

# News story: Government launches transport investment plan for Britain

- new strategy sets how transport investment can deliver a stronger, fairer Britain
- in good news for motorists, plans include the creation of the 'Major Road Network' with access to a multi-billion pound road fund, funded by Vehicle Excise Duty (VED), for improvements such as bypasses
- strategy sets out the need for future projects to show how they contribute to creating a more balanced economy

Local roads are set to benefit from a share in a multi-billion pound improvement fund as part of a landmark [investment strategy unveiled by Transport Secretary Chris Grayling](#).

The [Transport investment strategy](#) sets out a new long-term approach for government infrastructure spending – meaning cash will be targeted at projects that help rebalance the economy.

And it features the proposed creation of a new major road network, which would see a share of the annual National Road Fund, funded by VED, given to local authorities to improve or replace the most important A roads under their management.

The plans aim to improve productivity and connectivity of towns and cities across the country – tackling bottlenecks and traffic jams for road users, and taking away the misery of lorries and through-traffic thundering through rural villages on main roads.

The scheme will also aim to help people get to work or school by better connecting towns and cities, unlock land for new homes, and improve business links – forming a crucial strand of the government's strategy to rebalance the economy by ensuring wealth is spread across the UK and not just concentrated in the south-east of England.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Getting transport spending right is crucial for the country's future.

The transport investment strategy sets out a blueprint for how we can harness the power of transport investment to drive balanced economic growth, unlock new housing projects, and support the government's modern industrial strategy.

This government is taking the big transport decisions for Britain's future like HS2 and Heathrow, while delivering the biggest investment in roads and rail for a generation.

At the heart of our approach is a plan to make transport work for the people who use it and for the wider economy.

The strategy sets out how investment can deliver a stronger, fairer Britain – with priority for projects which cut congestion, support growth, boost Britain’s global competitiveness or unlock new housing.

The proposals for the major road network respond to the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund study last year, which highlighted the disparity between the funding and planning of Britain’s motorways – the strategic road network – and local authority A roads.

The new plans mean that main roads currently overseen by local authorities would share the VED funded National Roads Fund which was previously envisaged to be ring-fenced for national routes. UK VED was £5.8 billion for 2016-17.

The ‘Transport investment strategy’ also plans for a new ‘rebalancing’ measure, which will judge how investment programmes contribute to a more balanced economy, and prioritises investment that increases productivity or growth, supports new housing, improves reliability and tackles congestion. Investment should support every part of the country, and, where needed, fast track smaller schemes that are proven solutions so passengers and drivers get the benefits more quickly.

It is set to form a vital part of the modern industrial strategy and builds on the progress made in recent years of upgrading the road and rail network. The government is investing more than £61 billion over the 5 years to 2020-21 and has already taken big decisions on transformational projects like HS2 and announced our preference for a new runway at Heathrow.

The transport investment strategy sets out why investing in transport infrastructure matters and the priorities for future investment. Under 4 separate themes, it sets out propositions to guide future transport investment decision making.

## **Ensuring our investment consistently meets the needs of users and helps to create a balanced economy**

- we will prioritise:
  - reliability and congestion
  - economic growth
  - UK competitiveness
  - housing
- investment should support every part of the country, including taking account of the balance of spending between different regions

## **Getting best value out of the network and our investment**

- prioritising value for money
- getting the most from existing assets
- continuing to seek contributions from those who stand to benefit to support transport funding
- attracting more private finance

## **Maintaining a resolute focus on delivery**

- prioritising predictable funding and a stable long-term pipeline of projects
- ensuring all schemes considered for funding take a pragmatic approach to delivery challenges
- where appropriate, prioritising smaller schemes which deliver quickly

## **Adaptability in the face of change**

- where there is uncertainty, we will prioritise projects that are adaptable to change
- putting the UK at the forefront of new transport technology