

[News story: Government kick-starts work on Future of Mobility Grand Challenge](#)

A wave of electric cargo bikes, vans, quadricycles and micro vehicles could replace vans in UK cities as part of plans to transform last-mile deliveries, vastly reducing emissions and congestion around the country.

There are already 300,000 HGVs and over 4,000,000 vans on our roads and with online sales continuing to increase, this is likely to increase further. But new green delivery vehicles could replace the millions of conventionally-fuelled vans which are currently a common sight in city centres.

The plans are being outlined today (30 July 2018) as part of 2 government documents which offer a glimpse into how technology could transform transport, making it safer, more accessible and greener than ever.

Travel around the UK could dramatically change with the introduction of flying vehicles or widespread use of self-driving cars, all while data helps to deliver better journeys.

And the potential increased use of self-driving vehicles and shared travel could also allow the majority of parking spaces to be removed in city centres, opening areas up for redevelopment and potentially hundreds of thousands of new urban homes.

The ground-breaking developments are referenced in the government's [Last Mile](#) and [Future of mobility call for evidence](#) documents, which have been published today.

The documents fire the starting gun on the [Future of Mobility Grand Challenge](#), which aims to make the UK the world leaders in the movement of goods, services and people.

The work is all part of the government's [Industrial Strategy](#) and the work could help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, make travel safer, improve accessibility, and present enormous economic opportunities for the UK.

As part of this, the government is also today confirming [£12.1 million of funding for 6 projects](#) working on simulation and modelling to aid the development of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles. The capability will be essential for developing, testing and proving the safety of the vehicles.

Transport Minister Jesse Norman said:

The UK has a long and proud history of leading the world in transport innovation and our Future of Mobility Grand Challenge is designed to ensure this continues.

We are on the cusp of an exciting and profound change in how people, goods and services move around the country which is set to be driven by extraordinary innovation.

This could bring significant benefits to people right across the country and presents enormous economic opportunities for the UK, with autonomous vehicles sales set to be worth up to £52 billion by 2035.

Our Last Mile call for evidence and Future of Mobility call for evidence mark just one stage in our push to make the most of these inviting opportunities.

Societal changes are already changing the way people travel, with just some of the changes including people driving less overall; fewer workers commuting; a growing elderly population; and the number of people living in urban areas growing.

As a result, the government has used its Future of Mobility call for evidence to outline the below trends which could shape the future of transport in the UK:

- cleaner transport – the government has already outlined its intention for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040 – falling battery prices, improvements in electric vehicle technology and the development of alternative fuels are not only reducing emissions from existing modes of transport but paving the way for the uptake of new creations
- automation – improved sensors, increased computing power and the exciting potential of artificial intelligence are leading to increased automation in transport – the government has already said it expects to see fully self-driving cars on UK roads by 2021 and the benefits of automated transport could include increased safety, improved accessibility and better use of urban space
- data and connectivity – internet connected vehicles can not only link with each other, helping to avert congestion on roads, but also traffic lights and motorway signs – this could not only reduce traffic but also improve air quality
- new modes – UK cities are already pioneering the use of drones to support emergency services and improve infrastructure inspections – but the introduction of aerial passenger vehicles could also appear in urban areas, while the lines between taxis and buses could blur, with more on demand transport

- shared mobility – more use of shared transport could reduce congestion and emissions and examples are likely to include commercial ride sharing, car rental services where users rent from one another and shared use bikes
- changing consumer attitudes – technology is also changing the way people expect to be able to travel with more users expecting to be able to plan, book and pay for transport through their phones
- new business models – new business models are beginning to emerge, such as Mobility as a Service (Maas) – Maas can make payment easier, provide better real-time information and allow passengers to book multiple modes of transport with just one click

The government is expecting these trends to lead to safer travel, more accessible transport, cleaner journeys and make cities better to move around and live in.

Initial work as part of the Future of Mobility Grand Challenge will involve the government aiming to ensure we have explored all the regulatory barriers to technological and service innovation. Work will also take place to understand how data can be better used to improve transport.

Today's publication of the Last Mile call for evidence and Future of Mobility call for evidence precedes a full Future of Urban Mobility Strategy, which is due to be published by the end of the year.

The news comes the same day as Ian Robertson, BMW UK Chief Executive, has been appointed as Business Champion to help advise, shape and develop the Future of Mobility Grand Challenge. He will be supported by an Advisory Council made up of Isobel Dedring, Tracy Westall and Stan Boland.

Ian Robertson, Future of Mobility Business Champion said:

A transport revolution in the way people and goods move around will see more changes in the next 10 years than the previous hundred. As the Future of Mobility Grand Challenge Business Champion, I'm looking forward to working with the government to help the UK build on its existing strengths and capitalise on that opportunity.

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