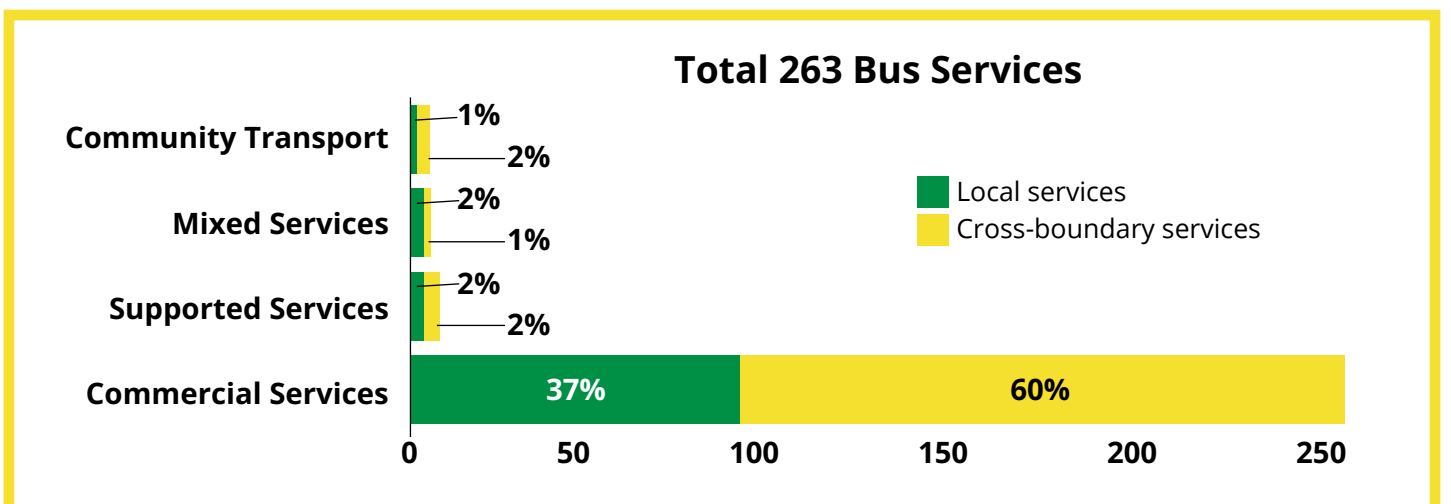
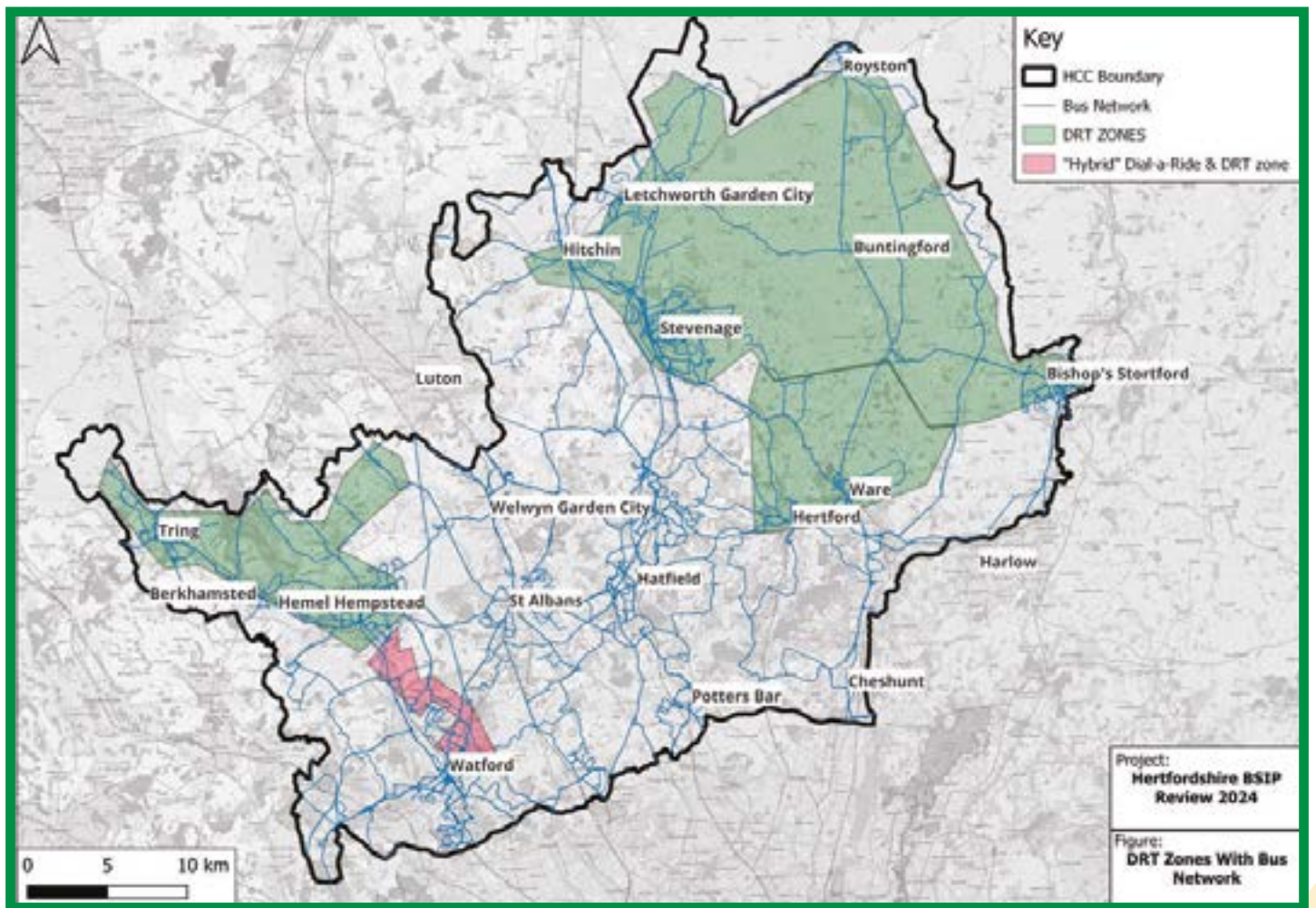


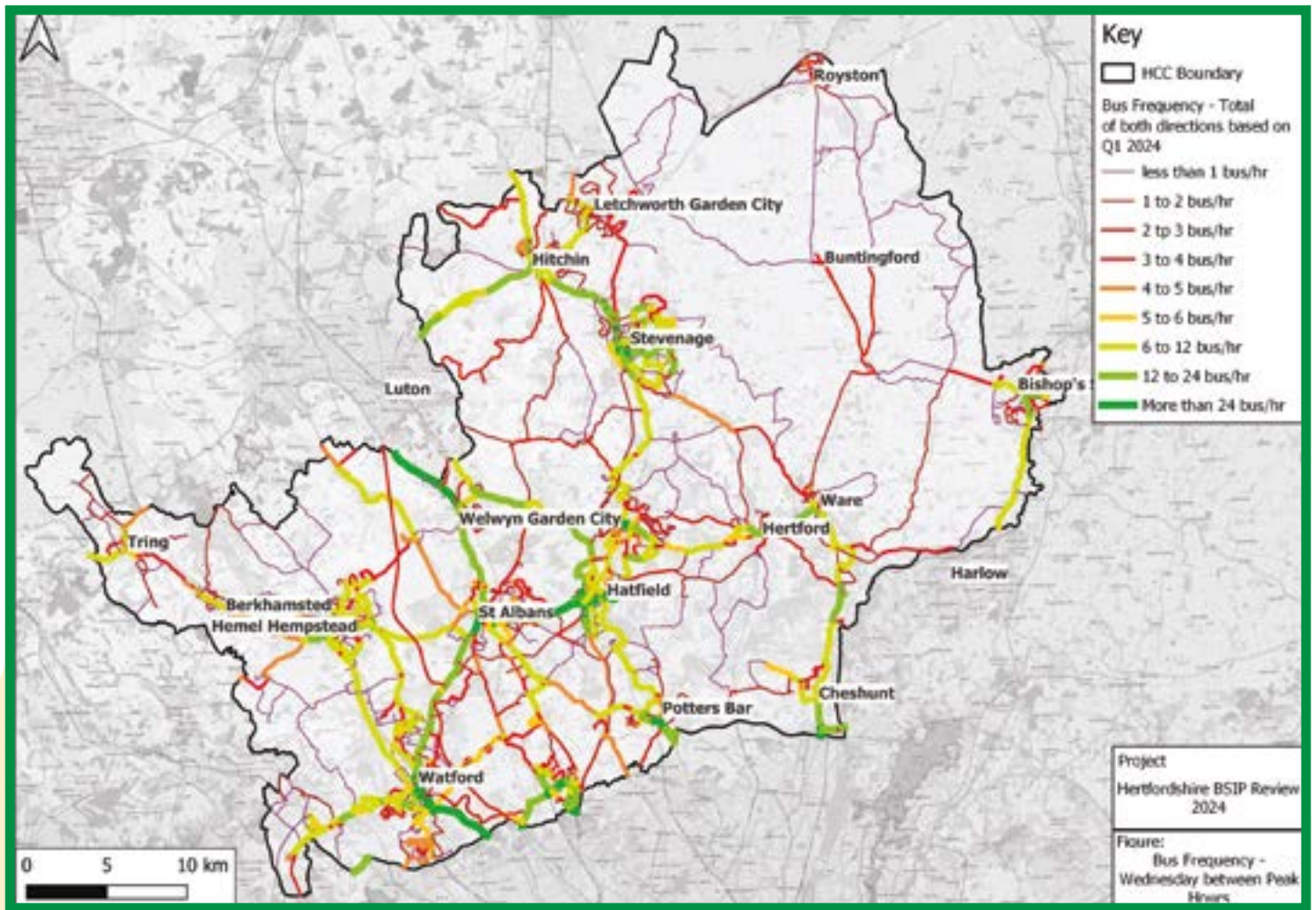
Figure 3



While the network offers extensive coverage, there are still gaps that need attention to increase coverage and accessibility. Some of these gaps have been addressed with the introduction of the HertsLynx Demand-Responsive Transport (DRT) service, yet others remain to be resolved in the future and include for example Hemel Hempstead – Harpenden, and Hertford - Potters Bar.



Figure 4 - Hertfordshire Bus Corridor Frequency Map



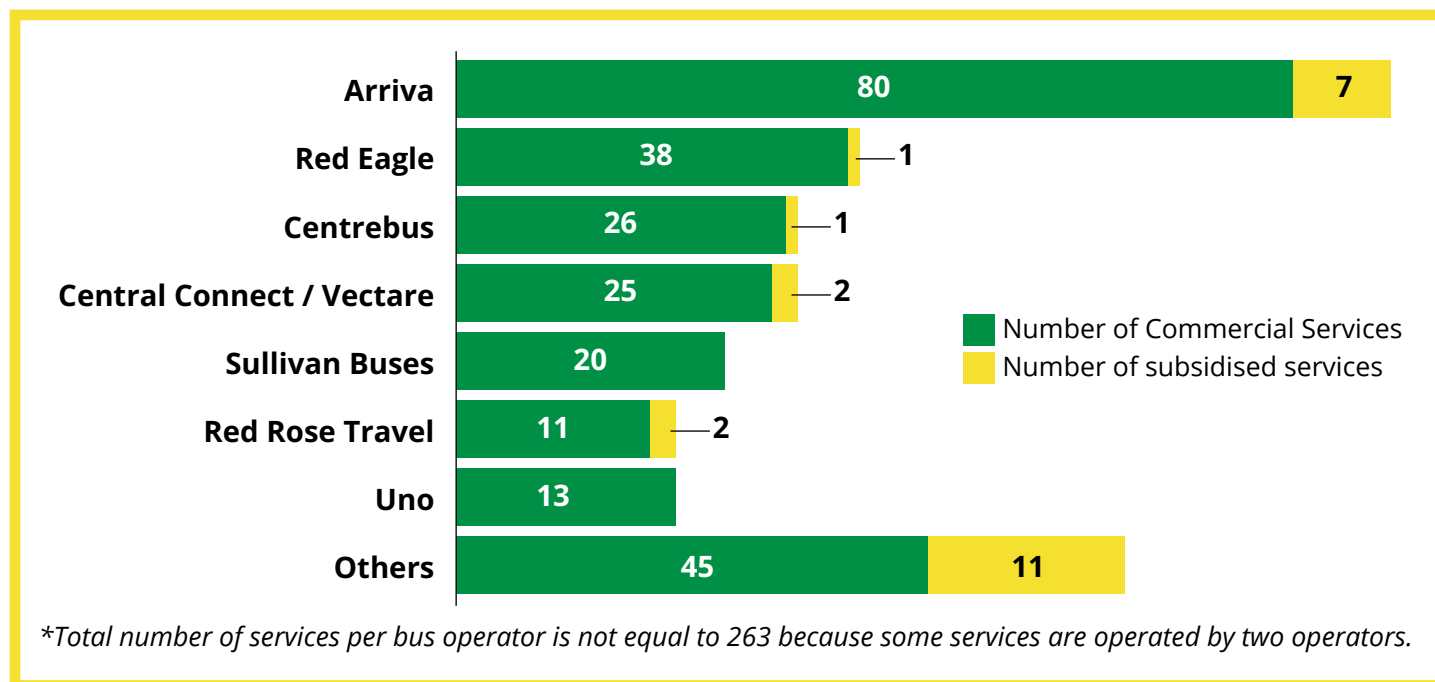
St Albans, Stevenage and the important secondary towns of Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City are connected directly to the most other towns by frequent services as show in Figure 4. However, some towns with large populations have lower than expected frequencies (e.g. Letchworth). These present an opportunity to grow local services between, and within, these towns to augment the main corridors.

Bus Operators

The largest bus operator across Hertfordshire is Arriva, operating 33% of all local bus services (with 92% being commercial). Red Eagle, Centrebus and Central Connect / Vectare are the next largest operator with a combined market share of 33% and operating 96% of these commercially. Figure 4.1 demonstrates the market for local bus services in Hertfordshire.

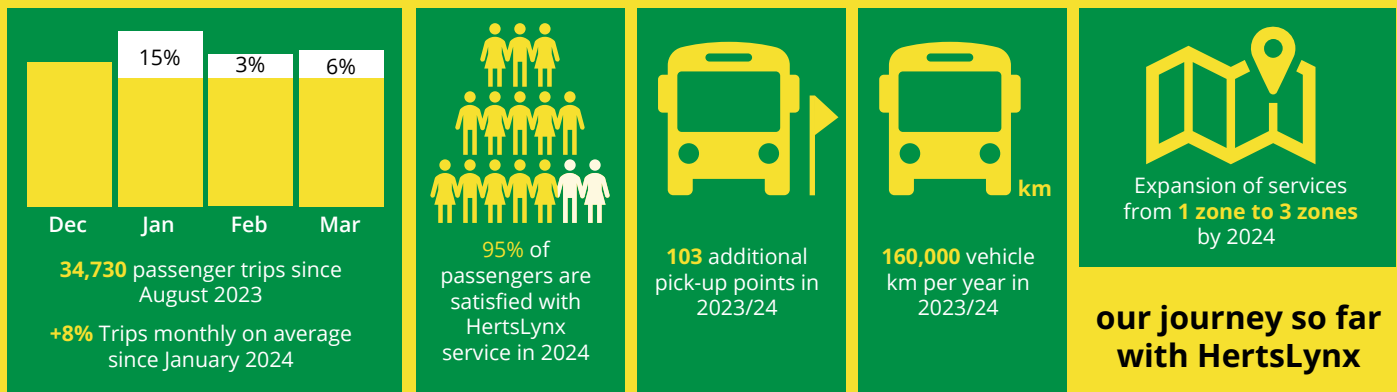


Figure 4.1 - Largest Bus operators in Hertfordshire by number of services*



HertsLynx (DRT) case study

HertsLynx is our Demand Responsive Transport service, offering a flexible way to travel by bus and a lifeline for rural villages, enabling people to travel to the places they need to get to. Unlike traditional bus services, the HertsLynx service doesn't follow a timetable or have any set routes, instead passengers can choose from a wide variety of pick up and drop off locations within designated operating zones across Hertfordshire. Passengers can select where and when they would like to travel by using the HertsLynx app, booking website or by calling the HertsLynx team.



HertsLynx (DRT)

Limited access to fixed bus services in rural areas of Hertfordshire can lead to social isolation, particularly for residents without access to private transport. This is a significant issue in northern, eastern and some western areas where without continued funding for the HertsLynx service a potential cliff-edge in service levels remains. The HertsLynx DRT service was introduced using Rural Mobility Fund (RMF) support and was expanded with BSIP funding. It has become a lifeline for rural areas. It has continued to grow, targeting specific demographic and geographic segments and trialling evening services once midweek patronage has been secured at a sustainable level. The expansion of HertsLynx since its introduction in 2021 has seen:

- Expanded services from one zone North and East Herts to three zones by 2024 (North and East Herts, Dacorum, and Three Rivers – a 'hybrid' Dial-a-Ride and DRT zone).
- Expansion through extended operating times, increased frequency, and more buses from five in 2021 to 11 by 2024.
- Additional pick-up points added to provide more options for travel across the zones.

HertsLynx service remains funded by two sources: DfT's RMF (North and East Herts) and BSIP funding (Hertford & Ware expansion zones, evening services and Dacorum DRT) with continued funding key to its survival and legacy on the rural mobility of our residents.

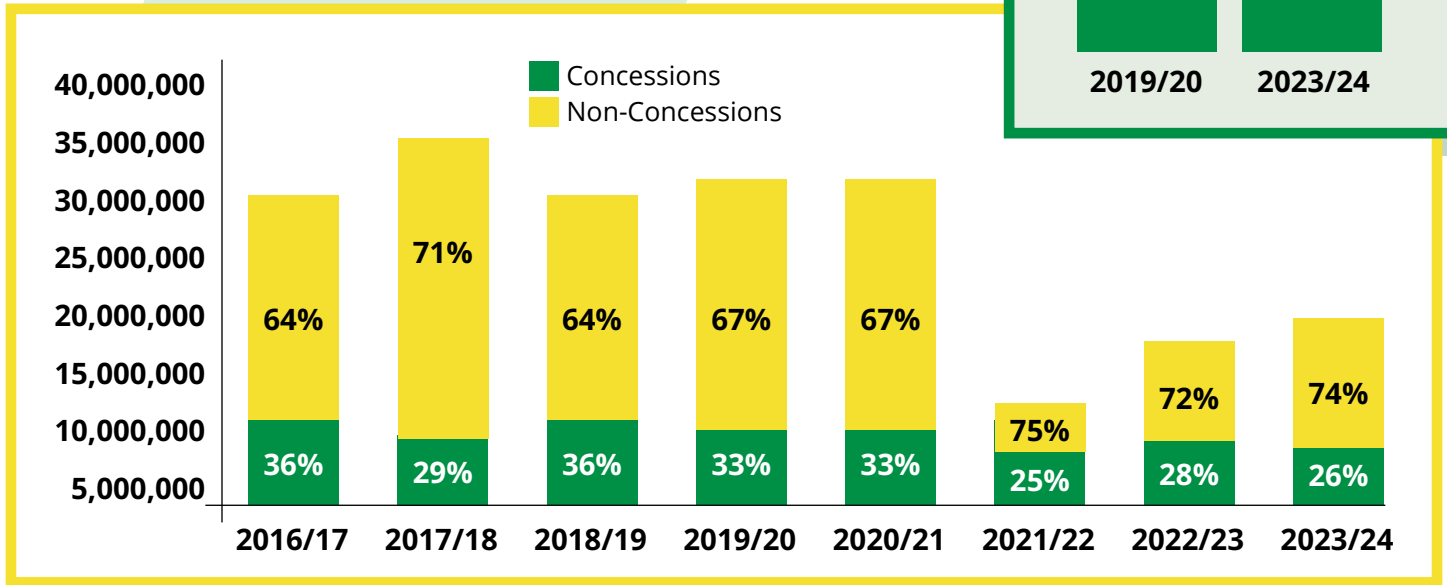
Park and Ride

Currently there are no Park and Rides in Hertfordshire due to the dense nature of commercial bus services in our main towns and cross-county links. Commuting and transport needs of residents make it more difficult to implement Park & Ride on a commercially sustainable due to no dominant town in the county and several larger metropolitan areas. However, there is potential to explore this option in some expanding areas (e.g. Watford and Marylands) in the future.

Passenger Journeys

In 2023/24 there were 20.8 million local bus passenger journeys made across the Hertfordshire local bus network. Figure 6 provides the total number of passenger journeys in Hertfordshire since 2016/17.

Figure 5 - Passenger journeys in Hertfordshire¹



Leading up to 2019/20 the number of passenger journeys was broadly static though the journeys per head of population was slowly declining. The most recent figures (although provisional) show that total passenger journeys have partially recovered from 10.5m in 2020/21 (the height of the Covid-19 Pandemic) to 20.8m in 2023/24. While this remains 23% less than pre-pandemic figures, demonstrating the continued negative impact of the pandemic on local bus patronage levels, there is a notable increase in the non-concessions market which has recovered and exceeded pre-pandemic levels in growth terms (though overall recovery is checked by the slower return to bus travel by concession pass holders).

Passenger trips made using HertsLynx DRT has increased due to expansion of the operating area and introduction of additional evening services. Since the introduction of the Dacorum operating zone (December 2023) there has been a growth in patronage by up to 15% per month.

¹ DfT table BUS01e, BUS01f, BUS01g and BUS01h (*DfT states these are Revised (2018/19)/Provisional (2019/20- 2022/23 Figures)



Service Operation (million kms)

The total number of vehicle kilometres on local bus services within Hertfordshire from 2015/16 to 2018/19 averaged 25.8 million km per year. During 2019/20 and 2020/21, due to national lockdowns and the knock-on effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic there was a fall in total vehicle kms to 25.2 million km and 17.7 million km.

Since the pandemic, the total number of vehicle kilometres has not recovered to their pre-covid levels and has decreased further.

This indicates that the bus network has not returned to pre-pandemic levels, explaining in part the much slower recovery of bus passenger journeys. Figure 6 shows the declining service distance operated between 2015 and 2023.

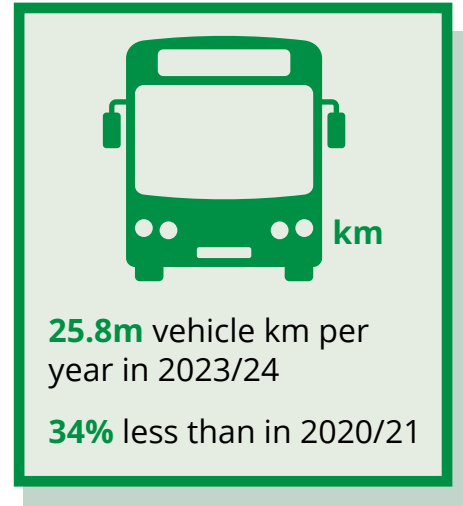
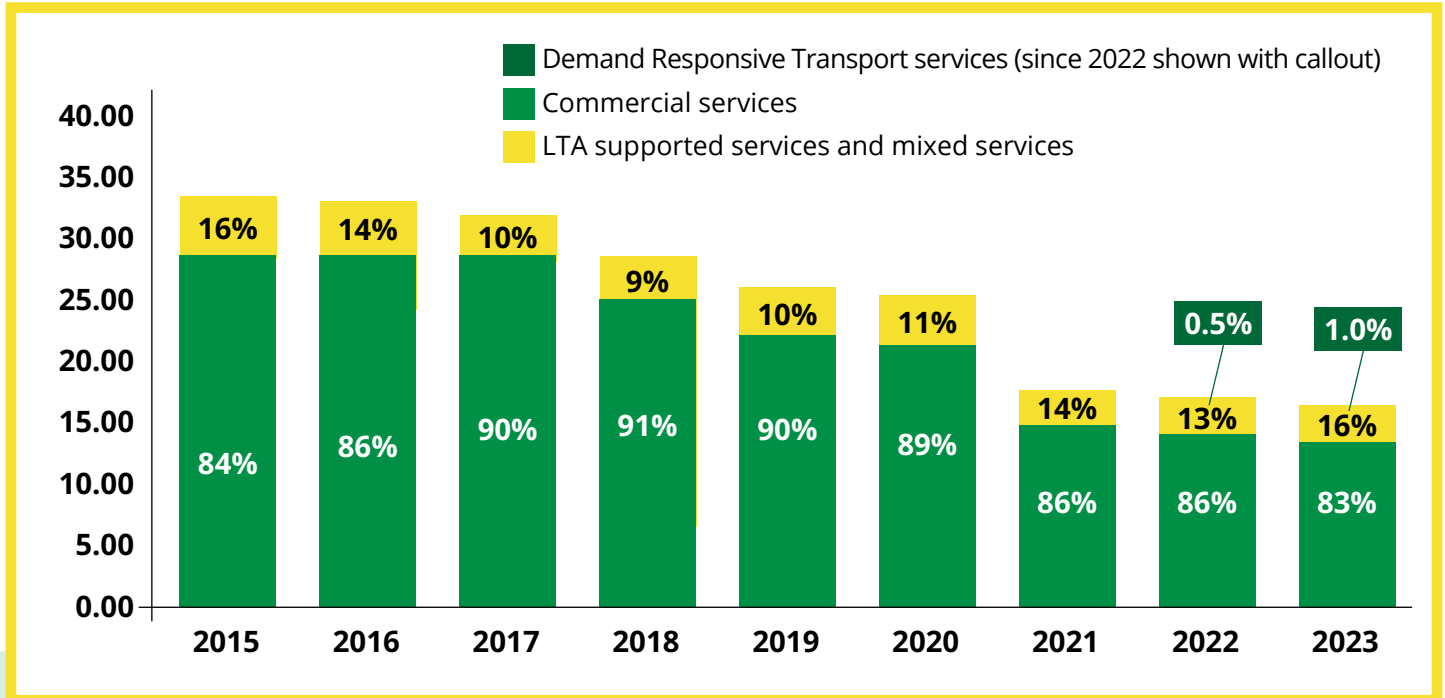


Figure 6 – Service operation in Hertfordshire, million kms

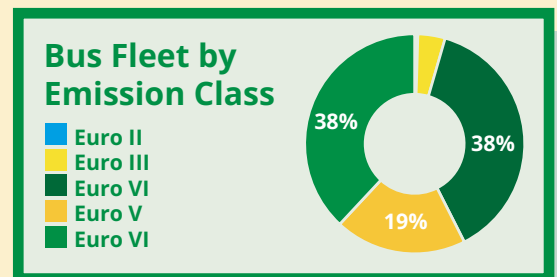
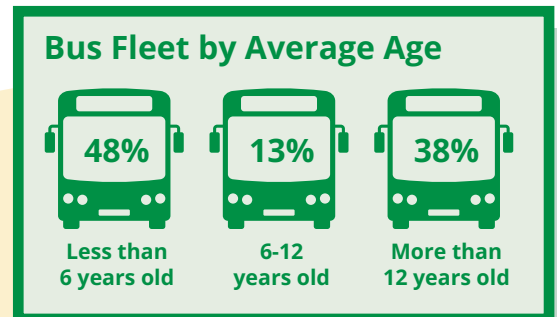


Bus Fleet in Hertfordshire

There are over 1,500 buses in our BSIP area with an average fleet age of 12-years. Currently 48% of buses within Hertfordshire are less than six years old, 38% are between six and twelve years old and 48% are over twelve years old.

Data suggests that 30% of the local bus fleet is operating to the cleanest diesel standard, 2% Euro VI with a further 28% of the fleet at Euro V. With the remaining fleet below this standard, data suggests that a process of fleet renewal to higher Euro standards or zero-emission buses would be beneficial, HCC are working with UNO to deliver 27 electric vehicles.

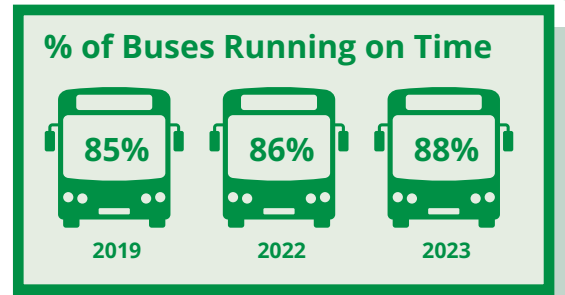
Through the Intalink EP we continue to make progress



towards updating fleets to cleaner vehicles and set out our approach to achieving this later in the BSIP.

Network Punctuality and Reliability

The average on-time performance (punctuality) figures (Hertfordshire County Council data) shows that bus services are no more than 1-minute early and 5-minutes late. Punctuality has increased from 85% in 2021/22 to 88% in 2023/24.

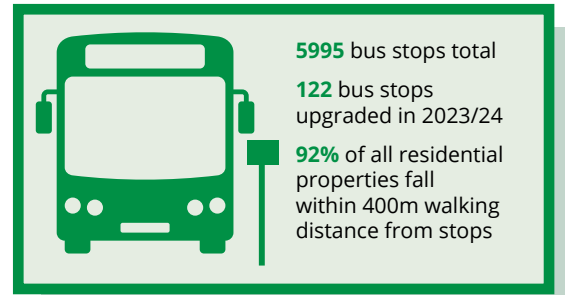


Regarding reliability, measured in terms of lost mileage (bus services that failed to operate) the current level of reliability for bus services in 2023/24 is 95%. Most of the 5% lost mileage has been due to driver shortages.

Bus Stop Density

Of the 122 upgraded bus stops introduced in 2023/24, 60 of them are located on the strategic Hertford to Stevenage BSIP corridor.

Figure 7 illustrates the pattern of stop locations with a 400m walking buffer to show the accessibility to nearby residential and commercial property.



Although there are gaps, most residential properties (92%) in Hertfordshire are covered by bus stops in a 5-minute (400m) walking distance.

Figure 7 - Bus stop density at 400m

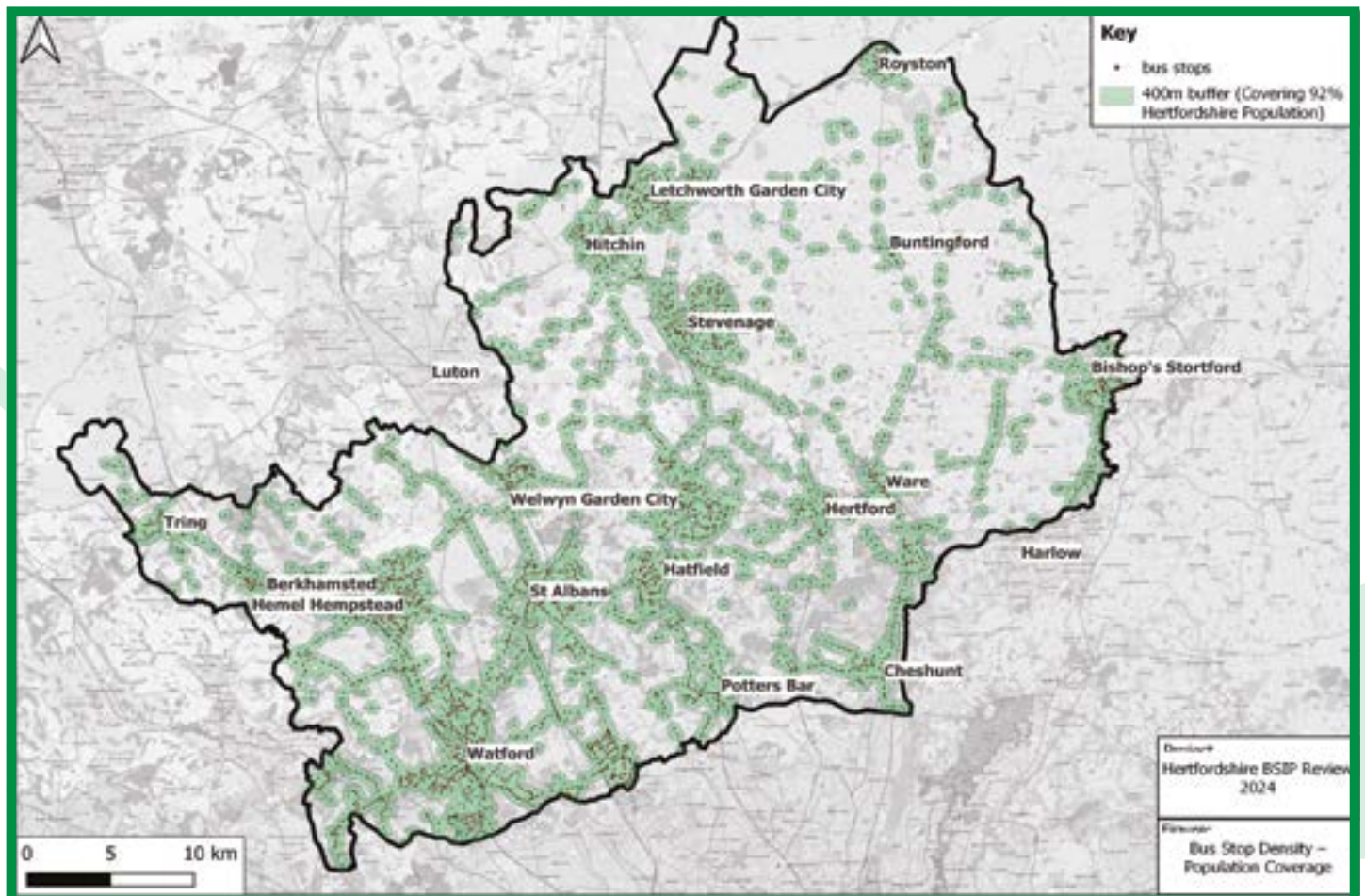


Figure 7 shows potential network gaps:

- Areas where density is lower around residential properties: around Letchworth Garden City, Hitchin, Royston, Buntingford, Bishop's Stortford, Ware, Tring.
- Areas where the walking buffers do not overlap may be areas for improvement in the network through further research: Broxbourne, Hoddesdon, Cheshunt, Rickmansworth, Berkhamsted.

Bus Stop Facilities and Real Time Information

While most of the bus stops are already equipped with basic facilities, our aim has been to maintain all bus stops at a consistent quality and standard across the County. This has been reflected by bus passenger satisfaction levels in the state of bus stops that is higher than the national average.

We upgraded 220 bus stops 2022/23 and a further 120 stops in 2023/24, including 60 on the Hertford to Stevenage BSIP enhanced corridor. Many of our bus stops are accessible and include raised kerbs for level bus boarding, improvements to localised pavements, additional crossing points close to bus stops and sensible placement of bus stop furniture to remove access barriers.

Within Hertfordshire there are 390 real time information (RTI) screens, of which 31 have been funded through the BSIP (1) programme. With a further 12-months still to run under the BSIP (1) programme we will install a further 160 RTI screens. Furthermore, passengers can access audible real-time information, including route number, destination, and time before arrival via scanning the QR code on all paper timetables at stops.

Network Accessibility

Our Bus Connectivity Assessment, which sits below this BSIP and informs our ongoing network development work, seeks to answer the question of what our bus service provision means for people getting to key destinations (work, education, healthcare, leisure opportunities), and what proportion of the population can reach key destinations by bus within 30 minutes.

We have assessed the journey opportunities which our bus network provides to residents and visitors, in terms of access to the following key destination types:

- Access to business
- Access to healthcare
- Access to work
- Access to education
- Access to retail
- Access to leisure opportunities
- Access to other modes of transport

We have assessed what proportion of Hertfordshire residents can travel to these destinations within 30 minutes by bus in the morning peak hour, or on a direct bus route at any time of the day. We have also compared average times to travel to these different destination types by bus and have completed this analysis looking at fixed route services, as well as DRT.

Some of the results relate to where facilities are located:

- Around one third (28%) of rural residents and 82% of urban residents can reach a major shopping area by bus within 30 minutes. The average journey time is faster for urban residents at 20 minutes, compared with over 30 minutes for rural residents. This reflects the location of major shopping areas in or on the edge of urban areas.
- There are relatively few hospitals in or close to Hertfordshire, so almost all rural residents

- (98%) and two thirds of urban residents are further away from them than a 30 minute bus trip.
- Primary school access within 30 minutes by bus is much higher for rural (60%) and urban (92%) but falls for secondary schools with rural access in 30 minutes or less by bus being 11% and for urban areas 69%.
 - Access by bus within 30 minutes for work opportunities in town centres, offices, and banks is low for rural areas with no category scoring higher than 18%, for urban areas this is better but access to any work category is still no higher than 70% for travel by bus within 30 minutes.

Table 2.3 below summarises data for bus travel up to 30 minutes for the percentage of population in each area category (urban and rural)

Table 2.3 Proportion of population by area that have access by bus within 30 minutes

Access Category	Specific Access Location	Urban	Rural
Business	Business parks and Industrial Areas	85%	48%
Healthcare	Hospitals	37%	2%
Healthcare	GPs	85%	46%
Work	Town Centres and Cities	63%	12%
Education	Universities	11%	2%
Retail	Shopping	82%	28%
Leisure	Restaurants	91%	65%
Leisure	Play Spaces	92%	61%
Leisure	Parks	83%	36%
Transport	Interchanges	66%	18%
Transport	Bus Stations	33%	5%

These proportions and average journey times reflect how different facilities and services are distributed, with many located in or close to town centres (and therefore closer to urban residents).

Ongoing analytical work by the county council will identify changes in access to key destinations for residents brought about by network changes since 2022/23 and will be reported in the next update of this BSIP and future Bus Connectivity Assessment submissions.



Modal Share and Travel to Work

Census data from 2021 shows that of all residents aged 16 years and over in employment, 39.4% work from home compared to 6.2% in 2011 (noting that 2021 Census data was collected during the latter part of the pandemic and associated restrictions). This increase is mainly a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic with indications being that travel to work journeys remain at 88% of their pre-pandemic levels.

2.8% commuters used bus services in 2021

This is a 0.6% decrease since 2011



Table 2.4 shows that of those who travel to work in 2021, 2.8% use buses, compared to the 2011 Census. There has been a 1% decrease in the number of people using the bus and a 4.4% increase in car travel, following the national trend.

Table 2.4 - Travel to Work Data excl. working from home (Modal Share)

On foot	Bicycle	Bus	Train	Motorcycle	Taxi	Passenger in car/van	Driving car/van	Other method	Total
2011									
52,671	9,399	18,149	65,020	4,048	2,686	23,237	338,809	2,921	530,265
9.9%	1.8%	3.4%	12.3%	0.8%	0.5%	4.4%	63.9%	0.6%	
2021									
41,339	7,271	10,333	20,636	2,223	3,030	17,831	247,645	5,490	598,241
11.4%	2.0%	2.8%	5.7%	0.6%	0.8%	4.9%	68.3%	1.5%	

Census data from 2021 highlighted that 85.2% of travel to work journeys remain within the county, commuting outside the county represented 14.8%, and total movements into the county represent 15.5% of work trips. London was the most popular destination in each direction.





Fares and Ticketing

Bus fares and tickets on offer within Hertfordshire are operator specific and have varying prices. With the DfT National Fare Cap currently in place most single tickets are capped at £2 creating an attractive option for those who may not require a longer-term ticket (with only 22% of services not applying the £2 cap²).

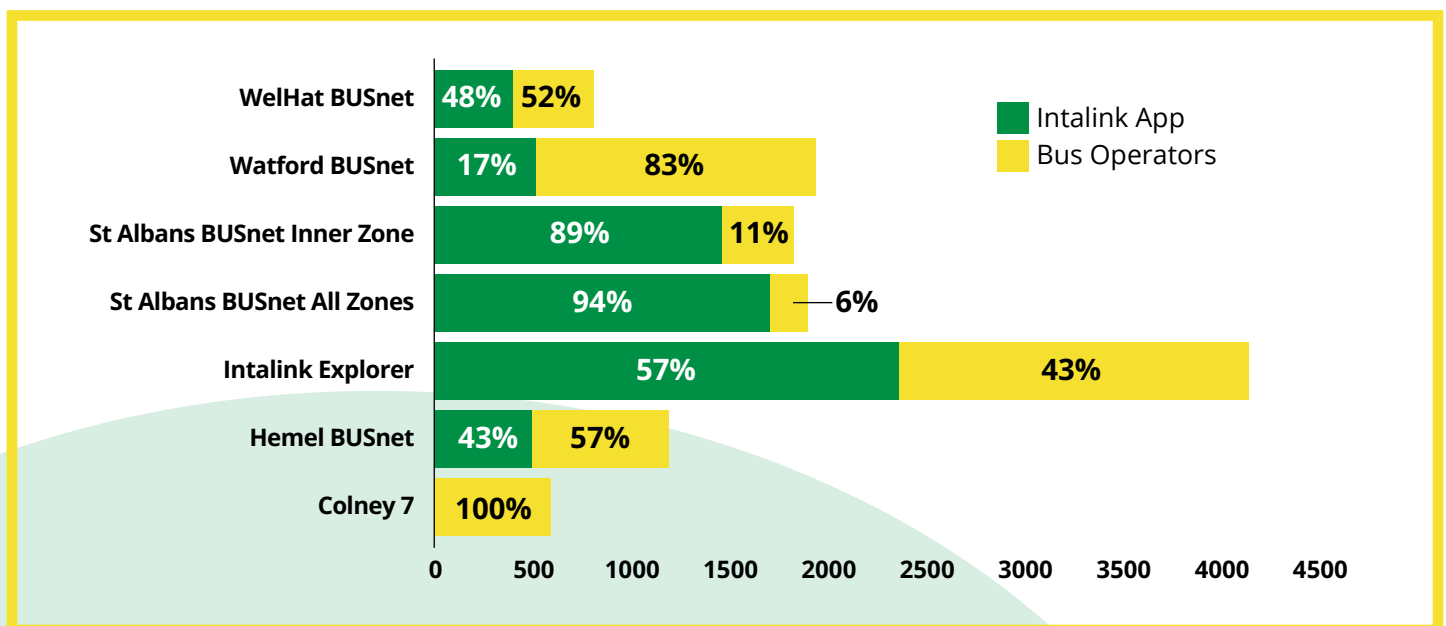


Although the National Fare Cap has lowered the cost for a single trip, average prices for period (weekly and monthly) tickets have increased since 2019/20.

In addition to multi-operator paper tickets available on-bus, several improvements to the user experience have been made electronically as part of our Ticketing Reform approach:

- The Intalink Explorer and BUSnet tickets have been made available in extended versions as four-week period tickets.
- Four types of saving initiatives based on age have been rolled out, including reduced fares, saver card discounts, and extended ticket options.

Figure 8 - Typical ticket sales by method




The later phases of the Intalink Smart Ticketing Strategy through our BSIP (1) programme cover the introduction of integrated multi-operator bus and rail ticketing. Whilst preliminary discussions with the Rail Delivery Group have been positive, putting this into practice will require a willingness and cooperation from the rail operators.

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/2-bus-fare-cap#east-of-england>

Concessionary Fares

During 2023/24, HCC recorded 181,716 active English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) passes. Compared to the 2020/21 baseline, Hertfordshire has seen an increase of 1% (2,313) in number of active ENCTS passes.³

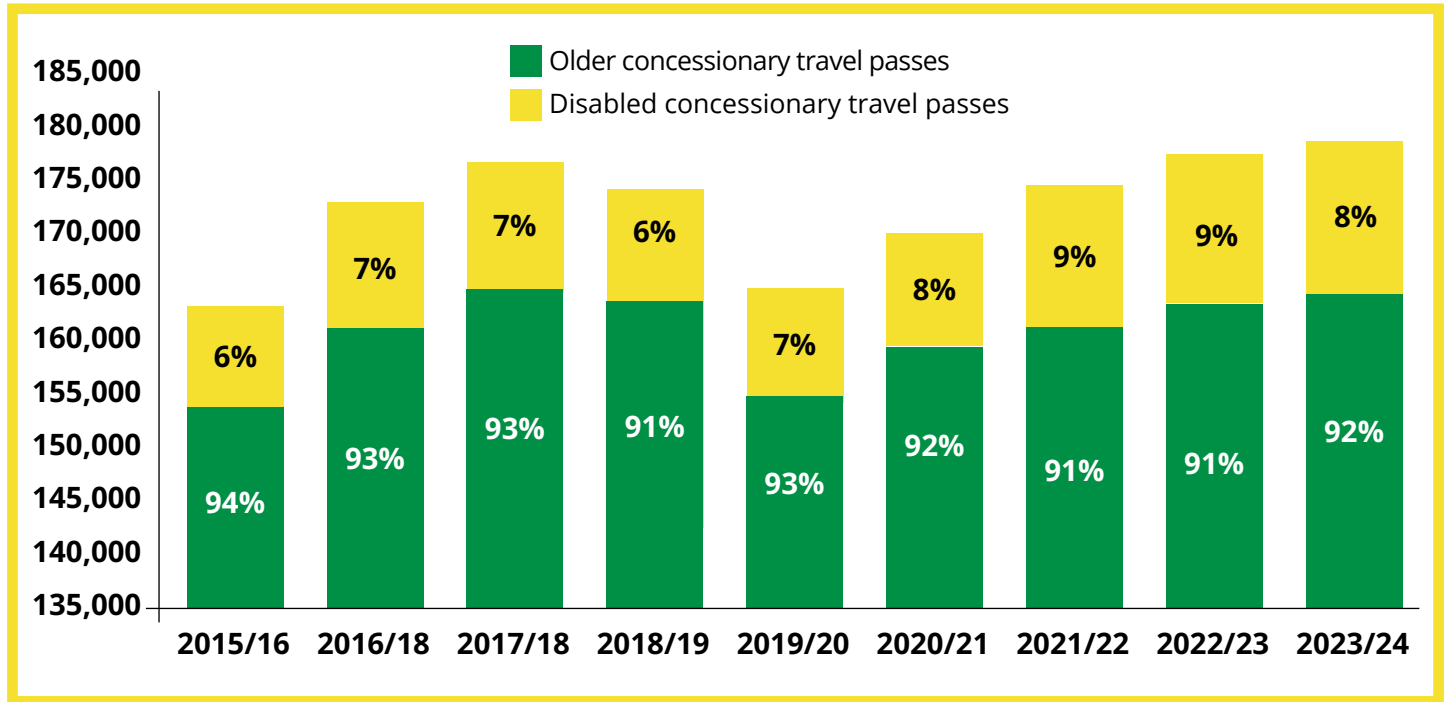


5% increase in concessionary passes since 2021

27% decrease of bus usage by concessionary pass holders since 2020/21

Figure 15 shows the breakdown to the number of passes registered to older persons and to people with registered disabilities.

Figure 15 - Number of passes registered to older persons and people with disabilities



Currently the council spends approximately £11m per year on concessionary fares. In the most recent figures, the DfT has shown that bus usage by ENCTS pass holders has remained consistently lower than pre-covid levels. Elderly and disabled concessionary passenger journeys were 57% lower than pre-pandemic levels in 2020/21 (during the pandemic) which has since improved but remains 30% (at 2023/24) below pre-pandemic levels.

HCC Public Consultation

Public consultation is held every two years, with the next event planned for the summer of 2024. This will include research to determine the future initiatives and strategies that bus users and the public would like to see the Intalink EP and subsequent BSIPs focus on and will inform the review of the Hertfordshire Bus Passenger Charter. Additionally, passenger feedback on bus services in Hertfordshire is being recorded monthly by HCC. The feedback for 2023/24 showed 66% positive or neutral responses.

Engagement Channels	Press/ Media	Meeting	Online	Ad Posters	Leaflets	Post to facilities
Hertfordshire Public						
Bus Users Older People	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Bus Users Young People			✓			✓
Partners		✓	✓			
Groups Identified in EQIA			✓	✓		

³DfT Table BUS08b: Concessionary travel passes



Section 3

Improvements Programme to 2025

Introduction

This section sets out our current BSIP delivery programme within the existing funding period which runs to the end March 2025. This delivery programme was developed following the announcement in 2022 of the funding awarded to Hertfordshire County Council through the BSIP process.


In the delivery of this funding award, the Intalink EP partners have made progress in improving the local bus network across all asset areas, with continued passenger growth achieved as a direct result of the BSIP programme and the way we have targeted funding across the bus service network.

This section sets out our progress to date (by March 2024), summarising the percentage of completed spend under each Delivery Plan and individual scheme, highlighting examples of value for money and high positive impact, and confirming our continuing plans to spend 75% of our 2021 BSIP allocation by March 2025 and the remaining fund amount by September 2025 or sooner.

This section also summarises the steps being taken to address bus driver and key operational staff shortages within the local bus market, as required within the 2024 BSIP guidance, and our plans for continued partnership work in this area beyond 2025.



WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED SO FAR

18% 
Bus Passenger Growth across the network and **95%** reliability

6 Turn-Up and Go bus corridors linking our five main towns



Buses every 15-minutes or better

3 
New **HertsLynx** demand responsive transport zones

 Over 300 pick-up locations and a rural lifeline for our residents

 'Tap-On / Tap-Off' processes agreed for all buses on our network – and starting later in 2024

National Fare Cap and simplified Intalink tickets across the network



Real-Time information displays installed across our network to provide our customers with better next bus information

21,771 clicks 

on adverts as part of our bus driver recruitment campaign and over 8,000 web-page landings



215 New Real-Time Information screens across

6 bus corridors

Less bus timetable changes each year through our EP



Laying the foundations for **HERT**



Through delivery of current BSIP schemes



A new Bus Passenger Charter giving our passengers confidence in the bus network

Our Delivery Plans

To meet the priorities of the NBS and to reflect the views of partners and stakeholders following engagement for the 2021 BSIP programme, Delivery Plans for five asset areas were established in the 2021 BSIP for Hertfordshire. These plans were developed to address the current and future challenges across the BSIP area (as set out in Section 2) and identify opportunities where we can make the most impact, meet targets, and prioritise investment. The Delivery Plans and the schemes under each are defined in Table 3-1 and align with key ambitions within the NBS.

Table 3-1 - Delivery Plans

Delivery Plans to meet NBS Objectives		Our Scheme Categories
1	More frequent and reliable services	Bus Service Support
2	Improvement to planning and integration with other services	Bus Priority Infrastructure
3	Improvements to fares and ticketing	Fares Support Ticketing Reform
4	Improvements to the bus passenger experience	Other Infrastructure Marketing
5	Improvements to passenger engagement	Programme Support

2021/2022 – Current Delivery Programme

Hertfordshire County Council was awarded £29.7 million through the 2021 BSIP fund. Our delivery programme was then adapted to match scheme categories to each Delivery Plan and then develop individual schemes under these categories to use the allocated funding across our bus network.

Table 3-2 shows each Delivery Plan area and the proportion of total 2021 BSIP allocation assigned to that area. It then states the percentage spend to date (by March 2024) for each individual scheme before we explain the remaining programme spend to 2025 in Table 3-4 further below.

Based on our current programme delivery (funding for the 2021 BSIP being available from Autumn 2022) we have currently spent 18% of our total allocation.



Table 3-2 Overall BSIP Allocation and Current BSIP Spend to March 2024

Delivery Plan Area	%age of Total Allocation	Delivery Plan Area Commentary	Delivery Plan Scheme Level Detail	
			Individual Scheme	Individual Spend to March 2024
Bus Service Support	40.1%	By March 2024 we have spent 28% of the BSIP allocated for Bus Service Support	Additional bus routes	21%
			Improvements to existing bus routes between the core towns	39%
			Improvements to evening, Sunday, and Public Holiday services	0%
			Community Transport / Total Transport	5%
			Expansion of current HertsLynx DRT scheme, fleet increase	31%
			Extension of HertsLynx operating times	24%
			Additional zones for HertsLynx DRT in the West	33%
Bus Priority Infrastructure	27.1%	By March 2024 we have spent 7% of the BSIP allocated to Bus Priority Infrastructure	Bus Camera Enforcement	3%
			Bus Traffic signals	0%
			Bus Lanes	10%
Fares Support	7.1%	By March 2024 we have spent 12%* of the BSIP allocated for Fares Support	Extend ticket range discounted with a Hertfordshire SaverCard	42%*
			Hertfordshire SaverCard Silver	20%*
			Reduced Fares for All	10%*
			Reduced prices for Intalink multi-operator tickets	8%*
Ticketing Reform	5.9%	By March 2024 we have spent 2% of the BSIP allocated for Ticketing Reform	Best value fares (Phases 3 & 4)	0%
			Intalink multi-operator smart ticketing (Phases 1b & 2)	9%
			Smart bus and rail ticketing (Phases 5 & 6)	0%
Other Infrastructure	12.2%	By March 2024 we have spent 9% of the BSIP allocated for other Infrastructure	Enhanced bus-stop information	0%
			Community Shelters	6%
			Mobility Hubs	2%
			On-street passenger information	0%
			Real-time information	18%
Marketing	2.4%	By March 2024 we have spent 54% of the BSIP allocated for marketing	Marketing and campaign development	54%

Note: *These figures are based on predicted costs to be paid out to bus operators upon invoices being received for the fare revenue subsidy up to March 2024 but not yet received. Programme Support makes up the remaining 5.2% of the budget and will be 27% spent by March 2024.

Challenges and Mitigation – to March 2024

We have made as much progress as possible under each Delivery Plan. Several individual schemes are showing excellent progress including the delivery of increased bus services between our core towns, expansion of the HertsLynx DRT service, our extended range of discounted tickets, and our roll out of increased RTI.

As we look ahead to the last 12-months of the current BSIP funding period we can see that most individual schemes are on track to be fully delivered, many will accelerate in terms of spend between April 2024 and March 2025 as background programme delivery aspects are concluded.

However, some individual schemes face continued challenges which have already led to some setbacks and are forcing a change in direction and a reallocation of funds to individual schemes where we know we can spend more and achieve significant results. Table 3-3 below summarises the challenges and risks for the individual schemes which have seen slower than planned spend to March 2024 and may not complete spend by March 2025.

Table 3-3 – March 2025 Delivery Plan Completion Challenges

Individual Scheme	Current Challenges	Moving Forwards	Target Completion
Bus Priority Infrastructure (All schemes including ANPR enforcement and signal priority)	The existing programme of bus priority was established prior to the Covid pandemic and the changing nature of travel demand and travel patterns, along with some consultation feedback and a shift in relevant Government policy (e.g. Plan for Drivers) has resulted in the need to re-evaluate some schemes and update our evidence base.	The programme is currently being re-prioritised where schemes are at risk of not being fully delivered in the required timescales or are no longer felt to be appropriate in their planned form. This is being done at pace to commit a deliverable programme with the required outcomes.	Measures in place by end September 2025.
Community Transport / Total Transport	Operators have decided not to participate as most feel more funding is required than available.	In this instance the funds have been reallocated to continued DRT support and expansion.	Scheme to be discontinued from March 2024.
Smart bus and rail ticketing (Phases 5 & 6)	These phases are dependent on working with Traveline, the Rail Delivery Group and bus operators.	Phase 5 will continue working with the Plus Bus initiative to make bus add on tickets to train journeys available via mobile phones. Phase 6 will look to develop a new product to enable customers to purchase rail and bus journeys together.	Both phases to be delivered by April 2025.
Enhanced bus-stop information	The contractor was unable to provide the prototypes of the colour e-ink type displays required for this part of the project within the agreed timeline.	The funds have been reallocated to the real-time information scheme.	Scheme to be discontinued from March 2024.

Programme to March 2025

With flexibility in the allocation of BSIP funding most individual schemes will be delivered by March 2025 and estimate that 75% will be spent. Programme Support makes up 5.2% of the budget which will be 63% spend by March 2025. Table 3-4 highlights planned spend to March 2025.

Table 3-4 Planned BSIP Spend to March 2025

Delivery Plan Area	%age of Total Allocation	Delivery Plan Area Commentary	Delivery Plan Scheme Level Detail	
			Individual Scheme	Individual Spend to March 2025
Bus Service Support	40.1%	By March 2025 we plan to spend 86% of the BSIP allocated for Bus Service Support	Additional bus routes	57%
			Improvements to existing bus routes between the core towns	171%
			Improvements to evening, Sunday, and Public Holiday services	0%
			Expansion of current HertsLynx DRT scheme, fleet increase	78%
			Extension of HertsLynx operating times	93%
			Additional zones for HertsLynx DRT in the West	76%
Bus Priority Infrastructure	27.1%	By March 2025 we plan to spend 39% of the BSIP allocated to Bus Priority Infrastructure	Bus Camera Enforcement	59%
			Bus Traffic signals	100%
			Bus Lanes	68%
Fares Support	7.1%	By March 2025 we plan to spend 27% of the BSIP allocated for Fares Support	Extend ticket range discounted with a Hertfordshire SaverCard	56%
			Hertfordshire SaverCard Silver	29%
			Reduced Fares for All	17%
			Reduced prices for Intalink multi-operator tickets	27%
Ticketing Reform	5.9%	By March 2025 we plan to spend 67% of the BSIP allocated for Ticket Reform	Best value fares (Phases 3 & 4)	100%
			Intalink multi-operator smart ticketing (Phases 1b & 2)	33%
			Smart bus and rail ticketing (Phases 5 & 6)	32%
Other Infrastructure	12.2%	By March 2025 we plan to spend 69% of the BSIP allocated for Other Infrastructure	Community Shelters	6%
			Mobility Hubs	100%
			On-street passenger information	82%
			Real-time information	83%
Marketing	2.4%	By March 2025 we plan to spend 65% of the BSIP allocated for Marketing	Marketing and campaign development	65%

Challenges and Mitigation – to March 2025

We have summarised the remaining challenges and legacy of each delivery plan in Table 3-5.

Table 3-5 – March 2025 Delivery Plan Commentary

Delivery Plan	Remaining Challenges	Delivery Plan Legacy	Target Completion
Bus Service Support	Most of the Delivery Plan budget will be exhausted by March 2025. The anticipated 14% remaining will act as contingency for any higher than planned contract costs and/or provide delivery of service extensions to Sunday and evening periods.	A doubling of service frequencies at a commercial level between main towns and extended periods of operation supported by an expansive DRT network.	March to August 2025
Bus Priority Infrastructure	We are currently re-aligning our strategy, design, and delivery teams to ensure a more joined up approach to delivery can achieve an acceleration of agreement to a revised delivery plan. This will ensure the programme can be delivered.	Outcomes will be maintained through the revised programme to provide more punctual and consistent journey times across key services and corridors.	End September 2025
Fares Support	Whilst the National £2 Fare Cap has been strongly welcomed, it has slowed the uptake of our proposed basket of fare offers. The slow return to bus use by people aged over 60 has also meant that planned spend has not materialised.	Fares and Ticketing work in tandem to provide: 1) A smaller range of simpler bus tickets with all tickets available digitally and capping used to make bus travel value for money. 2) Integrated ticketing between bus operators and the wider public transport sector. Systems aligned to DfT's Project Coral and used to support fare simplification.	March to August 2025
Ticketing Reform	We have combined individual initiatives to deliver Intalink multi-operator smart ticketing and Smart bus and rail ticketing as set up costs have been less than planned. Underspend has been moved to support our rapidly expanding HertsLynx service.		March to August 2025
Other Infrastructure	We have delivered a large proportion of this Delivery Plan and have used underspends from some individual schemes to increase the budget for RTI roll-out. We anticipate accelerating RTI roll-out and completing installation by the summer of 2025.	Over 200 bus stops newly equipped with RTI, ensuring all our passengers remain informed. Development of a blueprint for more mobility hubs in the future.	End September 2025
Marketing	Most of the allocated Delivery Plan budget will be spent by March 2025. We plan to retain some budget to extend beyond March 2025 to support any Delivery Plans where similar extensions are programmed.	A coordinated brand for service enhancements and multi-channel information supporting all activities – keeping the public informed.	March to August 2025

Programme Support will continue beyond March 2025 utilising the remaining 37% of allocated budget to ensure individual schemes with an agreed to extension are completed.

Visualisation of Current BSIP Programme

Table 3-6 visualises the overall BSIP programme, showing by individual scheme the duration and anticipated completion period.

Table 3-6 – Programme for workstreams under each Delivery Plan, 2021/22 to March 2025 (and beyond where extended)

Delivery Plan	2021 /2022	2022 /2023	2023 /2024	2024 /2025	2025 /2026	2026 /2027	2027 /2028	2028 /2029	2029 -2035
Additional bus routes	→								
Improvements to existing bus routes between core towns		→							
Improvements to evening and Sunday and Public Holiday services			→						
Expansion of current HertsLynx DRT scheme, fleet increase	→								
Extension of HertsLynx operating time		→							
Additional operating zones for HertsLynx DRT in the West		→							
Bus camera enforcement		→							
Bus traffic signals		→							
Bus lanes		→							
Extended ticket range discounted with a Hertfordshire SaverCard		→							
Hertfordshire SaverCard Silver		→							
Reduced Fares for All		→							
Reduced prices for Intalink multi-operator tickets		→							
Best value fares (Phases 3 & 4)		→							
Intalink multi-operator smart ticketing (Phases 1b & 2)		→							
Smart bus and rail ticketing (Phase 5 and 6)		→							
Community Shelters		→							
Mobility Hubs		→							
On-street passenger information	→								
Real-time information		→							
Marketing and campaign development	→								



OUR BUS DRIVER RECRUITMENT APPROACH



In 2022 we developed a targeted campaign to encourage people to join our bus driver workforce, working together with our Intalink EP Partners. The campaign was county wide and generic with interested people being given links to each bus operator to continue their application.

Our campaign ran for eight weeks and included:



- ✓ Social and digital media adverts.
- ✓ Partnership working with an established 'skills for adults' agency and local job centres to recruit and offer free pre-bus driver training.
- ✓ A4 and A5 roadside displays in bus shelters and interchanges.
- ✓ Information sent to all Intalink publicity distribution locations.
- ✓ News articles on the Intalink website.

173,600



people were reached

8,131

individual clicks were recorded -nearly **twice our target!**



811,972

adverts were viewed, at a cost of **less than 30 pence** per click!

We continued this approach in 2023 and targeted adverts across Google. We learnt from the 2022 campaign which phrases captured more interested (e.g. 'learn more' prompted more clicks than 'apply now').

In **2023** we achieved

21,771

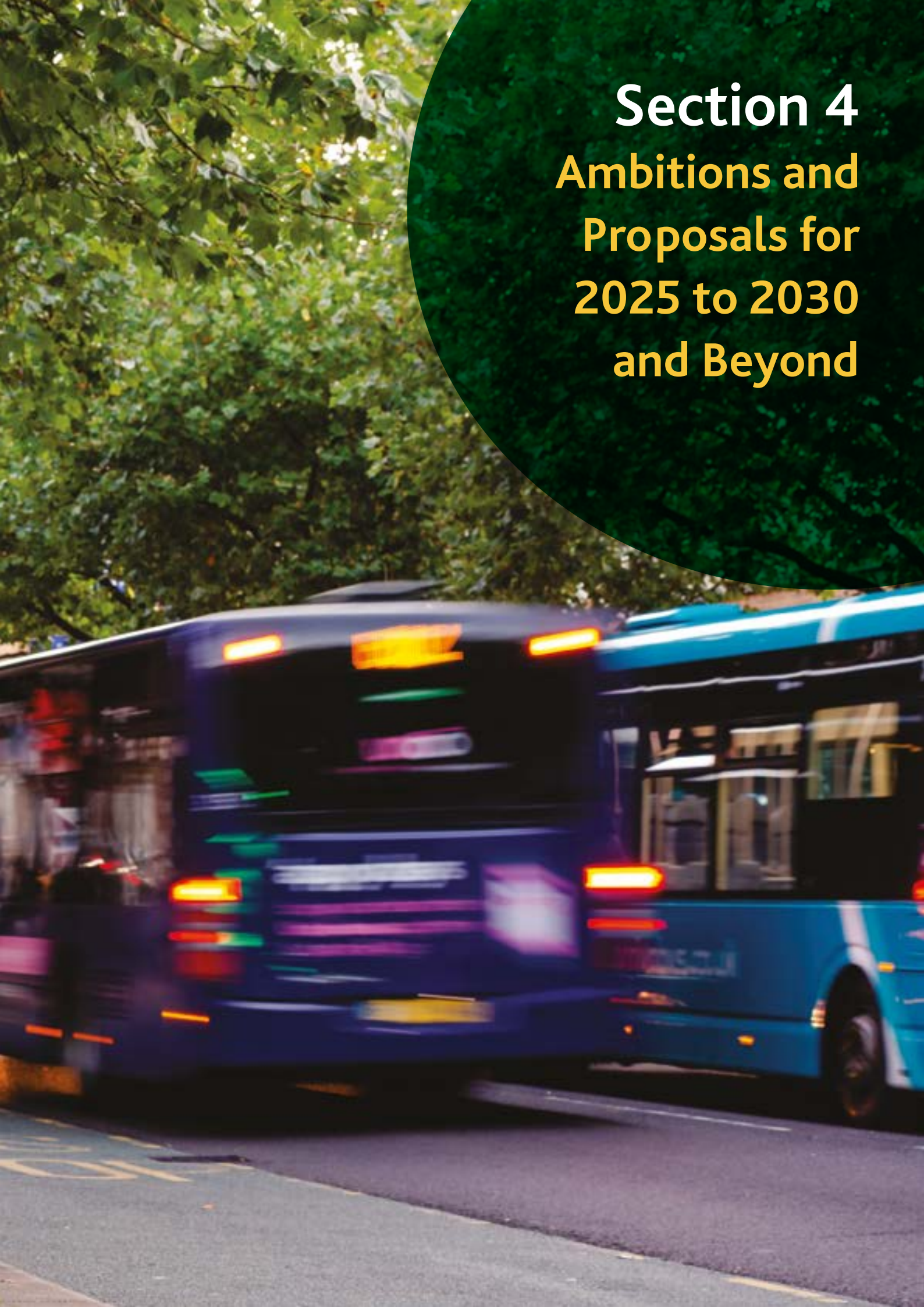
individual clicks by people **aged 25-54** years old.

2,571,140

adverts were viewed, at a cost of **less than 10 pence** per click!



Leading to more bus drivers in Hertfordshire and improving bus service reliability



Section 4
Ambitions and
Proposals for
2025 to 2030
and Beyond

Introduction

This section provides details of Hertfordshire's 2024 BSIP proposals and ambitions. These are set within the dual-horizon approach where proposals provide more detailed deliverables over a four-year period from 2025/26 to 2028/29 and ambitions are geared to a longer-term view across a period from 2025/26 to 2034/35.

The BSIP 2024 proposals and ambitions in the following section represent a review and refresh of Delivery Plans 1-5, as set out in the Hertfordshire BSIP 2022 update. They demonstrate a transitional approach from the current three-year funded programme (2021/22 to 2024/25) to a longer ranging, and currently unfunded, vision for both the short and long term as required by DfT for our 2024 BSIP refresh whilst confirmation over Government's position over future BSIP funding beyond March 2025 is clarified.

This section clearly sets out our continued ambitious plans for a local bus market that continues to be financially viable and through continuation of the Delivery Plans already commenced is further revitalised.

Our ambition remains to ensure bus travel is the model of choice in the county. We are already working hard to ensure this through our well established Intalink partnership whose objectives remain aligned to those within the National Bus Strategy.

Intalink Enhanced Partnership Objectives

Objective A:
Prioritising bus services in traffic

Objective B:
Improving the image of buses

Objective C:
Upgrading bus infrastructure

Objective D:
Closer integration of the bus network

Objective E:
Smarter use of data and information



Make improvements to bus services and planning

Make improvements to bus services and planning
Improvements to passenger engagement

Make improvements to bus passenger experience

Improvements to fares and ticketing
Improvements to passenger engagement

Make improvements to bus passenger experience
Improvements to passenger engagement

Bus Back Better Objectives

Service Level and Network Coverage

Our Ambition

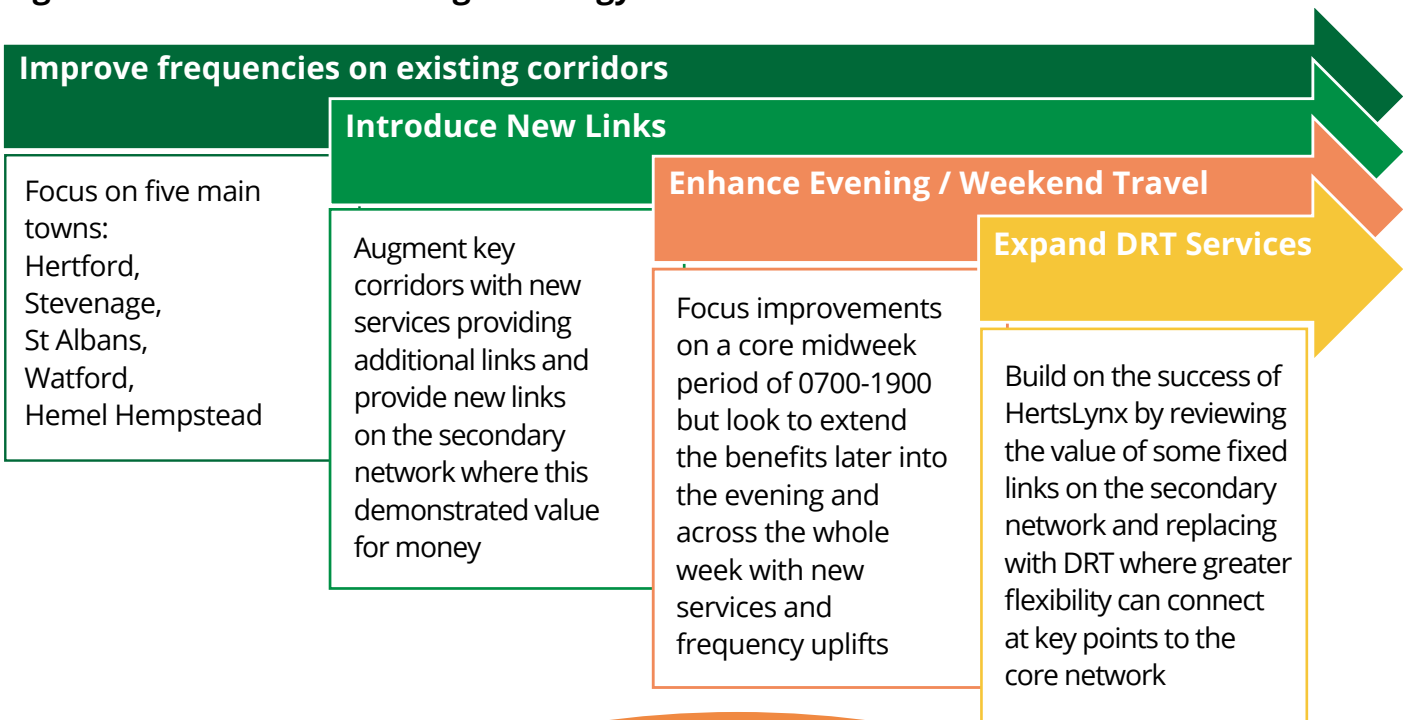
We want to achieve a balanced bus network across Hertfordshire where bus travel becomes the first choice when people need to make a journey, either in our busy urban areas or across our more sparsely populated countryside.

Our Approach

Our focus remains on the continued delivery of our four-stage network improvement strategy. This has successfully delivered 2021 BSIP funding across our core network and HertsLynx DRT services and has already seen positive improvements across our secondary level network.

The strategy is set out below. Our refreshed 2024 BSIP remains focused on the continued delivery of a financially stable core network. Building on our 2021 BSIP approach we have added stretch standards as a natural expansion of the success we have already seen across six corridors, and these are outlined in our short-term proposals.

Figure 4-1 Retained Four Stage Strategy for Hertfordshire Network and Services



Our Short-Term Proposals 2025/26 to 2028/29

To give us the foundations to build our longer-term plans for the local bus network, such as HERT (Hertfordshire and Essex Rapid Transit) – explained below, whilst also continuing short term growth and increased financial sustainability, we will:

Objective	Approach	Outcomes
Nurture and expand the current inter-urban BSIP Network	Although the core principles of BSIP funding and approach to the current core network are sound, we will continue to evaluate the success of the improved turn-up and go corridors and identify where we will be able to stretch standards by reinvesting revenue gain.	Four buses each hour earlier than 7am and later than 7pm each day on BSIP (1) enhanced corridors.
		Improve other core services over weekend periods (e.g. 721 and 907).
		Re-balance the network by moving capacity around to better meet demand at high loading periods and locations.
Provide services to cover missing links between secondary towns	We are keen to spread the benefits of our approach to the core network and improve some existing links and launch new links between secondary and primary towns to feed the core network.	Consider matching some links to core network frequencies over longer periods of the day.
		Invest in even service patterns (hours and frequency) on several existing links between secondary towns (e.g. Rickmansworth, Borehamwood, Bishop's Stortford).
		Provide new links to some secondary towns (e.g. Hertford to Potters Bar).
Develop the network to provide better cross-boundary travel	The requirement to serve key locations outside Hertfordshire remains. The challenge is how to develop routes without funding commitments from third parties.	Through the Intalink EP we will establish a Task Group to address cross-boundary services comprising operators, partner LTAs and important third parties (e.g. Stansted Airport).
Continue the expansion of our HertsLynx DRT service	Using our significant experience in operating a successful and expanding DRT service we will use the next period to establish a sustainable operating model following lessons learnt in the Dacorum zone and continue to absorb lower density fixed-line services to allow those 'bus' resources to be moved to secondary and core links above.	Expand existing services in North and East Hertfordshire in terms of capacity, reach and hours – setting new stretch standards for DRT.
		Look at the HertsLynx operational model and see how we can better manage the services to become sustainable in the long run.
		Continue to develop a successful model of DRT and Community Transport to spread resources further.

Simplifying our fixed route network

We will undertake a complete review of the local bus network across Hertfordshire. This will consider persona type mapping using emerging work from DfT and how the current bus network performs across each type of defined route.

We will use new data sources to determine current desire lines and understand how our bus network relates to this and what changes could be made to better match the network to demand.

The outcomes of our work will seek to simplify the network, improve the bus offer on dense corridors, open new routes to match un-served or partially served desire lines and create a hierarchy of bus route type matched to personas across our county so we can make bus attractive to as many people as possible.

We want to see a financially viable core route network that is balanced against high levels of coverage and maintaining the levels of existing access within a 5-minute walk (400 metres) – c95% of the current population. The work we propose will seek to re-balance the network where this is needed to provide consistent frequencies so that we can ensure interchange between services is convenient and equitable in both directions of travel.

Enhancing network coverage – in the short-term

In the short term we will work to enhance network coverage using three approaches:

1

Aside from continued improvements to the core network and a stretching of standards linked to frequency, hours of operation and daily coverage we will continue to invest in the secondary network, replacing missing links with restored services and improving existing lower frequency services that not only feed into the core network but help to continue to revitalise our towns and local centres.

2

In addition, we will review our supported services network. We know the vital role that buses play in rural areas to ensure accessibility and inclusivity. However, bus services can be costly to delivery, and we need to get the service right to maximise the benefits to local communities and minimise cost impacts so we can deliver more. We will undertake a supported services review and through local engagement we will understand how we can re-shape the supported service network to better meet people's needs and comingle services with wider DRT coverage – knowing that these services are a rural lifeline.

3

Linked to the step above, we will seek to continue the expansion of the HertsLynx DRT network. This has seen significant levels of success and has required us to increase the fleet through existing BSIP funding to ensure we meet demand that remains on an upward trajectory. The next phases of HertsLynx will see us integrate the network more closely with our own fleet and the community transport sector and work closely with the supported services network to understand where DRT may provide a better level of service at comparable cost or add capacity at different times of the day to increase accessibility and inclusivity across our more disparate communities.

Our Longer-Term Ambition to 2035

Our longer-term ambition will see us reconsider the balance of services across our local bus network and establish ways of providing even better coverage whilst supporting emerging opportunities such as **HERT**, a £2.5bn east/west mass rapid corridor using trackless trams and connecting our four north-south railway lines and over 500,000 people. It will also remain aligned with our relevant LTP and will allow us to consider further new delivery options, including those combining DRT and community-based transport provision. However, we see the focus of our longer-term ambition to 2035 to be across three areas:

Public transport with greater coverage

Setting ambitious stretch standards

A key area of success across Hertfordshire has been the targeted improvement of core services, delivering the first of our four-step strategy. Having seen how this can work, we would seek to apply a set of minimum stretch standards across our network based on the link between place, people, and movement. Our proposals below set our goals for 2035, or earlier where possible.

Population	Urban Radial Route	Inter-Urban	Town Services
70,001+	6-8 buses / hour 0500-2359 Daily	6-8 buses / hour 0600-2300 Daily	6-8 buses / hour 0700-2200 Daily
20,001 – 70,000	4-6 buses / hour 0600-2300 Daily	4-6 buses / hour 0600-2200 Daily	4-6 buses / hour 0700-2100 Daily
10,001 – 20,000	4 buses / hour 0700-2230 Daily	4 buses / hour 0600-2100 Daily	2 buses / hour 0700-2100 Daily
3,001 – 10,000	3 buses / hour 0700-2230 Daily	3 buses / hour 0600-2100 Daily	N/A
501 – 3,000	1-2 buses / hour 0700-2230 Daily*	1-2 buses / hour 0600-2100 Daily*	N/A
Less than 500	Use of HertsLynx DRT to identified transport interchanges		

Note: * Services on some days or at some periods may be better provided by HertsLynx DRT

Meeting new demand

The bus network, and any redesign, will need to be tailored more closely around the location and build-out pace of recently built and new residential and employment developments within, and immediately adjacent to the county. We know that this will have a bearing on existing commercially bus services as well as those supported by us on currently lower-density corridors.

Our approach will see us map the bus network against the current and long-term development plan for the county and identify routes that, by 2035 or beyond will have a more important role due to their link with development locations. By linking development strategies and the LTP we will seek to protect these existing bus service corridors (existing service levels) ahead of planned development so that the public transport network is ready to respond as development commences and benefit from any improvements in bus priority and capacity that developments can provide.

Where no existing bus services operate in development areas, we will use HertsLynx DRT as an early step to provide a bookable level of service from first occupation until we can consider how

bus demand may shape a longer-term service solution, which may remain as DRT. However, for larger developments we would expect developers to provide funding to support the early use of DRT and then the transition to higher volume fixed bus services.

HertsLynx DRT Expansion

The ten-year aspiration for HertsLynx DRT services, a critical piece of our network and a rural lifeline for our most isolated residents within Hertfordshire would see a continuation of all existing service areas and operation to an expanded level:

- A vehicle-replacement scheme is to be implemented within this timeframe to ensure all fleet vehicles are safe and compliant, with aspirations to transition to zero-emission fleet by the end of the 10-year period. This will also include diversification of the DRT fleet vehicles to include some smaller vehicles where appropriate.
- Working with developers to ensure that S106 funding incorporates inclusion of DRT services for the first stage, where dwellings are in lower numbers and patronage numbers would not be sufficient to sustain a fixed line service; this would ensure that a public transport offering is available for residents in new housing areas straight away and mitigate reliance on single occupancy transport.
- Implementation of through-ticketing to enable multi-modal travel via DRT, incorporating rail, bus, and active travel.

Adaptation of current bus routes to a feeder role for HERT

HERT will be an important east/west link across our county. It is likely that the HERT will require a re-casting of the local bus network to provide feeder services to the corridor and extend the benefits of the system to an even wider audience. The local bus network will be adapted in such a way as to complement and support HERT as well as remaining a vital mode in its own right.

HERT is a £2.5bn mass rapid transit project that will run east-west across Hertfordshire, linking key towns to our four north-south rail routes and unlocking the potential of over 100,000 new jobs and 100,000 new homes across the county that will otherwise be hampered by already overloaded infrastructure.

The core HERT route (c£500m - £750m) will provide high frequency trackless trams when it is fully delivered but the investment will unlock the potential of the local bus network well ahead of the first HERT vehicles running.

An important part of HERT's success will be how the local bus network is adapted to feed into the HERT system and operate at frequencies and periods of the day to maximise access and interchange potential.

HERT will also connect to rail services eastwards to Stansted Airport, significantly strengthening Hertfordshire's access to this important transport hub.



Bus Priority

Our Ambition

Our ambition is to significantly increase effective bus priority to ensure bus journey times are seen as attractive as private car trips with bus punctuality and reliability improving to a consistent level across the local bus network.

Our Short-Term Proposals 2025/6 to 2028/29

Historically, there has been limited bus priority infrastructure in the county. The benefits of bus priority are clear. The shift from a car dominant county to buses and active travel requires significant investment in measures that can prioritise bus on highway infrastructure. We have made a commitment in the Intalink Enhanced Partnership to invest in research and studies to identify priority measures that can enhance reliability and the passenger experience.

Our short-term approach to delivering and maintaining bus priorities across Hertfordshire will be:

- A continued emphasis on quick-win projects where we can work collaboratively with local bus operators, local stakeholders, and members of the public to effectively remove bus delays whilst seeking an agreed balance of road space and infrastructure for all users. – **we have already seen the positive results of this approach, for example the bus gate on the Hertford Road in Stevenage - here, traffic is limited to buses and cyclists and has the benefit of providing largely traffic-free access for the bus. Residents on Hertford Road also benefit as this area was previously used as a diversionary route when congestion occurred elsewhere on the network. This location is operated by camera-controlled bollards but will be upgraded to Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) control in the future.**
- Corridor based packages will remain at the forefront of major investment – here we will aim to link together a string of improvements, some simple and some more challenging to ensure a significant reduction in end-to-end journeys with operational improvements then linked to a reinvestment mechanism for OpEX savings adopted within the Intalink EP Scheme document.
- A focus on parking and how this affects our buses so that we can better manage on-street parking capacity and better enforce parking violations and moving traffic offences by working in partnership with our districts and boroughs.
- Continued work on schemes within our main towns where we can give priority to buses in each town centre and reduce journey times on corridors approaching town centres. We will work to adjust bus stop infrastructure to allow better access for buses and provide a level of self-enforcement where this is practicable. We will focus on corridors between:
 - **Watford and St Albans**
 - **Stevenage and St Albans**
 - **Hemel Hempstead to Watford**
- The use of Enhanced Partnership powers enabled by the Bus Services Act 2017, to negotiate packages of co-investment with bus operators benefitting from the priority measures.

Our Longer-Term Ambition to 2034/35

Our longer-term ambitions for bus priorities across Hertfordshire focus on preparing the way for significant mass transit schemes, such as HERT, and making sensible choices about how we best use our limited road space for everyone.



Preparing for HERT

HERT is a significant mass transit project that will provide an important east-west link across our county, it will change the way we travel and will form an east-west transport corridor that runs from Hemel Hempstead and West Watford, joining St Albans in Hertfordshire, to Harlow in Essex, linking four major north south railway routes and unlocking new journey options for residents across the counties, including Stansted Airport through a rail connection at its eastern end.

HERT will be delivered in evolutionary stages, optimising use of emerging technologies and providing incrementally higher levels of capacity as it is brought forwards. While the **HERT** system is being developed we will deliver short to medium term bus priority schemes that lay the foundations for and support the eventual full **HERT** system.

We are still very early in the scheme development process and have several stages before the **HERT** can be built. However, we will seek to bring forward early highway changes where existing bus service can benefit ahead of the **HERT** system being delivered and on corridors approaching the **HERT** route so that in the longer term the local bus network can be re-positioned as a high-quality feeder to the east-west mass transit corridor.

One of the key features of the project will be the development of transport hubs, connecting existing bus services and planned routes for people cycling and walking to the **HERT** network, creating a seamless integrated system, and helping to reduce congestion, pollution and improving air quality for the residents of Hertfordshire.

Working effectively across our network

We know that effective bus priority measures are important to the flow of all traffic, not just to buses. To get the balance right and ensure that we maximise the opportunities for buses without overly restricting car movements we will use the long-term period to develop through schemes where we need to carefully consider the impacts to everyone using our limited road space.

In the longer term we will consider how we take forward several schemes identified as early as the 2021 BSIP but where work is still required to get the balance right, for example schemes in St Albans and Watford. These measures will ease bus movements in the centres of these locations, as well as wider bus improvements to approach routes, gyratory systems and developments located adjacent to existing urban areas.



Improvements to Fares and Ticketing

Our Ambition

We want fares across our bus network to be simple and attractive for everyone across Hertfordshire. Our fares will ensure value for money, will make using buses (and trips using bus as part of the journey) easy and cost effective, and will ensure cash, smart and technology-based systems are all offered to keep our network accessible.

Our Short-Term Proposals 2025/6 to 2028/29

Low fares through the national fare cap have helped us record bus passenger growth of at least 18% across our network, with higher levels of growth seen where we have combined frequency increases with low fares and ticket promotions.

Whilst our Intalink Smart Ticketing Strategy continues to take us towards fully integrated ticketing for passenger transport and delivery of simpler and lower fares, including fare capping. We developed a programme of short-term and longer-term approaches to continue the successes already seen across the county.

In the short-term we will look to continue engagement with industry forums to understand how smart ticketing will advance further and work to introduce any new initiatives into the Hertfordshire scheme. This will include integrating the outcomes of DfT's Project Coral into our multi-operator ticketing environment and maximising the benefits that this will bring to our passengers – with this workstream straddling the short and longer term periods.

In addition, we will also seek to use further funding in the short-term to:

- Maintain the subsidy on Intalink Connect multi-operator tickets keeping fares low for a longer period.
- Increase the subsidy to provide even lower fares and seek to maintain a countywide fare cap in line with, or like the current national fare cap.
- Increase the discounts available to holders of Hertfordshire SaverCards (currently 50%) which focuses on younger people and target groups such as jobseekers and care leavers.
- Expand the SaverCard scheme to non-Hertfordshire residents (e.g. to residents outside of the county who travel into Hertfordshire – aligning with our earlier commitment to strengthen our cross-boundary service network).
- Provide promotional ticketing offers, learning best practice from other areas of England and working with partner operators to develop targeted offers and wider-spread free travel days.
- Continue work to realise our plans for multi-modal ticketing with train operating companies and technology providers.

Our Longer-Term Ambition to 2034/35

In the longer-term we will continue to align our BSIP, and any other required processes to support the local bus market with the Intalink Smart Ticketing Strategy. This approach will allow us to continue to support and extend system assets such as the well-established Hertfordshire SaverCard scheme which provides concessionary fares to all age groups from five years old to English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) qualifying age.

In the longer-term, we will look to ensure:

Continued delivery of the Intalink Smart Ticketing Strategy and a focus on the continued use and expansion of the Hertfordshire SaverCard as a platform to ensure discounts from 5-years old to, and beyond, ENCTS qualifying age. This will see the final delivery of any supporting assets and approaches under Phase 4 of the strategy.

A continued approach to lower fares through a countywide fare cap and additional promotional fare bundles that are accessible to everyone through multiple channels from on-bus cash payments to App-based technology.

A fully integrated ticketing system for all passenger transport modes across Hertfordshire (delivering the final assets as part of Phase 5 of the Intalink Smart Ticketing Strategy) and a Mobility as a Services (MaaS) style platform that allows emerging modes and active travel options to be bolted on quickly and easily to make first and last mile access to the network even easier.



Improvements to the Bus Passenger Experience

The 'Bus Passenger Experience' is positioned at the core of all bus service improvements across the BSIP area.

We aim to provide all round accessible and well-connected services which take people to the places they want to go, which are supported by high quality, clean, and safe waiting environments.

Ambitions and proposals under 'Improvements to the bus passenger experience' have been categorised into themes and under each we will outline our short-term proposals and longer-term ambitions in tables that follow.

Our bus passenger experience themes are:

- Improved bus stops, bus stations and interchanges
- Improved bus information and network identity
- Bus passenger safety and security
- Accessibility and inclusion
- Implementing the bus passenger charter.

What we will do ...

We want to achieve a bus network that is easily accessible for all passengers.

We already provide branded on-street information in real-time and printed formats for all our bus operators, and the Intalink website provides a 'one-stop shop' for all bus information. We will continue to expand the Intalink brand to make a 'one-network' approach.

We will upgrade most bus stops in urban areas by 2029, including implementation of mobility hubs in several pilot locations.



Our shorter-term proposal will consist of laying the foundation blocks to continue making improvements to inclusivity on the network.

We will further improve bus information and strengthen our network identity by enhancing the Intalink journey planners, adding more electronic departure information screens, trial e-ink displays at roadside stops, add information points at more locations and make the Intalink brand dominant over operator own branding as part of a one-network approach.



Our Short-Term Proposals (2024/5 to 2028/9)

Theme	Proposals	Outcomes
Improved bus stops, bus stations and interchanges	We will continue upgrading existing bus stops to current standards.	By 2029 all bus stops in urban areas will be upgraded to a county standard. We will pilot 'Mobi-hub' facilities in a small number of areas.
	In 2027 our bus shelter contract will end and will result in HCC owning all the advertising shelter assets.	Short-term expenditure increases as we make sure bus shelters are an acceptable standard. Future defined revenue stream to ensure further provision of bus shelters cost neutral.
Improved bus information and network identity	Continue to provide a clear network brand identity through the Intalink branding approach and EP.	More network assets using the Intalink branding (e.g. acquired bus shelters following the end of the current shelter contract in 2027) and progression to a one-network approach with improved visibility of Intalink on all network buses to match the already extensive brand identity on information and non-bus physical assets.
	Make the Intalink brand dominant over operator own branding to reinforce the "one network" principle with a single identity.	
	Enhance the existing Intalink journey planners to show the fare against each travel option, then enable purchase of the relevant ticket.	Ability to both plan and pay for a journey electronically with this expanded to cover bus/ bus and bus/rail journeys over the short-term programme period.
	Add to the estate of electronic departure information screens and information points making real-time information accessible to passengers at more locations.	More real-time displays at more bus stops across Hertfordshire and use of e-ink displays at most bus stops by the end of the short-term programme period.
	We will continue to deliver a targeted programme of marketing campaigns.	We will report on campaigns and engagements in our BSIP monitoring programme – learning from successes and tailoring our programme further.
Bus Passenger Accessibility, Inclusion, Safety and Security	Continue the dialogue we have with disability groups, operators, boroughs, and other stakeholders.	Solutions for barriers encountered and noting areas of the bus network which function well for those with accessibility needs
	Undertaking public and business / operator campaigns to raise awareness of inclusivity and accessibility issues.	Campaigns for; priority seating, being respectful in communal public spaces. County standard driver training for visible and hidden disability and inclusivity awareness. Awareness sessions with bus operators aimed at all staff to highlight user challenges.
	A review of the passengers that we are currently engaging with to find out if we are missing any potential groups.	To do this we will widen our demographic segmentation and target marketing further.
	Investigate emerging technologies for use on the bus network with our digital partners.	Solutions for accessibility and journey planning barriers – e.g. at stop announcements, journey planning help (e.g. wayfinding, interactive tools at stops), and further QR code use.

Our Longer-Term Ambition to 2034/35

Our longer-term ambitions are focused on how we integrate each element of the Bus Passenger Experience to emerging mass transit options, such as HERT. We also want to ensure that our ambitions help the local bus network to adapt to, and integrate fully with mass transit - for example, creating higher frequency core corridors with buses running up to every 7-10-minutes as described in our long-term ambitions for network and services.

Supporting infrastructure

By developing a network of high-quality bus stops, interchanges and 'Mobi-hubs' we will maximise the benefits of higher frequency local buses, mass transit corridors, and parallel work in areas such as network simplification and simple fares.

In the longer-term we want to see every bus stop equipped with electronic information, either through real-time information screens or e-ink displays so we can immediately update passengers about their bus services and pass on information that may help their current or future journey.

Understanding when your next bus will arrive in more isolated areas where services may be less frequent is often more critical than understanding when the next bus will arrive on a dense urban corridor - so we will ensure that rural and lower density areas have real-time functionality using the most effective measures that are accessible to all out passengers.



One-Network approach

We already have an incredibly strong and simple brand – Intalink. This is already used across all network assets including all the information we produce from bus times, to fares, accessibility and more. However, over the longer-term we would like to make the Intalink brand even more visual by ensuring most buses across the network and all network bus stops, stations and interchanges are branded Intalink – adopting a one-network approach.

Passenger Accessibility, Inclusion, Safety and Security

We want to make our bus network more inclusive and user friendly for everyone. Working with all our local bus operators, local disability groups, national organisations and other local stakeholders is crucial to achieving this. We will create a framework of guidance and agreements aimed to improve accessibility across the network which will include:

- Improvements to vehicles including a focus on accessibility (new vehicles, on-board announcements, clear priority seating in design and two wheelchair spaces)
- Working with our digital partners, disability groups and operators to ensure digital content, including real-time information, website, vehicle information app, and journey planning tools are inclusive and allow customers to plan their journeys, accurately and with ease.
- Invest in education to increasing customer confidence where we find barriers to digital content.
- Looking at future technologies for vehicles, stop infrastructure (including passenger counting for journey planning assistance), at stop navigational tools, stop announcements, travel information and journey planning tool development.



Bus Passenger Charter

Our Ambition

To provide a local bus network where everyone feels empowered to speak out if they feel we have not met their expectations, where our passengers can comment and positively contribute to the development of the local bus network and where we can clearly set out our expectations for bus use to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for our drivers and passengers alike.

We already have a Bus Passenger Charter in place. This is agreed with all our local bus operators and forms an important part of our Intalink Enhanced Partnership. The charter has been in place since 2021.

Following updated guidance for the 2024 BSIP refresh process, we will be reviewing the content of our Intalink Bus Passenger Charter and updating the document in partnership with our local bus operators where required.

We will make the document simple to understand, ensure it is accessible and written in a 'Plain English' style, and review how we make it available to ensure it remains accessible for everyone.

We will continue to measure our passengers' satisfaction with the Intalink Bus Passenger Charter on an annual basis and use the feedback we receive to continually review and improve the document.



Intalink Bus Passenger Charter

We will make improvements to bus services & planning through:

- Better real-time bus departure information and at more locations
- More frequent buses
- Punctual and reliable buses
- Improving the connection to other modes of transportation using a bus
- Decarbonisation of bus fleets
- Number of available bus routes

We will make improvements to fares and ticketing through:

- Extending our range of multi-operator tickets
- Introduce smart ticketing options on mobile and card
- Easy to understand fares which will be published
- Fares prices available before boarding

We will improve Passenger engagement through:

- An improved Intalink website and app
- Easy feedback procedures
- The promotion of Intalink
- Strengthening the Intalink Brand

We will improve Passenger satisfaction through:

- Clean, comfortable, and reliable buses
- Buses that are accessible to all
- Annual survey on passenger transport topics
- Providing clear and simple feedback channels. If you want to tell us something, please contact us below:
 - Web: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/busfeedback
 - Write to: Freepost INTALINK
 - Phone: 0300 123 4050

Our promise to you

Passenger promise:

- Be courteous to the driver, vehicle and other passengers
- Dispose of litter in the correct fashion
- Refrain from Smoking & Vaping
- Respect bus stops and buses
- Adhere to bus drivers' requests and instructions
- Refrain from distracting the driver when bus is in motion

And in return we ask

www.intalink.org.uk/passengercharter | [@intalink](https://twitter.com/intalink)



Improvements to our bus fleet

Our Ambition

Buses across Hertfordshire to be Euro VI compliant no later than 2029 and for all buses across the network to be zero-emission, meeting our carbon neutrality commitment by 2050. Our buses will be modern and include as a minimum - next stop announcements, charging facilities, improved seat design and additional space for wheelchair and buggy users.

Our Short-Term Proposals (2024/5 to 2028/9)

Improving our bus fleet will be a key aim for short-term BSIP funding and through various mechanisms we will, at the very least, ensure that all buses achieve Euro VI emission standards no later than 2029.

We will also continue to investigate the increased use of alternatively powered vehicles across our network, building these into our future contract specifications, initially as options but later (by 2029) as minimum standards. We will actively work with our SME bus operators to investigate how zero-emission status can be achieved and consider how retro-fitting of electric power could be a solution.

We will oversee the improvement of passenger facilities across our bus fleet, working with current Government legislation regarding next stop announcements, but also ensuring items such as charging facilities, improved seat design, and enhanced accessibility are also be considered.

Next stop announcements

Hertfordshire fully subscribes to the benefits of next stop announcement on bus. This complements the investments made in the Intalink website and app and other real time information measures. Next stop announcements create an environment where passengers can be more informed and fulfil a key accessibility requirement for those visually impaired. Funding would allow Hertfordshire to work with bus operator partners to best assess how the fleet can be upgraded to ensure next stop announcements on every bus, both commercial and contracted.

An electric revolution

We will start our zero-emission journey by delivering our first electric buses using Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) programme funding. We are already working collaboratively with a local bus partner to bring these vehicles into Hertfordshire and anticipate the commence of operation by the end of 2024. Uno and the county council have invested significant resources and are 100% committed to successful delivery of the project that is on course to see £6m of investment in zero-emission buses in the county.



Our Longer-Term Ambition to 2034/35

Our Longer-Term Ambition to 2034/5 is for our bus fleet will reflect any updated legislation at a national level and potential funding sources available at the time to allow us to accelerate decarbonisation ahead of our Hertfordshire 2050 target.



Our approach is likely to include widespread use of both electric and hydrogen powered vehicles.

Longer term transformation of the network

In the next 15 years we are planning for more than 100,000 new jobs and more than 100,000 new homes to meet our needs across Hertfordshire, but we are already experiencing increasing demands on our transport network - putting a strain on our infrastructure, our health, and the environment. Our mass rapid transit network, **HERT** will be designed to make sure this growth is sustainable and inclusive for all by providing fast, frequent, and affordable transport designed with the user in mind.

As outlined through our 2024 BSIP, **HERT** is a key part of our longer-term network with earlier schemes designed to support its longer-term place in the county's transport hierarchy. **HERT** will be a mass transit project transforming east/west public transport across Hertfordshire and directly serving towns with a current population of over 500,000.

3 ambitions

1. Delivering jobs and economic growth	2. Protecting and improving our environment	3. Supporting vibrant communities
<p>The HERT will make travel easier to access current and future job opportunities and will provide businesses with greater access to skilled people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the significant long-term planned growth in the county with better connections between new and existing communities and jobs. • Providing a more attractive alternative for motor vehicle users. • Ensuring that we are at the forefront of new mass rapid transit technologies to stimulate economic growth. 		

Through these ambitions and the delivery of **HERT**, we will:

Enable the delivery of 50,000 new homes and 50,000 new jobs by the end of the 2030s.







Make public transport a highly attractive option, with high quality vehicles every 10-minutes or better, shorter journey times and seamless integration with an enhanced local bus network, and full connectivity with all active travel opportunities.

Significantly improve access to the rail network by connecting the four north-south rail routes in the county with direct east-west **HERT** services together with joint bus/rail ticketing and a full suite of supporting technology infrastructure across the whole journey.

The **HERT** project is a series of building blocks which will accelerate the delivery of benefits for passengers, the local economy and the environment whilst enabling affordability and the minimisation of operational and technological risk.

The **HERT's** innovation is in bringing together tried and tested technology as it emerges in areas such as vehicle guidance, multi-modal ticketing systems and passenger information. The building block approach means that infrastructure delivered for the end goal of trackless trams will immediately benefit existing bus services.



 <p>Integrated ticketing</p>	 <p>Bus priority</p>	 <p>Coordination with train services</p>
 <p>First/last mile options</p>	 <p>Trackless tram technology</p>	 <p>Passenger Information</p>

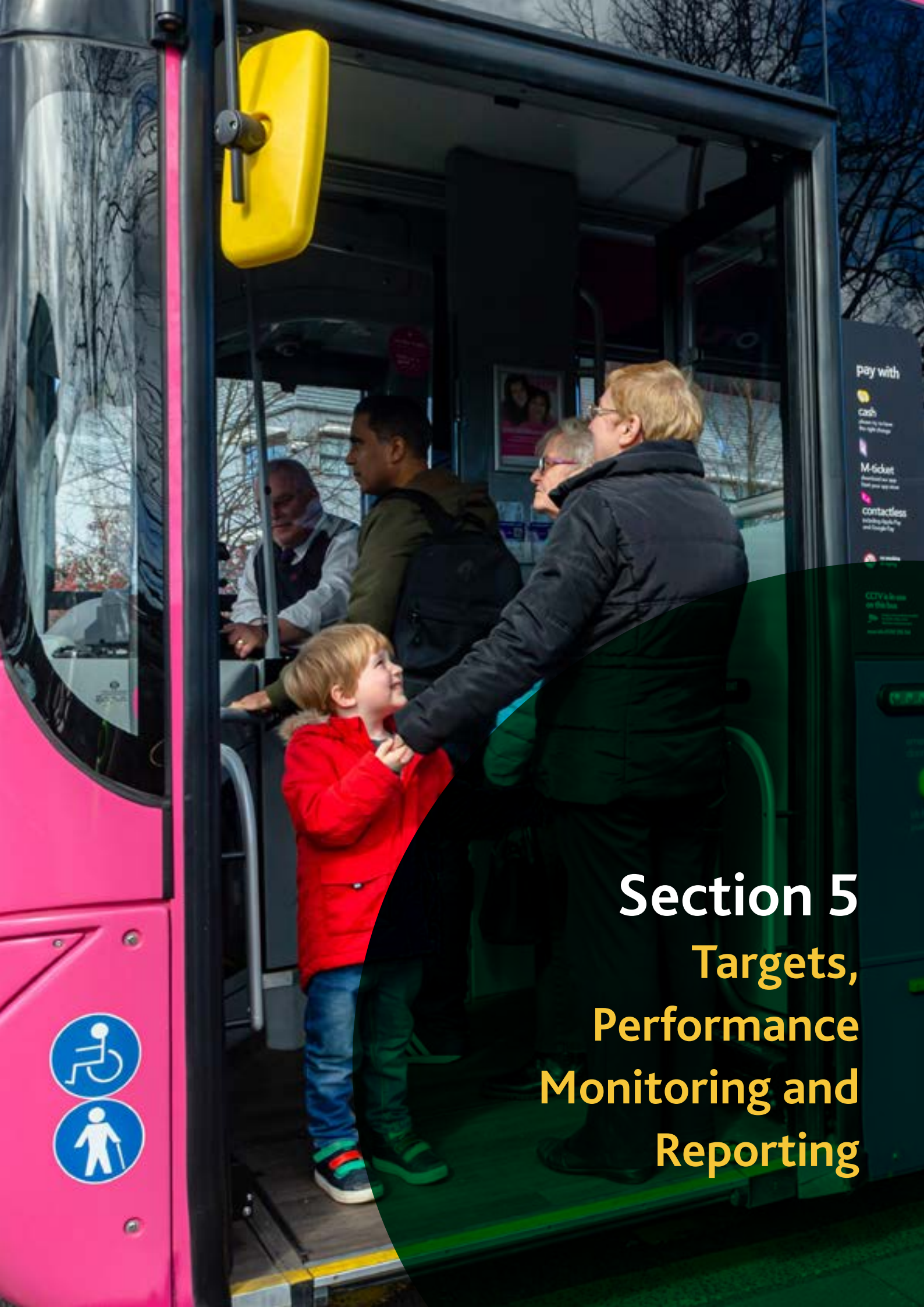
The route and location of strategic and local hubs will be determined in 2025 enabling **HERT** to be woven into key planning and transport documents such as Local Plans, Joint Strategic Plans, the Local Transport Plan, and future iterations of BSIP.

The concept of **HERT** is already included in the existing Local Transport Plan and the Regional Transport Strategy and is endorsed in the Hertfordshire Growth Board mission statements (2024).

The vision for delivering passenger benefits from **HERT** is:

<p>By 2030</p>	<p>Improved bus journey times and reliability through initial phases of bus priority.</p> <p>Quicker access to key facilities by linking bus services into the HERT nodes.</p> <p>Better connectivity with train services through the delivery of the first phase of railway station hubs.</p>
<p>By 2035</p>	<p>Simpler fares and ease of purchase through new ticketing system.</p> <p>Bicycle (and other active travel) hire integrated with bus ticketing.</p> <p>New public transport corridors in West Watford and Gilston (Harlow).</p> <p>Major improvements to bus journey times and reliability through continued roll-out of bus priority measures.</p>
<p>By 2040</p>	<p>Fast, reliable, and easy to use passenger transport system through full roll out of integrated ticketing and branding system covering buses, trackless tram, rail, and active travel.</p> <p>Enhanced passenger experience through delivery of trackless tram.</p>





Section 5

Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting



pay with



cash
inserting notes
for right change



M-ticket
download app and
link your app to

contactless
including Apple Pay
and Google Pay



CCP's logo
on the bus

www.ccp.gov.uk

0800 000 000

Targets, Performance Monitoring, and Reporting

The current BSIP covering Hertfordshire and the adjoining Intalink Enhanced Partnership document set out a small number of critical performance targets which we use to understand the progress we are making in delivering the BSIP programme and the wider performance of the bus market across Hertfordshire. The information below summarises performance against these targets by March 2024.

Punctuality

85%

Actual 2023/24



Year on Year



Against Target 88%

Past Performance:

2021/22: N/A 2022/23: 84%

On-time performance is measured using -1 minute early to +5 minutes late as the definition of on-time. Buses outside of this are late.

Passenger Journeys

20.8m

Actual 2023/24



Year on Year



Reset Target

Past Performance:

2021/22: 10.5m 2022/23: 17.5m

Figures for passenger journeys are for all local bus trips within Hertfordshire and include all local bus operators who supply the data.

Reliability

95%

Actual 2023/24



Year on Year



Against Target 96%

Past Performance:

2021/22: 95% 2022/23: 94%

We measure reliability based on the amount of timetabled bus mileage operated and open to our fare paying passengers.

Customer Satisfaction

66%

Actual 2023/24



Year on Year



Against Target 80%

Past Performance:

2021/22: 66% 2022/23: 67%

We have a range of satisfaction information. This figure is the general score for customer satisfaction for buses across Hertfordshire.

Putting our performance into context

Punctuality (our primary monitor)

The figure for 2021/22 was artificially high due to a small sample size being measured the year before (2020/21) as we had a reduced team working to verify bus punctuality following the Covid-19 Pandemic period. As result, the number of routes checked in 2020/21 was only 1,800, compared to 3,000 checked in for 2021/22 as we fully emerged from the pandemic period. Therefore, the data for 2021/22 has not been shown.

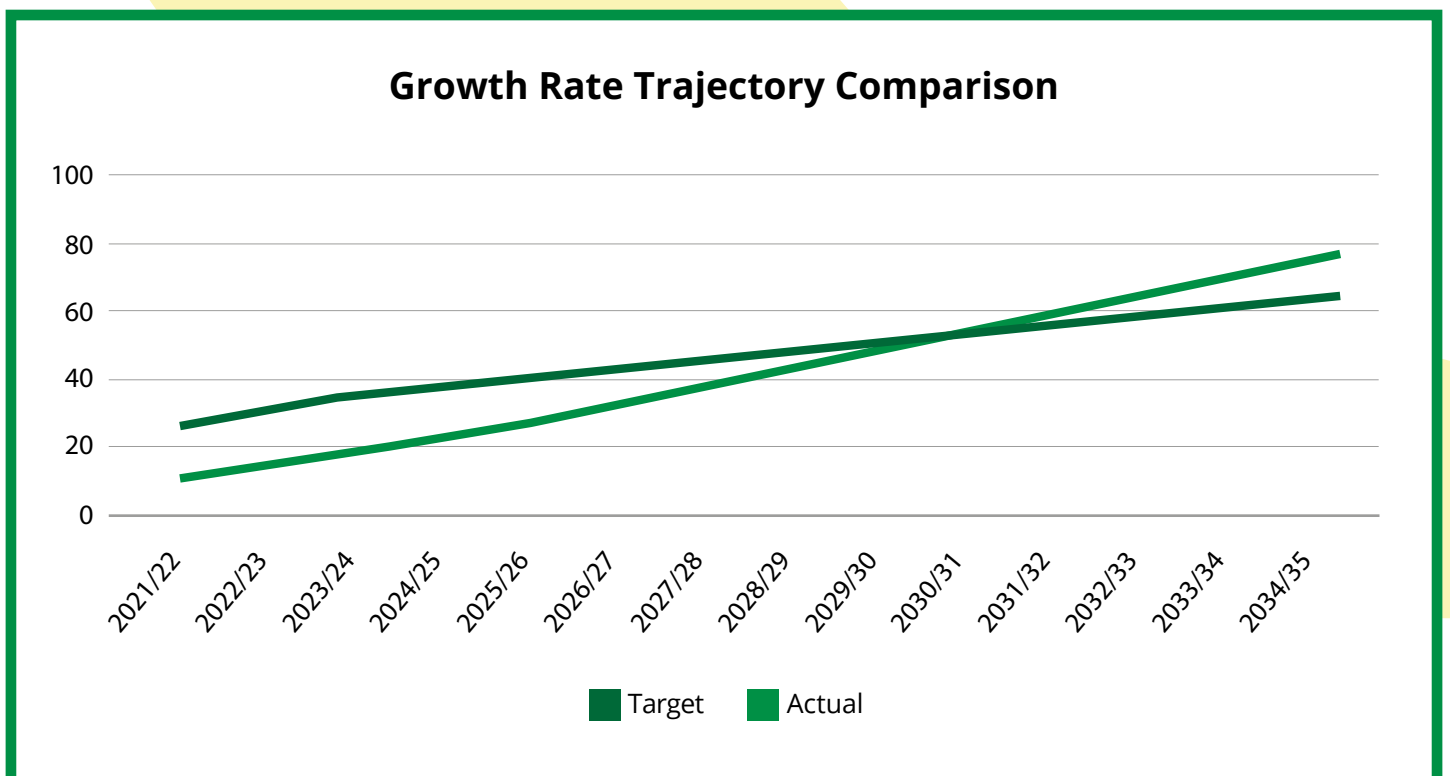
In the following years punctuality has improved, showing a one-percentage point increase, and representing a pace of 1.2% change compared to a targeted trajectory of 2.3% (representing a two-percentage point increase).

The local bus market across Hertfordshire has fared no differently to the wider national trend regarding staff shortages and issues with vehicle availability following pressures on the parts supply chain. These have both influenced the number of buses being available for service across the monitoring period and, therefore, the level of punctuality when compared to the scheduled services advertised.

Passenger Journeys

The local bus market across Hertfordshire was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic, in line with the situation nationally. Whilst local bus operators are reporting recovery generally of 90% or more, with some routes now over 100% of pre-pandemic use, the number of passenger trips still lags behind BSIP targets.

However, there has been a consistent rise in patronage which although behind original targets set, has seen impressive year on year growth rates of 66.7% (2021/22 to 2022/23) and 18.9% (2022/23 to 2023/24). These compare favourably to the planned pace of growth for each respective period of 22.7% and 5.1%. The graph below demonstrates the current growth rate trajectories and predicts we will surpass our target by 2028/29. Therefore, we are resetting our target to reflect this through our EP process in the coming period using up to date data trends.



With new and extended bus services implemented between Nov 2022 - Jan 2023 as part of our BSIP core corridor programme with routes across six corridors between our five main towns improved to offer at least four buses each hour between 0700 and 1900 each day (excluding Sundays) we are expecting to see a more significant improvement by March 2025. So far, we have seen an overall 7% uplift on these corridors over the standard rise across the local bus market, specifically on Route 390 which is showing growth averaging 350 new passenger journeys each week compared to same time last year, a c26% growth rate.

Reliability

This is a measure of the amount of in-service mileage that is operated across the local bus network in comparison to that promised within each service timetable. Lost mileage occurs for several reasons and is effectively the mileage, which is not operated by the local bus company, with passengers experiencing missing bus trips on the roadside.

We are currently one percentage point behind our planned target of 96% mileage operated (4% lost mileage) for 2023/24 and over the last three years our performance has been consistent, ranging only between 94% and 95% – on target for 2021/22 and one and half percentage points below the 2022/23 target.

An analysis of 2023/24 data demonstrates the following headline information regarding lost mileage across the local bus network in Hertfordshire:

- Mileage lost across all network routes ranges from 0.5% to 12%, demonstrating that some routes / areas perform very well whilst others are more adversely impacted by a range of localised issues.
- 50% of mileage lost can be attributed to staff sickness, absence, lateness, or a lack of staff to cover the rostered work.



- 17% of mileage lost is attributed to traffic congestion forcing buses to end a trip early to turn around and remain on-time for further trips and/or driver working hours compliance.
- 13% of lost mileage is due to either on-road breakdown (8%) or in-garage maintenance issues (5%).
- Routes in Stevenage are most affected by lost mileage, with most problems due to staff sickness, absence, lateness, or a lack of staff to cover the rostered work.

Customer Satisfaction

Current Bus Passenger Satisfaction data is collected through the National Highways and Transport Survey (NHTS), this asks a wide range of questions, but response sizes can be small and respondents more prone to private car use rather than regular bus travel. As a result, the scores may not be fully representative of a regular bus passenger in Hertfordshire.

We have recently started to gather higher quality data through an ongoing online passenger satisfaction survey promoted on the Intalink website and at roadside in timetable cases. Our experience shows that where we have made a marketing push to encourage passengers feedback, we gain much better traction and higher satisfaction results.

To allow us to move away from the NHTS approach and harvest richer data we have recruited a customer engagement officer. They are now working on plans to widen our approach to customer satisfaction monitoring and develop technology on the Intalink App which will engage with customers when they have purchased a multi-operator ticket product.

Further, as part of our commitment in the Bus Passenger Charter, we will also be running an Annual Customer Research Survey during (starting Summer 2024,) in addition to route focussed research (starting with BSIP core corridor services).

The Customer Engagement Officer will also be seeking to engage with Bus User Groups in Hertfordshire, working through the Bus Partnership with District and Borough Councils.


Our plans to increase monitoring

As part of our approach to improve data monitoring and the performance of our local bus network in the short-term period from 2024/25 to 2028/29 and beyond we will develop an extended suite of monitoring targets. These may include, but will not be limited to:

- Route by route on time performance (individual route on time performance)
- Dwell times at bus stops
- Average bus speeds (mph) on identified corridors
- Targets for network coverage (percent of population within 400m of the bus network)
- Accessibility targets based around service frequencies and hours of operation
- Analysis of congestions hotspots (monitoring habitual bus delays).

We will use information and data gathered through the Bus Connectivity Assessment (BCA) annual exercise to inform our more regular monitoring, provide a cross check against data observed, and assist with annual reporting of some data.

We are also looking at how we develop a direct portal that provides real time and historical insight into bus performance data which would be populated by Hertfordshire County Council and its partner local bus operators. Such a portal would take account of a range of measures to inform decision making and insight, provide a dashboard approach to information and aid the annual BCA exercise.



Section 6
BSIP schemes
and proposals
overview table

Section 6: BSIP schemes and proposals overview table

NBS objective	Title of scheme or proposal	Additional description
Service level and network coverage	Nurture of the current inter-urban BSIP Network.	Extend stretch standards to longer high frequency periods and additional days of the week. Consider new routes for 4 bus/hr frequency and improve the balance of resources.
Service level and network coverage	Provide services to cover missing links between secondary towns.	Improve the secondary bus network and complete missing links (including Potters Bar - Hertford, Harpenden - Hitchin).
Service level and network coverage	Provide services to improve links between secondary towns.	Improve some existing and important secondary networks between towns including Rickmansworth, Borehamwood, and Bishop's Stortford.
Service level and network coverage	Develop the network to provide better cross-boundary travel.	Working with neighbouring LTAs and significant trip generators (e.g. Stansted Airport) improve cross-boundary services where people look for travel regardless of administrative boundaries.
Service level and network coverage	Continue the expansion of our HertsLynx DRT service.	Following the success of earlier expansions, continue to expand HertsLynx, a vital rural lifeline, and consider different delivery models including in-house operation and greater coordination with Community Transport.
Bus Priority	Continued Bus Priority schemes.	Develop further schemes on the following corridors (including schemes in each town): Watford / St Albans, Stevenage / St Albans, Hemel Hempstead / Watford. These will include a mix of traffic signal priority, ANPR camera enforcement, bus lanes and bus gates as well as on-street parking restrictions and capacity changes. Taking into consideration the phased approach to the HERT.
Bus Priority	Quick-Win Programme.	Develop a programme of potential 'quick-wins' and collaborate with a range of stakeholders, local organisations and the public find and fund low-cost and value for money improvements that have low local impact but significant benefit for bus journey times.
Bus Priority	Preparing for HERT.	Work jointly with the team developing the HERT mass transit scheme to provide additional early bus priority measures and mobility hubs that initially help the current core network but in time provide priority for both buses and HERT.
Fares and Ticketing	Intalink Connect multi-operator fare cap.	Continue to support simple and low fares across our network through our Intalink fares scheme.
Fares and Ticketing	Increase discount level on SaverCards.	Consider how we increase discounts for some user groups through our SaverCard programme, e.g. increasing the current 50% young person discount. Taking into consideration the phased approach to the HERT.

Fares and Ticketing	Expand the SaverCard scheme to non-Hertfordshire residents.	Following development of the SaverCard through our 2021 BSIP we now want to expand this to communities outside the county but who use buses to access services in Hertfordshire as their nearest provider - links to cross-boundary bus service improvements (above).
Fares and Ticketing	Provide promotional ticketing offers.	Continue to develop a range of targeted ticket offers to different user groups.
Fares and Ticketing	Realise our plans for multi-modal ticketing with train operating companies and technology providers.	Continue working with Train Operating Companies (TOCs) across our county to complete the process of multi-modal ticketing and bus/rail travel within and beyond Hertfordshire. Funds to support project work and some deliverables as match funding with TOCs.
Bus passenger experience	We will continue upgrading existing bus stops to current standards by 2029.	Using our bus stop design standards process we will work on a corridor basis to continue the bus stop refreshment approach.
Bus passenger experience	In 2027 our bus shelter contract will end and will result in HCC owning all the advertising shelter assets.	We will take on and improve a number of bus stops at prominent locations across our network.
Bus passenger experience	Continue to provide a clear network brand identity through the Intalink branding approach and EP.	Continue work with operators to make the Intalink brand more visible on network bus services and at any upgraded bus stops and interchanges.
Bus passenger experience	Make the Intalink brand dominant over operator own branding to reinforce the "one network" principle with a single identity.	Linked to above, support operators in making Intalink prominent on all buses used across our network.
Bus passenger experience	Enhance the existing Intalink journey planners to show the fare against each travel option, then enable purchase of the relevant ticket.	Development support costs to improve further the Intalink journey planner and provide the opportunity to buy digital tickets and understand whole trip costs.

Bus passenger experience	Add to the estate of electronic departure information screens and information points making real-time information accessible to passengers at more locations.	Continue our impressive roll-out of RTI screens, totems and e-ink displays across even more of our bus stop estate, working closely with technology providers and managing the roll-out on a continued corridor by corridor basis. We believe this will improve passenger experience and encourage more frequent and new bus users.
Bus passenger experience	We will continue to deliver a targeted programme of marketing campaigns.	Linked to specific delivery plans we will plan and support marketing campaigns so we can maximise the combined effects of some improvements (e.g. more buses, lower fares, and more digital information).
Bus passenger experience	Continue the dialogue we have with disability groups, operators, boroughs, and other stakeholders.	Continue to work with a range of focus groups and organisations to improve accessibility to the network and people's understanding of our local buses.
Bus passenger experience	Undertaking public and business / operator campaigns to raise awareness of inclusivity and accessibility issues.	Linked to above, produce marketing support to ideas and approaches developed with focus groups and organisations.
Bus passenger experience	A review of the passengers that we are currently engaging with to find out if we are missing any potential groups.	Understand through further consultation who uses our local bus network, who we already engage with and who we are missing so we can develop plans and strategies to better engage and meet needs.
Bus passenger experience	Investigate emerging technologies for use on the bus network with our digital partners.	A fund to work together as an Intalink EP to better understand opportunities for technology to make delivery of our services and information more effective and efficient.
Bus passenger experience	Update Bus Passenger Charter.	Following updated DfT Guidance we will update and promote an amended Bus Passenger Charter for Hertfordshire.
Accessibility and inclusion	Create a framework of guidance and agreements aimed to improve accessibility across the network.	Work on a suite of strategy and policy documents to improve our approach to, and delivery of measures to ensure access to the bus network. These will include training for bus operational staff regarding diversity, accessibility, and disabilities (visual and hidden).

<p>Accessibility and inclusion</p>	<p>Undertaking public and business/operator campaigns to raise awareness of inclusivity (campaigns on priority seating and areas, being respectful in communal spaces for public).</p>	<p>Linked to above we will create campaigns and promotions focused on people with different accessibility needs to ensure they feel comfortable, confident, and safe when using buses.</p>
<p>Accessibility and inclusion</p>	<p>Investigating emerging technologies for use on the physical network including at stop announcements, additional journey planning assistance (way finding, interactive tools at stops), QR codes etc.</p>	<p>Continue to support operators in understanding the technology available to improve the bus passenger experience and meet our plans for accessibility and mobility.</p>



stay connected
on the move..



601

204

with free WiFi
or USB power
on this bus



Hertfordshire