



Department  
for Transport

# Transport Labour Market & Skills

Call for Views & Ideas



Department for Transport  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4DR



© Crown copyright 2022

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/) or contact, The National Archives at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/contact-us](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/contact-us).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is also available on our website at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport)

# Contents

How to respond to this Call for Views and Ideas	4
Freedom of Information	5
Confidentiality & Data Protection	6
Foreword	7
<b>1. Purpose &amp; Context</b>	<b>8</b>
Purpose of this Call for Views & Ideas	9
The Challenge and Opportunity	10
<b>2. Progress</b>	<b>14</b>
Building on Progress So Far	15
<b>3. The Five Pillars</b>	<b>16</b>
Pillar 1: Preparing for Future Skills	18
Pillar 2: Improving Training and Employment	20
Pillar 3: Promoting Careers in Transport	26
Pillar 4: Boosting Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Mobility	28
Pillar 5: Building Evidence and Evaluating Progress	32
<b>4. Next Steps</b>	<b>34</b>
Transport Employment and Skills Taskforce	35
What will happen next	36
Annex A: Full list of Call for Views & Ideas questions	37
Annex B: Consultation principles	38

# How to respond to this Call for Views and Ideas

The Call for Views & Ideas period began on **Monday 7 February 2022** and will run until **Monday 9 May 2022**. Please ensure that your response reaches us before the closing date. If you would like further copies of this document, it can be found at [www.gov.uk/dft#consultations](http://www.gov.uk/dft#consultations) or you can contact the team below if you need alternative formats (Braille, audio CD, etc.).

Please send responses to:

**Transport Labour Market and Skills Team**

4th Floor, Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London SW1P 4DR

[TransportLabourMarketandSkills@dft.gov.uk](mailto:TransportLabourMarketandSkills@dft.gov.uk)

When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of a larger organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

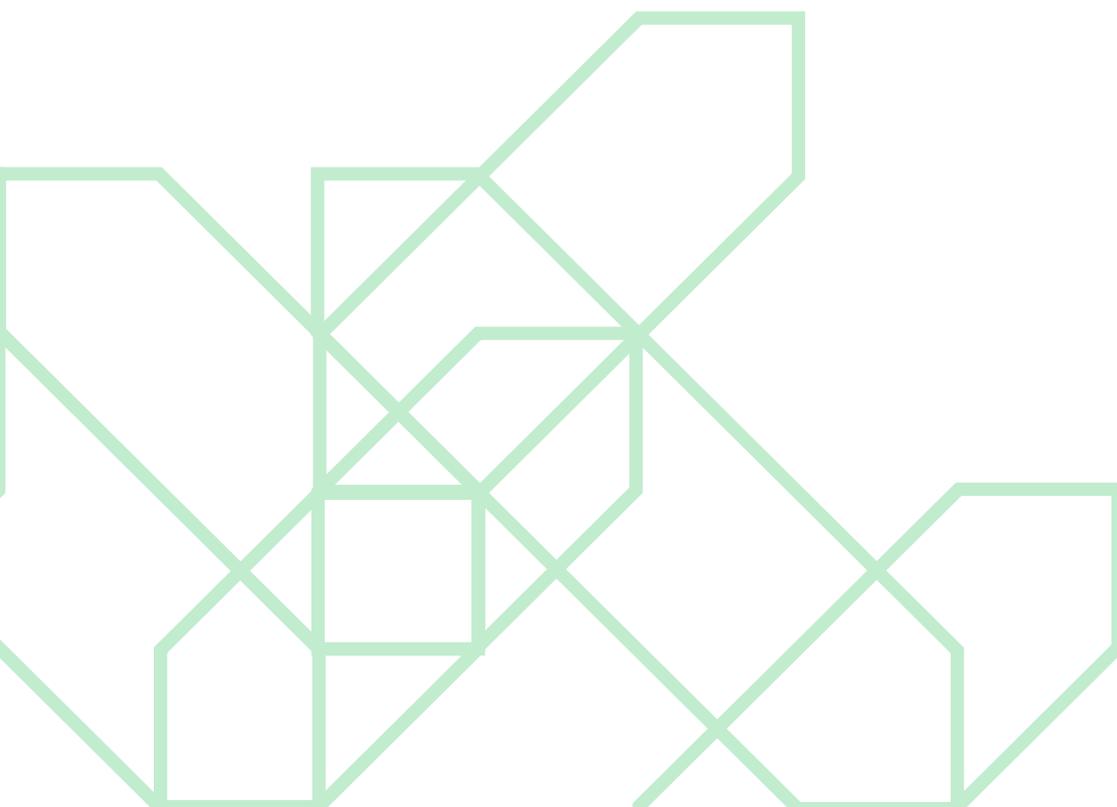
# Freedom of Information

Information provided in response to this Call for Views & Ideas, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.

In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.



# Confidentiality & Data Protection

The Department for Transport (DfT) is carrying out this Call for Views & Ideas to gather evidence on the key labour market and skills challenges across the transport sector in order to inform future strategy.

As part of this process we're asking for your name or that of your organisation and email address. This is in case we need to ask you follow-up questions about any of your responses. You do not have to give us this personal information. If you do provide it, we will use it only for the purpose of asking follow-up questions.

Your response and the processing of personal data that it entails is necessary for the exercise of our functions as a government department. DfT will, under data protection law, be the controller for this information. [DfT's privacy policy](#) has more information about your rights in relation to your personal data, how to complain and how to contact the Data Protection Officer.

We will not use your name or other personal details that could identify you when we report the results of the Call for Views & Ideas exercise. Any information you provide will be kept securely and destroyed within 12 months of the closing date. Any information provided through the online questionnaire will be moved to our internal systems within 2 months of the Call for Views & Ideas period end date.

# Foreword

The UK has a long and proud transport heritage. Across rail and road, through cities and towns, along winding tracks and snaking bus routes – we behold human feats of science, engineering and construction. The sector is changing fast and the needs of mature transport networks must be balanced with the exciting potential of changing technology, digital connectivity, and new transport modes. Building back better from Covid, achieving net zero, and levelling up the economy requires us to develop a diverse, resilient, and highly skilled transport workforce that is fit for the future.

This call for views and ideas is the start of that process, and it does not begin from a standing start. The government acted on the Transport Infrastructure and Skills Strategy (TISS) published in 2016, carrying forward its recommendations to create a Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce (STAT) of employers who came together to address skills challenges in the sector. We can be proud of the progress the taskforce made to increase the uptake of higher-level apprenticeships, demonstrate the importance of engineering and technical career pathways, and improve ethnic minority representation amongst apprenticeship starts.

Not having enough people with the right skills across the transport sector can have significant consequences across the wider economy that relies on an effective and efficient transport system. Acting now to develop the workforce of the future will help us maintain and grow our global reputation. We must take steps to ensure careers, training, and opportunity are accessible to all. Together, government, industry and key stakeholders can promote jobs in transport,

signpost training and qualification routes, and remove roadblocks to increasing diversity, inclusion, and social mobility. To future proof the industry, it is vital that we attract, train, and develop people with the right skills and mindsets to deliver a sustainable and efficient transport system for the decades ahead.

Continuing our close working relationship with industry and other key stakeholders is the only way we can make this work, which is why we are establishing the Transport Employment and Skills Taskforce (TEST). We want to get going but get as many views and ideas to help inform our approach. This is an invitation to talk about the transport workforce of the future and how we get there.

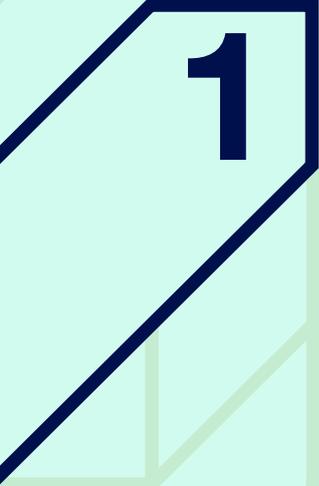
Let's start the conversation.



**Andrew Stephenson**  
Transport Minister  
for Skills

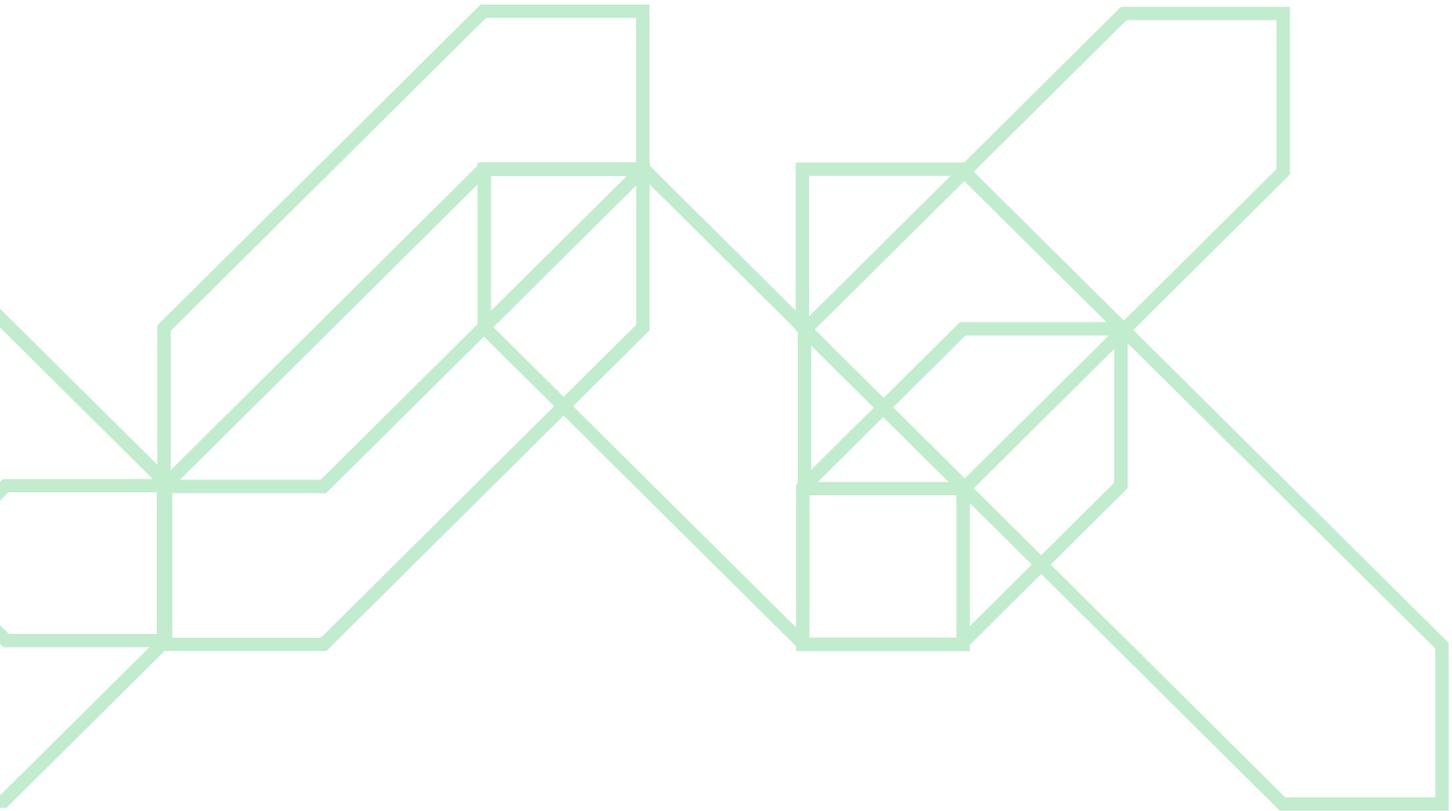


**Rachel Skinner  
CBE**  
Chair of Transport  
Employment and  
Skills Taskforce



1

# Purpose & Context

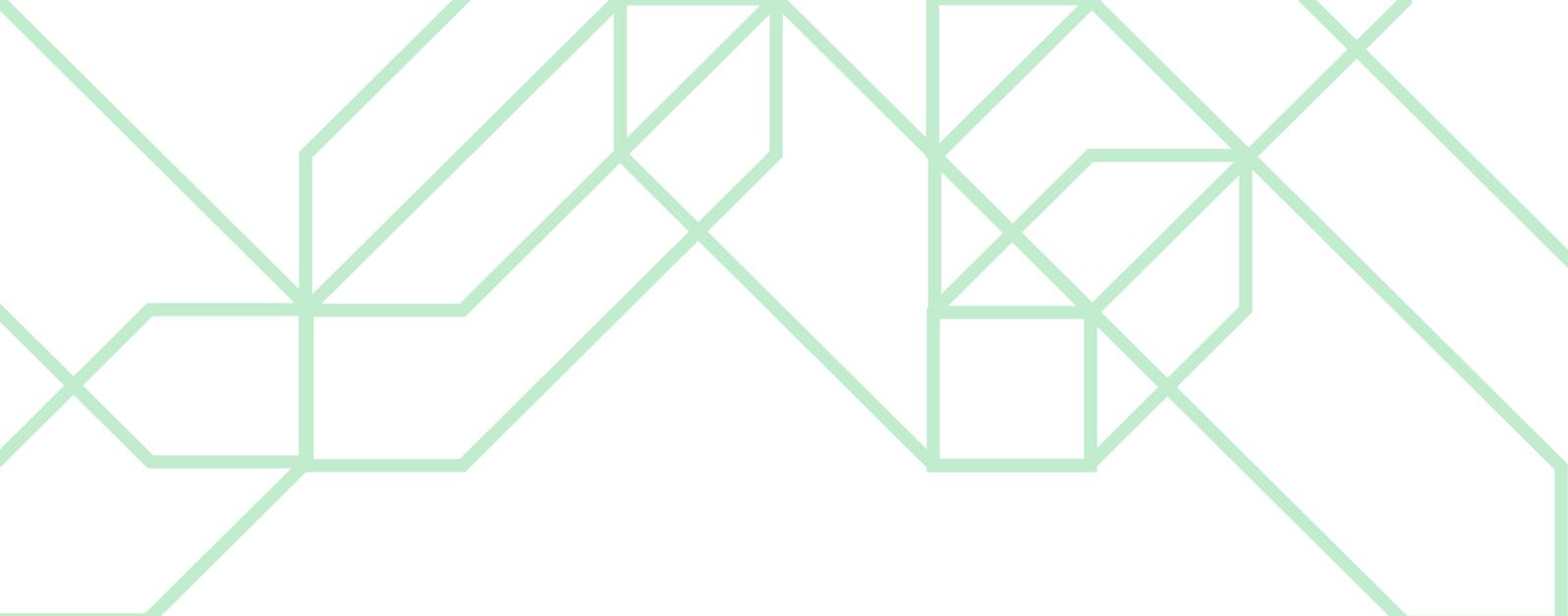


# Purpose of this Call for Views & Ideas

## This paper sets out:

- The key labour market and skills challenges across the transport sector;
- Four cross-cutting themes and five proposed 'pillars' that the Department for Transport (DfT) and industry will work together in tackling; and
- The creation of a new industry-led taskforce, the Transport Employment and Skills Taskforce (TEST), to drive forward these pillars and our labour market and skills work.

The Pillars set out in this paper form the basis for the work we want to take forward in collaboration with external partners, including the transport industry, academia, and the third sector. We consider the barriers and opportunities to developing skills and careers across the transport sector and suggest an approach as to how we can tackle them. Informed by your responses to this paper, these pillars will set the direction for the work of the Taskforce. The Taskforce and DfT will then develop and refine our programme in this area to support the transport sector in **developing and** accessing a skilled pipeline of talent, as we **build back better** from the COVID pandemic and build a transport system fit for the future.



# The Challenge and Opportunity

**This paper sets out the challenges and opportunities for the transport sector to not just deliver on our ambitious transport and infrastructure plans today, but also to deliver our ambitions of the future.**

Given the current changes going on inside the transport sector as a whole, being driven through COVID recovery, the climate crisis, and the need to address social and economic inequalities around the levelling up agenda, the pace of change is greater now than at any time in the past 20 years.

Preparing for the future skills and labour market needs of the transport sector is essential in supporting the productivity, resilience, and long-term future of our transport system. Understanding what skills we really need for the near and longer terms will drive what we need to deliver through our skills and labour market policy. If we get it right, we can:

- Support the development of skills to maximise the research and application of innovative technologies and ways of working to improve productivity and efficiency;
- Play a leading role in reshaping and supporting the transport workforce to meet the net zero challenge;
- Make a significant contribution to the levelling up agenda by supporting local education and training offers and labour markets across the country; and
- Build a diverse, inclusive, and highly skilled sector which is the envy of the world.



The transport sector, like so many other sectors, was profoundly impacted by the pandemic and the ramifications will be felt for many years to come. Transport organisations and businesses had to respond and adapt throughout the pandemic to keep networks operational, often moving personnel around into different roles and utilising new and different skills. This demonstrated the importance of an adaptable, flexible workforce who have access to the training and development they need to respond and adapt to fast-changing circumstances.

We have also seen how important transport skills are to the wider economy. A shortage of HGV drivers has led to significant supply issues in parts of the economy creating a ripple effect across diverse sectors from hospitality, supermarkets, and construction. Further recruitment challenges in the construction sector can slow down the delivery of infrastructure and other development projects. In the interests of the wider economy, it is vital we produce a skilled pipeline of talent across the transport sector to keep the economy moving. Improving the training and employment options across the country will be essential in delivering this.

Our work has already started, across the Department we have brought a real focus on how the skills and labour market can help us deliver our future transport system. This has included:

- The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail set out an ambitious reform agenda to transform Britain's railway. This included a new joined-up, cross-sector training and skills offer that will support people at every stage of their career to develop skills, and bring in experience from outside the rail sector. The Bus Back Better strategy set out a commitment to enhancing the skills and capability of Local Transport Authorities, including through the Bus Centre of Excellence; and
- The Transport Decarbonisation Plan that puts transport on a path to delivering net zero by 2050. Upskilling existing workers and producing a pipeline of talent with the skills needed for green jobs will be vital in achieving these ambitions.

However, challenges remain in delivering the labour markets we need to achieve our goals. The Infrastructure Projects Authority predicts a shortage of 533,000 individuals in the infrastructure and construction supply chain in 22/23, along with regional disparities, as most of the workforce is in the south of England. This demonstrates the urgent need to promote careers in transport, recruit and train new entrants from diverse backgrounds and across the country, and to up-skill the existing workforce to meet the current and future skills needs of the transport sector.

We have also found that the pandemic has had a profound impact on young people, particularly school, college and university leavers taking their first steps into the labour market. Traditional qualifications and routes into employment have been upended and a coherent, longer-term plan to connect or re-connect those most economically impacted by the pandemic to the labour market is essential. Promoting the huge variety of careers across transport to people of all backgrounds across the country will be key to achieving this.

There also remains acute issues of diversity in the sector. Efforts to improve the diversity of the transport industry are ongoing and there has been some good progress, but we must build on this. More needs to be done to ignite the significant change we need. Careers in the transport sector should be open to everyone, regardless of background, to create a diverse, inclusive, and socially mobile workforce across the country.

We also need robust and high-quality data and evidence to inform our decisions and evaluate the progress we are making. This paper, and your responses to it, will be a key part of this.

This paper seeks to explore the steps we can take in taking advantage of the opportunities and tackling the issues we see. We can't achieve this on our own and so we want to work with and hear from people and organisations across the private and public sectors in how we look at areas such as:

- What skills do we really need for the future and how do we develop a workforce that has them?
- How do we attract and build a more diverse and inclusive transport labour market with people from under represented backgrounds taking up jobs and training in the transport sector?
- How can we maximise our recovery from Covid by supporting people into jobs and upskilling the current workforce to help to deliver our ambitious transport plans and support the wider economy?

It is in this context that we have developed a five-pillar approach to this paper. The five pillars aim to encapsulate and explore the key issues set out here and others. Your input will help drive the Department's transport labour market and skills work and inform the work of the new Transport Employment and Skills Taskforce so we can work together to build a transport workforce that is fit for the future.

We look forward to hearing from and working with you.



The **Transportation  
and Storage**  
industry contributed

**£81bn**  
to **GDP** in 2019

**2**

# **Progress**

# Building on Progress So Far

**In 2016, DfT published the Transport Infrastructure Skills Strategy (TISS) to address the skills challenges faced in delivering an ambitious programme of investment in transport infrastructure. The TISS set stretching ambitions for apprenticeship numbers and diversity in road and rail bodies.**

These included a 20% increase in ethnic minority representation in apprenticeships and for 20% of technical and engineering roles to be filled by women by 2020, reaching parity with the working population by 2030.

The TISS tasked the industry-led Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce (STAT) with delivering these ambitions. STAT was responsible for increasing apprenticeship numbers, resolving skills shortages, promoting transport as a career and increasing diversity across the transport sector. STAT reported on progress through its annual reports, the most recent of which: 'Four Years of Progress', was published in October 2020. The report committed to a refresh of our work to replace the TISS, outlining a new set of long-term strategic aims.

The 'Four Years of Progress' report showed that there was a total of 11,254 apprenticeships created in road and rail client bodies and the supply chain from 2016/17 to October 2020. The report showed that ethnic minority representation stood at 21%, ahead of the target of 20%, but the female proportion of technical and engineering apprenticeship starts was down from 14.8% to 12%. There had been continued growth in degree level apprenticeships, which

accounted for 11% of starts in 2019/20 – up from 3.5% in 2016/17.

Through the work of STAT, significant progress has been made during this time to embed apprenticeships as an important way of getting skilled individuals into the transport industry. Although apprenticeships are one of the key routes to a career in transport and will remain a priority, other routes into the transport industry are equally as important. We want to take a broader view of the routes to attracting talent and producing a skilled pipeline and workforce for the future.

**11,254** 

**total apprenticeships created** in road and rail client bodies and the supply chain

**21%** **ethnic minority** representation

**12%** **female** technical and engineering apprenticeship starts

Source: Transport infrastructure skills strategy: 4 years of progress – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

**3**

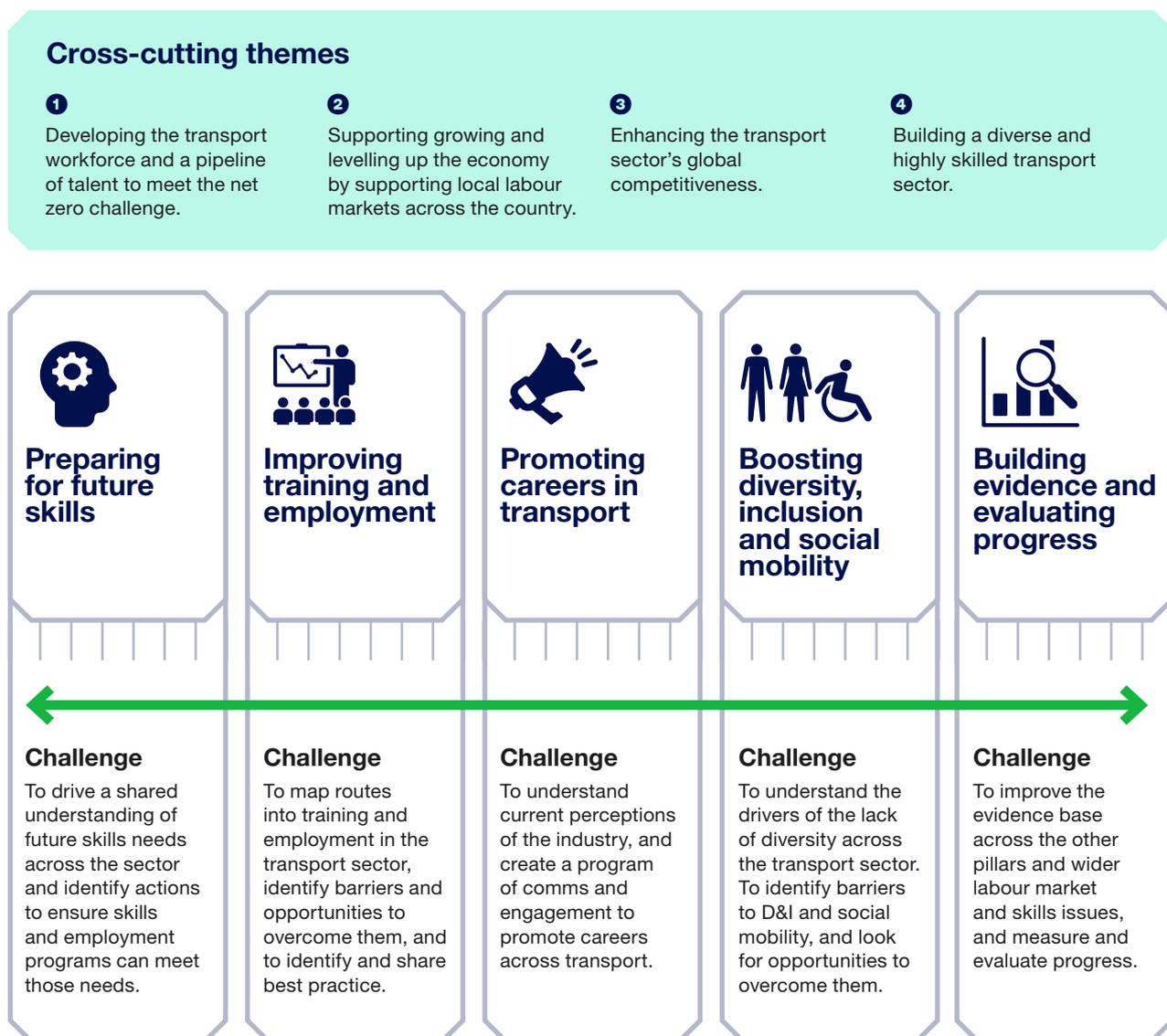
# The Five Pillars

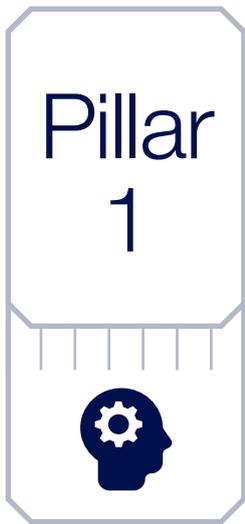
**The transport sector has a vital role to play in supporting the country to build back better from the pandemic. Our proposed approach to support the country’s recovery and address wider skills challenges across the transport sector is structured around four cross-cutting themes and five pillars.**

This chapter will set out the challenges and opportunities within each pillar, and our approach to capitalising on these opportunities and mitigating the challenges.

The cross-cutting themes and the pillars will play a key role in setting the direction of travel. They are intrinsically linked and reflect long-standing, current, and future skills challenges in the transport sector.

The cross-cutting themes, the five pillars and their challenges are:





# Preparing for Future Skills

## The Challenge and Opportunity

The transition to net zero and recovery from COVID will require the whole transport sector to gear up for transformational change and at an unprecedented pace. This includes changes to every aspect of the transport sector – from planning, design, construction, operation and decommissioning, to the emergence of new and different job roles. The impact of the pandemic and the move to a better, greener Britain has accelerated the need for skills and jobs that are fit for the future.

Although the challenges are in the future, we must act now and with greater urgency than before to ensure we have a workforce ready to meet them, so we can reap the economic, social, and environmental rewards from doing so.

In November 2020, the Prime Minister announced a 10-point ‘Green Plan’. It is envisaged to create up to 250,000 jobs, with much of the focus aimed at the north of England, Midlands, Scotland and Wales. More recently, Government hosted the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties on 31st October–12th November 2021, which presented an opportunity to unite on the road to tackle climate change.

Harnessing new technologies in transport will support productivity and help provide better services to the public. In addition, it will create an opportunity to build jobs in the UK, help those who are unemployed and those in transitioning industries into new, skilled jobs.

According to a recent Labour Force Survey conducted by the Office for National Statistics, there are around 1.5 million people employed in the Transport and Storage industry. However, the transport sector will increasingly be competing with other sectors for talent, particularly in digital skills and green technologies. To ensure we are not left behind other sectors, a different blend of skills will be required.

The skills and training required across the transport sector will change significantly as it evolves in response to innovations

In November 2020, the Prime Minister announced a **10-point ‘Green Plan’**, envisaged to **create up to**

**250,000**

**jobs**, with much of the focus aimed at the north of England, Midlands, Scotland and Wales





and emerging technologies – notably, decarbonisation technology such as carbon capture, hydrogen, automation, and digital innovation.

The growth of automation and AI will boost productivity and drive new opportunities, but not everyone will benefit equally and these changes could also displace existing low to mid skilled roles. More must be done to re-train and upskill people in those roles and to engage and inspire people from all backgrounds to pursue relevant education and training, such as in STEM subjects, to address the continuing skills gaps across the sector.

The skills needed for the future are not just about science and technology, but also about leadership, programme and project management and project delivery.

It is imperative that we understand future skills demands now, so we can design robust and fit for purpose initiatives to meet employer needs for future skills, not just for the skills of today. It is also vital to our economy: according to the ONS, the Transportation and Storage industry contributed £81bn to GDP in 2019.

## Our Approach

We will work with TEST, other government departments, and other key stakeholders to build a shared understanding of future transport labour market and skills needs so we can identify where we need to focus skills and labour market interventions.

We will work with TEST, other government departments, and other key stakeholders to explore how best to ensure that we have the right skills across the UK to fully capitalize on innovation and support the move to net zero, as well as supporting levelling up the economy.

We will work closely with other government departments such as the Department for Education on qualifications and training and the Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on jobs and economic development policy.

## Question

 **In your view, what skills does the transport sector need in the future?**

## Pillar 2



# Improving Training and Employment

## The Challenge and Opportunity

To decarbonise our transport sector and to support the economic recovery from Covid we need to equip the existing workforce with the skills they need, and support new entrants into the sector, whether they are young people straight out of education or experienced workers looking for a new challenge.

The existing training landscape can be confusing and challenging to navigate for students, employees, and employers. There are routes other than apprenticeships and it is both a strength and a weakness that there are such wide range of routes into employment in the transport industry.



Since 2016, over

**77,000** 

**apprentices starts** have studied Transport Operations and Maintenance

Since 2016, over

**40,000** 

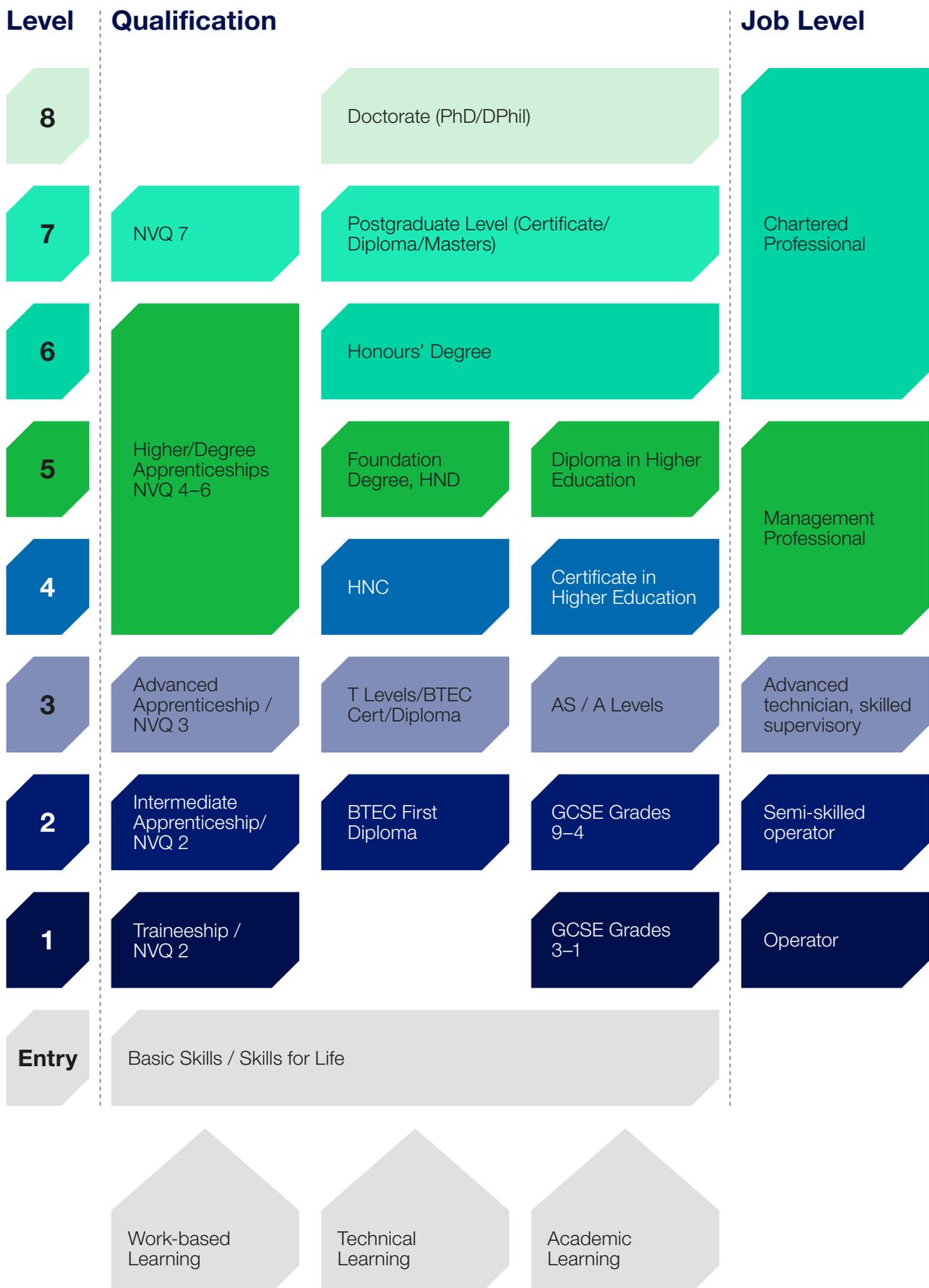
**Transport Operations and Maintenance apprenticeships** have been achieved

Source: DfE Statistics

Although there are a variety of options, the Institute for Fiscal Studies has suggested that for those individuals who would like to enter the transport sector, or even upskill in their current role, career pathways and the training required to support them can be difficult to navigate<sup>1</sup>. The current range of qualification and training options include:

- **Technical and vocational qualifications** – for example BTECs, City and Guilds and NVQs;
- **T Levels** – 80% provider setting theory with practical skills, 20% industry placements;
- **A Levels** – academic classroom learning;
- **Higher Education qualifications** – diplomas, bachelor degrees, foundation degrees post-graduate degrees;
- **Kickstart** – job placements for 16–24 year olds on universal credit and at risk of long-term unemployment;
- **Skills Bootcamps** – up to 16-week courses to build sector-specific skills, supporting individuals to re-skill/up-skill, formalise existing skills;
- **Traineeships** – courses between 6 weeks and a year in duration for 16–24 year olds (or 25 year olds with an education, health and care (EHC) plan), not in employment, and with no higher than level 3 qualification;
- **Intermediate apprenticeship** – for younger school leavers in practical or vocational trades. 80% in the workplace, 20% off-the-job training;
- **Advanced apprenticeship** – for school leavers with some academic background. 80% in the workplace, 20% off-the-job training;
- **Higher apprenticeships** – employment-based path to progression. 80% in the workplace, 20% off-the-job training. Training delivered in universities, colleges, specialist institutions; and
- **Degree apprenticeships** – give learners a higher education degree while employed but maintains the balance of 80% in the workplace, 20% off-the-job training.

The diagram below shows the existing training and qualifications landscape:



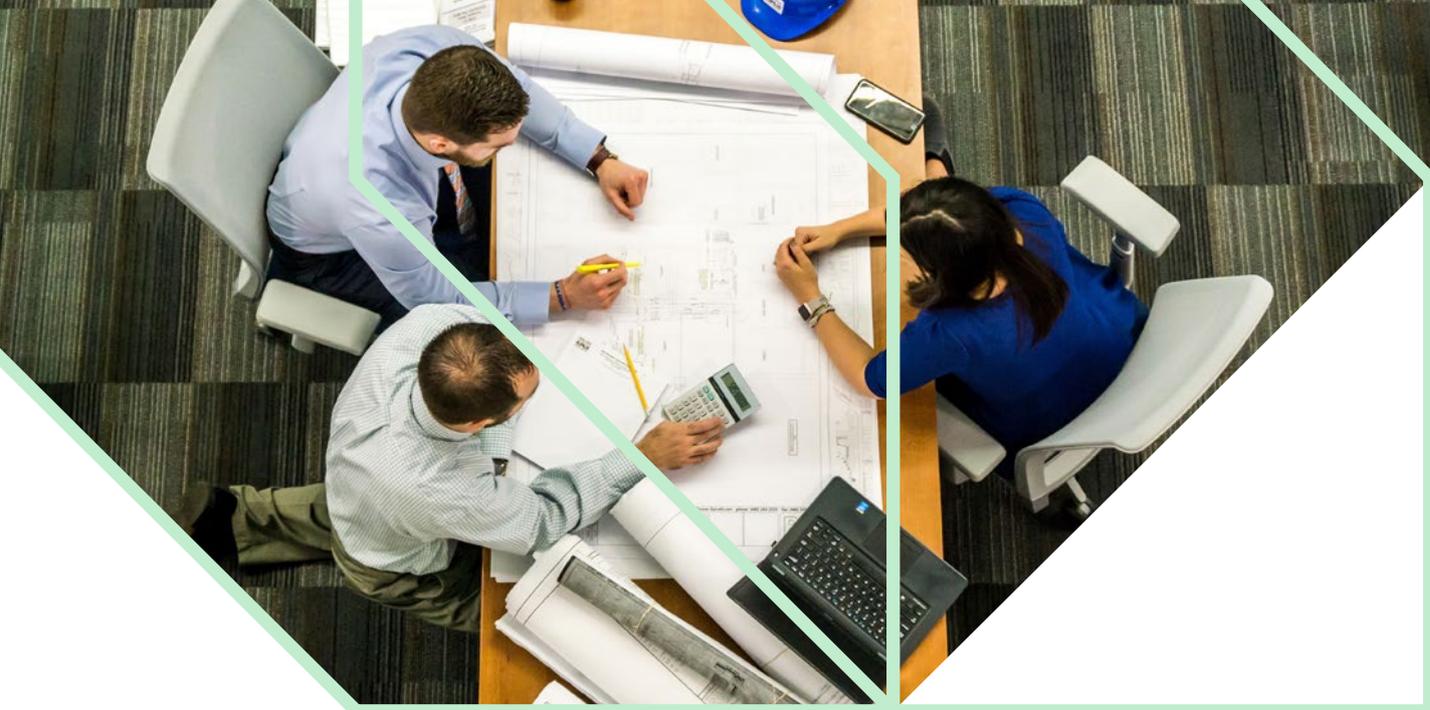


The Department for Education (DfE) Skills for Jobs White Paper has set the agenda for how Government will reform further education to support people to get the skills the economy needs. Government wants employers to work in partnership with education and training providers to fill skills gaps. Access to training and education opportunities will be reformed by simplifying funding and providing flexible approaches to lifelong learning as set out in the Lifetime Skills Guarantee.<sup>2</sup>

The Government's proposed reforms and investment in training opportunities for young people and adults, and present institutions and education providers with a unique opportunity to broaden the appeal of working in the transport industry.

There is significant investment for traineeships and the Government's Kickstart Programme. There is an opportunity for transport sector employers to think about how they are using these different training offers to produce a pipeline of the workforce and skills for the future.

The proposed Local Skills Improvement Plans, funded by the Strategic Development Fund<sup>3</sup>, will provide a framework to meet local labour market needs and support people to access jobs where they live. In addition, College Business Centres will enable employers and training providers to shape the FE education/training provision in a local area. This will mitigate the perception that the apprenticeship system is too centralised<sup>4</sup>.



## Our Approach

We will work with TEST and key stakeholders to increase the number of apprentices entering the transport sector, improve the progression of tertiary education learners into the industry, ensure training and education in skills is relevant for how the industry might operate in the future; and help education institutions innovate in how learning is delivered, taking advantage of the changes that were implemented because of the pandemic<sup>5</sup>.

As in Pillar 1, we will work with TEST and key stakeholders to identify and prioritise the transport sector's current skills needs and into the future. In addition, we will work with industry, education providers and other Government departments to tailor government training provision and funding to meet those skills needs.

TEST will explore how Government and industry can work together to signpost funding for accessing apprenticeships and training, as well as providing clarity in relation to the range of options available; develop an understanding of the challenges in apprenticeship recruitment and retention; and help design initiatives that help improve accessibility to training and apprenticeships from disadvantaged groups.

We will work with TEST to help the transport sector better understand the content and value of T Levels, and promote them as a key route to higher level qualifications and employment options in the transport sector.

We will work with TEST to engage with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to ensure that the proposed National system of post-16 employer-led standards for post-16 technical qualifications meet the transport sector's future labour market needs.

## Question

 **How, in your view, can current qualification and training routes be made more accessible for those who want to pursue a career in the transport sector?**

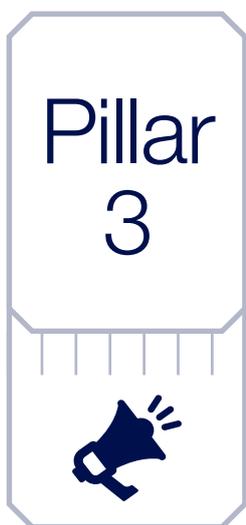


The Infrastructure  
Projects Authority  
predicts a shortage of

**533,000**

**individuals** in the  
infrastructure and  
construction supply  
chain in 22/23





# Promoting Careers in Transport

## The Challenge and Opportunity

Careers in the transport sector should be open to everyone. The sector faces long-standing skills challenges, notably an ageing workforce – the ONS 2020 population survey notes that over 60% of transport workers are aged 40 and over. Other challenges include, historically low staff turnover, and poor perceptions of transport as a career, particularly for under-represented groups.

However, there are a huge range of diverse career opportunities across the transport sector, from technical and operational roles to build and keep our networks running through to the transport services sector, and new and emerging roles in digital and green jobs. There have been significant efforts across the sector to attract more people from a variety of backgrounds into a career in transport.

To attract people to work in the rail industry, the National Skills Academy for Rail launched the 'Routes into Rail' website in November 2020, which provides careers advice and information on the types of different roles in the sector and a 'live' jobs board. HS2 has a job brokerage scheme to support local people into jobs and training along the proposed route, with a focus on under-represented groups.

The Maritime 2050 Strategy and subsequent People Route Map, both published in 2019, recommended that the sector needed to do more to understand its skills needs, address diversity, raise its profile, and attract more people. In response, DfT and Maritime UK established in 2020 a Careers Taskforce, Maritime Skills Commission and Diversity in Maritime Taskforce with networks for Women, Ethnicity, Pride and Mental health. In 2021 DfT provided £100,000 funding to support a skills and diversity post in Maritime UK and £50,000 to the 1851 Trust to run their Roadshows for Girls to promote STEM and maritime careers to 11–14 year olds.

Alongside building on transport-specific initiatives, related sectors such as construction are key elements of delivering transport infrastructure investment. An Industry Skills Plan has been developed by the construction industry that will ensure the retention of existing talent and attract new people. In the first year the plan will focus on the following key areas, which include 'improved access to opportunities for all and attractiveness of careers', which will;

- Support access for all industry to operate a more inclusive culture to encourage new entrants at every stage of their career and retain skilled workers;

In 2021 **DfT provided**

**£100,000**

**funding to support a skills and diversity** post in Maritime UK and

**£50,000**

to the 1851 Trust to **run their Roadshows for Girls** to promote STEM and maritime careers to 11–14 year olds



- Make construction an attractive career sector of choice through better development, delivery and showcasing of the career development opportunities our varied industry offers; and
- Work with industry to identify and utilise other training and skills initiatives to attract young and mature people into transport roles from all backgrounds, as well as support those people newly unemployed to re-train, upskill and, where possible, re-enter employment.

We will work with TEST to actively encourage the transport industry and other key stakeholders to focus on attracting more young people and career changers from a variety of backgrounds into choosing transport careers through local outreach work.

## Question

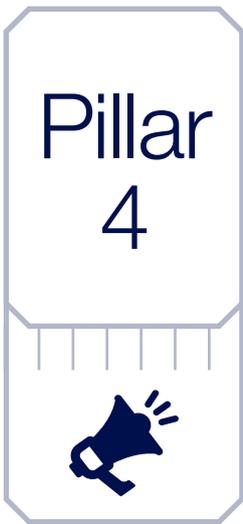


**What, in your view, are effective ways to attract young people and career changers into a career in the transport sector?**

## Our Approach

We will work with TEST and other key stakeholders to identify and share best practice from across the transport sector and other sectors in how to promote the range of careers in transport.

We will work with TEST to actively engage with the National Careers Service, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Department for Education to devise an approach increase the number of entrants to the transport industry.



# Boosting Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Mobility

## The Challenge and Opportunity

The transport sector has had long-standing challenges around increasing diversity and improving inclusion and social mobility. This means we are not utilising talent from across society, the sector's resilience is reduced as it is drawing on a small pool of talent, and that we do not have a sector representative of the society it serves that offers opportunities in all parts of the country.

In aviation, women account for just 6% of commercial pilots. In rail, only 16% of the rail workforce is female and just under one in four women (24%) would consider a career in rail.<sup>6</sup> Across the entire industry the 2020 ONS Annual Population Survey suggests women on represent just 20% of the workforce. We

also believe there is poor representation across other key groups, however there is limited recorded data available for representation of ethnic minorities, LGBTQI+, disabled people or those of a lower socio-economic background. The same ONS data suggests around 20% of transport workers are non-white.

Several bus operators are working closely with local transport authorities to devise initiatives that are changing negative perceptions of men only driving buses. Times are changing, but the Annual bus statistics: England 2019/20 reports that the national gender split of bus drivers is 93% men and 7% women.

To investigate the equality, diversity, and inclusion issues in the sector further, STAT collaborated with the University of Sussex on a research project: *Enhancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) for Transport Infrastructure Skills*<sup>7</sup>. Following a series of interviews and focus groups with policy makers, practitioners and apprentices, the report uses Kurt Lewin's *unfreeze-change-refreeze* model as a framework for organisational change (Bohnet, 2016)<sup>8</sup>.



In aviation, just **6%** of **commercial pilots are women**



In rail, only **16%** of the **rail workforce is female**



The research found evidence of equality, diversity, and inclusion issues, including:

- Gender stereotyped training and development, a low uptake of shared parental leave, inflexible working arrangements, inaccessible progression pathways, onsite facilities designed for men, and lastly, despite improvements, complaints of inappropriate personal conduct and comments that should not be expected or tolerated in the workplace.

The research found evidence of emerging challenges facing EDI interventions:

- Concerns about the impact of positive discrimination, the burdens placed on gender champions, and the complexities of supporting a very diverse workforce that can suffer discrimination in multiple ways.

**Recommendations** are suggested on the most effective ways to improve EDI outcomes based on leading academic research, including:

- Manage interventions as a change-management programme;

- Collect, monitor and report both numerical and non-numerical data;
- Build-in systems for performance management;
- Overhaul mechanisms for evaluation in recruitment and progression;
- Introduce mentoring programmes; and
- Carve out opportunities for reflective dialogue and constructive learning

The report suggests that significant additional action is needed, that goes beyond attracting and recruiting new staff, to developing inclusive working conditions where diverse talent can thrive.

Social mobility remains a significant challenge, particularly in the context of levelling up the economy. In 2017, the Social Mobility Commission published 'State of the Nation', a review of Social Mobility in Great Britain<sup>9</sup>. They summarised that a stark social mobility postcode lottery exists in Britain, where the chances of someone from a disadvantaged background succeeding in life is bound to where they live. They uncovered a striking geographical divide with London and its surrounding areas pulling away from the rest of the country, which has significant implications for, and shows the

importance of, the Government's levelling up ambitions. In its more recent publication, the Commissioner highlighted that half of adults from the poorest backgrounds receive no training at all after leaving school. Even in a professional role, they earn 17% less, on average, than those from higher socio-economic backgrounds.<sup>10</sup>

Apprenticeships and traineeships can act as an essential tool to address inequality and support social mobility. However, not everyone who wants to take up one of these options is able to do so for a variety of reasons, such as lower educational attainment, lack of opportunities in their local area, or a lack of support and guidance.

Monitoring training, progression and retention is key to understanding why people from under-represented groups may not have the same training and career options as their colleagues. This is why we are broadening our focus on diversity characteristics beyond gender and ethnic minorities, to include disability, social mobility, and other under-represented groups.

## The Approach

We will work with TEST and the transport sector to set stretching ambitions for enhancing the diversity of the transport workforce to ensure it represents the society it serves.

We will work with TEST and key stakeholders to identify barriers for under-represented groups and identify the initiatives required to overcome them.

We will work with TEST and key stakeholders to devise an approach to ensure those from disadvantaged and under-represented groups can be given additional support to reach their potential in the transport and infrastructure sector.

We will work with TEST and key stakeholders to explore and act on the findings identified in the *'Enhancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion interventions in support of Transport Infrastructure Skills'* research project.

We will work with TEST, the transport industry, and regional stakeholders to identify any particular regional skills and labour market challenges that have impacts on social mobility.



**50%** of adults

from the **poorest backgrounds receive no training at all** after leaving school.

Even in a professional role, **they earn**



**17%** less,

on average, than **those from higher socio-economic backgrounds**

## Questions



**What, in your view, are the barriers to further increasing diversity, inclusion and social mobility in the transport sector?**



**How, in your view, can barriers to diversity, inclusion and social mobility in the transport sector be reduced?**



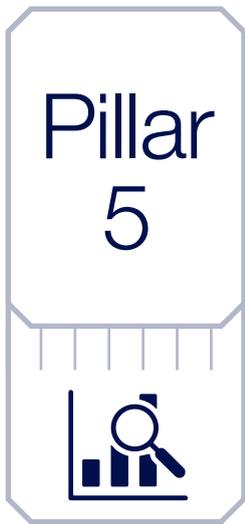
The 2019/20 national gender split of **bus drivers** in England is



**93%** men



**7%** women



# Building Evidence and Evaluating Progress

## The Challenge and Opportunity

Robust, high quality data and intelligence is fundamental to understanding these key challenges, informing the actions we take to address them, and evaluating our progress in tackling them. Currently, there is a mixed picture of skills and labour market needs across the economy with evidence gaps across several sectors. This pillar will support the other four pillars by identifying the evidence we have and what we do not have, and how we fill those gaps to ensure we have a robust evidence base to inform labour market and skills policy.

As announced in September 2020, a new Skills and Productivity Board will undertake expert analysis of national skills needs to inform government policy. The independent board, composed of labour market and skills economists, will provide evidence and analysis that addresses the most pressing gaps in our knowledge of the labour market. Building on the existing evidence, it will consider which skills and training add the most value to the economy, where the key skills mismatches are both now and in the future, and which courses return the best earnings for young people and adults.

The picture in transport is no different, and we will undertake similar work to address gaps in our knowledge and evidence base and where key skills mismatches are now and in the future, to ensure the transport sector feeds into the Skills and Productivity Board.

To ensure we promote careers in transport successfully and attract talent, we need to build a picture of the current perception of industry to ensure a cohesive communication and engagement plan is produced to respond to findings.

STAT's collection of data on apprenticeship starts has proved integral to monitoring progress against targets and understanding why some apprenticeships have a higher uptake than others. We want to build on that so we have a broader evidence base on which to draw on.



## Our Approach

We will work with TEST and build our evidence base on the current skills shortages and mismatches across the transport sector. The aim is to understand where the gaps are, to robustly quantify the scale of the issue, and focus our efforts in the most affected areas.

We will work with TEST to collect data to understand the barriers to progression and retention so that interventions can be designed to tackle diversity, inclusion, and social mobility at all levels.

We will work with TEST to monitor progress against the pillars identified in this Paper, with a view to reporting progress annually.

4

# Next Steps

# Transport Employment and Skills Taskforce

**To build on the Paper and drive this work forward – a new Transport Employment and Skills Taskforce (TEST) will be set up to ensure that these pillars are owned and led by industry, with DfT support.**

The Taskforce will be chaired by Rachel Skinner CBE and have representative membership from across the transport sector. The Taskforce will be responsible for driving the work of the Paper, representing industry views, and monitoring and reporting on progress against the paper's recommendations.

TEST will be supported by five working groups. Each working group will be responsible for delivering one of the five pillars of the Paper and will regularly report into TEST:

- **Future Skills Working Group** – leading pillar 1 – to drive a shared understanding of future skills needs across the sector and identify actions to ensure skills and employment programmes can meet those needs.
- **Training and Employment Working Group** – leading pillar 2 – to map out routes into training and employment in the transport sector, identify barriers and opportunities to overcome them, and to identify and share best practice.
- **Promoting Careers in Transport Working Group** – leading pillar 3 – to understand current perceptions of the industry and create a programme of comms and engagement to promote careers across transport.
- **Diversity, Inclusion and Social Mobility Working Group** – leading pillar 4 – to understand the drivers behind the lack of diversity across the transport sector. To identify barriers to D&I and social mobility, and seek opportunities to overcome them.
- **Evidence and Evaluation Working Group** – leading pillar 5 – to improve the evidence base across pillars 1–4 and wider labour market and skills issues, and measure and evaluate progress.

Government and key stakeholders will work together, driven by the taskforce, to tackle the challenges and answer the questions set out in this paper. By tackling these issues head on, we can ensure that the transport sector supports a labour market that is highly skilled, responsive to continuous technological innovation, and representative of the communities it serves, across the country.

# What will happen next

**A summary of responses, including the next steps, will be published within three months of the Call for Views & Ideas closing. Paper copies will be available on request.**

If you have questions about this Call for Views & Ideas, please contact:

**Transport Labour Market and Skills Team**

4th Floor, Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London SW1P 4DR

[TransportLabourMarketandSkills@dft.gov.uk](mailto:TransportLabourMarketandSkills@dft.gov.uk)

# Annex A: Full list of Call for Views & Ideas questions

## Question 1

 In your view, what skills does the transport sector need in the future?

## Question 2

 How, in your view, can current qualification and training routes be made more accessible for those who want to pursue a career in the transport sector?

## Question 3

 What, in your view, are effective ways to attract young people and career changers into a career in the transport sector?

## Question 4

 What, in your view, are the barriers to further increasing diversity, inclusion and social mobility in the transport sector?

## Question 5

 How, in your view, can barriers to diversity, inclusion and social mobility in the transport sector be reduced?

## Final Comments

 Open-ended responses.

# Annex B: Consultation principles

This Call for Views & Ideas is being conducted in line with the Government's key consultation principles which are available at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance)

If you have any comments about the consultation process, please contact:

Consultation Co-ordinator  
Department for Transport  
Zone 1/29 Great Minster House  
London SW1P 4DR  
Email [consultation@dft.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@dft.gov.uk)

## Endnotes

- 1 Institute for Fiscal Studies, Inequalities in education, skills and incomes in the UK, 2021, <https://www.ifs.org.uk/inequality/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/BN-Inequalities-in-education-skills-and-incomes-in-the-UK-the-implications-of-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf> (accessed 13 May 2021)
- 2 Department for Education, Skills for Jobs White Paper, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-for-jobs-lifelong-learning-for-opportunity-and-growth> (accessed 13 May 2021)
- 3 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-accelerator-trailblazers-and-pilots/skills-accelerator-local-skills-improvement-plan-trailblazers-and-strategic-development-fund-pilots>
- 4 Learning and Work Institute, All Change: Where next for apprenticeships, 2020, <https://learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/All-Change-Where-next-for-Apprenticeships-Essay-collection.pdf> (accessed 13 May 2021)
- 5 Construction Leadership Council, 2021, <https://www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk/news/construction-skills-plan-backed-by-industry-and-government/> (accessed 13 May 2021)
- 6 <https://www.cityandguildsgroup.com/research/back-on-track> accessed 17 January 2022
- 7 Enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion for transport infrastructure skills <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-infrastructure-skills-improving-equality-diversity-and-inclusion> – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) accessed 17 January 2022
- 8 Bohnet, I. (2016). What works: Gender equality by design. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- 9 State of the nation 2017 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2017> – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) accessed 17 January 2022
- 10 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/891155/Monitoring\\_report\\_2013-2020\\_-\\_Web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/891155/Monitoring_report_2013-2020_-_Web_version.pdf) accessed 17 January 2022

