

# Route Strategies

Our high-level approach to informing future investment on roads

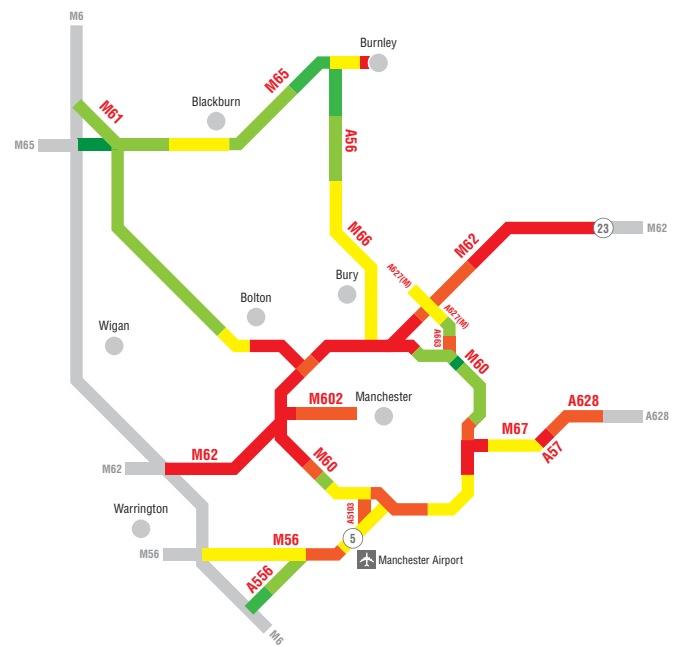


**The roads managed by Highways England provide businesses with the means to get products and services to their customers, give access to jobs and suppliers, and encourage trade and new investment. They are essential to the growth and balance of the nation’s economy. It is important that planning for the future of these roads reflects national and local aspirations and is based on firm evidence.**

In 2015, we published the first set of Route Strategies, describing the condition and performance of our roads, issues affecting them and the investment priorities for the Strategic Road Network for Road Period 1: 2015 – 2020. This was a significant step forward - our roads were comprehensively assessed link-by-link and junction by junction for the first time. This in turn meant that the first Road Investment Strategy (RIS) was built on a stronger evidence base than any previous roads programme.

The next set of route strategies will bring together information from motorists, local communities, construction partners, environmental groups and across the business. This information will be reviewed to help us better understand the performance of our roads and shape our investment priorities to improve the service for road users and support a growing economy.

Route Strategies are one of the key steps of research required for developing the Department for Transport’s Road Investment Strategy for Road Period 2, covering the period 2020-2025, hereafter referred to as RIS2.



The evidence identified through this process will be vital to inform the development of RIS2. Ministers will use this to identify where problems are most severe, and where the need for action is greatest. Much of the work of developing the next RIS will use the route strategies as its foundation.

The rest of this document provides an overview of the approach we will use to prepare route strategies and how everyone can get involved.

## Scope of route strategies






We will complete 18 route strategies, covering all of our roads and building on the approach we took in the first round. Each strategy will cover a key strategic route, providing a description of the key centres of population and industry, and international gateways served by the route, the type of road, its current performance and constraints. We will consider options for maintaining, operating or enhancing roads, including on local roads where these may bring about benefits such as alleviating congestion, on the strategic road network. Where appropriate, this could include influencing driver behaviour, or recommend looking further at other modes of travel. Where an area has a number of route strategies that are all relevant, such as east and west connections and around Birmingham and Leeds, we will ensure the interfaces are addressed.

In December 2014, our **Strategic Business Plan** was published, describing how we aim to provide modernised and reliable roads that reduce delay, creates jobs and helps businesses compete while opening up new areas for development. Safety, free flow of traffic, the environment, and

integration and accessibility will remain a key focus while preparing our proposals.



















As with the previous generation of route strategies, this will involve reviewing traffic flows, congestion and safety. Environmental evidence will also play an important role. We will make sure that challenges on our roads are being assessed in light of the very latest evidence available to us. We will also ensure that any developing proposals for investment can be assessed on a consistent basis, so that ideas coming forward from motorists, local communities, construction partners, environmental groups and from our own teams are properly understood before decisions are made about potential investment priorities.

The Government's vision for transforming the strategic road network is described in the **Road Investment Strategy post 2020: Planning Ahead**. This vision builds on the five broad aims published in the Road Investment Strategy for 2015-2020: economy, network capability, integration, safety and the environment. Using the evidence from route strategies, we will develop proposals that can help bring Government's vision for roads to life.

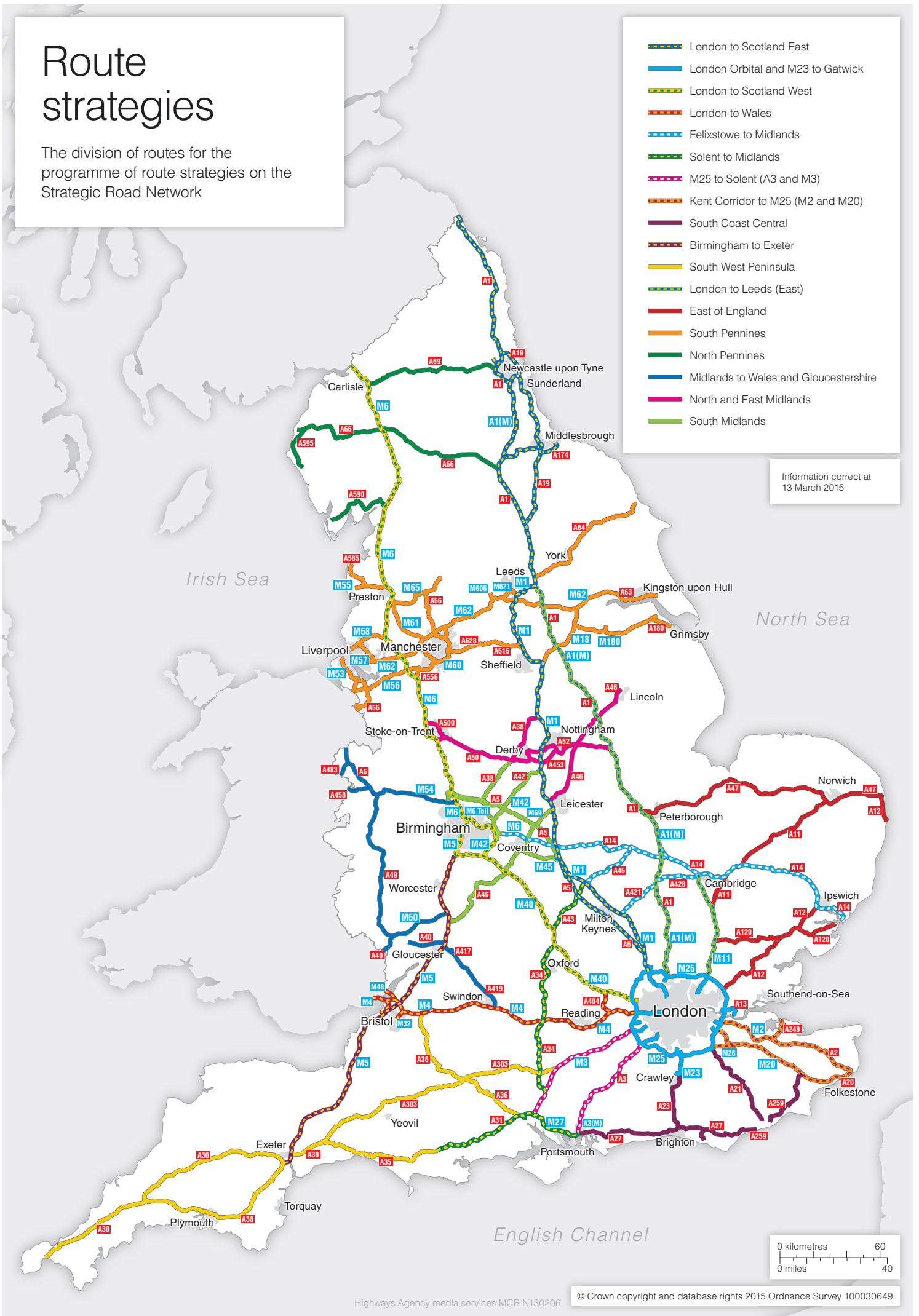
RIS1 Strategic Vision as reiterated in RIS Post 2020: Planning ahead	Highways England Strategic Business Plan's Key Outcomes
Economy	 <b>Supporting Economic Growth</b> through a modernised and reliable network that reduces delays, creates jobs and helps business compete and opens up new areas for development
Network capability	 <b>More Free Flowing Network</b> where routine delays are more infrequent, and where journeys are safer and more reliable
Safety	 <b>Safe and Serviceable Network</b> where no one should be harmed when travelling or working on the network
Environment	 <b>Improved Environment</b> where the impact of our activities is further reduced ensuring a long term and sustainable benefit to the environment
Integration	 <b>More Accessible and Integrated Network</b> that gives people the freedom to choose their mode of transport and enable safe movement across and alongside the network

# Route strategies

The division of routes for the programme of route strategies on the Strategic Road Network

-  London to Scotland East
-  London Orbital and M23 to Gatwick
-  London to Scotland West
-  London to Wales
-  Felixstowe to Midlands
-  Solent to Midlands
-  M25 to Solent (A3 and M3)
-  Kent Corridor to M25 (M2 and M20)
-  South Coast Central
-  Birmingham to Exeter
-  South West Peninsula
-  London to Leeds (East)
-  East of England
-  South Pennines
-  North Pennines
-  Midlands to Wales and Gloucestershire
-  North and East Midlands
-  South Midlands

Information correct at 13 March 2015



## Involving motorists, local communities, construction partners and environmental groups

We have already gathered a wealth of evidence through preparing the last round of route strategies and through our ongoing monitoring of the condition and performance of our roads. Building on the engagement we started in the last round of **route strategies**, we will continue to work closely with motorists, local communities, construction partners and environmental groups to support our understanding of the road network, and identify where users and communities feel the greatest priorities for investment are needed. We have been listening to feedback and have taken on board recommendations to further strengthen our approach.

In this round, we want to further improve how we reflect the issues and needs of our customers in our route strategies. We are keen to ensure we capture and reflect our customers' views and concerns in identifying problems and priorities on the network, so we are commissioning Transport Focus to conduct customer research, supplementing our own customer insight panel. Transport Focus surveys will be carried out very soon around the country at motorway service areas, retail parks, and other similar locations, collecting customer information that will feed directly into route strategies.

We also want to make sure that the full range of stakeholders are fully involved in this round of route strategies. We will lead a nationwide programme of engagement, allowing national and local groups to contribute their views and build up a comprehensive picture of the needs of the different parts of the network. Members of Parliament, Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships will play an important part in this discussion, as will business and environmental groups, residents' groups and other interested parties.

We will also be updating our approach to reflect the emergence of new sub national transport bodies, such as Transport for the North, so that we make sure that route strategies recognise their regional priorities. We are talking to the emerging sub-national transport bodies about how these relationships can prosper, and to enable them to have a prominent role in setting strategies for the network.

We will continue to engage with customers and stakeholders throughout the route strategy process and there will be a variety of ways that issues and concerns about our roads can be fed back to us, including:

- An online tool available on gov.uk for customers and stakeholders alike to inform us of issues and challenges on our roads affecting them.
- Holding stakeholder events across the country, giving interested parties a chance to offer their views on problems and priorities.
- Establishing stakeholder panels to check and challenge options that may be proposed in the course of the route strategy process from any source, to capture the perspective from a broad spectrum of interests.
- Providing regular updates on progress and opportunities to hear about next steps throughout the process of preparing route strategies; and
- Using existing dialogues between our Highways England colleagues and our stakeholders and delivery partners.

The evidence we gather that will reflect our road users and stakeholder's needs, will be used to determine the locations which are priorities for further investigation and potential action. We want this to be a transparent process and all our recommendations will be rooted in the evidence.



## After route strategies

The evidence produced in the route strategies will be central to the development of the next Road Investment Strategy. The information that we gather will provide a consistent and thorough picture of the condition and needs of the network, and will be the main evidence base on which decision-makers draw when coming up with the next RIS.

The route strategies will be the foundation for much of the thinking about where major new investments should be after 2020. Alongside the evidence being gathered by the Government, by the Office of Rail and Road, by Transport Focus and by individual stakeholders, it will play a major role in shaping the next investment programme. Many of the ideas put forward by others will be considered with reference to the evidence gathered in the route strategies, to make sure that they are assessed on a fair and consistent basis.

## Getting started

In April 2016, we will contact a wide range of organisations to start the process of collating the evidence base, including sub-national transport bodies, local government, Local Enterprise Partnerships, business groups, road user and environmental organisations.

If you would like to be involved in route strategies, please let your Highways England contact know or email us at:

[\*\*routestrategies@highwaysengland.co.uk\*\*](mailto:routestrategies@highwaysengland.co.uk)

If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

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