

News story: Transport Secretary Chris Grayling announces £2 million to improve transport and connectivity in the South East of England

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has announced a £2 million funding boost for regional transport organisations in the South East of England to develop ambitious strategies to improve journeys for goods and passengers.

As part of the government's ambition to give regions across the UK greater influence over transport investment decisions, sub-national transport bodies England's Economic Heartland and Transport for the South East will be given £2 million of government funding to develop innovative transport plans fit for the future of their regions.

These plans will allow people in counties including Kent, Hampshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire to influence government investment decisions at a more regional level, filling the existing gap between national and local transport authorities.

Chris Grayling, Transport Secretary, said:

This government is committed to empowering regions across the UK by giving them a stronger influence over the future of transport in their area.

This will help us build the modern and effective links our country needs, improving journey times, boosting housing development and economic growth, and getting people and goods where they need to be faster, safely and more comfortably.

Investing in England's Economic Heartland and Transport for the South East means that those best placed to make decisions have our support to put forward ambitious proposals for the future. We will continue to work closely with these organisations as they develop transport strategies to help their regions seize their potential.

Councillor Keith Glazier, Chairman of Transport for the South East, said:

This is a great step forward for our region's transport system and all the people who rely on it. We're grateful to the DfT for this vote of confidence in Transport for the South East and in the work we're doing with them to ensure we have an innovative and efficient network for decades to come.

Councillor Martin Tett, Chairman of England's Economic Heartland, said:

This investment by government is good news for England's Economic Heartland and will help us deliver our ambitious programme of work over the next 12 months, which includes work to develop an overarching Transport Strategy and taking forward work to establish England's Economic Heartland as a sub-national transport body.

We share the government's ambition to realise the economic potential of our region. England's Economic Heartland is committed to working collaboratively with the government to ensure that we get the right investment in strategic infrastructure, at the right time, and in the right locations. This vote of confidence in England's Economic Heartland will help ensure our region can compete on the global stage by exploiting its excellence in innovation, technology and research.

Today's announcement coincides with Transport for the South East launching its Economic Connectivity Review in Farnborough. This represents a key milestone in its work towards developing a transport strategy for the South East, helping improve journeys for 7.5 million people and 329,000 businesses from Berkshire to Kent.

England's Economic Heartland is a body covering an area from Oxfordshire through to Cambridgeshire County. It is currently developing its blueprint for transport to unlock jobs and housing across the region.

Both will look to follow in the footsteps of England's first sub-national transport body, [Transport for the North](#), which became a statutory body on 1 April 2018.

Notice: RG7 4PR, AWE plc: environmental permit consultation advertisement

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for Radioactive Substances Activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the consultation is about
- which Environment Agency office you can visit to see the application

- documents on the public register
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
- what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)

[News story: SSE / Npower merger referred for in-depth investigation](#)

Today's decision follows the Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA) initial Phase 1 investigation which found that the deal could reduce competition, potentially leading to higher prices for some bill payers.

SSE and Npower did not offer measures to address the CMA's concerns, and so it has referred the merger for a more in-depth, Phase 2 investigation.

A decision on the merger will now be made by a group of independent panel members supported by a case team of CMA staff. The deadline for the final report is 22 October.

[Corporate report: Waste Metric Dashboard September 2018](#)

Updated: Latest Waste Metric Dashboard – for September

The National Waste Programme publishes a range of waste metrics to track progress and ensure that expected programme benefits are being delivered.

The metrics demonstrate:

- the successful diversion of waste away from disposal to the LLW Repository
- the optimal use of key national assets, such as the LLWR site and waste treatment facilities
- the safety and environmental performance of the National Programme.

[News story: Air Quality Information Bulletin](#)

The following site has exceeded the EU ozone public information threshold of 180 µg/m³:

- Bournemouth: µg/m³ – 16:00 BST

Public Health England advises that some people are more sensitive to ozone than others and may begin to notice an effect on their breathing. People with asthma are not necessarily more sensitive but, if affected, can use their 'reliever' inhaler to alleviate symptoms.

If affected, people are urged to take sensible precautions. In particular, avoiding exercise outdoors in the afternoon can reduce individual exposure to ozone.

If the legal threshold for ozone is again breached, further alerts will be issued on our website.

Forecasts, latest measurements and health advice are available on UK Air and via Defra's freephone helpline (0800 556677). Updates on current and forecast levels of air pollution can also be found on Twitter (@DefraUKAir).

Further information:

- Ground level ozone is not emitted from any man-made sources in any significant quantities. It is formed when sunlight acts on nitrogen dioxide and other atmospheric substances close to the ground. The pollutants that cause ground level ozone come from a range of sources, including petrol and other fuels
- This alert has been triggered by a forecast of a HIGH level of ozone where significant health effects may be noticed by sensitive individuals, and action to avoid or reduce these effects may be needed. The EU Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) requires member states to provide information to the public when this level is reached
- [Details](#) of the Air Quality Index which classifies pollution as Low, Moderate, High, or Very High and gives health advice
- [Information](#) on the health effects of air pollution from the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP)