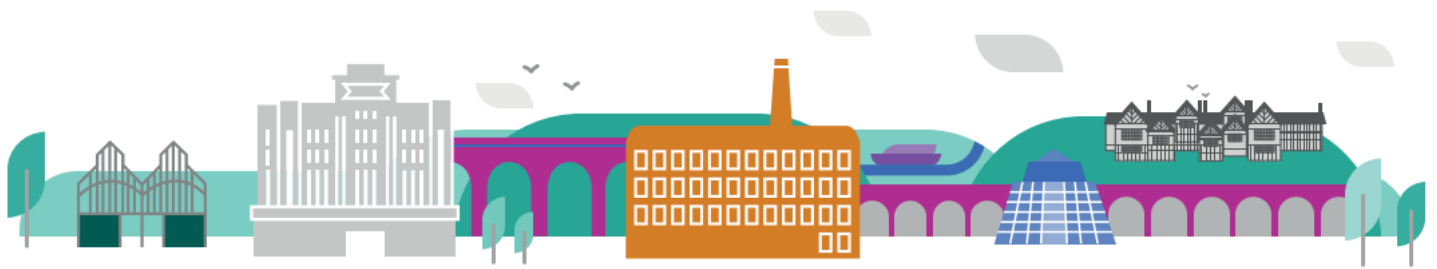


Stockport Transport Strategy 2026-2042

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consultation Draft

Autumn 2026



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Ambitious Stockport,
creating opportunities
for everyone**

Foreword

Stockport is a borough on the rise, ambitious, fast-changing and confident about the future. Across our towns and neighbourhoods, we are creating a cleaner, greener and better-connected place where people, communities and businesses can thrive.

This Transport Strategy sets out how we will turn that ambition into reality, delivering a modern transport network that powers opportunity, supports vibrant communities and makes everyday journeys easier, safer and more reliable.

Our vision is bold and clear: a transport system that puts people first, connects communities, unlocks growth and helps create healthier, more sustainable lives.

At the heart of this Strategy are seven ambitious objectives that will help shape the future of the borough, driving investment, improving connectivity and supporting long-term transformation across Stockport.

We will strengthen Stockport's role as the Southern Gateway to Greater Manchester, including providing a transformed Stockport Station at the heart of a thriving town centre, with better accessibility and step-free access helping more people travel with ease and confidence.

We will improve rail connectivity across Stockport with the delivery of more step free access at stations and the New Cheadle Station which will provide intercity and interurban rail travel to the west of the borough.

The confirmed extension of Metrolink to Stockport is a once-in-a-generation opportunity, a transformational investment that will reshape how people move across the borough and beyond eventually expanding into the wider borough through Tram-Train. By connecting Stockport to the wider Bee Network, it will deliver faster, greener and more joined-up journeys while unlocking new opportunities for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

We will improve sustainable connections to Manchester Airport and the Southern Growth Corridor, support growth along key routes including the A6, A34 and A560, and ensure more people can access jobs, education and opportunity quickly and easily.

Closer to home, we want walking, cycling and public transport to become the natural first choice for local journeys across Stockport, creating healthier streets, safer neighbourhoods and stronger connections between communities, schools, town centres and local high streets. Stockport is already gaining national recognition for this approach, leading the way on active travel through landmark schemes such as our award-winning Interchange development and the Bramhall Park to A6 route, projects that are changing how people experience and move around the borough.

Safety remains central to everything we do. Alongside investment in infrastructure, our dedicated road safety teams support thousands of schoolchildren every year, helping young people build the confidence and skills to travel safely and independently.

Above all, this Strategy is about shaping a transport network fit for the future: decarbonised, resilient, reliable, supporting economic growth especially in areas experiencing deprivation, and built around the needs of people and place.

By delivering this vision, we will reduce emissions, improve air quality and create healthier, better-connected communities, while supporting the borough's continued growth and ambition.

Together, we can create a transport system that not only meets the needs of today, but helps power a more ambitious, connected and sustainable future for Stockport.



Councillor Grace Baynham

Cabinet Member for Parks, Highways & Transport Services

What is the Stockport Transport Strategy?

The Stockport Transport Strategy presents our long-term plan for the development of transport infrastructure and maintenance priorities within the borough.

Better connectivity is critical to help us; sustain our economic growth ambitions, deliver more houses, address inequalities, and tackle problems of congestion. The Strategy and related plan will also help the transport sector contribute to a more sustainable and lower carbon economy.

This Strategy makes the case for more investment in transport infrastructure across Stockport. It complements the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2050 but with further local detail on the investment priorities that we feel are most important for our Borough.



What issues does the Strategy need to address?

The Transport Strategy has been developed in response to the issues and challenges we face. These include:

- A network which is under stress. Most of our road network, and other highway infrastructure such as our drainage systems, date back to the 19th century. The infrastructure we still rely on was constructed for a different age.
- Increasing congestion, with traffic levels returning to pre-pandemic levels. This creates unreliable journeys, stress for drivers, disruption for bus users and deters active travel users.
- The need to provide residents with transport alternatives to car ownership, to provide the ability to get around, and to access opportunities, jobs and skills. Supporting areas of the borough with low car ownership and encouraging sustainable transport decisions.
- The need for better connectivity across the borough, including within the Airport and Southern Growth Corridor, to support the region's transformational economic growth ambitions and the requirements placed on us to deliver more housing.
- The need to make travel safer. User safety and security continues to be a priority across all parts of our transport network.
- The need to reduce the environmental impact of transport, including reducing greenhouse gases and carbon emissions. We must help people move towards electric vehicles.

- The need to connect to Metrolink. Whilst Stockport benefits from the connectivity to the West Coast Main Line railway and to the M60 motorway, we are not connected to the Greater Manchester tram network.
- The need to improve our bus connections. Our bus services are part of the Bee Network. Now we need to see the network develop to provide the essential, affordable orbital and neighbourhood connections which rail lines do not offer.
- The need to increase the ease and safety of walking and cycling, whilst recognising that these modes of travel are not right for everybody or for every journey that needs to be made. We must make it safer for people to get around their local neighbourhoods without speeding vehicles and poor infrastructure creating barriers.

And what are the opportunities?

There has never been a more exciting time to be in Stockport. From its recognition as the “Best Place to Live in the North West” by The Sunday Times Best Places to Live Guide in 2024, to groundbreaking regeneration projects and cultural milestones, Stockport’s evolution shows no signs of slowing down.

We have opened Stockport Interchange and Viaduct Park, key milestones in the town’s £1 billion regeneration journey. We are continuing with our headline-grabbing regeneration within the town centre, and our district centres are flourishing too – bucking the national trend of declining high streets.

We are now looking ahead in light of the plans that are developing around the Airport and Southern Growth Corridor, the Greater Manchester Strategy, the new Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2050, and our One Stockport: One Future plan, as well as our Local Plan.

We must understand what we require from the transport system, both today and into the future as we succeed, to enable greater prosperity for our people and businesses.

A good transport system is going to be crucial for the social and economic vitality of Stockport, enabling journeys to be made safely, healthily, efficiently, with predictable journey times, whilst making a significant contribution to Stockport’s response and resilience to the climate emergency.



Our approach will be guided by our Strategy Vision and Objectives.

These will help the Council in shaping our plans and monitoring our progress, whilst helping ensure we remain closely aligned to the priorities set by TfGM in the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2050.

VISION

“Providing a transport system which is cleaner and greener, positively supports the social and economic vitality of Stockport, and enables more journeys to be made safely, comfortably, efficiently and in ways which reduces the impact travel has on the climate and our environment.”

OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen Stockport town centre’s role as the Southern Gateway into Greater Manchester and the North, supported by the redevelopment of Stockport rail station to create a modern and fully integrated multi-modal national, regional and local transport hub.
- Develop and strengthen sustainable transport connections to and within the Airport and Southern Growth Corridor, to promote significant economic growth and regeneration for Stockport and Greater Manchester, and to secure active travel and public transport benefits.
- Use sustainable transport to improve access to jobs, services and opportunities, particularly in vulnerable and poorly connected communities.
- Identify and develop sustainable infrastructure and transport services that support a growing and thriving borough.
- Develop and deliver multi modal transport solutions that improve the performance of the borough’s key transport corridors and enable future innovation in mobility and logistics.
- Support sustainable local journeys within, and between, neighbourhoods, to local centres and schools, and to Stockport town centre and our borough district centres.
- Develop a well-maintained, decarbonised, resilient, safe and reliable local transport system with travel times that encourage all modes.

In such a way as to :

- Reduce the impact our travel has on the climate and our environment; and
- Improve the quality of our neighbourhoods and streets, supporting our communities to become more appealing places to live, work, visit and invest.



What are we proposing?

The Transport Strategy identifies proposals to improve our roads, public transport services, walking, wheeling, and cycling networks. Working with Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), we are committed to the roll out of the Bee Network, which will increasingly offer real-world benefits for our residents and communities by providing a more connected, affordable and accessible integrated transport system. We are also focused on ensuring we can maintain our existing assets to a high standard to ensure they are always usable.

Our Transport Strategy (and Delivery Plan) sets out our ambitions for the transport system organised into 9 topic areas:

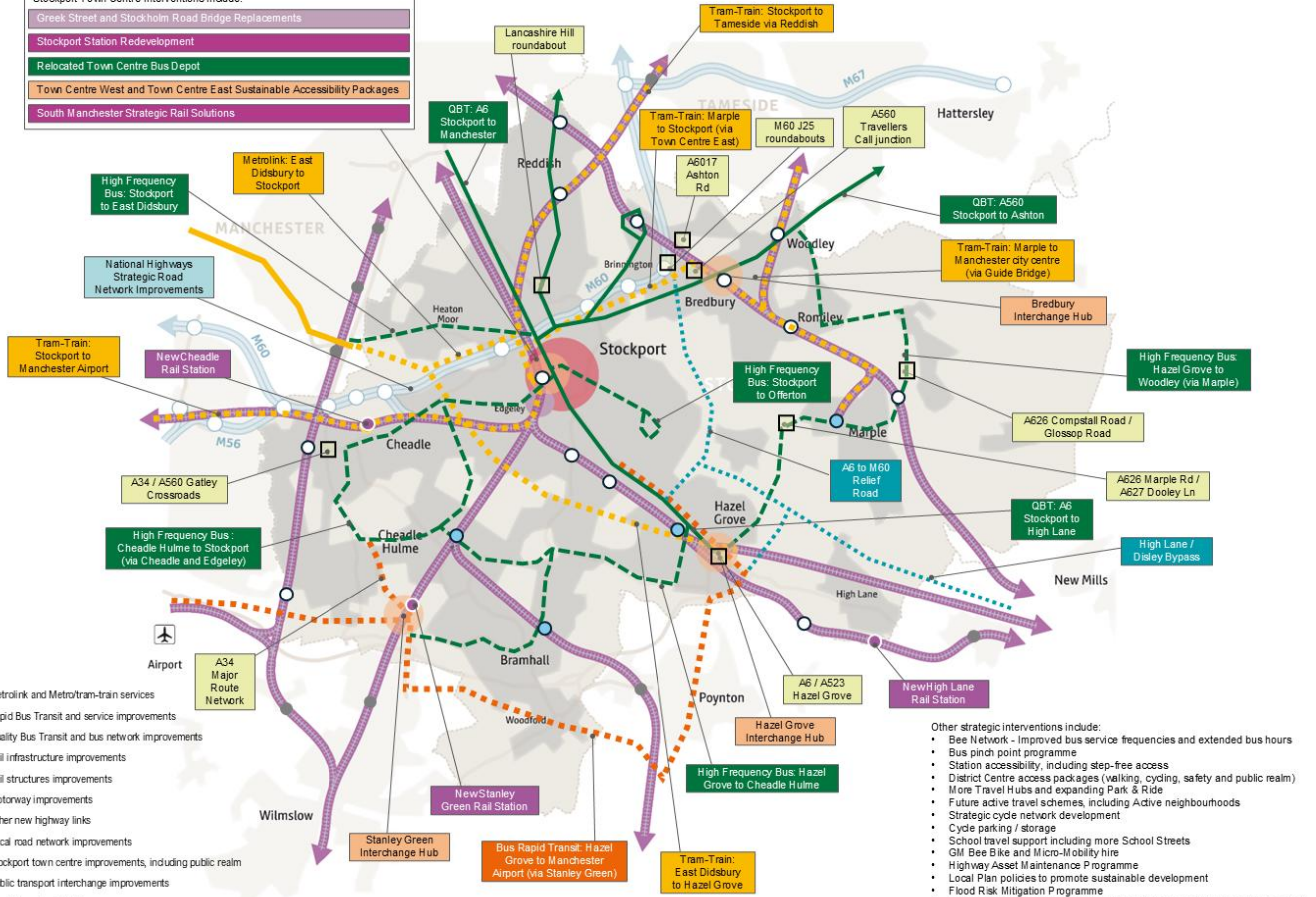
Bus	• New and enhanced bus services, including Bee Network bus development and cross-boundary routes. • Bus infrastructure improvements, including bus priority.
Rapid Transit	• East Didsbury to Stockport Rapid Transit Extension (Metrolink). • Future tram-train connections (subject to pathfinders). • East-West Bus Rapid Transit to Manchester Airport.
Rail	• Redeveloped Stockport Station. • Station Accessibility Improvements • Opening of Cheadle Station. • Bee Network rail integration.
Walking, Wheeling, Cycling and Micro-mobility	• Improved quality of routes and wider network coverage. Investments in Stockport town centre, district centres and residential neighbourhoods. • Strategic network development. • Improvement and Maintenance of the Public Rights of Way.
Our Streets	• Maintenance including resurfacing, gully clearance, vegetation removal and flood resilience. • Targeted highway capacity improvements.
Integrated transport	• Simpler and integrated fares. • Timetable integration, with easy interchange between services.
Lower emission travel and future travel	• Supporting transition to lower emission vehicles, including buses, taxis, and across the general population (by providing a wider EV charging network).
Safety and Security	• Road safety interventions. • Public transport safety.
Demand Management	• Behaviour change training and education. • Parking management.

The plan overleaf provides a snapshot of some of our most important proposals. This is followed by a spotlight of some of our key projects.

- Stockport Town Centre Interventions include:
- Greek Street and Stockholm Road Bridge Replacements
 - Stockport Station Redevelopment
 - Relocated Town Centre Bus Depot
 - Town Centre West and Town Centre East Sustainable Accessibility Packages
 - South Manchester Strategic Rail Solutions

KEY

- Metrolink and Metro/tram-train services
- Rapid Bus Transit and service improvements
- Quality Bus Transit and bus network improvements
- Rail infrastructure improvements
- Rail structures improvements
- Motorway improvements
- Other new highway links
- Local road network improvements
- Stockport town centre improvements, including public realm
- Public transport interchange improvements
- Bee Network rail station
- Bee Network rail stations with Growth Hub plans
- New rail stations
- Built up area within Stockport district
- Built up area within neighbouring districts



- Other strategic interventions include:
- Bee Network - Improved bus service frequencies and extended bus hours
 - Bus pinch point programme
 - Station accessibility, including step-free access
 - District Centre access packages (walking, cycling, safety and public realm)
 - More Travel Hubs and expanding Park & Ride
 - Future active travel schemes, including Active neighbourhoods
 - Strategic cycle network development
 - Cycle parking / storage
 - School travel support including more School Streets
 - GM Bee Bike and Micro-Mobility hire
 - Highway Asset Maintenance Programme
 - Local Plan policies to promote sustainable development
 - Flood Risk Mitigation Programme
 - Working with TfGM and partners on public transport ticketing and travel costs
 - Clean Air Plan
 - Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
 - Electric vehicle charging infrastructure
 - Road Safety Schemes supporting VisionZero
 - Parking strategy and reviews

Key Projects Spotlight

Bringing Metrolink to Stockport

Bringing Metrolink services into Stockport has the potential to deliver truly transformational economic, environmental and social benefits for the borough and Greater Manchester.

A new £2.5 billion funding package for Greater Manchester, announced by the government in June 2025, includes funding towards extending Metrolink from East Didsbury to Stockport town centre.

The Metrolink extension will connect Stockport more directly into the wider Greater Manchester network, making it easier for people to travel for purposes such as getting to work, shopping, and leisure activities. The tram extension will also further support our ambitious town centre regeneration which is already delivering new homes and businesses.

We have already been making plans for this new Metrolink connection, with allowances made when the new Stockport Interchange was built. This will allow a new tram stop to be built next to the Interchange. We are also considering where a tram stop can be located as we design options for a redeveloped Stockport Station.

Work completed in 2025/26 to replace the Greek Street railway bridge in Stockport town centre also protects future potential Metrolink routes.

The East Didsbury to Stockport Metrolink extension is a priority for Greater Manchester. The Strategic Outline Case for the scheme is being finalised, with the aim being to start construction in 2030.

TfGM are also looking at the wider connections which Metrolink could enable. This includes the potential for the tram network to expand further across Stockport in the future, such as tram-train connections to Hazel Grove, into Tameside (via Denton and Reddish), and to Manchester Airport. Further into the future, we also would see benefits in the Town Centre East area being served by Metrolink.

Considerations for how local businesses and residents can benefit from a Metrolink, alongside other public transport and active travel routes, will be an important part of our planning for the future of the town and our district centres.





Securing further investment in Stockport Station

Stockport Station is Greater Manchester's Southern Gateway and the third most used rail station in the North West (outside Manchester and Liverpool central stations).

Located on the West Coast Main Line it has direct and frequent connections to Manchester and London and many other regionally and nationally significant destinations, as well as serving local needs.

The cancellation of the northern sections of HS2 infrastructure to Manchester means that Stockport's role as the Southern Gateway into Greater Manchester and Airport and Southern Growth Corridor is more important than ever.

We have a vision to transform Stockport Station and its surrounding area, making it into a state-of-the-art transport hub which can accommodate more rail passengers as well as provide extra amenities for non-rail users.

Our plans are also looking at ways of making it easier to cross the railway between the town centre and Edgeley, where we know the railway and the station are a barrier to movement.

As well as being designed to meet future patronage growth and the wider benefits of new high speed rail connectivity, the proposals provide safeguarding and preparatory works to support future Bee Network rapid transit expansion into Stockport town centre, such as protecting space for a future Metrolink stop.

Our work on the station is being progressed alongside wider rail network reviews which are critical to the services that operate within our borough. There are longstanding rail capacity issues on the Castlefield Corridor in central Manchester which have an impact on our services, as well as capacity issues that have been identified close to central Stockport.

Network Rail has commenced a South Manchester Strategic Advice Study in response, to explore the infrastructure solutions that are needed to accommodate future rail network requirements. Early concept options include the potential for remodelling Stockport Station with an additional through-platform and bi-directional signalling.

Our proposals for Stockport Station are being developed to take account of this other critical work.

Facilitating a zero-emission bus network which connects all our neighbourhoods

Stockport has an established and mature bus market – in any given year, over half of our residents travel by bus. However, we recognise that higher frequency routes are largely focused on travel to Manchester city centre and Stockport town centre. Other movements are less well served.

We believe that bus franchising and Bee Network buses can provide us with the opportunity to give greater access to bus routes which travel across the borough and beyond. Our ambition, recognising that this requires supporting patronage, is to broaden and strengthen the bus network by building on the higher frequency routes already in place with further regular connections that better connect:

- Stockport town centre – Offerton
- Woodley – Romiley – Marple – Hazel Grove
- Hazel Grove – Poynton – Woodford – Heald Green – Manchester Airport
- Stockport town centre – Edgeley – Cheadle and Cheadle Hulme – Stanley Green – Manchester Airport
- Hazel Grove – Bramhall – Stanley Green – Manchester Airport
- Stockport town centre – Heaton Mersey – East Didsbury

A higher frequency network should be supported by improved services connecting:

- Stockport town centre – Romiley
- Reddish – Heaton Chapel – Heaton Mersey – East Didsbury
- Marple – Offerton – Stockport town centre
- Stockport town centre – Edgeley – Cheadle – Wythenshawe
- Hazel Grove – Bramhall – Heald Green – Wythenshawe
- East Didsbury – Cheadle
- Marple – High Lane – Hazel Grove
- Heaviley – Davenport – Bramhall – Stanley Green

These key bus connections would be supported by more local and lower frequency bus routes to form an overall comprehensive bus network which connects and supports each of our communities.

As well as additional routes and higher daytime frequencies, we are keen for operating hours to be extended to provide better network coverage later in the evening, night-time and at weekends. We know many people rely on buses at these times and we want to make it possible for people to get about whatever the time of day.

We fully support Greater Manchester's ambition to deliver full electrification of the bus fleet by 2030, which is also a key commitment in our Climate And Nature (CAN) strategy 2025 to 2030.





Making active travel more accessible for our residents

Active travel has been a major focus for national policy, TfGM and Stockport Council over the last decade. We know that encouraging more people to be active can offer real health benefits, as well as reduce reliance on cars providing reductions in air pollution and carbon.

We want our residents to be able to freely choose to travel to work or school, pop to the shops or meet friends in their neighbourhoods using more sustainable and healthier forms of transport – which can include walking, wheeling or cycling. As well as providing more wide and uncluttered paths, lighting, benches and shelter, we also want to make it easier for people to access parks and green spaces within their communities.

Building on the infrastructure we have already delivered, we have bold plans to continue to expand our networks, and improve connection between routes we already have, so that more journeys are possible by walking, wheeling and cycling. We are also placing a focus on infrastructure within district centres, so that

shops and community facilities are easy to reach and use. We know that every route or crossing completed is another important link in expanding how far people may be able to travel.

We have a range of schemes under construction as we move into 2026, and ideas of where we should target next. We will continue to develop these options with inputs from residents and community groups to ensure that schemes best meet the needs of the local area.

Although we have already delivered several cycle corridors which offer continuous facilities over extended lengths, we want to do more. Our ambition, subject to funding availability, is to develop and sign a key cycle network which uses on- and off-road routes, and complements routes being installed elsewhere in Greater Manchester so that people can travel more freely by bike across the city region and over longer distance should they wish to.

Maintaining a climate resilient and safer transport network

Whilst we can make ambitious plans for how we would like to improve the transport system, we also recognise that we must maintain and improve the quality and function of our existing transport network. Part of this is ensuring it is resilient to climate change.

The borough contains approximately 950km of carriageway, 1,500km of footway and 440km of footpaths, bridleways and byways. Our industrial heritage and historic patterns of development means we have a substantial legacy of highway infrastructure. This includes many narrow roads and footways, and ageing drainage systems from the 19th century or earlier. Keeping everything in good working order, to meet today's needs, is a big challenge.

Our teams maintain roads, footpaths, public rights of way (e.g. bridleways), surfaced paths in greenspaces, signs, road markings, street lighting, highway drainage, and vegetation. Over the last decade, we have spent more than £100 million bringing our network up to standard. This included resurfacing many roads and footways and upgrading streetlights to Light-Emitting Diodes (LEDs) which are brighter and significantly more energy and carbon efficient.

Despite these successes, further maintenance is an on-going pressure on resource and budgets, despite much more work being required.

As well as maintaining our assets, we actively manage the network and have a duty of care to maintain the safety and usability of roads.

We are always monitoring the network and seek to quickly respond to hazards like dangerous junctions, unsafe parking, and speeding. We also have the ability, if necessary, to enforce moving traffic offences via cameras reducing dependence on police enforcement.

All districts in Greater Manchester have signed up to Vision Zero, which aims '*to eliminate all traffic fatalities and life changing injuries by 2040*'.

We monitor congestion and assist with the management of road works - which we appreciate can cause frustration for drivers – to minimise their impact. A lane rental scheme is being considered across Greater Manchester which would charge organisations for the time the roadworks closes lanes or streets at sensitive times. We will monitor how this proposal develops.

We are also focused on ensuring that movement is easy for everybody, so work to ensure there are dropped kerbs and tactile paving to assist people with disabilities as they move around.

Over the course of the period covered by this Transport Strategy, we can be certain that the way we travel will continue change and evolve including the role of technology and increasing uptake of electric vehicles. We also expect severe climate events to intensify placing greater pressure on our transport networks, especially drainage. We will keep finding new ways to manage and maintain our infrastructure, making sure it works for everyone.



What Happens Next?

Our Transport Strategy will guide our work in the coming years as we seek to continue to implement a more reliable, accessible and integrated transport system for the benefit of all our people, businesses and places. It will help us as we make the case for additional funding to be invested in Stockport, both in discussion with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and with the Government.

Our plans are necessarily ambitious to help continue to push forward the borough's ambitions, in line with the One Stockport: One Future plan. The opportunities afforded to us in Stockport town centre (enabled by the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC), and across the rest of the borough, provide a significant opportunity to create a more prosperous local economy, and help to address the inequalities and deprivation which are still faced in parts of the borough. We want you to join us on our journey as we push to bring Metrolink to Stockport, redevelop Stockport Station, improving the quality of the bus network through Bee Network Buses, and make Stockport more accessible by walking, wheeling and cycling.

We are also aware of the sensitivities which the new Stockport Local Plan presents to the residents of the borough. It will be challenging to add new homes and jobs around the borough when there are already pressures on our transport system.

This reinforces our case for needing more investment in transport infrastructure. This Transport Strategy provides us with a clear and evidenced framework to support decision-making as development sites come forward.

We are committed to keeping this Transport Strategy under review. We plan to publish an updated Delivery Plan in five years' time to demonstrate what we have delivered and where we still have work to do.

As the world is evolving at a fast pace, and new technologies are creating new opportunities and ways of doing things all the time, we will also need to take stock to ensure our ambitions remain right for the borough. Our review will be aligned with GMCA monitoring of the Greater Manchester Strategy and the GM Transport Strategy 2050.

With investment opportunities on the horizon, through the Integrated Settlement, including the Transport for City Regions fund and funding attached to the 'Airport and Southern Growth Corridor', we are confident in our plans and the positive impact which we can have to ensure that Stockport remains an exciting and thriving place to be as we head towards the end of the 2020s and into the next decade.



Consultation

Please respond to our consultation between the 23rd September and 8th November 2026

Drop In Events:

There will be events in early October. Further details will be shared on <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/events> and on the council's social media channels.

You can access the documents and questionnaire on the council website <https://consultation.stockport.gov.uk>.

Paper copies of the strategy are available to view at Libraries and at Stopford House Reception where there are also copies of the executive summary and the questionnaire to take away.

If you need an alternative-format not met by the above please contact us to discuss your needs.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/consultations>

Or contact us:

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STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Ambitious Stockport,
creating opportunities
for everyone**