

# The Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Plan For Buses



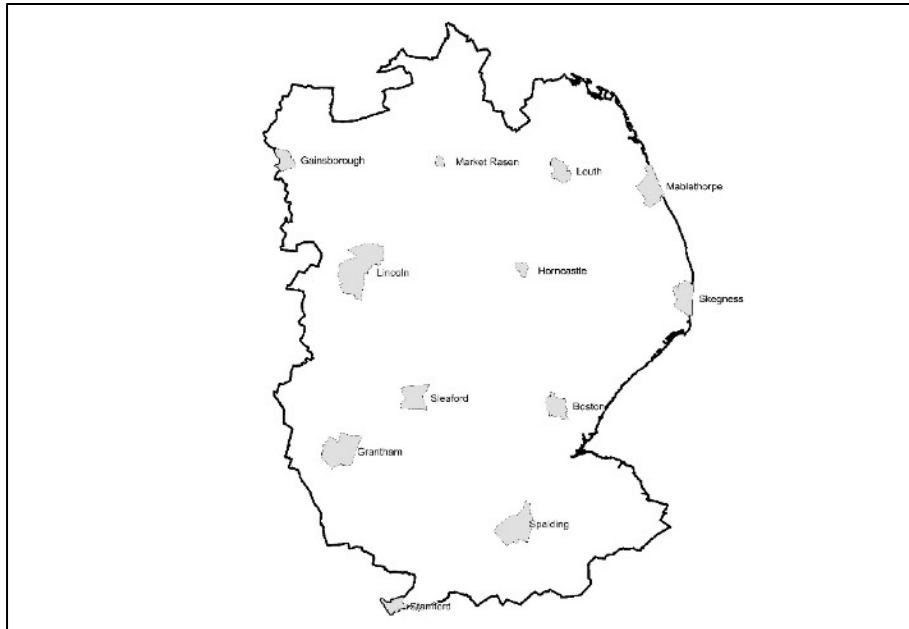
# Contents

<b>1. EP Plan Area</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. EP Plan Period &amp; Monitoring</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. EP Plan Objectives</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Passenger Experiences</b>	<b>6 - 7</b>
<b>5. The Current Bus Service Offer in Lincolnshire</b>	<b>8 - 30</b>
<b>6. Outcomes and targets for improvement</b>	<b>31 - 35</b>
<b>7. EP Plan interventions</b>	<b>36 - 55</b>
<b>8. Impact of the EP Plan on neighbouring areas</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>9. EP Plan delivery through an EP Scheme</b>	<b>56</b>

# 1. EP Plan Area

1.1.1. The Lincolnshire EP Plan covers the county area of Lincolnshire, as illustrated in Figure 1-1.

**Figure 1-1 EP Plan Area**



## 2. EP Plan Period and Monitoring

2.1.1. This EP Plan initially sets out a high-level bus strategy for Lincolnshire for the period from 1st April 2023, but has no specific end date. The Plan will be monitored and evaluated against its objectives twice in respect of the initial period. These reviews will be completed by the following dates:

- 30th April 2024
- 30th April 2026

and the EP Plan shall be reviewed every two years following this if not revoked.

2.1.2. The Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan will be evaluated on an annual basis, and the EP Scheme(s) will also be monitored on an annual basis. Should either of these processes or reviews in accordance with section 2.1.1 deem the EP Plan to require potential amendment, this will be as agreed by the EP Partnership Board and implemented as a variation in accordance with sections 138K to 138M Transport Act 2000.

2.1.3. Assessing the Plan's performance against its objectives is essential to understand what has been delivered through the EP Plan and Scheme(s) and how it has performed in enhancing local bus services. The Plan will be monitored by the County Council initially, in conjunction with the Lincolnshire EP Board and Forum, which consists of local bus operator representatives, district council officers and the Greater Lincolnshire LEP. Passenger Groups will also be consulted to understand their views on performance of the EP Plan and Scheme(s), alongside wider public engagement to understand levels of bus user satisfaction.

## 3. EP Plan Objectives

3.1.1. The EP Plan objectives are the same as those contained within the Lincolnshire EP Plan. These objectives align with the draft Local Transport Plan and seek to improve the quality of bus services and their effectiveness in moving people around the county efficiently and at a reasonable cost. The objectives are as follows:

1. For buses to contribute to the quality of place across Lincolnshire
2. To recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2023
3. To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability
4. To increase bus user satisfaction rates
5. To support the perception of travelling safely by public transport
6. To increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities, including those living in new developments
7. To provide efficient multi-modal connectivity between our rail, bus and other transport networks to connect Lincolnshire with the East Midlands and beyond
8. To support a reduction in operating costs through an efficient use of resources
9. To maintain the number of operators providing bus services in Lincolnshire
10. To support economic growth and the levelling up of our more deprived communities through improving access for all to education, employment health and leisure
11. To reduce rural isolation through more available and usable bus services
12. To improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions from transport
13. To reduce barriers to public transport use through attractive fares and tickets
14. To reduce barriers to public transport use through high quality information
15. To reduce all physical barriers to public transport use
16. To ensure users have a say in how bus services are provided

## 4. Passenger Experiences

4.1.1. The County Council has two main sources of evidence that highlight the experience of bus users as well as their views and satisfaction rates:

- 2018 Passenger Focus bus user survey
- 2021 BSIP public engagement survey

4.1.2. The 2018 Passenger Focus survey showed that:

- Overall satisfaction was 89% (88% nationally)
- For fare payers, overall journey satisfaction was 85% (85% nationally)
- Journey times in Lincolnshire are rated at 88% (85% nationally)
- Punctuality (71%) is below the national average of 74%
- Value for money in Lincolnshire is 56% compared to 64% nationally

4.1.3. Overall, the survey suggests that punctuality and value for money are two areas that Lincolnshire bus operators could improve upon compared to other parts of England.

4.1.4. Between July and September 2021, the County Council carried out an online public engagement survey to understand perceptions of bus services in Lincolnshire and their priorities for enhancing bus services. 1,705 individuals responded to the survey, and while it was a self-selecting sample, it provides a broad indication of the priorities of those respondents.



4.1.5. The top priorities for all respondents are presented below:

Priority	Bus service enhancement
1	More frequent services
2	Better information at bus stops/stations
3	Later evening services
4	Better information on local bus services made easier to obtain and understand
5	More destinations
6	Better bus stops/shelters
7	Multi-operator tickets
8	Better connectivity
9	Lower fares
10	Better connectivity with rail

4.1.6. For those respondents aged 19 and under, the vast majority (48 out of 51) stated that lower fares would encourage them to use buses more frequently. Other notable enhancements to encourage them to use buses more frequently included:

- Better and up to date information, including real time information, and
- Better bus stops and shelters

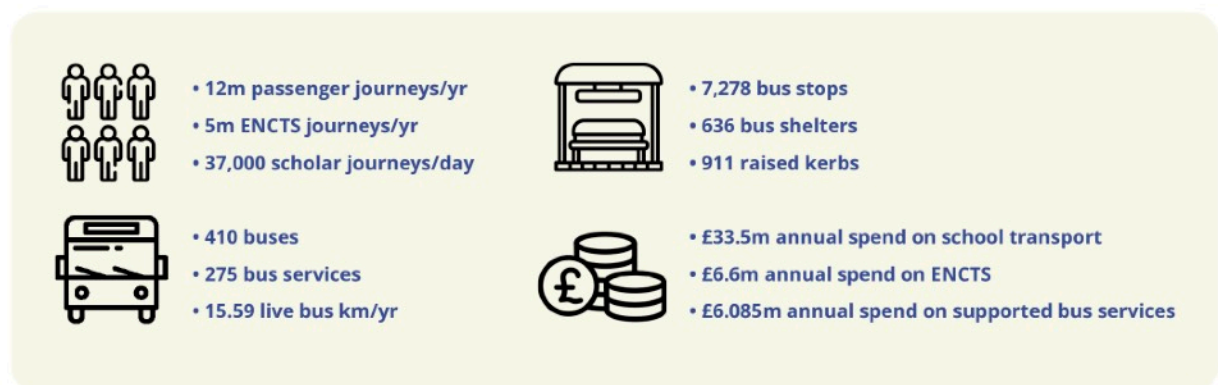
4.1.7. Better facilities for people with disabilities scored highly as a motivator among people with physical disabilities. Buses are already accessible, so further investigation is required to explore whether there are other areas of improvement for such groups, including bus stop infrastructure, access to information etc.

4.1.8. Overall, there are some clear priorities identified from the survey. More frequent services, more evening services, better information provision and better bus stop facilities accord with the general sentiments of bus operators and other stakeholders.

## 5. The Current Bus Offer in Lincolnshire

- 5.1.1. Given the rurality of the county, Lincolnshire presents a series of challenges for operating buses. Our bus services, however, 'punch above their weight' in the face of a variety of challenges – a sparse population, a high number of settlements away from high trafficked corridors (and fixed bus routes), high levels of car ownership (in certain areas, but not all), pockets of deprivation (particularly around our coastal areas) and ongoing funding constraints amongst others. Identifying what Lincolnshire does well helps to provide foundations on which to develop and enhance the bus offer to encourage more people to use the bus. Equally, identifying the things that Lincolnshire does less well helps to identify those areas in which the bus offer can be greatly enhanced, and which this EP Plan details.
- 5.1.2. This section documents both existing bus supply and demand in Lincolnshire and identifies the areas where there is a lack of provision or where supply could be improved.

**Figure 5-1 Overview of bus provision in Lincolnshire**





## 5.2. Bus Supply

5.2.1. A key part of the last countywide bus strategy in Lincolnshire was to develop a clear hierarchical structure for local bus services to meet the differing needs of users in different areas. This has led to the following bus network structure that remains in place today:

- Urban bus services - including 'IntoTown' services in our market towns
- 'InterConnect' (inter urban) services to create a mostly hourly service between all towns across the county and cross boundary
- Fixed route rural bus services where there is sufficient demand
- 'CallConnect' (demand responsive) services to provide a dependable service to all rural areas of the County without an alternative conventional bus service

5.2.2. Complementing the above services, the County Council is responsible for providing transport for different groups – some being statutory responsibilities while others are decisions taken by the Council. Additional services funded by the Council include:

- Integrated education travel
- Special educational needs transport
- Adult and child social care transport
- Health transport for services during circumstances such as during COVID vaccinations

5.2.3. The Council supports the commercial bus network by encouraging scholars to travel on the commercial network where there are suitable services, with travel funded by the County Council for entitled pupils. Where there are no suitable services, the Council funds dedicated school bus services, many of which are integrated into the commercial bus network before and after providing the school service. This is an efficient use of vehicles and the cost of supporting the school bus helps to underpin the commercial viability of services during the day.

5.2.4. There are 275 live local bus registrations, operated by 27 operators - see Table 5-1. The largest operator is Stagecoach East Midlands with 85 service registrations, although this underestimates the number of services as some registrations include more than one service. 21 of the 27 operators have 8 or fewer registered services, highlighting that despite a broad operator base, the majority of services are provided by a small number of operators.

**Table 5-1 Number of local bus registrations by operator in Lincolnshire**

Operator	Registrations
Amvale	1
Brylaine Travel	24
Cambus T/A Stagecoach East	4
Centrebus North	16
Delaine Buses	7
EYMS T/A Stagecoach East Midlands	1
F Hunt T/A Hunts Coaches	13
GDS 2016	1
Gem Mini Travel	2
GHP Trading	2
Grayscroft	8
Kettlewell (Retford)	2
Lincolnshire Road Car T/A Stagecoach East Midlands	84
Blands (Rutland)	5
Marshalls of Sutton on Trent	3
National Express	4
Nigel Dickinson & Julie Overton T/A Dickinson Coaches	1
PC Coaches of Lincoln	28
Phil Haines Coaches	3
Robert Dent & Linda Horstwood T/A Dents Coaches	2
Sleaford Taxi Company T/A Sleafordian	17
Stuart Oakland & Jane Oakland	1
TC Mini Coaches	11
Transport Connect	26
Vectare	1
W H Fowler & Sons	5

## **InterConnect**

- 5.2.5. The core InterConnect services are detailed in Table 5-2 and illustrated in Figure 5-2. Within the 2006 Lincolnshire Bus Strategy, the target for InterConnect services was to provide a minimum of an hourly service between our towns. These services are operated at a maximum of 60-minute headways, although early morning, evening and weekend provision varies.
- 5.2.6. There remain a small number of other inter urban services to the south of the county. Delaine Buses provides services between Bourne and Peterborough, Bourne, Stamford and Peterborough, and Spalding and Stamford. Daytime frequencies are typically half hourly or hourly.

## **Fixed route rural bus services**

- 5.2.7. These services provide a vital lifeline to many of our villages, connecting smaller settlements to our market towns. Services such as the B11 between Spilsby and Boston and the 96A between Mablethorpe and Spilsby – see Figure 5-2 - are good examples of these essential rural bus services. These services complement InterConnect services.

## **IntoTown**

- 5.2.8. IntoTown services are relatively short urban bus services operating in and around our market towns. IntoTown services are detailed in Table 5-2. These typically operate on half-hourly or hourly headways in Grantham, Spalding, Sleaford and Boston. In addition, there are 'town services' in Gainsborough and Stamford. In Louth the 'Nipper' service provides a similar level of service to IntoTown with some services operating at hourly headways between 7am and 7pm. In addition, wholly commercial urban operations exist in Lincoln and Skegness.

## **CallConnect**

- 5.2.9. There are 35 CallConnect Demand Responsive services providing access to essential goods and services for all those living in rural Lincolnshire without access to other local bus services. The whole of Lincolnshire is served by CallConnect, except for the city centre in Lincoln which has sufficient coverage of local bus services to provide local residents with the access they require to essential goods and services. There is also a Lincoln area Dial-a-Ride service in operation to provide door-to-door services for those with reduced mobility. All Call Connect services are provided by operators on a minimum cost basis i.e. the County Council accepts all financial risk on these services.

## **Supported Bus Services**

5.2.10. Lincolnshire County Council has a total of 148 individual contracts for providing bus services across the County. These contracts range from individual journeys receiving a small amount of de minimis support, to entire services operating on either a minimum subsidy or minimum cost basis. 17 operators provide these services on behalf of the County Council.

5.2.11. The annual value of supported bus services in Lincolnshire is approximately £6,085,000. This includes only a small proportion of home to school services. Spend on home to school transport for entitled scholars is more than £33,500,000, while ENCTS costs over £6,600,000pa.

## **Geographic Provision**

5.2.12. Lincolnshire is wholly covered by local bus services, as illustrated in Figure 5-2. Urban, IntoTown and InterConnect services provide coverage countywide. Away from fixed route bus services, CallConnect provides a local on-demand service for residents that require a gate-to-gate service, or those who cannot connect with a fixed route service.

Figure 5-2 Geographic coverage of local bus provision



InterConnect  
Network  
Map

InterConnect Services

- 1 Lincoln - Grantham
- 5 Lincoln - Boston
- 7 Skegness - Boston
- 37 Spalding - Peterborough
- 51 Louth - Grimsby
- 56 Lincoln - Skegness
- 57 Skegness - Boston - Spalding
- 53 Lincoln - Grimsby
- 59 Mablethorpe - Skegness
- 100 Lincoln - Gainsborough - Scunthorpe
- 505 Spalding - Kings Lynn

- CallConnect routes
- Other key services
- Call Connect CallConnect DRT area (Wheelchair accessible) 0345 234 3344
- I Interchange
- Interchange with railway
- Terminus

## Temporal Provision

5.2.13. The temporal provision of bus services can vary greatly, by service and by operator. The lack of evening services in some areas is reflective of a lack of a night time or Sunday economy in many parts of the county. Urban services typically operate longer hours and over more days of the week. As shown in Table 5-2, services in Lincoln, Skegness and Grantham have frequent services of half hourly or better, particularly in Lincoln. These services operate every day of the week in Lincoln, although Sunday frequencies are reduced. Services in Lincoln operate into the evening, with buses departing Lincoln on services 6, 9 and 15/16 after 2100. Despite this the need to increase frequency and capacity of public transport in the evening to support the night time economy has been identified as an issue for the city in the Lincoln Transport Strategy and Town investment Plan. In other urban areas - the last service of the day is before 1800 on weekdays.

5.2.14. InterConnect and other inter urban services operate at hourly headways from before 0800 on weekdays (except IC7). There is a mixed picture during evenings - the last departure on service 56 between Lincoln and Skegness is 2100, but for most other services, the last service of the day is before 1900. CallConnect services operate from 7am until 7pm Monday – Friday and 7.30am – 6.30pm Saturdays. There is currently no demand responsive offer on Sundays.

**Table 5-2 Selection of core fixed route bus services in Lincolnshire**

### Urban and Suburban Services

Operator	Service	Description	Headway	1st service dep	Last service dep	Days
Stagecoach	1	Lincoln to Grantham	30 mins	0520	1815	M-Sun
Stagecoach	2	Lincoln to Branston	30 mins	0645	1845	M-Sun
Stagecoach	6 / X6	Lincoln to Birchwood/County Hosp	10 mins	0520	2130	M-Sun
Stagecoach	9	Lincoln to Birchwood	20 mins	0540	2100	M-Sun
Stagecoach	15/16	Lincoln to N.Hykeham	10 mins	0550	2130	M-Sun
Stagecoach	1 / 3	Skegness to Chapel	30 mins	0625	1905	M-Sun
Brylaine	IT1/IT2	Spalding Town	1 hour	0745	1500	M-Sat



<b>Operator</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Headway</b>	<b>1st service dep</b>	<b>Last service dep</b>	<b>Days</b>
Brylaine	IT1 - IT6	Boston Town	1 hour	0730	1704	M-Sat
Brylaine	B13	Boston to Spalding	1 hour	0630	1900	M-Sat
Centrebus	1	Grantham - Alma Park	30 mins	0625	1805	M-Sat
Centrebus	1	Grantham - Earlesfield	30 mins	0700	1735	M-Sat
Centrebus	3	Grantham - Barrowby Gate	1 hour	0800	1745	M-Fri
PC Coaches	777	Lincoln to Saxilby	6 svcs/day	0645	1745	M-Sat

#### Inter-urban Services

<b>Operator</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Headway</b>	<b>1st service dep</b>	<b>Last service dep</b>	<b>Days</b>
Stagecoach	50	Lincoln to Louth	2 hours	0555	1715	M-Sat
Stagecoach	53	Lincoln to Market Rasen	1 hour	0640	1820	M-Sat
Stagecoach	56	Lincoln to Skegness	1 hour	0600	2100	M-Sat
Stagecoach	100	Lincoln to Gainsborough	1 hour	0735	1805	M-Sat
Stagecoach	51	Louth to Grimsby	1 hour	0550	1815	M-Sat
Stagecoach	57	Skegness to Boston	1 hour	0620	1815	M-Sat
Brylaine	IC5	Lincoln to Boston	1 hour	0630	1800	M-Sat
Brylaine	IC7	Boston to Skegness	1 hour	0910	1640	M-Sat
Delaine	101/102	Bourne to Peterborough	30 mins	0610	2015	M-Sun
Delaine	201/202	Bourne, Stamford to Peterborough	1 hour	0610	1815	M-Sat
Delaine	301/302	Spalding to Stamford	1 hour	0740	1715	M-Fri
Hunts	7	Alford to Skegness	6 svcs/day	0645	1605	M-Sat

## Bus Fleet

5.2.15. Based on data provided by our operators, the mean age of a bus in Lincolnshire is 13.34 years old, while the median bus age is 14 years. In 2019-20, the average age of the bus fleet in England was 8.8 years old<sup>1</sup>, thus, the bus fleet in Lincolnshire is significantly older than elsewhere in the country.

5.2.16. As shown in Table 5-3, the emissions standards are towards the lower end of the Euro standard. For the 410 buses for which data was provided, 9 buses are Euro 2, while 123 adhere to Euro 3 standards, 123 Euro 4 and 120 Euro 5. Just 35 of the 410 buses operating in Lincolnshire meet Euro 6 standards. In addition to poorer air quality, the age profile and emissions standards of our local buses are likely to contribute to higher CO2 emissions.

**Table 5-3 Emission standards for local buses in Lincolnshire**

Euro Category	No. of buses
Euro 2	9
Euro 3	123
Euro 4	123
Euro 5	120
Euro 6	35

---

1 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/929992/annual-bus-statistics-year-ending-march-2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/929992/annual-bus-statistics-year-ending-march-2020.pdf)

## Bus Fares

- 5.2.17. As the fixed route bus network is commercial or supported through de minimis payments or minimum subsidy tender, operators have full control over bus fares, tickets and other fare products. Fare scales for all operators are graduated, so passengers are charged a higher fare the longer distance they travel. All local bus operators offer single and return tickets, while day, carnet and longer period tickets are typically offered by only the 'largest' operators. All operators typically have fare products for adults and children, while some have their own commercial scholar products.
- 5.2.18. Child and young people fares differ across the bus market in Lincolnshire. Some operators do not offer child tickets before 0900 on a weekday, others offer child fares up to the age of 11 and young people fares from 11-18, while others offer child fares up to either 14, 16 or 18. The level of discount offered for children and young people also differs across Lincolnshire bus operators, ranging between 20% and 50% discount compared to the equivalent adult fare. Differences in fares policies is the result of competition law and the prevention of collusion between operators. Despite this, there is a mixed, and potentially confusing, picture for younger bus users that an Enhanced Partnership Scheme can help to overcome.
- 5.2.19. While operators have their own fare products, there are few examples of integrated fares across multiple operators. When using CallConnect, passengers can connect onto commercial services using the ticket purchased on CallConnect, and vice versa. This arrangement is a 'revenue where it falls' agreement where there is an acceptance of tickets on CallConnect and other local bus services but no exchange of fare revenue between operators. Other than CallConnect, all fare products provided by operators are for those individual operator's services only, and there are no integrated fares or multi-operator ticketing schemes in place at the present time – even where there are multiple services operating along the same corridor or in the same urban areas. PlusBus does exist however, enabling rail users to make onward journeys by bus.
- 5.2.20. The price of bus travel to the passenger is an important contributory factor to bus use across the County. Table 5-4 shows the average 'concessionary' fare for the Lincolnshire ENCT scheme since 2012-13. This shows that fares increased by approximately 18% between 2014-15 and 2019-20. During this same period, RPI increased by approximately 18% while operating costs for bus operators in 'the Midlands' increased by 9.1% according to the Confederation of Passenger Transport cost index<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cpt-uk.org/benefits-services/cpt-cost-index/>

**Table 5-4 Change in average ENCTS scheme bus fares in Lincolnshire**

Year	Scheme Ave Fare	%age change	CPT Cost Index	RPI
2014-15	£ 2.08			
2015-16	£ 2.11	1.0%	1.6%	2.4%
2016-17	£ 2.16	3.7%	1.6%	6.1%
2017-18	£ 2.29	10.1%	3.8%	9.6%
2018-19	£ 2.38	14.2%	5.5%	12.9%
2019-20	£ 2.46	18.0%	9.1%	14.3%
2020-21	£ 2.46	18.0%	n/a	18.1%

5.2.21. The TAS National Bus Fares Survey 2019 (see Table 5-5) broadly accords with Lincolnshire bus fares noted above, but suggests that Lincolnshire fares are in line with (or potentially a little cheaper than) the national average, despite the deeply rural nature of the county and the high operating costs. Compared to rural areas in other parts of the country however, fares in Lincolnshire are good value. In the South East of England, a single fare of £2.90 compares to £2.46 in Lincolnshire, while fares in the North West and South West of England average £2.78.

**Table 5-5 Outputs from TAS National Fares Survey 2019**

	East Midlands		National	
	Urban Areas	Rural Areas	Urban Areas	Rural Areas
Single fares	£2.45	£2.62	£2.44	£2.62
Day ticket price	£5.92	£6.63	£4.75	£6.71
Week ticket price	£21.49	£23.48	£16.72	£22.56

5.2.22. In the case of CallConnect services, the Council determines the price of fares using a distance-based zonal structure. Cash single fares range from £2.20 (2021 prices) to £4.80 for a journey between 10 and 13 miles. Discounts are offered for those purchasing a return ticket while a further discount is offered to those willing to purchase a 10-trip carnet product.

## **Bus Ticketing**

5.2.23. All local bus operators have their own ticket offer, with cash options available on all operator services. Some operators provide their own proprietary smart cards to customers, notably Stagecoach and Brylaine Travel. Mobile ticketing is available on Centrebus, Stagecoach and Delaine Buses' services, while contactless c.EMV options are available across most operators including Delaine Buses, Stagecoach and others, including on CallConnect services.

5.2.24. Contactless EMV payment options in Lincolnshire are typically 'model 1' in nature i.e. they are retail transactions of existing tickets. For the sale of single, return, day or other period tickets, the transaction is carried out once and a paper ticket issued which is used for any subsequent journeys for which the ticket is valid. There is a desire within Bus Back Better for a 'tap and cap' model to be implemented, where c.EMV card taps are aggregated at the end of the day or period and the optimal fare is determined. At the present time, this model has not been introduced due to technology limitations to allow for graduated fare scales and for capping across operators with different ETM providers and Payment Service Providers.

## **The Lincolnshire ETM Loan Scheme**

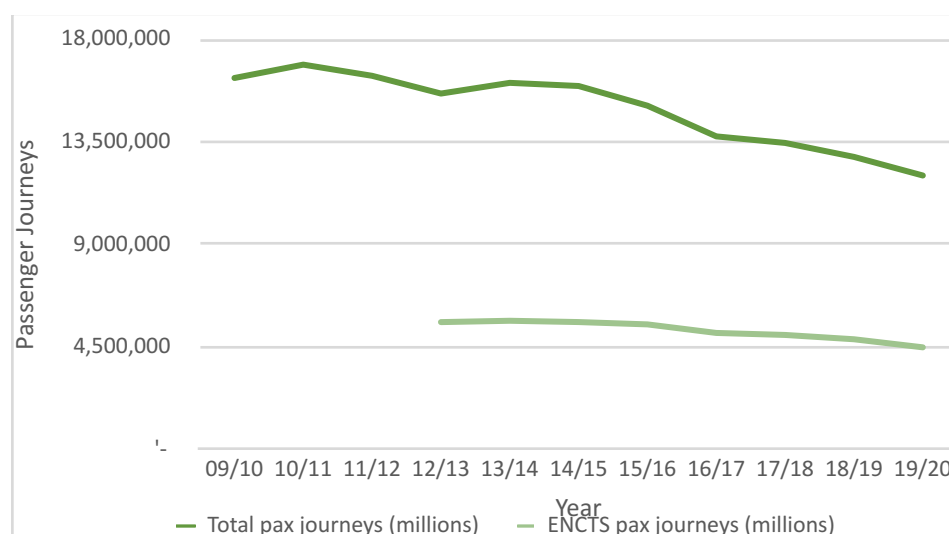
To illustrate our long history of delivering transport projects, during 2019, the County Council implemented the 'Lincolnshire ETM loan scheme' that enabled bus operators across the County to acquire modern electronic ticket machines (ETM) and other ticketing equipment through the scheme. The loan scheme, funded by the County Council, allows smaller operators who would typically not be able to afford a modern ETM and back-office system to acquire this equipment and pay a loan fee each year for a period of five years.

The scheme did not initially intend to include c.EMV readers, but due to COVID and the need to minimise cash handling, the scheme was enhanced to allow operators to acquire c.EMV readers through the scheme. 12 bus operators have acquired ETMs and offer c.EMV payments.

### 5.3. Bus Demand

5.3.1. Lincolnshire has had in place a structured local bus network for more than a decade. During this time, passenger journeys have been typically in decline as presented in Figure 5-3. Between 2010-11 and 2019-20, total bus passenger numbers in Lincolnshire declined by 28.8%. Much of that decline occurred between 2013-14 and 2019-20 as total bus passenger journeys reduced from 16.09m to 12.03m journeys. At the same time, concessionary passenger trips declined by 20.6%, suggesting that there has been a greater reduction in local bus use amongst commercial and other non-concessionary passengers.

**Figure 5-3 Local bus passenger journeys in Lincolnshire**

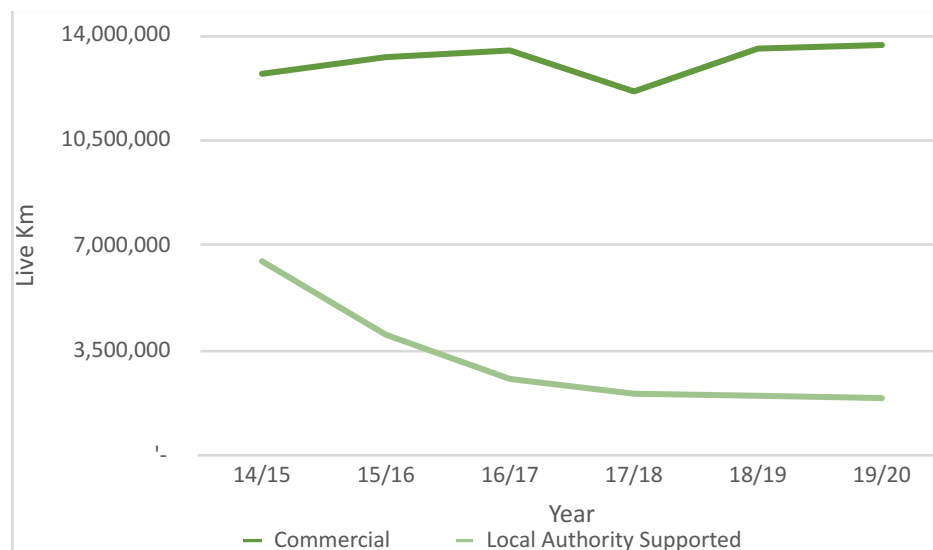


5.3.2. Figure 5-4 highlights that ENCTS passengers account for around 37.5% of all passengers using local bus services in Lincolnshire. This highlights the importance of concessionary reimbursement to operator revenues, and substantiates operator claims in recent years that concessionary reimbursement underpins the commercial network across the County.

5.3.3. Comparing passenger numbers to changes in bus mileage help to explain why there are fewer passengers on bus services across the county. Since 2014-15, despite funding levels being maintained, local authority funded kilometrage in Lincolnshire has declined around 70% from nearly 6.5m km to 1.92m km per year, as presented in Figure 5-4. This 70% reduction compares to 57% across the wider East Midlands. During the same period, commercial kilometrage in Lincolnshire increased from 12.7m km to 13.67m km while total local bus kilometrage reduced by 18.7%. During this time, total passenger numbers declined by 24.6% suggesting that the reductions in mileage have had a disproportionately negative impact on bus patronage.



**Figure 5-4 Live kilometres travelled by commercial & local authority supported services**



## 5.4. New Developments and Evolving Bus Demand

- 5.4.1. Like many other parts of the UK, Lincolnshire has a significant amount of new residential and commercial developments being planned and constructed all across the County. To encourage alternative modes and offer greater travel choice, it is essential that bus services are provided from an early stage of occupation to cater for local travel demand. Understanding where these new residential developments are located is an important first step towards providing attractive bus services.
- 5.4.2. During the engagement with District Councils and operators, discussions have been held around how the Lincolnshire EPS should manage new residential and commercial developments. There was agreement that new developments should be served by bus services from an early stage to ensure new residents do not become overly reliant on the private car from the outset of living there. In addition, there was agreement that for recently completed developments, network reviews will need to be carried out to ensure they are integrated into the bus network at the earliest opportunity.

5.4.3. The following sets out a description of the larger residential developments planned in the County:

- Stamford North – A major development crossing the County Boundary with 600 houses in Rutland and 1,400 in South Kesteven. LCC Transport Services Group is currently engaged with consultants regarding the S106 Agreement.
- Grantham Spitalgate Heath – an application was made in 2014 for 3,700 houses. This has since been designated as one of the Garden Villages.
- Grantham - Prince William of Gloucester Barracks will include up to 4,000 new houses. Initial traffic modelling indicates that the road network cannot accommodate the forecast generated traffic flows from a standard housing development. It is therefore expected that this development will need to provide significant sustainable transport improvements to meet predicted transport demand and this would include bus services.
- Lincoln Western Growth corridor – 3,200 houses proposed and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. The indicative masterplan with the outline application includes a spine road through the site which connects Skellingthorpe Road to Tritton Road with a new bridge over the railway. This spine road will have bus priority measures.
- Lincoln North East Quadrant-1,400 houses proposed and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
- Lincoln South East Quadrant-3,500 houses proposed and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (with further potential beyond that date to deliver a total of 6,000 dwellings)
- Lincoln South Western Quadrant – An urban extension for 3,000 houses near North Hykeham allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan but the development is unlikely to commence until the North Hykeham Relief Road is constructed. The development is therefore likely several years away.
- Sleaford South Quadrant (Sleaford Handley Chase) - 1,400 houses are planned and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, with S106 requests of £1M to go towards bus services. This was granted outline consent in 2014 and construction has commenced. Around 50 houses are complete, and reserve matters applications for around 400 houses have been submitted in 2021.
- Sleaford West-1,400 houses planned and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan

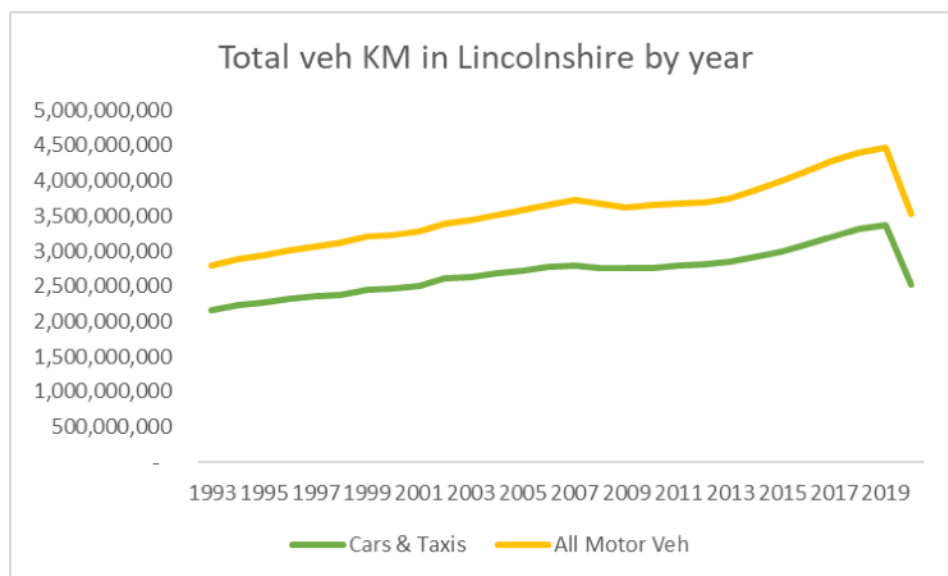
- Gainsborough North Neighbourhood-2,500 houses are planned and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
- Gainsborough South Neighbourhood-2,500 houses are planned and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
- Skegness Gateway on the A52 – new college and 900 houses planned. This is not allocated in the current Local Plan but discussions are ongoing with East Lindsey District Council and the Environment Agency due to potential coastal flood risk.
- Spalding 700 houses towards the north of the town. The planned relief road is progressing, albeit slowly.
- Gainsborough – 500 new houses planned to the south of the town centre, close to Gainsborough Lea Road rail station

5.4.4. Where appropriate, we always request S106 funding towards public transport services and infrastructure. However, this ask often competes with other requests for highway enhancements, education, health and community facilities for example. S106 contributions towards public transport measures therefore cannot be guaranteed.

## **5.5. Congestion and Traffic Levels**

5.5.1. Congestion and increasing traffic volume is a major issue for our bus services and the primary factor behind the low 'value for money' scores within the 2018 Passenger Focus survey. Traffic flow has increased across the county over recent decades. Figure 5-5 highlights the increase in vehicular traffic, which up to 2019, was 60.5% greater than in 1993. During that same period, the length of Lincolnshire's roads increased by a total of just 14.74 miles, resulting in greater levels of traffic flow on existing roads and increasing the strain across the road network.

**Figure 5-5 Total vehicle km travelled on Lincolnshire roads since 1993**



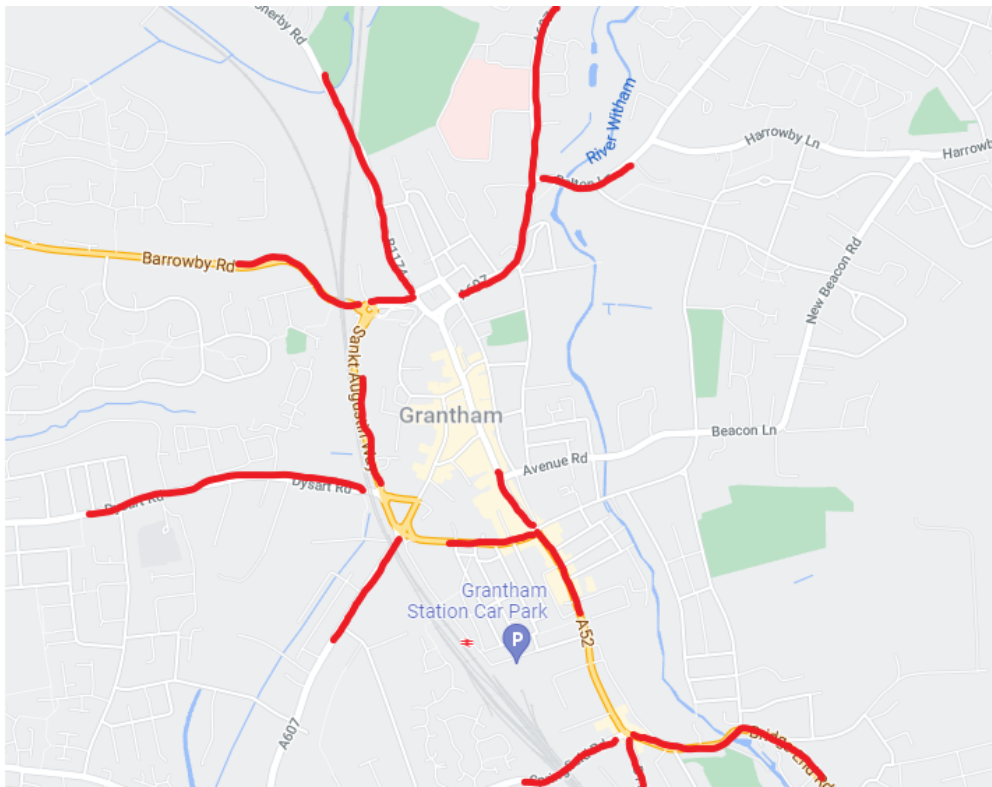
5.5.2. The impact of the increase in traffic levels has been seen across the county. The direct impact on bus services can be seen with service 6 between Birchwood Estate and Lincoln. In 1999, the service used to operate at 15-minute headways with a 45-minute round trip requiring 3 PVR. Today, the service operates at a 20-minute headway, with a round trip of 75 minutes and requires 5 PVR. Thus, two additional vehicles are required to maintain a slightly reduced level of service compared to a little over 20 years ago. With no other changes, it is evident that this has come about due to an increase in journey times brought about by increased traffic flows and congestion.

5.5.3. Figure 5-6, Figure 5-7 and Figure 5-8 show the congestion hotspots in Boston, Lincoln and Grantham respectively. The nature of congestion varies between each, although Boston and Grantham both suffer from through traffic during peak periods, while Lincoln suffers from congestion along radial routes as vehicles approach the city centre.

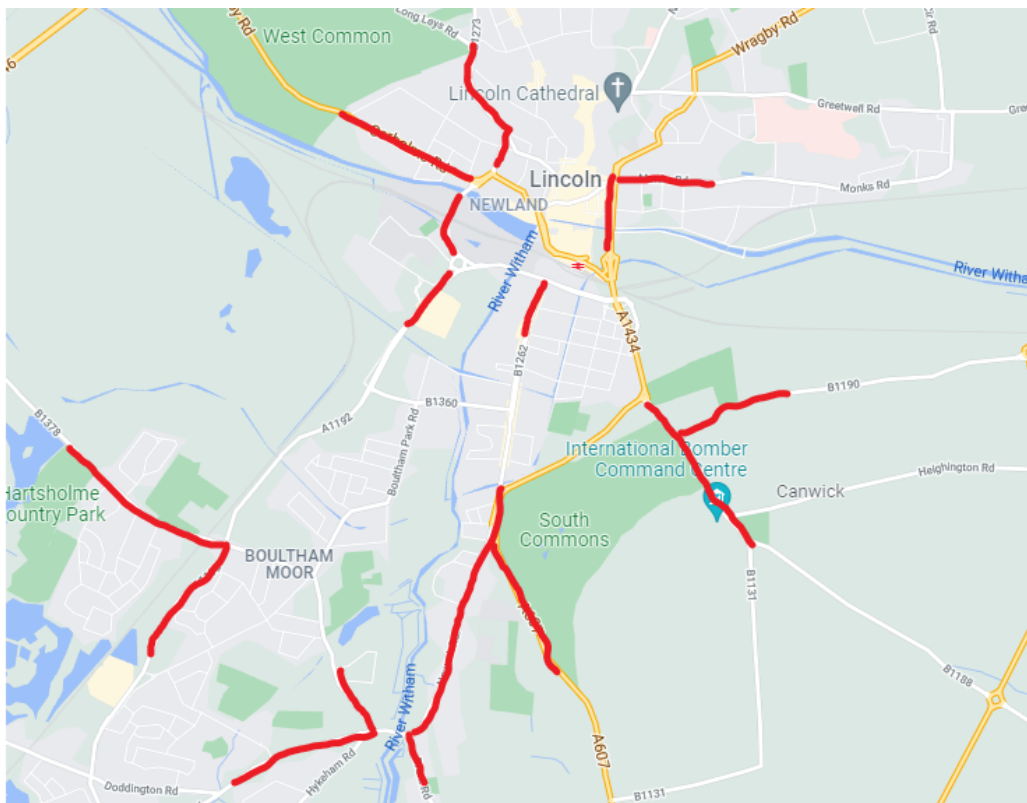
**Figure 5-6 Peak hour congestion hotspots in Boston**



**Figure 5-7 Peak hour congestion hotspots in Grantham**



**Figure 5-8 Peak hour congestion hotspots in Lincoln**



5.5.4. Traffic levels and congestion also contribute to air quality issues, particularly in our urban areas. There are a number of hotspots around the county around which there is an Air Quality Management Area established. For example, Lincoln's Air Quality Management Plan identifies that 70% of air pollution within the city comes from HGVs and buses/coaches. The highest reported annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentration in 2020 was 29.3µg/m<sup>3</sup> at the diffusion tube site 3 (Broadgate/Monks Road junction).



## 5.6. Car Parking

5.6.1. Car parking is predominantly owned and controlled by both District Councils and private operators. Lincoln – the most populous urban area within the county – has 22 off-street car parks located on the edge of the city centre. Approximately half of these car parks are owned by the City of Lincoln Council, while the remainder are owned by private operators.

5.6.2. During weekdays, there are 2,629 off-street public parking spaces available, with an additional 675 spaces provided at weekends. The pricing of car parks is targeted at different groups of car users, notably commuters (typically long stay), visitors and shoppers (typically short stay) with three pricing tiers, as presented in Table 5-6. The greatest proportion of parking spaces are charged at £8.50 for 4 or more hours, which includes the largest car park in the city – Lincoln Central. An annual season ticket is also available at this car park, charged at £1,261.70.

**Table 5-6 Car parking prices in Lincoln on weekdays**

Tier	No. of spaces	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	4+ hours
1	520	£1.50	£3.00	£4.30	£6.00	£6.00
2	1,737	£1.80	£3.40	£5.00	£6.40	£8.50
3	372	£1.90	£3.20	£5.20	£6.00	£8.80

5.6.3. For the City of Lincoln Council in particular, car parking generates a significant amount of revenue, supporting the provision of local public services. This and the required behavioural changes makes using car park reduction as a demand management tool for increasing bus usage challenging. The Lincoln Transport Strategy recognises the need to review the City's parking strategy and rebalance movement away from car usage towards walking, cycling, shared mobility and mobility hubs and this review is identified as priority by the City Council. In Lincoln, there is an aspiration to consolidate car parking and have fewer but larger more strategic parking locations in the city centre.

5.6.4. In our market towns, car parks are typically owned and controlled by District Councils. In East Lindsey (our largest geographical District including many of our coastal areas), the Council operates 46 pay and display car parks. The objectives in determining parking charges are:

- To cover the costs of their maintenance, infrastructure and management, including those of associated land and facilities available to the public
- To ensure that parking is available for people using the facilities in the town and villages by ensuring a turnover of spaces in the car parks

5.6.5. Car parks in East Lindsey generated annual revenues of £1,798,135 in 2020-21, against costs of £1,413,695. This generated a surplus of £384,440 for the District Council. The scale of revenues generated from car parking can vary depending on the location, and this typically influences the views of politicians over the role of parking in their local areas. During engagement with district council officers as part of the development of this EP Plan, there was a mixed response to the role of car parking as a demand management tool. This presents a challenge for the successful delivery of this EP Plan and highlights the need for a partnership approach.

## **5.7. Driver shortages**

5.7.1. During the autumn of 2021, bus driver shortages have had a significant impact on the delivery of bus services. Across the county, services have been reduced as operators struggle to recruit and train sufficient numbers of drivers to maintain existing service levels (which are close to 100% of pre-COVID levels). This appears to be an issue across England as the national economy rebounds following COVID-induced travel restrictions. While prominent now, in Lincolnshire this issue has existed for a number of years. Long-term solutions are required to ensure there are sufficient drivers to transport our residents and visitors.

## 5.8. Conclusions and implications for the EP Plan

- Every Lincolnshire resident has access to a local bus service. CallConnect services, in particular, provide a minimum level of mobility for all, overcoming the challenge of a sparse population throughout much of the County during core hours.
- The temporal provision of local bus services varies across the County, with evening and weekend services only in locations where there is a night time and weekend economy.
- In rural areas, local bus services are often provided to fit around school services, suggesting an efficient use of vehicles, but shows that the contracts provided by the Council for school services (as well as those provided commercially) underpin the commerciality of large swathes of the local bus network.
- Lincolnshire has a large number of operators (27) who are geographically spread across the County.
- Driver availability and recruitment, historically, and not just in recent months, has been a particular issue for all operators and threatened the existence of smaller operators in particular. A lack of drivers is a significant risk to enhancing bus services in the short and medium term, thus training and skills development within the bus industry is vital.
- Operational mileage across the county has declined, while bus patronage has also declined by almost 30% since 2009/10, highlighting the challenge to ensure services are commercially viable and sustainable.
- The average age of local buses is 13.34 years compared to the national average of 8.8 years. This reflects the commercial reality of operating bus services in Lincolnshire as operating costs are high (due to high mileage and sparse populations) while revenues are limited (partly due to high car ownership).
- Operators typically have graduated fare scales, with higher fares for longer distance journeys.
- Apart from the limited use of PlusBus, there is no formal integrated ticketing in Lincolnshire and very few integrated fares.
- Changes to bus fares illustrate the impact of congestion and the increased costs faced by operators just to maintain service levels. 'Making buses quicker' should help to support a long term real-terms reduction in fares.
- There is a mixed ticketing offer across bus operators, but c.EMV is available on most services now due to the Lincolnshire ETM lease scheme.

- There are relatively few day, week and other season tickets available at the current time, so the introduction of a tap and cap model will need to consider implementing new products.
- The provision of child and young people fares varies significantly. The age of eligibility for child fares can vary, the time at which child fares are available can vary and the discount compared to an adult fare can vary greatly across operators.
- Operators recognise that congestion impacts greatly on bus service reliability and punctuality - a long-term solution to this is to encourage younger people to use bus services instead of learning to drive a motorbike or car.
- The most recent user satisfaction surveys in Lincolnshire suggest that both punctuality and value for money are areas that Lincolnshire operators perform poorly compared to elsewhere - value for money scored low due to the effects of congestion, highlighting the need to give buses more priority.
- It is absolutely necessary to collaborate with the District Councils – who are the Planning Authorities – through this EP Plan to ensure new developments are well served by public transport, that new developments are bus friendly and that they prioritise buses over cars.
- Car parking across Lincolnshire is predominantly controlled by District Council's and private operators - this highlights the need to work in partnership to enable car parking to be used as a demand management tool.

## 6. Outcomes and targets for improvement

6.1.1. The Lincolnshire EP Plan identified a broad range of schemes and measures that are included within this EP Plan. These schemes and measures aim to:

- Increase the speed, punctuality and reliability of bus services
- Increase the number of people using bus services
- Enhance bus services to make them more attractive and better value for money for users and potential users

6.1.2. To measure the success of the EP Plan it is necessary to establish targets to ensure that the EP Plan achieves its objectives. The primary aim of the EP Plan is to get more people travelling by bus. Due to COVID-19, there are challenges in encouraging people to use buses again, not least because travel demand has changed due to changing working patterns. The first target is therefore to restore bus patronage for all commercial passengers i.e. non-ENCTS passengers to pre-COVID levels by 2023-24.

6.1.3. Achieving this target could be dependent on external factors beyond the control of the Partnership. Travel demand has fundamentally shifted over recent years as online shopping has reduced town centre footfall, while COVID has reduced demand to travel to work amongst other issues. Metrics such as town centre footfall shall therefore be reported to contextualise the impacts of measures.

6.1.4. Once patronage is restored, the next step is to grow patronage further, and most notably fare paying passengers. The second target is therefore to increase overall patronage by 8% by 2025-26. This data will be provided by operators on an aggregated basis directly from their ETM back offices. We believe this target to be a challenge, but achievable based on the enhancements this EP Plan will allow us to introduce.

6.1.5. Similar to monitoring patronage, we will evaluate the success of our measures by understanding journey time improvements on an aggregated countywide basis, as well as a localised service by service basis along corridors where bus priority and other enhancements have been made. This will give us a comprehensive understanding of the real impact of the measures delivered.

- 6.1.6. In addition to individual services, we will monitor the impact of different measures on journey times across entire towns. We have determined average journey times across all services in Lincoln, Skegness, Boston and Grantham pre-COVID and will adopt the same methodology once bus priority measures have been implemented in all four areas. Given the increase in average journey times over the past two decades, stemming the increase would be considered a success, against the backdrop of increasing car journeys and traffic congestion. However, given the bus priority measures identified within this EP Plan, we aspire to see a reduction in journey times of at least 1 minute in each of the three urban areas by 2025-26. When evaluating this metric in our annual reports we will provide traffic levels alongside the change in bus journey times to give the context of the bus operating environment.
- 6.1.7. We will also use our own PIP surveys and nationally available bus statistics to determine the proportion of non-frequent buses running on time across the County. In 2018-19, this stood at 74% in Lincolnshire, and we aim to increase this to 80% by 2023-24 and 85% by 2025-26.
- 6.1.8. Bus user satisfaction is an important metric and central to our EP Plan monitoring and evaluation plan. As identified earlier, Lincolnshire suffers from below national average satisfaction rates in both value for money and bus punctuality. Alongside overall satisfaction, these three metrics will demonstrate whether the EP Plan has been a success.
- 6.1.9. We intend for customer satisfaction surveys to be carried out in 2023-24 and 2025-26. Our target is for overall satisfaction to increase from 89% to 90% by 2023-24 and to 93% by 2025-26. Value for money targets are to increase satisfaction rates from 56% in 2028-19 to 60% in 2023-24 and 64% in 2025-26. Finally, satisfaction rates for bus punctuality are aimed to increase from 71% to 74% by 2023-24 and 78% by 2025-26.

**Table 6-1 Summary targets for improvement**

Evaluation measure	Target	Current / Latest	2023-24	2025-26	Method
<b>Bus patronage</b>	Restore pre-COVID countywide bus patronage, excl. ENCTS	12,000,000 total journeys (4,490,000 ENCTS)	12,000,000 total journeys (4,490,000 ENCTS)	n/a	Operators to provide ETM records of every passenger trip made, disaggregated by passenger type on an annual basis
	Increase countywide bus patronage by 8% compared to pre-COVID levels excl. ENCTS	7,510,000 non-ENCTS journeys	n/a	8,111,000 non-ENCTS journeys	Operators to provide ETM records of every passenger trip made, disaggregated by passenger type on an annual basis  Comparisons will be made against changes to bus mileage to assess passengers per bus mile travelled as this will indicate commercial sustainability
	Increase patronage on enhanced routes/ corridors	Services: IC 56* 1&3* IC3	10%	15%	Stagecoach & Brylaine Travel to provide ETM records of every passenger trip made, disaggregated by route to enable a route analysis and comparison to be made between those that receive enhancements and those that do not. Services without similar enhancements to be

Evaluation measure	Target	Current / Latest	2023-24	2025-26	Method
		* Patronage data provided, but redacted due to commercial sensitivity			used as a control to understand 'do nothing' situation.
<b>Journey Times</b>	Reduce journey times on corridors with bus priority	Services: IC 56* = 115min round trip 1&3* = 73min round trip 6 = 68min round trip	IC56 = 10 mins/ round trip 1&3 = 5 mins per round trip 6 = 8mins per round trip	IC56 = 10 mins/ round trip 1&3 = 5 mins per round trip 6 = 8mins per round trip	Three heavily trafficked corridors identified where bus priority will be introduced and service enhancements made. We will use timetabled information to determine changes to journey times post implementation.
	Reduce journey times in Lincoln, Skegness & Boston	Boston = 24m 25s ave. jny time Skegness = 28m 20s Lincoln = 37m 30s	1 minute (minimum) reduction in journey times	1 minute (minimum) reduction in average town-wide journey times	Average journey times for a 5-day weekday period for all journeys operating wholly within the urban area of each town.  Boston services include: IT1, IT2, IT5, IT6 & G61  Skegness services include: 1, 2, 3, 83  Lincoln services include: 6, X6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19  Future monitoring will involve providing traffic & congestion levels as context towards success against targets.



Evaluation measure	Target	Current / Latest	2023-24	2025-26	Method
	% of non-frequent buses running on time	74%*	78%	82%	National Bus Statistics will be used on a countywide basis to determine the proportion of buses running on time (1 min early – 5:59 mins late)
<b>Reliability</b>	99.5% of scheduled journeys operated	99.4%	99.5%	99.5%	All operators to provide %age of scheduled journeys operated on an annual basis
<b>Customer satisfaction</b>	Increase overall satisfaction rate to over 90%	89%**	90%	93%	Passenger surveys to be carried out in 2023/24 and 2025/26
	Increase 'value for money'	56%**	60%	64%	Passenger surveys to be carried out in 2023/24 and 2025/26
	Increase satisfaction of bus punctuality	71%**	74%	78%	Passenger surveys to be carried out in 2023/24 and 2025/26

\*DfT Bus Statistics 2018-19 \*\* 2018 Passenger Focus surveys in Lincolnshire

## 7. EP Plan Interventions

7.1.1. The partnership between the County Council, bus operators and other stakeholders has a long-standing history of successfully delivering bus service enhancements and ensuring their long-term sustainability. Our plans documented in this section are realistic, deliverable and will meet the needs of more bus users across Lincolnshire.

7.1.2. Where costs are provided, these have been calculated to include project management and staffing costs to enable the tasks to be carried out.

7.1.3. This section adopts the same structure as Bus Back Better, with the addition of 'stabilising the bus network'. The structure is as follows:

- Stabilising the bus network
- Intensive services and investment on key corridors
- Bus priority
- More 'socially necessary' services
- Fares must be lower and simpler
- Seamless, integrated local ticketing
- Service patterns integrated with other modes
- Services must be simpler and easier to understand
- Bus Information and a single system
- Give bus passengers more of a voice
- Modern buses and decarbonisation
- Traffic management and other measures

## 7.2. Stabilising the bus network

7.2.1. COVID recovery continues to be a mixed picture countywide. From April 2023 and beyond, it is likely that significant parts of the bus network will require funding to bridge gaps in revenues in order to maintain existing service levels. Without network stability support, EP Plan measures will not have their desired impact. The financial support required will likely gradually reduce over the two-year period as bus passengers return to using services.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2023	Support existing services which are commercially unviable to provide network stability

## 7.3. Intensive services and investment on key corridors

7.3.1. Two decades ago, the Lincolnshire bus network was revitalised by developing a coherent network inter-urban bus services. These provide hourly services with high quality infrastructure and information designed to enable people to travel from town to town with ease. As part of this EP Plan, provided we receive sufficient funding, we will refresh the entire InterConnect network to appear more like a Super Bus network with high levels of priority where it is needed, and with fast, efficient and good value bus services.

7.3.2. InterConnect services are the backbone of the Lincolnshire bus network linking all of our market towns. Our urban bus services, however, are integral to the efficient functioning of our urban areas and a key tool to encourage modal shift away from cars in our towns and the city of Lincoln. Fixed-route rural services also play a key role in alleviating rural isolation and linking our villages with nearby market towns. For the long-term sustainability of these services, this EP Plan has various actions that will be delivered.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities, including those living in new developments</p>	<p>Increase InterConnect frequency to half hourly, 7am-7pm, Mon – Sat, hourly on Sundays, plus early morning &amp; evening services</p> <p>Identify and construct bus layover locations in Lincoln, Sleaford, Mablethorpe and elsewhere</p> <p>Increase IntoTown and other urban service frequency to half hourly or better, 7am-7pm M-Sat, hourly on Sundays</p>
<p>To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability</p>	<p>Bus lane feasibility studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Broadgate, Lincoln</li> <li>● High Street, Lincoln</li> <li>● Roman Bank, Skegness</li> <li>● Others to be identified</li> </ul> <p>Detailed design and construction of bus lanes where feasible</p> <p>Implement traffic light priority at all Scoot junctions</p> <p>Reduce 'lateness trigger' in Scoot to make buses quicker</p>
<p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p> <p>To reduce all physical barriers to public transport use</p> <p>To reduce barriers to public transport use through high quality information</p>	<p>Newer buses (operators to invest as services enhanced)</p> <p>Upgrade bus interiors, WiFi &amp; USB charging, on-bus next stop displays, CCTV on all buses</p> <p>Upgrade bus stop infrastructure – stops, shelters, real time information, raised kerbs, street lighting</p> <p>Quality corridor arrangements where services compete, with co-ordinated timetables and integrated ticketing</p> <p>Communications &amp; marketing</p>

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions from transport	Retrofit buses with emission capture technologies
<p>To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability</p> <p>To increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities, including those living in new developments</p>	<p>Bus network reviews in all urban areas including: Boston, Grantham, Sleaford, Spalding, Stamford, Skegness Lincoln &amp; Gainsborough amongst other areas – reviews to consider new developments</p> <p>Engage with employers and trip attractors to ensure commercial network meets their needs, and supports a strong network for all</p>
To increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities, including those living in new developments	New residential developments served by enhanced bus services to discourage car reliance – funding required to pump prime new services & adapt existing services where S106 funding is absent or insufficient
To support economic growth and the levelling up of our more deprived communities through improving access for all to education, employment health and leisure	Identify locations to integrate bus services with mainline rail stations – early morning & evening IntoTown services to connect with London rail services in Grantham and Spalding
To improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions from transport	Electric bus demonstration project in Boston or Grantham (tbc). Identify how electric buses can reduce operating costs and ensure long term viability of bus services
To reduce barriers to public transport use through attractive fares and tickets	Ticketing will be revamped with day tickets introduced in defined areas, & multi operator ticketing where multiple operators. Introduce contactless capping to speed up boarding times & improve journey time reliability, including multi operator capping once technology allows

## 7.4. Bus priority

7.4.1. Bus priority is essential to provide faster and reliable bus services. In our urban areas, traffic congestion impacts on bus journey times and reliability, and to attract more people to bus services, it is essential that we provide greater levels of priority for buses. There are only limited examples of bus lanes in Lincolnshire today, most notably:

- Roman Bank in Skegness
- High Street, Lincoln

7.4.2. However, the bus lanes that we have are typically short or intermittent, resulting in delays when having to re-join traffic flows. Feasibility and design work will be undertaken on the scope of completing and extending these existing sections of bus priority.

7.4.3. There are on-going transport projects, most notably in Lincoln, where bus priority is being considered. Wigford Way – a key route linking the bus and rail station with the shortest radial route out of the city – has been identified as an important route for bus services should a modal interchange hub be implemented to the west of the city centre. Where these opportunities arise, this EP Plan will be updated to identify the role that bus priority can play along such routes.

7.4.4. In addition to bus lanes, we have junction priority for late running buses at some of our Scoot enabled junctions. Bus priority has not been activated at all junctions to date, but it is technically possible, so enabling this facility at all locations is an integral part of our EP Plan to make buses quicker. Bus priority can also be provided at all non-Scoot signal controlled junctions

7.4.5. Giving buses greater levels of priority comes in many different forms. Through engaging with operators and other stakeholders as part of developing this EP Plan, we have identified a large number of pinch points and areas where small changes to highway or junction layouts, can have a significant positive impact on bus movements. Much work needs to go in to each individual scheme, but pinch points to review include, but are not limited to the following:

- North Street, Bourne (between Burghley Street and Market Place)
- High Street, Market Deeping (Godsey Lane-Mkt Place)
- West Street, Boston (around the bus station)
- Tattershall Road, Boston
- Market Place, Spilsby
- Market Place, Horncastle
- Witham Road, Woodhall Spa

- Sea Lane, Skegness

7.4.6. To resolve these pinch points a variety of options will be examined to identify the optimal solution in each case. This could involve clearways, red routes, moving parking spaces, street furniture, trees, kerbs amongst other options. In each case, we will carry out appropriate engagement with the local community and political representatives.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability</p>	<p>Subject to feasibility, completion of the inbound Roman Bank (Skegness) bus lane so that it is continuous</p> <p>Subject to feasibility, extension of the inbound Lincoln High Street bus lane</p> <p>Subject to feasibility, Broadgate corridor in bound bus lane towards the bus station (Lincoln)</p> <p>Identify other bus lane and priority opportunities in areas of high congestion and bus journey delay – develop business cases</p> <p>Implement traffic light priority at all available Scoot and non-Scoot junctions</p> <p>Reduce ‘lateness trigger’ at all traffic signal-controlled junctions to make buses quicker</p> <p>In market towns and our larger rural villages we will study pinch points &amp; identify optimal solutions. Clearways, ‘red routes’, changes to parking provision (to help reduce indiscriminate parking) and the moving of street furniture will all play a role in enabling buses to move through our market towns and villages with greater freedom and less delay</p>

## 7.5. More 'socially necessary' and DRT services

- 7.5.1. Lincolnshire already has a strong DRT offer with its CallConnect DRT network with over 30 vehicles operating six days a week, 12 hours a day. CallConnect provides every Lincolnshire resident (except for a small area of Lincoln where commercial bus and Dial a Ride services already fulfil that role) with access to the essential services in their local area.
- 7.5.2. CallConnect complements the commercial fixed route bus network as it operates at times and in areas where fixed route services do not serve. Where longer journeys are required, connections are guaranteed with main bus routes at interchange points.
- 7.5.3. Whilst the CallConnect service receives largely positive feedback from passengers and a high satisfaction rating of over 98%, the service at times is a victim of its own success with a level of unmet demand due to the limited vehicle resources available in any one area. This is defined by the budget available to operate the service. Due to this, CallConnect customers currently have to pre-book every journey, often days in advance to secure a journey especially at peak times. This is not an attractive customer proposition for some of Lincolnshire's residents especially the younger demographic who would prefer a more responsive and real-time offer. In addition, CallConnect services operate 7am until 7pm Monday to Saturday, preventing people from travelling early morning, late evening and Sundays using this mode of transport.
- 7.5.4. The majority of CallConnect contracts currently in place utilise eight-seater vehicles to provide registered DRT services. This opens the market up to taxi operators and other transport providers. It also allows services to access the county's small hamlets and remote locations.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To support economic growth and the levelling up of our more deprived communities through improving access for all to education, employment health and leisure</p> <p>To reduce rural isolation through more available and usable bus services</p>	<p>Enhance the CallConnect offer through purchase of additional vehicles and roll out across the network</p> <p>Develop and trial a new app-based booking platform with dynamic routes scheduling, enabling passengers to book a service within 30 minutes of travel</p> <p>Increase operating hours by 4 hours a day (7-11pm) and introduce Sunday services. We will identify where earlier services (pre-7am) would support movements to employment centres and provide these if there is demand</p>



EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
	<p>Pilot urban DRT services at times of lower demand such as evenings and Sundays when commercial and/or conventional services are not viable</p> <p>DRT services will be included in countywide fares initiatives and will provide integrated ticketing with other bus and rail services when this is rolled out more widely</p> <p>Review CallConnect branding whilst maintaining the heritage and excellent reputation</p>
<p>For buses to contribute to the quality of place across Lincolnshire</p> <p>To support economic growth and the levelling up of our more deprived communities through improving access for all to education, employment health and leisure</p> <p>To reduce all physical barriers to public transport use</p>	<p>Work with communities and local businesses to identify industrial/employment areas which may benefit from DRT provision</p> <p>Promote the enhanced DRT services with particular target marketing where take up is currently poor e.g. the youth &amp; eastern-European community</p> <p>We will also market the service more widely to support the night time economy across the County, as well as employment sites which operate different shift patterns</p> <p>Explore options and feasibility of a Total Transport approach particularly in relation to health and Adult Social Care provision</p>

## **7.6. Fares must be lower, better value and simpler**

7.6.1. Lincolnshire is a large county with a sparse population. This leads to high mileage (and operating costs) and a customer base that is spread out, many with alternative means of travel. For bus services to be sustainable fares must – as a minimum - meet operating costs plus provide some form of profit margin. Without it, operators require financial support from the County Council or cease to operate that service.

7.6.2. To encourage operators to reduce fares, there are four options available to us:

1. Subsidise fares directly with public funds – this requires a long-term commitment from the Council and will, in all likelihood, be unsustainable in the medium term
2. Reduce operating costs so operators can reflect this in reduced prices for customers
3. Increase revenues from fare paying passengers by attracting more people onto bus services, making services better value for money and enabling a greater number of people to pay slightly less than at present
4. Increase competition so operators are encouraged to minimise fares

7.6.3. We don't believe that option 1 is sustainable. The approach is not supported by operators and without the long-term commitment of funding through the EP Plan, subsidies are likely to be a short-term initiative with fares reverting to their typical level at a later date. This creates a fluctuating level of bus service which confuses the user and reduces their trust in services. This in turn is likely to encourage car ownership and car use. Such an approach will likely discourage bus users as they are faced with a significant price increase in the long term.

7.6.4. Option 4 is unrealistic given that there is little direct competition between bus operators due to the operational footprint and geographical conditions in Lincolnshire, with the main competition coming from private cars and taxis. Options 2 and 3, if implemented through the EP Plan, can complement one another, and both can help support a long-term real terms reduction in fares. In addition, better value fares can also be introduced to enable more travel for the same price to make bus services more attractive and drive patronage (and farebox) growth.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To support a reduction in operating costs through an efficient use of resources</p> <p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p> <p>To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability</p>	<p>Prioritise bus service enhancements and bus priority measures initially where they can demonstrably reduce operating costs</p>
<p>To recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2023</p>	<p>Engage with Boston College to create and provide bus driver training courses, as well as courses for other bus industry roles. This supports operators to manage the current driver shortage, whilst providing a more skilled workforce across the county – see details below.</p> <p>To increase operator revenues, we will deliver the initiatives detailed in this EP Plan that make bus services more attractive. This includes: enhanced service provision, more attractive and accessible vehicles, improved bus stop infrastructure, more comprehensive and accessible bus information, integrated ticketing, managing car parking amongst other initiatives. All of these measures will support fares being suppressed or reduced.</p>

## **Driver/transport training with Boston College**

- 7.6.5. All bus operators in Lincolnshire have identified a lack of qualified drivers as a significant challenge for their business and training and recruiting new drivers is carried out at a significant cost. This is a long-standing issue, and not just one that is being seen nationally at this moment in time. This EP Plan identifies a long-term solution to these challenges.
- 7.6.6. In January 2021, the government announced a new White Paper – Skills for Jobs - which outlines the ambition of strengthened, purposeful links between employers and further education providers. By positioning employers from the transport industry at the heart of defining local skills needs, Boston College is well-placed to deliver on this promise for the benefit of Lincolnshire's transport infrastructure. The proposal in partnership with the County Council is to develop and provide a bespoke and holistic training academy to meet the skills shortage in a variety of roles from driving and passenger assistance to maintenance incorporating electric and hybrid electric vehicle technologies. From April 2023, with the support of EP Plan funding, we will meaningfully engage with the College to train local people to work in the bus industry and critically, to professionalise these roles as a key career choice through the college's links with primary and secondary educational settings. Courses will range from driver training to mechanical and digital maintenance to passenger assistance, not only providing core elements of compliance but crucially, an enhanced offer to ensure that Lincolnshire's operatives are considered the 'best in class' for passenger safety, service and support. As an example, the driver training programme will commence with a 'Ready to Roll' course designed to determine an applicant's appropriateness for the job and their 'drive to drive' using an intensive 'sector skills work academy' approach. This will test a candidate not only on their driving abilities but also their individual aptitude for the role in terms of responses to professionalism and personal performance. The academy will also offer bespoke commercial training, apprenticeships for drivers and maintenance crew and short courses aimed at passenger support assistants.

- 7.6.7. By harnessing the strong synergies between existing courses and those that could meet the needs of the bus services in Lincolnshire, the partnership proposal will provide our workforce, including young people, with relevant and much-needed skills alongside a rich source of workplace opportunities during or once their courses are complete. In addition, it provides our bus operators with a pool of potential drivers, passenger assistants and other qualified roles within the local bus industry thereby reducing disruptions to service and providing a consistently first-class offer to all customers. The unwavering training standard for staff emerging from the academy will be a critical factor in achieving a key outcome of the bid – to encourage consumers to return to and use public transport through meeting exacting expectations of service.
- 7.6.8. We have also engaged with Grimsby College who are interested in developing a similar offer, using their driving simulators and other facilities to support the training of bus drivers. We will look to work with Grimsby College – which also has a campus in Skegness – to develop this to enable the training of more bus industry personnel across the breadth of the county.

## **7.7. Seamless, integrated local ticketing**

- 7.7.1. We will move towards a tap and cap model to enable contactless and mobile phone payments across all operator's services. Having rolled out an LTA sponsored ETM lease scheme project in 2019, all local bus operators now have an ETM and can accept contactless payments. However, this is solely on a retail model and not on a tap and cap basis.
- 7.7.2. We have identified a roadmap to deliver a tap and cap model with numerous stages required before it can be rolled out. This will involve:
1. Introduction of multi-trip day tickets for operators that do not offer them
  2. Introducing single operator day tickets in defined geographic areas surrounding each of our market towns.
  3. Introduction of a Lincolnshire Rover multi-operator ticket to enable travel across the County in a given day or week. This will act as the maximum day cap for when travel occurs outside of a single urban area.

4. Develop a multi-operator offer with a minimal price premium to the single operator offer (commercial arrangements tbc). This will act as the multi-operator cap price for travel within an individual urban area once a tap and cap model is introduced. Current constraints to delivering multi-operator capping are technological as c.EMV capping is not possible at the current time across multiple ETM providers and Payment Service Providers. It is envisaged that during the delivery period of this EP Plan, this barrier will be overcome with either the Midlands Connect (Regional Broker) solution, or an alternative national solution.
5. Work with operators to install tap out readers on buses which will enable accurate fares to be calculated for every passenger and single operator caps to be introduced. Over time, and once technology allows, multi operator capping will be rolled out across Lincolnshire using the tap and cap model.

7.7.3. As the ticketing roadmap is delivered, we will work with operators to provide some consistency to young people's tickets. There is a broad range of child and young person policies amongst bus operators in Lincolnshire which is confusing for the user. As part of the EP Plan, we will work to broker all operators seeking to align child fares in terms of the age of eligibility, the availability of child and young person fares at different times of day and a little more consistency in terms of the discount compared to the adult fare. Operators have committed to examining aligning policies as much as is practical.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To increase bus user satisfaction rates	Work with operators to introduce multi-trip day tickets across all towns, with defined geographic areas
To reduce barriers to public transport use through attractive fares and tickets	<p>Work with operators to deliver a Lincolnshire Rover countywide ticket</p> <p>Work with operators to deliver multi-operator tickets within all of our market towns</p>
To provide efficient multi-modal connectivity between our rail, bus and other transport networks to connect Lincolnshire with the East Midlands and beyond	<p>Install tap-out readers on all buses and introduce single and multi-operator capping</p> <p>Marketing and promotion of new ticketing options</p> <p>Look to align young person and child fare policies across all operators</p>

## 7.8. Service patterns integrated with other modes

- 7.8.1. Integration of bus services with other modes will take many forms in Lincolnshire. The County Council and District Councils have invested in interchange facilities across the County over the past decade. In Skegness – as part of the Go Skegness project - the bus/rail interchange has been a significant success, reinvigorating an area that suffered from anti-social behaviour while in Lincoln, the bus station was rebuilt in 2018 and provides much improved facilities, including good connections with the rail station.
- 7.8.2. The County Council has also invested heavily over recent years to provide rural hubs that enable bus to bus interchange.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p> <p>To provide efficient multi-modal connectivity between our rail, bus and other transport networks to connect Lincolnshire with the East Midlands and beyond</p> <p>To support a reduction in operating costs through an efficient use of resources</p> <p>For buses to contribute to the quality of place across Lincolnshire</p>	<p>Integrate bus services with rail stations, focussing on aligning bus timetables with rail timetables for specific trains to key locations such as London</p> <p>In villages where residential developments are a distance from the local bus stop, provide secure cycle parking adjacent to the bus stop to enable people to bike and ride. Initial sites will be along the service 101 corridor including Morton, Northorpe, Thurlby, Baston and Langtoft</p> <p>Roll out bike and ride concept more widely if successful. This initiative can benefit scholars going to school and reduce the need for the school run by parents whose children are not entitled to free school transport.</p> <p>Develop plans for modal interchange hubs around Lincoln, Skegness &amp; Mablethorpe to encourage interchange from car to sustainable modes to reduce and minimise the negative external impacts of cars</p> <p>Explore potential for modal interchange hubs in Grantham, Boston and other market towns, including where convenient pocket park and ride sites can be identified.</p> <p>Work with independent transport commissioners such as colleges and large employers to encourage travel on the commercial network. Understand their needs and explore ways in which travel can be provided efficiently</p> <p>Actively promote PlusBus tickets through Council and operator media channels more widely across the County in order to encourage more multi-modal journeys across the county</p>



## 7.9. Services must be simpler and easier to understand

- 7.9.1. Making bus services easier to understand is important, but we recognise that route numbers or names have existed for a long time and are well understood by users. It is essential that any changes to simplify services builds on what works well, rather than making changes for the sake of it. Collaborating with each and every operator is therefore an integral part of our policy.
- 7.9.2. As the EP Plan is delivered and services are enhanced on a corridor-by-corridor basis, we will work with operators to brand and market each enhanced service to raise awareness of the services. As part of this process, we will consider whether the services require a change to their route number or an entire re-branding, with the ultimate aim to make services easier to understand for non-bus users and make them more attractive.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2023	Develop a marketing and communications strategy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support post-COVID return to buses</li> <li>● Present a positive message about bus services</li> <li>● Raise awareness of bus service enhancements</li> </ul>

## 7.10. Bus Information and a single system

- 7.10.1. One of the potential inefficiencies of a deregulated bus market is the fact that bus operators provide information about their own services, but not for other operators. We therefore have a system where operators work in silos and the bus network appears fragmented. To overcome this, there is scope to provide service information for all operators in one, easy to access location. The County Council has attempted to do this in the past, and implemented the LincsBus.info website. However, while the website is functional, it is perhaps not as intuitive or user friendly as some other options on the market. There is also demand for providing this information in a mobile application to improve accessibility to that information for those who use mobile phones.

7.10.2. It is not only bus information that can make the Lincolnshire bus network appear disparate. Infrastructure, in terms of bus stops and bus shelters, provided across the county can vary in quality and with little consistency from one area to another. At present, around 15% of Lincolnshire’s bus stops have raised kerbs enabling level boarding and alighting from buses. This is inadequate and requires a focussed effort to raise the standard of bus stop infrastructure around the county. There will be a need to take local circumstances into account in the delivery of bus stop and interchange improvements such as conservation areas, available space etc and a priority order for implementation across the county will be developed.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p> <p>To reduce barriers to public transport use through high quality information</p> <p>To reduce rural isolation through more available and usable bus services</p> <p>To reduce all physical barriers to public transport use</p>	<p>Explore options and agree the most appropriate means of presenting comprehensive bus information in a customer focussed way for all services and operators</p> <p>Explore and agree an appropriate app-based solution to enable bus users to access real time information, purchase tickets etc.</p> <p>Carry out an audit of all bus stop infrastructure countywide</p>
<p>To support the perception of travelling safely by public transport</p>	<p>Develop bus stop and shelter standards in conjunction with operators. Standards will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bus stop flags</li> <li>● Information/RTI</li> <li>● Raised kerbs</li> <li>● Shelters &amp; waiting areas</li> <li>● Lighting &amp; CCTV</li> </ul>

## 7.11. Give bus passengers more of a voice

7.11.1. We have engaged with bus users and non-bus users as a key part of compiling this EP Plan, providing them with an opportunity to identify their priorities for enhancing bus services. The two main priorities for our residents are more frequent services and better information at bus stops, and these are fully recognised within this EP Plan.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To ensure users have a say in how bus services are provided</p> <p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p>	<p>Formal consultation with users and non-users during preparation of the EP Plan and EP Scheme</p> <p>Include a 'feedback' function when developing the mobile app to obtain views and feedback. Data to be analysed regularly and feed in to EP Board discussions in order to update EP Plan and EP Plan in future</p> <p>Continue to offer 'fix my street' to enable residents to report issues with bus infrastructure</p> <p>Bus operators have developed a Passenger Charter, setting out operator commitments to bus users so they know what they can expect whenever they use buses. Failure to meet the standards will necessitate an offending operator to rectify any issues identified and report back to the user.</p>

## 7.12. Modern buses and decarbonisation

7.12.1. Buses in Lincolnshire are typically older than the national average. This is not the case for all operators – some operate newer vehicles – but overall, vehicles are typically between 13 and 14 years old. The reason for older buses is simple, operators face high operating costs due to long distances, alongside relatively low revenues due to operating within a sparsely populated county which has high levels of car ownership. The bus user market is therefore limited, a situation that this EP Plan aims to change. With high costs and limited revenues, an ability to invest in new vehicles is challenging for operators, particularly when the cost of low or zero emission buses is much greater than new diesel buses.

7.12.2. To overcome these challenges, it is necessary to develop a roadmap to include short term measures that have an instant impact on air quality, medium term measures of trialling zero emission buses to understand how they can be introduced in Lincolnshire, and long-term measures of replacing the existing fleet with low and zero emission buses entirely.

7.12.3. Our outline roadmap is below.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions from transport	<p>Develop and finalise decarbonisation roadmap for Lincolnshire</p> <p>Retrofit emission capture technologies on most polluting buses. Priority will be given to those buses operating in sensitive areas – Air Quality Management Areas, other urban areas and near schools</p> <p>Raise County Council requirements for contracted services to minimum of Euro 4 or Euro 5</p> <p>Electric bus trial in Boston or Grantham – feasibility study</p> <p>Support operators to purchase new(er) and less polluting vehicles through delivery of measures to enhance service levels, infrastructure etc as detailed in this EP Plan</p>

## 7.13. Traffic management and other measures

7.13.1. We have identified a number of traffic management projects that would benefit bus services.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability	Identify locations for vehicle loading restrictions, and implement TROs where it supports free flowing bus services
To increase bus user satisfaction rates	Examine the potential for electronic parking messages on approach to Skegness and other seaside resorts to reduce cars searching for spaces. Deliver where feasible.
To support a reduction in operating costs through an efficient use of resources	Studies to reduce indiscriminate parking in market towns

## 8. Impact of the EP Plan on neighbouring areas

8.8.1. We do not consider that there will be any material impacts of the measures and facilities included within the initial EP Scheme on neighbouring areas.

## 9. EP Plan delivery through an EP Scheme

9.1.1. The EP Scheme will assist with the delivery of the policies and achieving the objectives set out within the EP Plan. The initial EP Scheme provides both a framework for implementation of the EP Plan through the governance arrangements set out in section 5 of the EP Scheme, and also implements a number of measures and requirements which start implementation of the EP Plan. In particular:

- Existing and new bus stop infrastructure
- Existing bus lanes
- Traffic light priority
- Managing roadworks in the EP Scheme Area
- All-operator bus information
- Maintaining Fix My Street
- Promoting PlusBus
- Adherence to the Lincolnshire Bus Passenger Charter
- Vehicle Standards
- Operator Information Provision

9.1.2. Whilst these facilities, measures and standards are only a small part of the matters which it is intended to deliver through the EP Scheme, they reflect those matters which are able to be delivered early in the scheme, and which are not dependent upon further funding. The EP Scheme includes a variation mechanism allowing the parties to vary the EP Scheme when new funding becomes available and/or where agreement is reached as to how further objectives of the EP Plan are to be delivered, and therefore the initial EP Scheme also provides a framework for delivery of further elements of the EP Plan where the County Council and relevant operators agree to such further facilities, measures and/or standards and where funding is made available, including any DfT funding.



Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln, LN1 1YL

T: 01522 552222 [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk)