

Competition winners to deliver UK's first hydrogen transport trials in Tees Valley

- winners of a £2.5 million research and development (R&D) competition to accelerate the use of hydrogen transport in the Tees Valley area unveiled
- successful projects will see diesel buses retrofitted with hydrogen fuel cells, supermarket chains benefitting from hydrogen delivery vans and the police and NHS using hydrogen vehicles for rapid response services
- trials will show how hydrogen-fuelled vehicles can be quick and easy to drive and refuel, cleaning up the air in our local areas as we aim to meet our net zero ambitions

Hydrogen transport pilots in the Tees Valley area will establish the UK as a leader in the technology and propel us towards our net zero goals, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has said today (17 August 2021), as he unveiled the winners of a £2.5 million R&D competition.

The successful trials will lead to supermarkets, emergency services and delivery companies using hydrogen-powered transport to move goods and carry out local services.

The trials will also help us to understand the role hydrogen has in meeting our 2050 net zero ambitions, which will inform our future investment decisions and prime export opportunities.

In collaboration with Stagecoach, Ricardo PLC will retrofit a double-decker diesel bus with a hybrid fuel cell system. The bus will be driven on local routes and learnings from this project will support fuel cell retrofit technologies in public transport across the UK.

One of the most wide-ranging projects sees Toyota delivering a number of hydrogen vehicles, including a forklift truck for warehouse operations, a passenger bus and 10 fuel cell passenger cars. These will be deployed across the town's rapid response services, such as emergency response units for the Cleveland Police and NHS patient support.

HV Systems plans to demonstrate the use of hydrogen in delivery vans in the Tees Valley area. The vans will be operated in collaboration with a leading supermarket chain, running between 19 superstores and their main distribution centre.

The project aims to show how delivery vans fitted with fuel cells can have increased range, faster refuelling times than battery-electric versions and speed parity with conventional diesel vehicles.

In collaboration with Sainsbury's, Element Energy will also be trialling a

hydrogen-powered heavy goods vehicle (HGV) in the Tees Valley area. The vehicle will be operated from a local distribution centre and will be carrying out goods deliveries in the area.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

With less than 100 days to go until COP26, I'm committed to supporting industry to develop innovative new technologies that will decarbonise transport, helping us to build back greener and level up the country.

By harnessing the power of hydrogen technology, we can pave the way for its use across all transport modes, creating cleaner, greener more efficient transport systems across the UK.

This announcement comes weeks after the launch of government's [Transport decarbonisation plan](#), a world-leading 'greenprint' that sets out a credible path for the UK to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and lead the world in tackling climate change.

The funding follows the unveiling of an [official masterplan for the UK's first-ever hydrogen transport hub](#), which could be fully operational by 2025 – helping to create up to 5,000 new jobs in the North East over the long-term as we continue to level up the economy.

Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen said:

Through trialling the use of hydrogen in transport across Teesside, Darlington and Hartlepool, we are spearheading the path to a greener future by developing the knowledge and expertise needed to roll hydrogen out as a fuel source across the country.

In Teesside, we already produce 50% of the UK's hydrogen, so there is no better place for this research to take place.

This new investment shows how Teesside is leading the way in the drive for the UK to be net zero by 2050, creating good-quality, well-paid, clean energy jobs in the process.

David Tozer, Head of Land and Maritime Transport, Innovate UK, said:

Innovate UK is pleased to support these innovative projects across the Tees Valley in partnership with the Department of Transport.

Deploying hydrogen vehicles and vessels at scale and showcasing the UK's long-term aspirations in this space, is essential in delivering UK commitments to decarbonisation.