



York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority

Bus Service Improvement Plan

September 2026

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1. Our bus vision

This Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) sets out how local bus services will be improved across the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority area. It brings together the ambitions of the previous BSIPs for York (2021) and North Yorkshire (2024) into a single, shared plan that reflects how people travel across the combined authority area today.

Our area covers 3,214 square miles, making it the largest of any combined or strategic authority. Within this wide geography, we have five distinct bus markets. These broadly align to the City of York and four towns in North Yorkshire, namely Harrogate, Scarborough, Malton and Selby, along with their surrounding areas. Each market connects with neighbouring towns and cities, both inside and outside our boundaries, reflecting the everyday journeys people make for work, education, services and leisure.

Our Combined Authority area covers a mix of urban, rural and coastal communities across nine parliamentary constituencies. Our economy is worth around £28 billion and supports a diverse range of jobs and businesses. This local context creates real challenges for bus services, but also strong opportunities to shape a network that works better for residents, visitors and employers. Figure 1-1 shows how our local bus networks relate to different place types across the area.

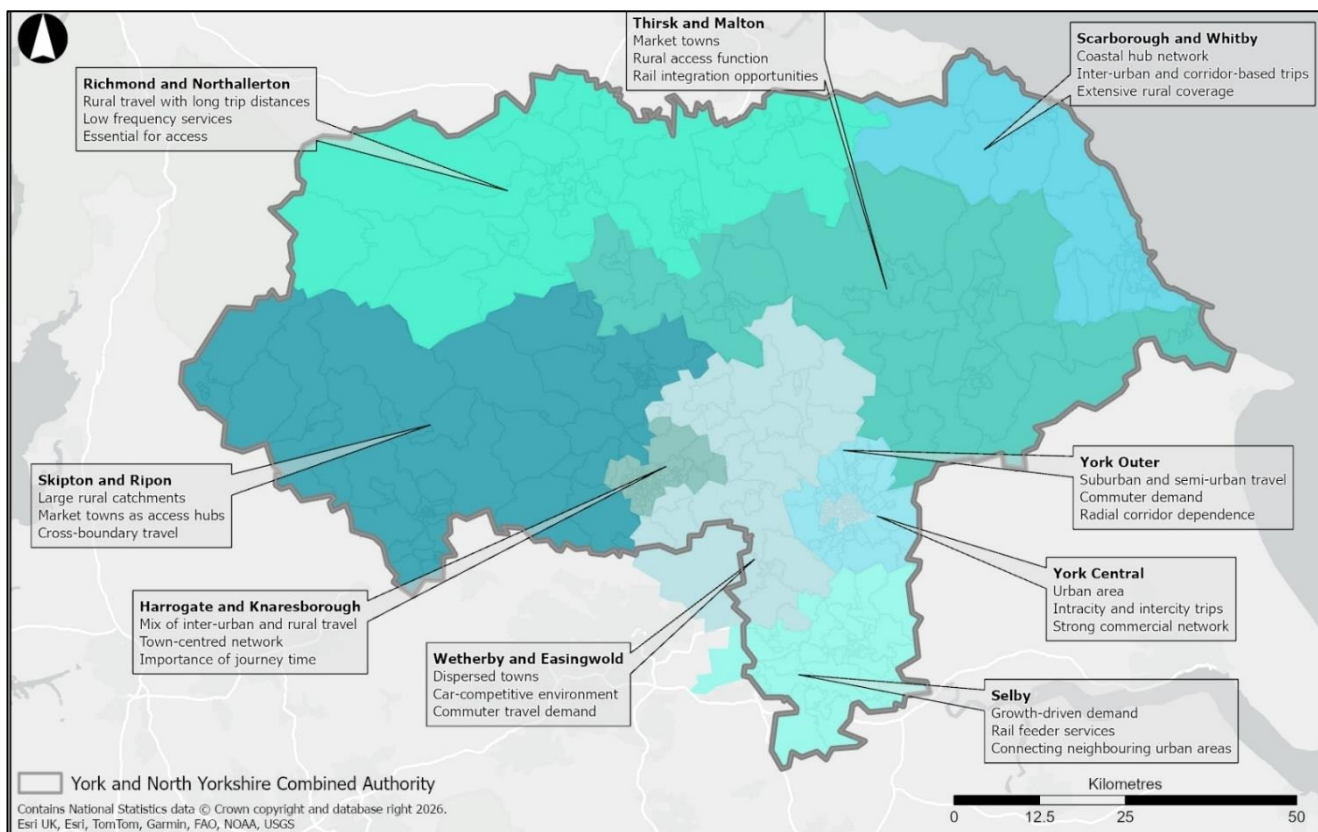


Figure 1-1: Local bus networks and place typologies by parliamentary constituency

The creation of York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority gives us new powers to make decisions locally. This allows us to plan and improve coordination of bus services and routes, ensuring they support our wider goals for economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

Through this BSIP, we want to maximise the potential of York and North Yorkshire by ensuring bus services help unlock opportunity, reduce inequality and support sustainable growth.

Our long-term vision is for a reliable, more frequent and easier-to-use bus network that people can depend on. We want buses to be a natural choice for more journeys, helping to grow passenger numbers and create a virtuous circle where higher patronage supports better services. Improving reliability, simplicity and customer confidence will be central to achieving this.

This BSIP covers the period from 2027 to 2032. We will review progress every year to make sure we are delivering the improvements set out in this plan and responding to changing needs.

1.1 Vision

Our vision provides the foundations on which improvement proposals and objectives have been developed around, articulating our shared ambition to deliver:

A reliable, integrated, accessible, safe, and comfortable bus network that meets the needs of residents and visitors across York and North Yorkshire, from urban centres to rural communities. This will support the region's **inclusive economic growth, social connectivity, and carbon negative ambitions**.

In our urban areas, such as York, Harrogate and Scarborough, the bus network will provide more frequent, reliable and attractive services that support faster journeys and everyday travel, reducing the need for car.

In market towns, rural areas and villages, the network will safeguard socially necessary services and strengthen connections to jobs, education, healthcare and visitor destinations, recognising different travel patterns and operating constraints while maintaining clear minimum service standards.

Across all place types, the bus network will enable more people to choose bus travel, supporting cleaner air and improved public health, with a clear ambition to **achieve sustained growth in bus patronage**.

This vision supports our wider plans for inclusive economic growth, stronger communities and a cleaner, greener region, and aligns closely with the emerging Mayor's Local Transport Plan, emerging Strategy for a Sustainable Future and other local strategies. It reflects the national vision set out in the Government's National Bus Strategy, which aims to make buses a more attractive and convenient choice for everyday journeys.

The vision has been shaped with input from bus operators, local councils, councillors and bus user groups, ensuring it reflects the needs of people who use and deliver bus services across the area.

1.2 Objectives

Our objectives set out how bus services across York and North Yorkshire will be transformed over the life of the Bus Service Improvement Plan. They focus on delivering a network that is reliable, affordable, accessible and easy to use, while supporting economic growth, social inclusion and the transition to a low-carbon future.

Together, they provide a clear framework for partnership working between the Combined Authority, bus operators and local stakeholders, translating the ambitions of the National Bus Strategy and the emerging Mayor's Local Transport Plan into practical, measurable improvements for passengers and communities.

Tailored targets will support measurable objectives throughout the BSIP, taking local contexts into account. This ensures ambition where progress has been made, and sets achievable, proportional goals for each place type.

Improve reliability and punctuality

Reliable and punctual bus services are fundamental to rebuilding confidence in the network and supporting sustained growth in patronage. Our objective is to ensure that services operate consistently and meet the Department for Transport's Excess Wait Time and On-Time standards across urban centres and key inter-urban corridors and target percentage of non-frequent services running on time.

Achieving consistently dependable services will ensure buses are a trusted option for everyday travel. This will support access to employment, education and key services, and reduce uncertainty and journey times for passengers across York and North Yorkshire.

Enhancing connectivity through a frequent and legible core network

Improving access to opportunities is central to delivering sustainable and inclusive growth across York and North Yorkshire. A well-connected transport network enables people to reach jobs, education and healthcare more easily, supporting social mobility, reducing inequality and improving quality of life. By strengthening connections between our key urban centres, market towns and rural communities, we will enable more people to participate in the economy, support local businesses and attract investment, while reducing reliance on the private car.

To achieve this, a strong and more frequent core network will form the backbone of the bus system, which focuses on the key connectivity across the region. During the lifespan of this BSIP, we will develop a simple, legible network with core routes, whilst enhancing bus frequencies where supported by demand and strategic importance. Through route optimisation and service simplification, waiting times will be reduced and services will become easier to understand and use, making bus travel the practical and attractive choice for everyday journeys.

Strengthen rural and visitor connectivity

Bus services play a vital role in supporting rural communities and the visitor economy across York and North Yorkshire. This objective focuses on protecting and strengthening socially necessary services, ensuring rural communities are able to access employment, education, healthcare and other essential services.

We will prioritise strengthening services that already demonstrate demand and have an established customer base, helping to build resilience and make efficient use of investment. Through route optimisation of contracted services, we will aim to deliver, where possible, a rural network that connects smaller settlements to key corridors, improving access to wider opportunities while supporting sustainable, viable rural and visitor travel. We will seek to achieve a minimum frequency on key rural services of one bus every two hours during daytimes.

We will also prioritise improved connectivity to visitor destinations, seasonal attractions and market towns. This will support local businesses, promote sustainable tourism and help reduce car dependency in less densely populated and environmentally sensitive areas.

Keep fares affordable and simple

Affordable and simple fares are essential to encouraging bus use and improving accessibility. Our objective is to deliver a clear and easy-to-understand fares offer, supported by fare caps, multi-operator and smart and contactless ticketing, and appropriate concessionary and discount schemes.

By continuing and strengthening existing initiatives, our BSIP will help reduce the cost barriers to travel, support cost-of-living pressures and make the bus network more accessible and affordable for residents, commuters and visitors across York and North Yorkshire.

Enable inclusive access for all

We will reduce barriers to bus use for disabled people, older residents, young people and those with additional needs by ensuring vehicles, infrastructure and information meet inclusive design standards across the network. This objective is focused on providing physical, cognitive, and sensory accessibility which balance the needs of all users and prioritises those that are most vulnerable in the transport network.

Inclusive access will be embedded as a core principle of network planning and investment, enabling more people to travel independently and confidently by bus, and supporting social inclusion across all place types.

Create a safe and welcoming network

Passengers must feel safe using bus services at all times of day and across all parts of the network. Our objective is to improve both actual and perceived safety for passengers and drivers, with particular focus on waiting environments, interchanges and onboard journeys.

A safe and welcoming network will help build confidence in bus travel, support use by women and vulnerable passengers, and encourage travel beyond peak periods in both urban and rural communities.

Accelerate decarbonisation for a healthier environment

Our objective is to accelerate the transition to a cleaner bus fleet through the introduction of additional zero and low-emission vehicles, while recognising the differing operational requirements

of urban, inter-urban and rural services. Furthermore, it is important we position ourselves to align with the statutory requirement of no new non-ZEBs on local services from 2030.

Increasing bus use alongside fleet decarbonisation will deliver local air quality and public health benefits and support the Combined Authority's wider carbon-negative ambitions.

Deliver high-quality, informed, and integrated journeys

We will deliver a consistently high-quality bus experience that feels comfortable, clean, easy to navigate and well-integrated across all bus operators and with other modes. This objective focuses on the end-to-end journey, from waiting environments and onboard comfort to clear, reliable information and seamless transfers.

Integration will be strengthened between bus services and rail, walking and cycling networks through coordinated timetables where feasible, high-quality interchanges, and intuitive ticketing and information. Together, these improvements will position the bus network as a single, coherent system that offers attractive, connected journeys across York and North Yorkshire.

1.3 Policy alignment

Recent years have seen significant change in national bus policy, with Bus Back Better providing a national bus strategy that set the initial direction for reform and established the foundations for a more passenger-focused, integrated and accountable bus system. Locally driven change is central to the delivery of the National Bus Strategy, with the Bus Services Act 2017, and now the Bus Service Act 2025, providing the statutory framework for delivery through partnership, and the Bus Service Improvement Plan setting the vision, objectives and delivery plans for our authority and its partners to deliver locally.

The York and North Yorkshire Bus Service Improvement Plan builds directly on this trajectory and reflects both the National Bus Strategy and the Department for Transport's Bus Service Improvement Plan Guidance, aligning with their shared emphasis on improved service reliability and frequency, simpler and better-value fares, enhanced passenger information, and closer partnership working with operators.

The Bus Services Act 2025 represents a significant shift in national policy for local bus services, placing greater responsibility and flexibility for our authority to shape local bus markets. It enhances powers for partnership working, enables the setting of service standards, improved coordination across operators to deliver more passenger-focused networks. It also introduces measures to protect socially necessary services, requiring stronger oversight of service changes and the reduction of the risk of sudden route withdrawal, especially in areas where the commerciality of services is less prevalent. The act will enable us to better deliver our objectives through greater local influence and improved service reliability and stability for valuable outcomes for passengers.

At a regional level, the BSIP directly supports the priorities of the Mayor's Local Transport Plan by providing a clear delivery mechanism for wider strategic objectives, including inclusive growth, decarbonisation and improved connectivity across both urban and rural areas. Bus investment is positioned as a key tool in addressing social exclusion, supporting town and city centres, and improving access to employment, education and services, particularly in more remote communities.

Why bus investment matters

York and North Yorkshire's ambition is to become a trailblazing City Region Rural Powerhouse, creating healthy and thriving communities while driving sustainable economic growth. A high-quality bus network is central to achieving this vision, connecting people to jobs, education, healthcare, culture and leisure across both urban and rural communities.

Buses enable residents to participate in the economy, reducing inequalities and supporting inclusive growth. They enable local businesses to access customers and strengthen the resilience of town centres and high streets. They also play a vital role in reducing social isolation by connecting people to family, friends, services and community activities, particularly in rural areas.

They also support one of the region's greatest economic assets: its visitor economy. Reliable and affordable public transport helps visitors reach York, the coast, market towns, National Parks and National Landscapes without relying on the private car, supporting sustainable tourism, extending visitor dwell time and increasing spending in local economies.

2. Our current bus offer to passengers

2.1 Overview

In this section, we outline the current bus service, infrastructure, and passenger experience in York and North Yorkshire, establishing a baseline from which we will identify future opportunities. This will inform our proposals and ambitions for further improvements across the region from 2026 onwards as we deliver the network passengers want.

Following the devolution agreement for York and North Yorkshire, we have been building on the notable progress made throughout the region in the delivery of bus service and infrastructure improvements that have been delivered by City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council following the publication of the National Bus Strategy and development of BSIPs in 2021, and the subsequent awards of dedicated bus funding the previous transport authorities received.

We have improved the bus network and infrastructure, supporting a more connected, accessible, and affordable transport system. These enhancements facilitate travel into neighbouring areas, encourage economic growth by supporting new housing and businesses, and contribute to a greener network linking people to jobs, education, healthcare, and leisure.

2.2 Bus Improvement Highlights

Since the introduction of the York and North Yorkshire individual BSIPs in 2021, the councils have worked hard to make improvements to the bus system and infrastructure. We, as the Combined Authority, have been collaborating with City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council since our creation in 2024. These efforts have centred around upgrading infrastructure and assets, improving services, and making fares more affordable, as set out in Figure 2-1. These improvements not only enhance the passenger experience but also support economic growth and contribute to a more sustainable, greener transport network, connecting people to jobs, education, healthcare, and leisure throughout York and North Yorkshire.

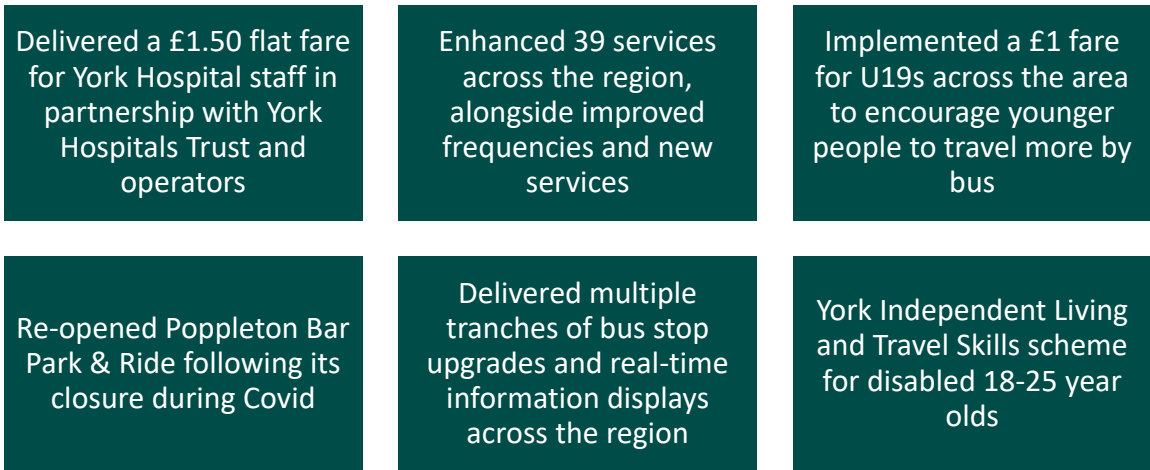


Figure 2-1: Improvement delivery highlights

2.3 Funding and Expenditure

Our authority has received its first long-term deal with record investment to boost our transport network. This funding will help to deliver a 4-year strategy of transport improvements across the

region, including £13.9m for bus and rail access and punctuality. This is in addition to the £36m of dedicated bus funding received by the region in the period 2022-23 to 2025-26.

Table 2-1 and

Table 2-2 outline the spend in the region, both capital and revenue and the funding sources that have enabled this over the last 4 years. Over the last four years, BSIP and LABG funding has played a key role in enabling investment across a range of bus service and infrastructure improvements.

Table 2-1: Funding allocations for expenditure on buses in York and North Yorkshire (£m)

Source	2022-2023		2023-2024		2024-2025		2025-2026		Total (£m)	Note
	Rev	Cap	Rev	Cap	Rev	Cap	Rev	Cap		
BSIP Phase 1	2.2	2.4	2.3	4.4	2.2	3.9	-	-	17.4	CYC only
BSIP Phase 2	-	-	1.46	-	1.46	-	-	-	2.9	NYC only
BSIP Phase 3	-	-	-	-	4.65	-	-	-	4.65	Total for CYC and NYC
LABG	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.7	5.0	12.7	YNYCA
Total									36.45	

From 2026-2027, funding for bus will be wrapped up in multi-year settlements.

Table 2-2: Expenditure on buses by City of York Council, North Yorkshire Council and York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (£m)

Local Authority	Type	Spend	24/25	25/26
North Yorkshire Council	Revenue	Supported Services	1.69	1.70
		Concessionary Fares (ENCTS)	7.20	7.41
		Community Transport	0.20	0.20
City of York Council	Revenue	Supported Services	0.59	0.59
		Concessionary Fares (ENCTS)	3.83	4.00
		Community Transport	0.023	0.023
	Capital	Infrastructure	0.05	0.05

2.3.1 Bus funding from 2026/27

From 2026/27, public bus funding has been consolidated into the Mayoral Transport Fund (MTF), a multi-year local transport settlement that provides greater flexibility for how funding is deployed, but with a more constrained settlement than in previous years. The MTF settlement provides a four-year capital funding envelope for bus investment, up to March 2030, and a three-year settlement for revenue, up to March 2029. Within the funding envelope, we receive between £4.50m and £4.84m of capital funding per year in addition to £7.33m per year of revenue funding for bus services.

2.4 Key Corridors and Current Network

The bus network is fundamental to supporting and transforming productivity and growth in York and North Yorkshire. Currently, there are 203 services in the region, covering over 12 million miles per year across 20 operators. The current network has four distinct bus markets and is largely split between being commercially operated in cities and towns and supported in rural areas

In York, essential services link different parts of the city and settlements outside the outer ring road to the city centre and major local destinations. These city services are also complemented by connections to towns and cities beyond York, including direct routes to Leeds, Hull, Scarborough, and Selby, as well as other local towns such as Pocklington and Easingwold which maintain strong ties to York. In North Yorkshire, services provide links within and between the region's key towns and rural areas, connecting across boundaries into neighbouring centres such as Leeds, York and Middlesbrough.

Our four distinct bus markets play a critical role in underpinning our region's bus connectivity, allowing supported services and community transport to connect with key corridors, which together provide a more holistic network, supporting economic growth and social inclusion.

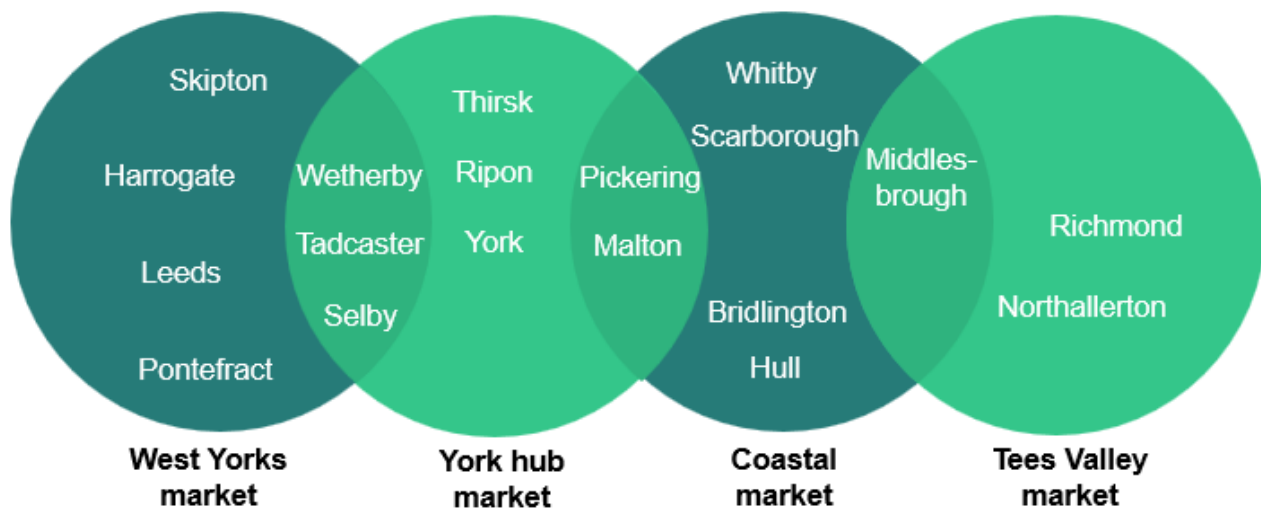


Figure 2-2: Key bus markets and core commercial networks

Outside of our more populous areas of York, Harrogate, Scarborough and Selby and away from the key interurban corridors, services generally operate up to every two hours, with reduced service in evenings and on weekends. These services are mainly tendered with support from community transport services and inter-urban commercial services providing key links on the corridors shown on Figure 2-3.

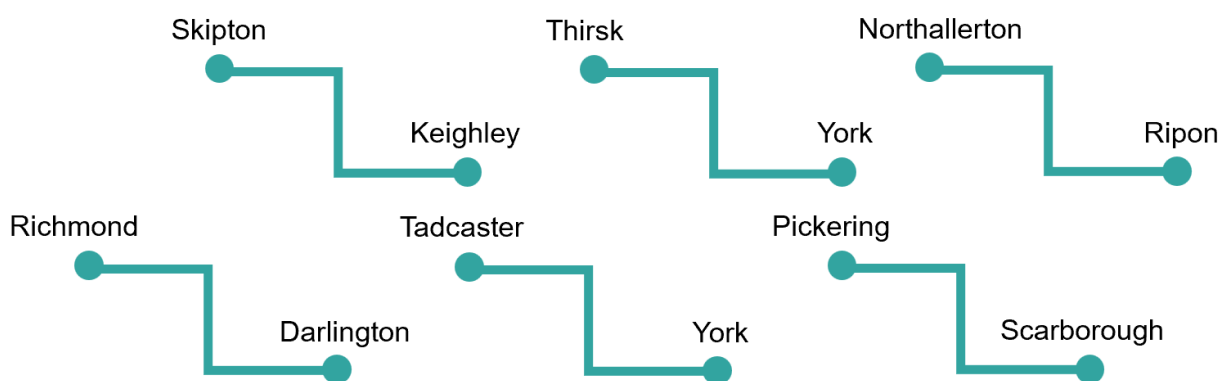


Figure 2-3: Key corridors outside of key bus markets

85% of North Yorkshire is classed as very rural or super-sparse, with a population density five times below the national average, which makes it a challenging environment to provide commercial services between areas of low population density and significant distances between settlements. This makes car travel the dominant mode in North Yorkshire, with 82% of households having access to at least one car.

Demand Responsive Travel (DRT) and community transport services play a vital role in filling service gaps and meeting local transport needs, especially within rural communities. Over 41,000 community transport journeys were made in the Upper Dales area in 2023-24, which is one of the most rural areas in our region, demonstrating that success can be had with limited or no commercial provision and that services need to connect with all communities, regardless of size or location.

2.4.1 Services

Our Bus Network Review has categorised the existing routes into four groups based on frequency, as shown on:

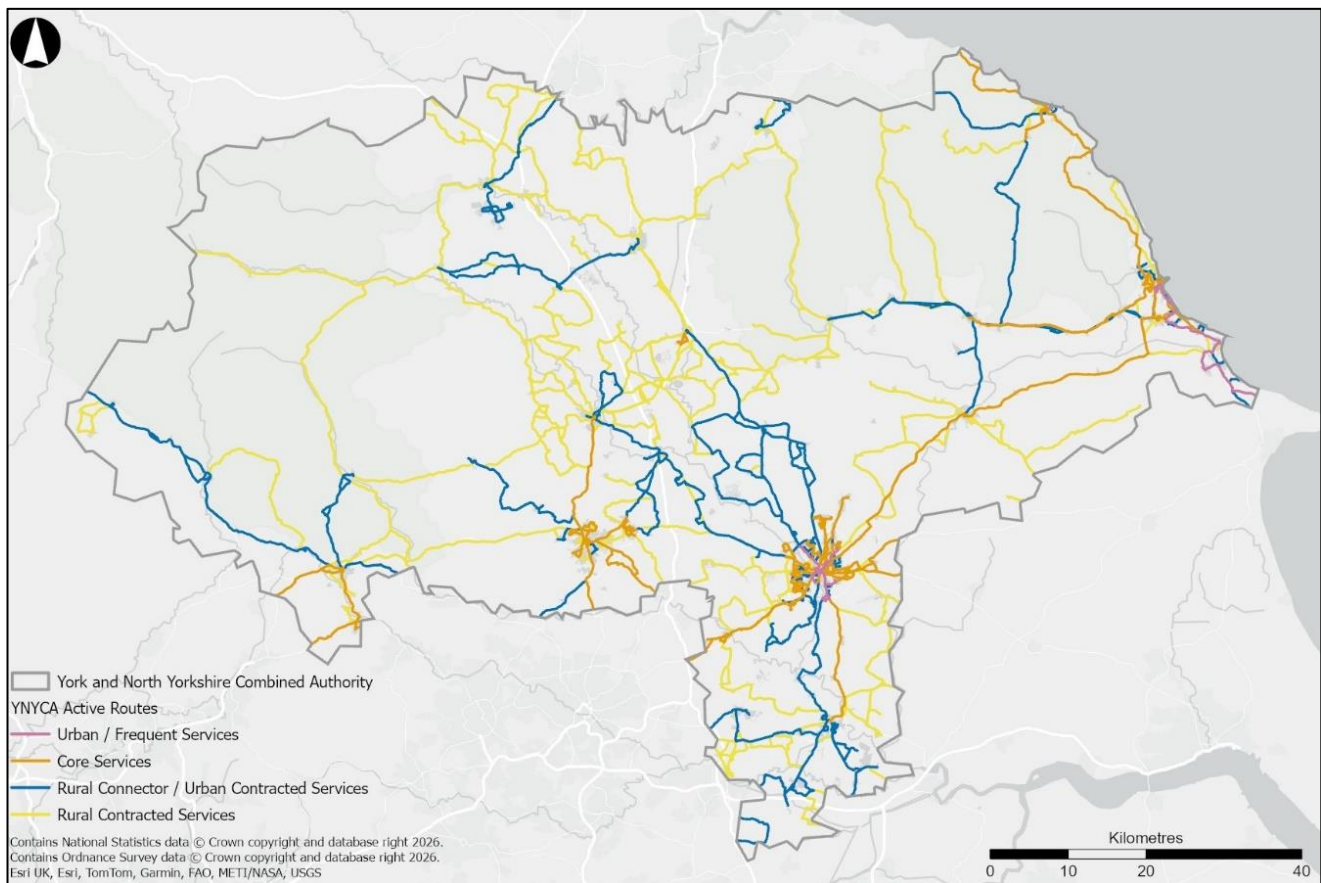


Figure 2-4: Route classification (Bus Network Review)

2.4.2 Operators

There are 20 operators providing registered local bus services within the region. The majority of York's bus network is operated commercially, without public sector financial support. In line with the obligations under the Transport Act 2000, financial support is provided for bus services that are deemed to be socially necessary and that operators cannot provide on a commercial basis.

Commercial bus services connect destinations on the perimeter of York to the city centre, with interurban services linking York to Leeds, Hull, Scarborough, and Selby. More infrequent services connect towns and villages outside York; most of these are supported by local financial support. Our Park and Ride services are operated commercially under a licensing agreement with First, and the service between the University of York and the city centre is contracted by the University of York.



Figure 2-5: York and North Yorkshire bus operators

Within North Yorkshire, the three largest operators broadly align with the main commercial bus networks: Arriva in Selby, East Yorkshire Buses in Scarborough, and The Harrogate Bus Company (Transdev) in Harrogate. They provide more frequent urban and interurban links to major neighbouring centres such as Leeds, York, Pontefract, Middlesbrough, and Bridlington, while the wider county is served by a mix of tendered routes, community transport, and key interurban corridors. Outside these hubs, rural services generally operate every two hours, with limited evening and weekend provision, relying heavily on public funding due to low population densities and high car ownership.

Community transport provision in the region is extensive, especially in North Yorkshire, reflecting the scale and predominantly rural nature of the area. A significant number of community transport providers operate across wide geographies, covering urban, coastal and significant rural area, which reflects the size and predominantly rural nature of the area as well as the coordination and investment made by the local authority in the area.

Limited transport provision in rural areas constrains residents' ability to access essential services, such as healthcare, and increases the risk of social exclusion by restricting opportunities for leisure and social interaction. Community transport can deliver wider health and wellbeing benefits by reducing social isolation, supporting independent living, and encouraging physical activity, thereby improving both physical and mental health and helping to reduce demand on health services.

There are 22 community transport providers operating in North Yorkshire, alongside one provider in York. Operators such as Little White Bus, Ryedale Community Transport and Upper Wharfedale Venturer form a core part of the community transport network. Many services operate on a demand-responsive basis, including Dial-a-Ride and voluntary car schemes, and frequently extend beyond local catchments to enable access to essential services such as healthcare. As a result, their activity and impacts are not confined to defined geographic boundaries. This underlines the importance of flexible, area-wide provision in supporting access for residents in dispersed rural communities.

In the most sparsely populated areas, particularly the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors, provision is more limited and reflects the constraints of deep rural contexts. Demand-responsive and contracted services provide essential connectivity, while fixed-route services typically operate at low frequencies and require ongoing subsidy. Voluntary services, such as Dalesbus and Moorsbus, complement the network by offering targeted leisure and tourism connections, primarily at weekends and during the holiday season. While these services play a valuable supplementary role, overall provision remains characterised by infrequent services and limited evening and weekend availability, with some additional services operating on Fridays, weekends and Bank Holidays during the summer, responding to seasonal demand.

Outside of Harrogate, Scarborough, Selby, York, and principal interurban corridors, frequencies rarely exceed one journey every two hours, and evening and weekend operations remain limited, with most routes requiring financial support from the Combined Authority.

A breakdown of the community transport providers and their main areas of operation is provided in Table 2-3.

Table 2-3: Local community transport operators (VCSE Community Transport Report, 2025 and bustimes.org)

Organisation name	Areas covered by journeys	Voluntary car service	Dial a Ride	Bus Route
Age UK North Craven	North Yorkshire	✓	✓	
Bedale Community Minibus	North Yorkshire			✓
Boroughbridge Community Charity	North Yorkshire	✓		
Chain Lane Community Hub	North Yorkshire	✓		
Community Works CIO	North Yorkshire	✓		
Easingwold District Community Care Association	North Yorkshire	✓		
Esk Moors Active	North Yorkshire		✓	
Hambleton Community Action	North Yorkshire	✓		
Reeth & District Community Transport	North Yorkshire		✓	
Ryedale Community Transport	North Yorkshire & York	✓		✓
Scarborough Dial a Ride	North Yorkshire		✓	
Sherburn Visiting Scheme Supporting Seniors	North Yorkshire		✓	
Skipton Step into Action	North Yorkshire		✓	
Stokesley Community Care Association	North Yorkshire	✓		
Tadcaster Volunteer Cars and Services Association	North Yorkshire	✓		
The Nidderdale Plus Partnership	North Yorkshire	✓	✓	✓

Organisation name	Areas covered by journeys	Voluntary car service	Dial a Ride	Bus Route
Up For Yorkshire	North Yorkshire & York	✓		
Upper Dales Community Partnership	North Yorkshire		✓	✓
Upper Wharfedale Venturer	North Yorkshire			✓
York Wheels	York	✓		

2.4.3 Campaign for Better Transport: Connecting Every Community

Connectivity is not solely defined by proximity to a stop; it depends on the availability of sufficiently frequent services that provide meaningful access to key destinations. Campaign for Better Transport, an advocacy group that promotes sustainable transport, particularly for bus and rail services, has determined a bus service standard measure of whether people have access to a usable bus service, through their 'Connecting Every Community' report. The standard measures define a minimum and an ambition for service frequency and population who can access that frequency (See Table 2-4).

Wards are scored on the basis of meeting one or both parameters, of accessibility to bus stop and frequency of service. Where the 'Green' category meets both parameters, 'Yellow' requires additional bus stops, the 'Amber' shows require additional frequency or services, and 'Red' falls short in terms of both stop density and service frequency.

Table 2-4: Parameters for Bus Service Standard Minimum Baseline and Ambition Benchmark (Campaign for Better Transport, Bus Service Standard tool)

Ward density	Bus stop catchment	Population who can access a stop	Service frequency	Population who can access that frequency
Minimum Baseline				
High	5 mins	> 95%	300 trips per week	> 75%
Mid	10 mins	> 90%	150 trips per week	> 50%
Low	10 mins	> 50%	50 trips per week	> 40%
Ambition Benchmark				
High	5 mins	> 95%	500 trips per week	> 75%
Mid	5 mins	> 75%	250 trips per week	> 50%
Low	10 mins	> 70%	150 trips per week	> 50%

Approximately 85% of the total population in York and North Yorkshire live in wards that meet the minimum baseline standards from Campaign for Better Transport.

Figure 2-6 below shows that the only wards in our region that have severe gaps and fall short in terms of meeting the minimum standard for both stop density and service frequency, as shown in Table 2-4, are Morton-on-Swale and Appleton Wiske, near Northallerton where the service standard for low density wards is not met and High Harrogate and Kingsley, where the bus service standard for high density wards is not met. Areas categorised as ‘Amber’, lacking services, are found in urban areas of Scarborough and York, as well as rural areas of North Yorkshire, in the outskirts of Ripon, Thirsk, and Northallerton, and around the Yorkshire Dales.

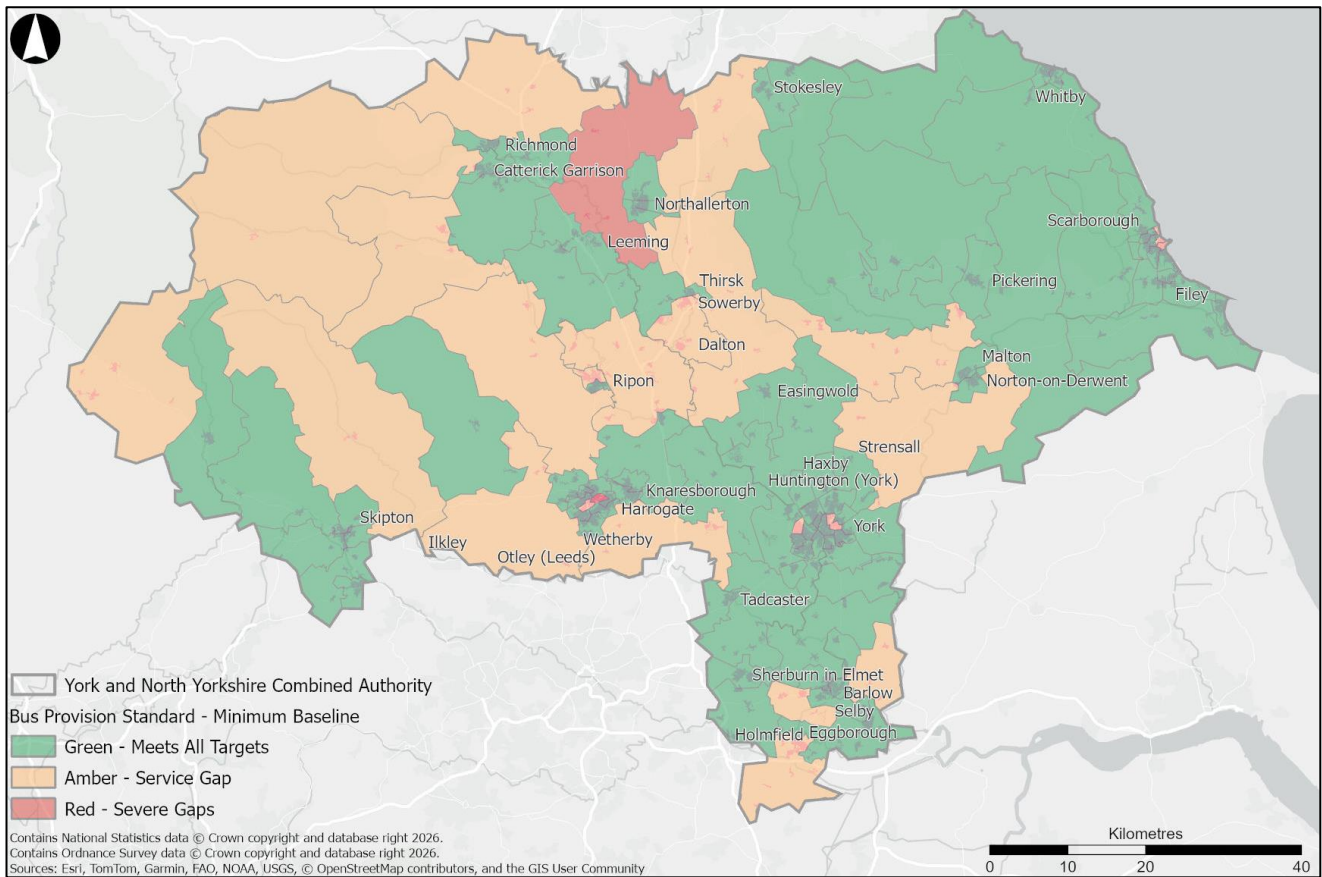


Figure 2-6: Bus provision standard minimum baseline (source: Campaign for Better Transport, Bus Provision Standard)

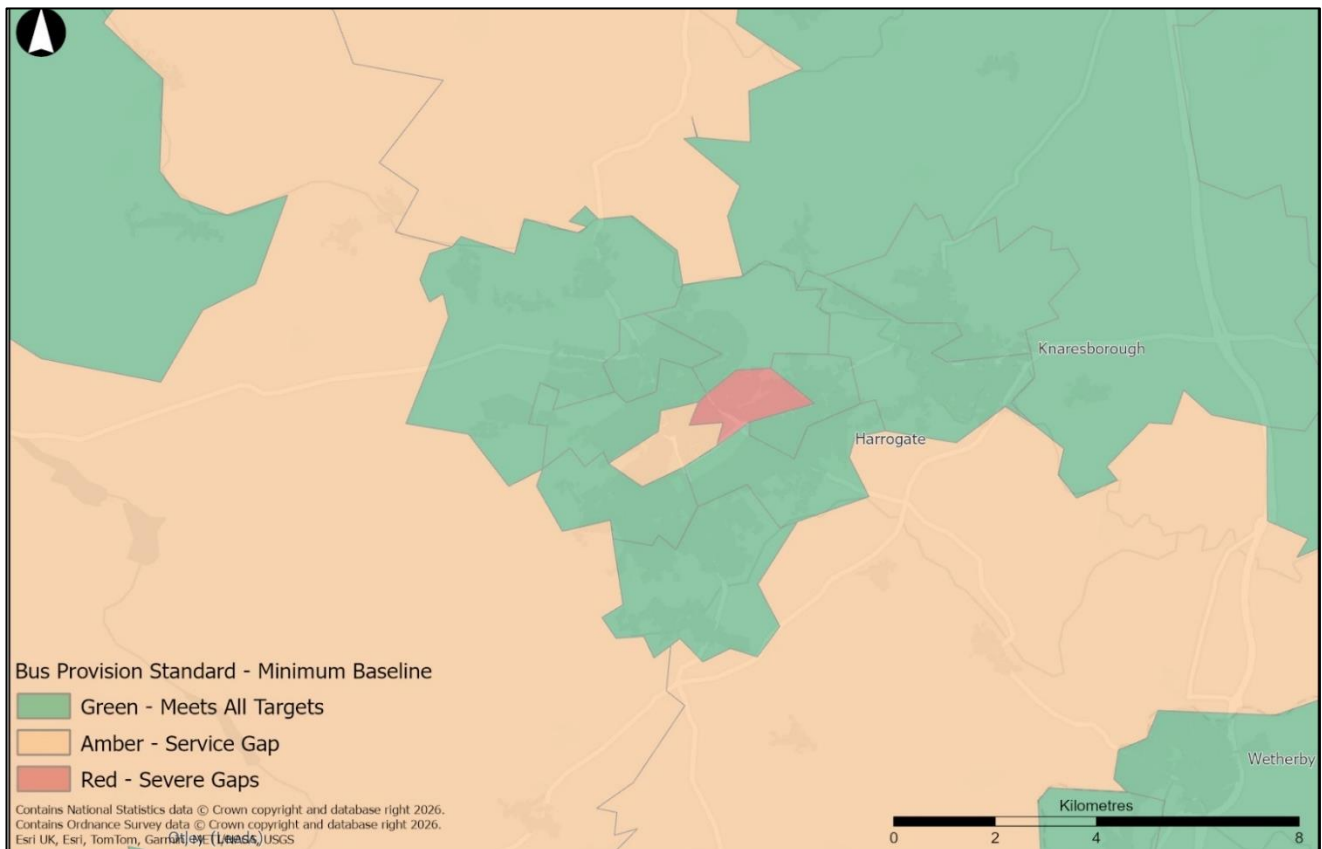


Figure 2-7: Bus provision standard minimum baseline - Harrogate

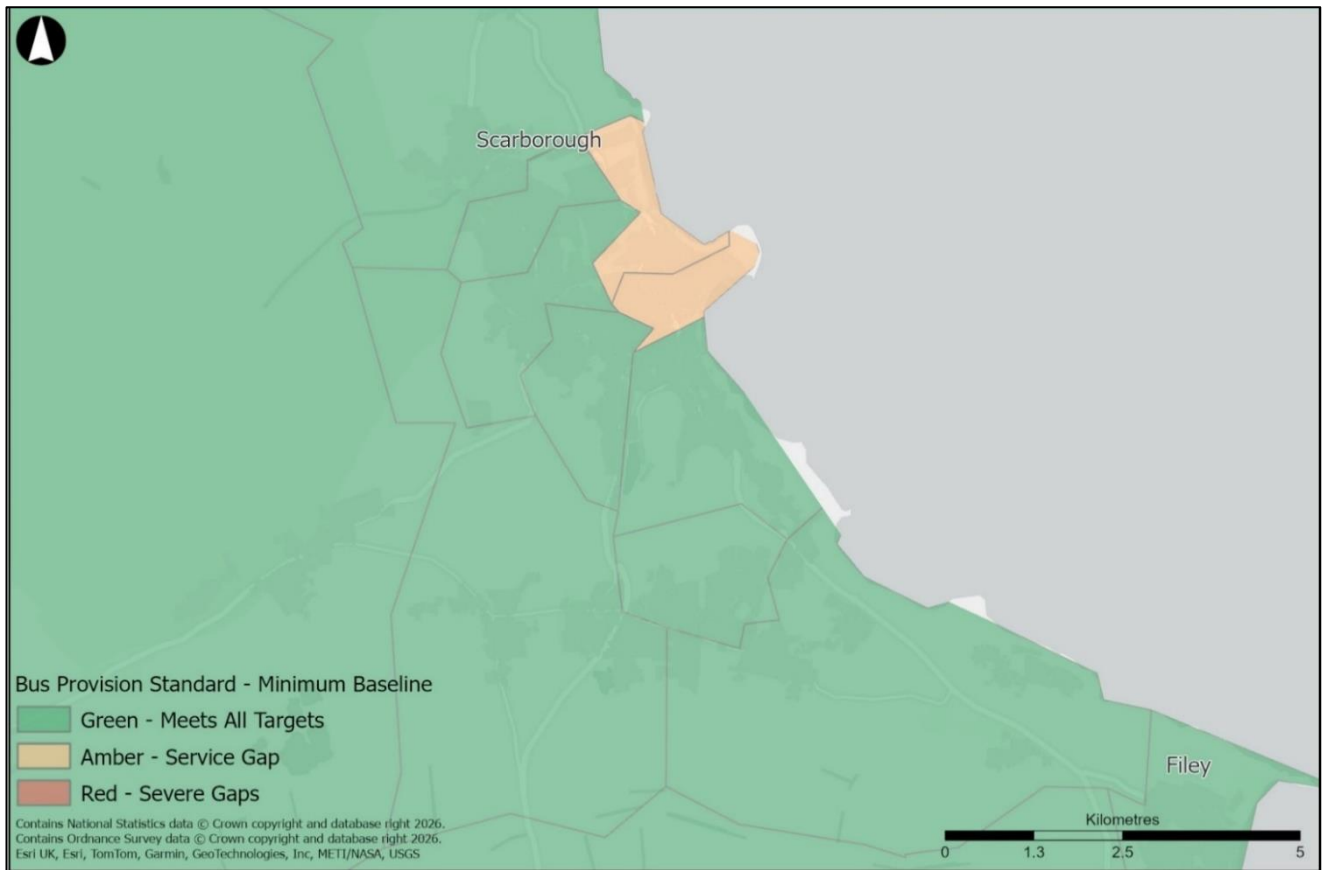


Figure 2-8: Bus provision standard minimum baseline – Scarborough

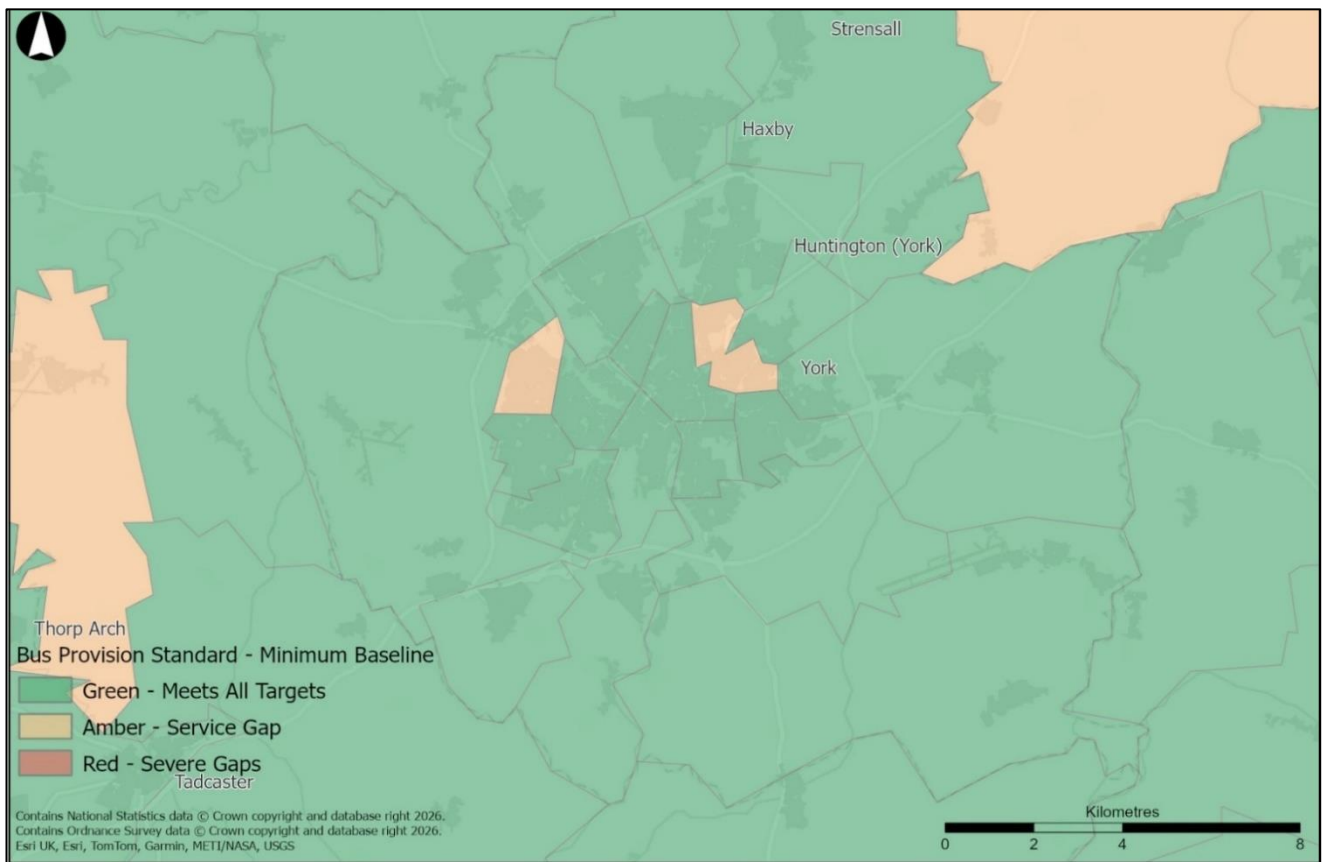


Figure 2-9: Bus provision standard minimum baseline – York

Figure 2-7, Figure 2-8 and Figure 2-9 show the bus provision standard against the minimum baseline in Harrogate, Scarborough and York. The makeup of these urban areas generally meets all targets for the minimum baseline bus provision standard, with some service gaps in Scarborough town centre and seafront, Acomb and Heworth in York and in High Harrogate. It is worth noting that Scarborough's peninsula is constrained by geography in terms of the ability to provide services and stops, in line with meeting all targets for the minimum baseline. In Heworth, a number of private roads and a golf course create severance for services and accessibility, but services that do run through the ward provide a frequent service between Monks Cross and York city centre, though it's noted that service 9 does so on a limited stop basis. To the east of Harrogate train station, there are severe gaps in stop density and services, potentially resulting from lack of railway crossing options for vehicles. Delivering improvements here would require high-cost capital works to reduce severance, with most properties already able to access high frequency services on Knaresborough Road.

When assessing connectivity against the ambition benchmark, approximately 53% of people in York and North Yorkshire live in wards where the Campaign for Better Transport's ambition benchmark is met. The total number of wards with severe gaps increases from 2 to 14, with service gaps becoming more widespread, especially in more rural areas, where low-density populations have no or limited services.

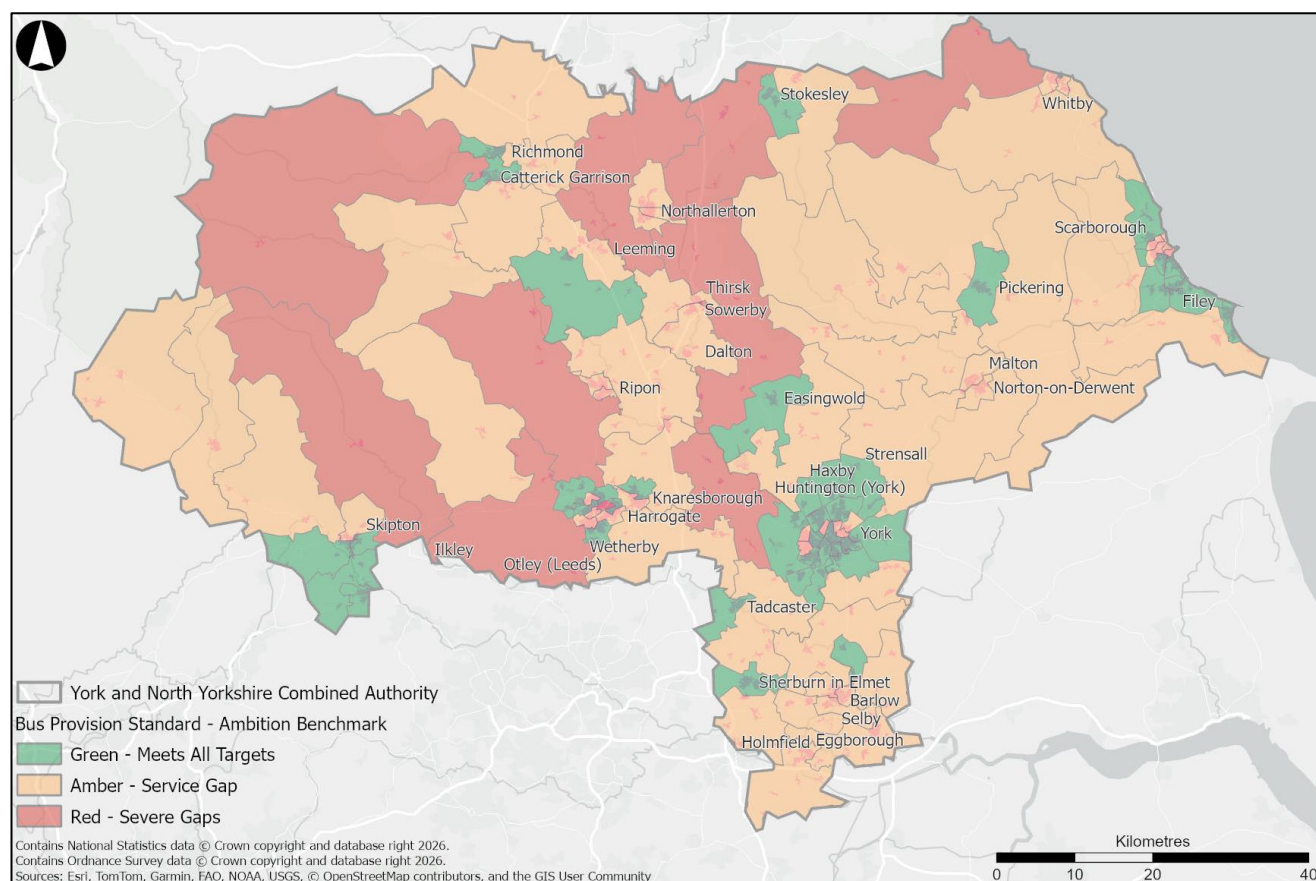


Figure 2-10: Bus provision standard ambition benchmark (source: Campaign for Better Transport, Bus Provision Standard)

2.5 Bus Infrastructure

Bus service provision and infrastructure in York and North Yorkshire consists of bus priority lanes, bus stops, and Park and Ride facilities.

2.5.1 Bus Stops

There are 6,733 bus stops in the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority area, as mapped on the National Public Transport Access Node (NaPTAN) database. As part of the Bus Network Review, we categorised all bus stops within our region to provide a hierarchy of stops based on the following criteria:

- Access to bus stop within 400m / per population
- Access to amenities
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- Percentage of population served aged 65+
- Percentage of population served young people
- Percentage of population served registered disabled
- Percentage of population served young people
- Bus link frequency

A ranking system was developed based on the total score of all metrics, which were then classified into the Table 2-5 categories:

Table 2-5: Bus stop prioritisation, count and percentage of stops

Category/rank	Number of stops	% of total
Highest	594	9
High	1356	20
Medium	2238	33
Low	2585	38

The highest and high priority stops are located across the network but predominantly located in built-up areas and at important interchange points and frequently served locations such as York, Scarborough, Whitby, Selby, Richmond, Northallerton, Skipton, Harrogate, Starbeck and Knaresborough. The exercise undertaken through the Bus Network Review provides the case for developing a set of standards for bus stop infrastructure across the area, which that specifies the essential components that should be present for each category of stop.

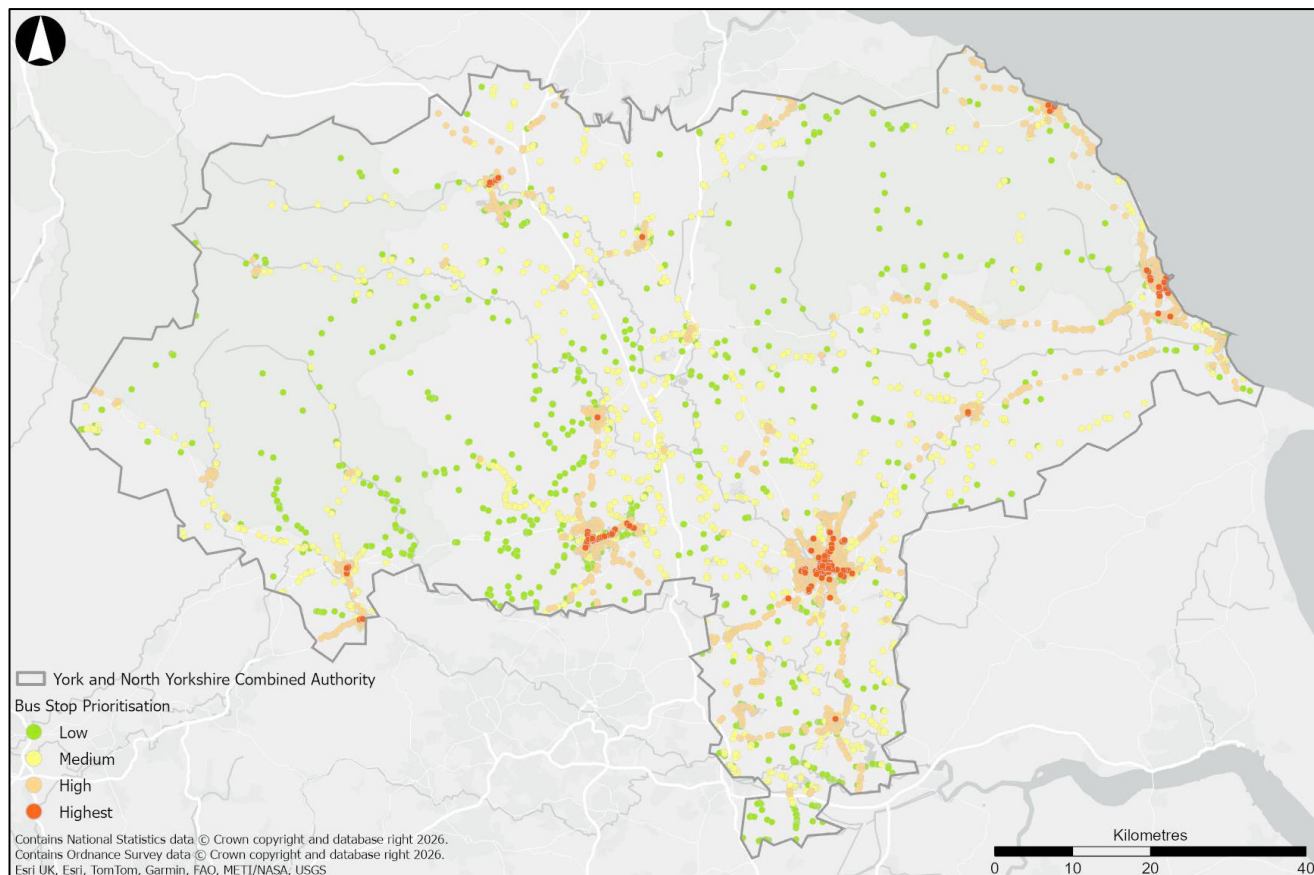


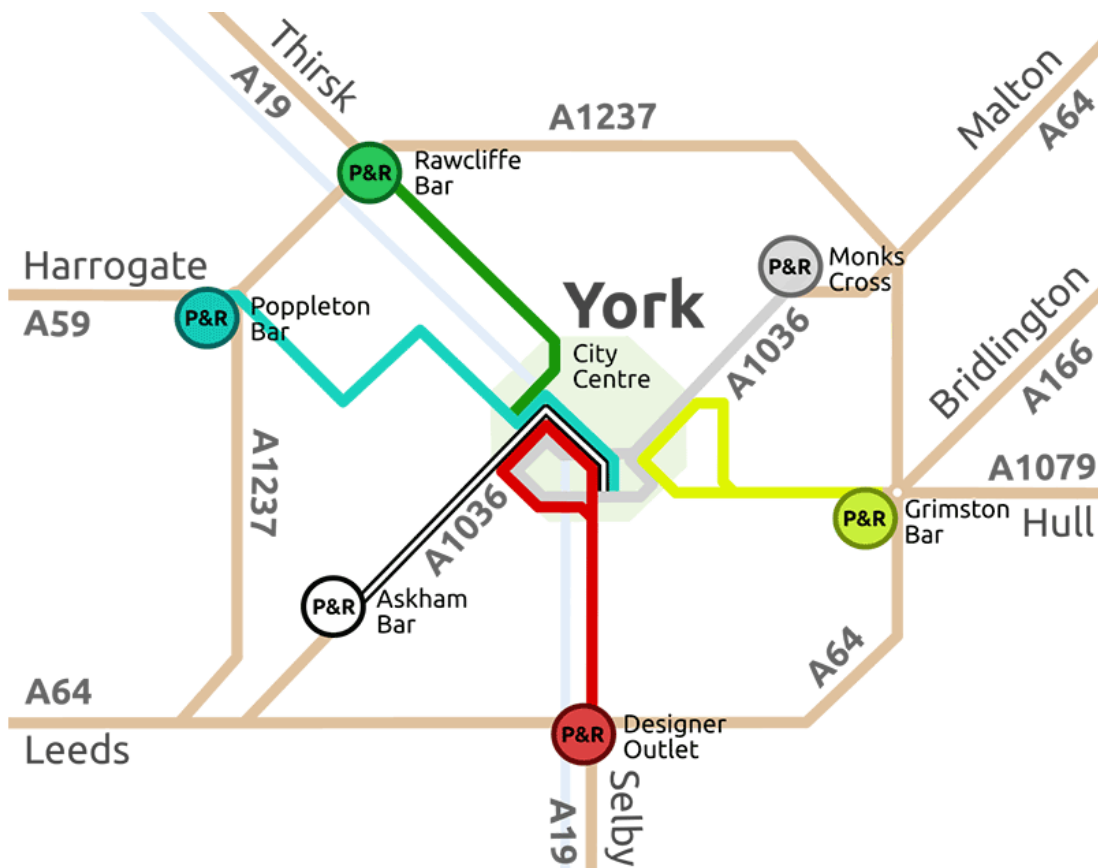
Figure 2-11: Bus stop prioritisation across York and North Yorkshire

2.5.2 Park and Ride

There is an extensive Park and Ride system in our region, especially in York which has the largest zero-emission bus-based Park and Ride service in the UK. There are six sites in York, with additional sites in Scarborough and Whitby.

York's Park and Ride system provides 4,950 free car parking spaces across the six sites, which are situated on the outskirts of the city, close to the Outer Ring Road. The sites provide more frequent bus access to the city centre for visitors and commuters and reduces congestion and vehicle access in the city centre. Ticket prices are set to encourage use and provide better value than parking in the city centre. Corridors which connect the sites to the city centre have bus priority infrastructure which reduces congestion impact on journey times and journey time reliability.

Figure 2-12: City of York Park and Ride network



Scarborough has two Park and Ride sites, which have 500 and 600 free parking spaces respectively, and Whitby has one Park and Ride site, which has 450 free parking spaces.

York Rawcliffe Bar 1,000 parking spaces 10 to 12-minute frequency	York Askham Bar 1,100 parking spaces 10 to 12-minute frequency	York Designer Outlet 600 parking spaces 10 to 15-minute frequency
York Grimston Bar 900 parking spaces 10 to 15-minute frequency	York Monks Cross 750 parking spaces 12 to 15-minute frequency	York Poppleton Bar 600 parking spaces 12 to 15-minutes
Scarborough Filey Road 600 parking spaces 20-minute frequency	Scarborough Seamer Road 500 parking spaces 20-minute frequency	Whitby Park and Ride 450 parking spaces 30-minute frequency

Figure 2-13: City of York and North Yorkshire Park and Ride services

In 2025, Park and Ride services in York carried over 3.8 million passengers, the most for any year since the Covid-19 pandemic. December 2025 saw over 430,000 journeys made, a return to pre-pandemic levels. It is estimated that York Park and Ride results in over 60,000 fewer cars per month entering the city centre.

2.5.3 Bus Priority Infrastructure

All six Park and Ride sites in York are supported to some extent by bus priority lanes on the routes to/from York city centre. Below is a list of bus priority lanes in the City of York area:

- A59 Poppleton Road inbound, between Holgate Park Drive and Windmill Rise.
- A1079 Hull Road inbound, between Grimston Bar Park and Ride and Archbishop Holgate's School
- A1036 The Mount inbound, between Knavesmire Road and Blossom Street
- A1036 Malton Road inbound, between New Lane and Heworth Green roundabout
- A19 Selby Road inbound, through Fulford Interchange.
- A19 Main Street/Fulford Road inbound, between Fulford Park and Broadway
- A19 Shipton Road outbound, between Howard Drive and Rawcliffe Bar Park and Ride
- Coppergate
- Corner of Low Poppleton Lane and Millfield Lane

A consultation on proposals to introduce a new bus priority corridor on Rougier Street in York was undertaken at the end of 2025, with results indicating broad support for improving bus reliability. The corridor accommodates over 1,000 bus movements per day across 29 routes, representing more than

half of all city centre services, with congestion resulting in average peak-hour speeds as low as 3.4 mph.

The proposals were updated to address consultation feedback and concerns regarding impacts on residents, businesses, and Blue Badge access. Proposed measures include restricting sections of Rougier Street, George Hudson Street and Micklegate to buses, cycles and emergency vehicles, supported by bus lanes and bus gates. In July 2026, the Rougier Route proposals received executive approval.

2.6 Passengers

Bus use across the region is varied, with the network supporting a wide range of trip purposes including commuting, education, healthcare and tourism. In 2025, this equated to over 26 million passenger journeys, comprising 11.6 million in North Yorkshire and 14.6 million in the City of York.

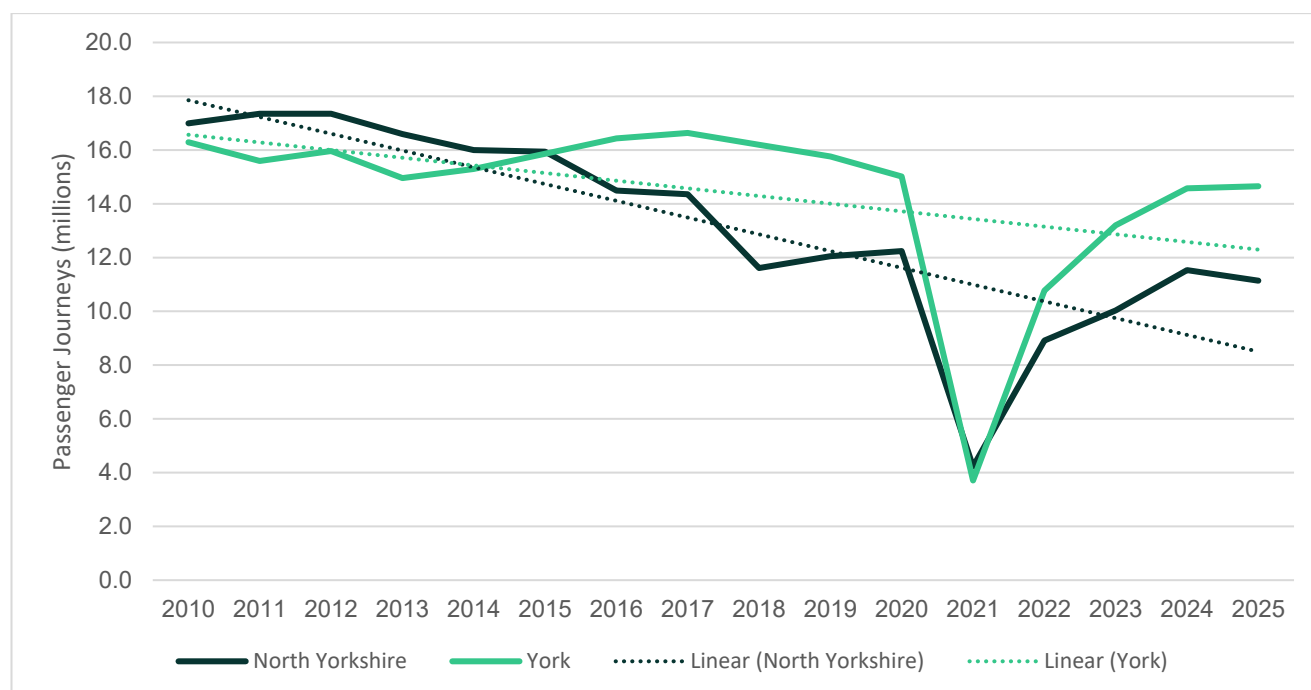


Figure 2-14: Local Bus Passenger Journeys (Source: DfT) / Table BUS01e)

In North Yorkshire, patronage is approaching recovery following a long-term decline since 2010, with 2025 demand reaching 92% of 2019 levels. Patronage is also performing above the long-term trend, supported by increased revenue funding to maintain and enhance services.

In contrast, York has experienced a more stable trend over time and a strong recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic, with patronage reaching 99% of 2019 levels. However, 2025 journeys remain 1.7 million below the 2017 peak but with further growth expected as continued investment in services and infrastructure takes effect. Since setting the City of York Local Transport Strategy, York has recorded a 38% increase on a baseline of 2022 patronage levels and sets out a target to increase patronage 50% by 2030.

Both York and North Yorkshire, surpass the national level of pre-pandemic recovery for journeys in England outside of London at 88% with trendlines showing the impact of 2021 and 2022 as major outliers that distort the general trend of recovery following the pandemic and changes to journey patterns.

2.6.1 Journeys per capita

Bus journeys in York range from local city services (First Bus, Transdev) and commuter routes to surrounding towns (Arriva, East Yorkshire) to tourist routes into the Dales and Moors.

Journeys per head of the population are high in York compared to similar areas, reflecting the comprehensive coverage and investment in affordability and reliability. Overall, the comprehensive network in the city supports more journeys per-capita than the average across metropolitan areas, non-metropolitan areas and the average in England, excluding London. York ranked ninth in 2025 nationally for per-capita bus journeys.

By contrast, North Yorkshire's predominantly rural and low-density network means that per-capita bus journeys are in the bottom quartile when compared to the other areas across England. The network and area characteristics present a challenge for investment in maintaining and improving viable services while increasing patronage in a low-density, car-dependent environment.

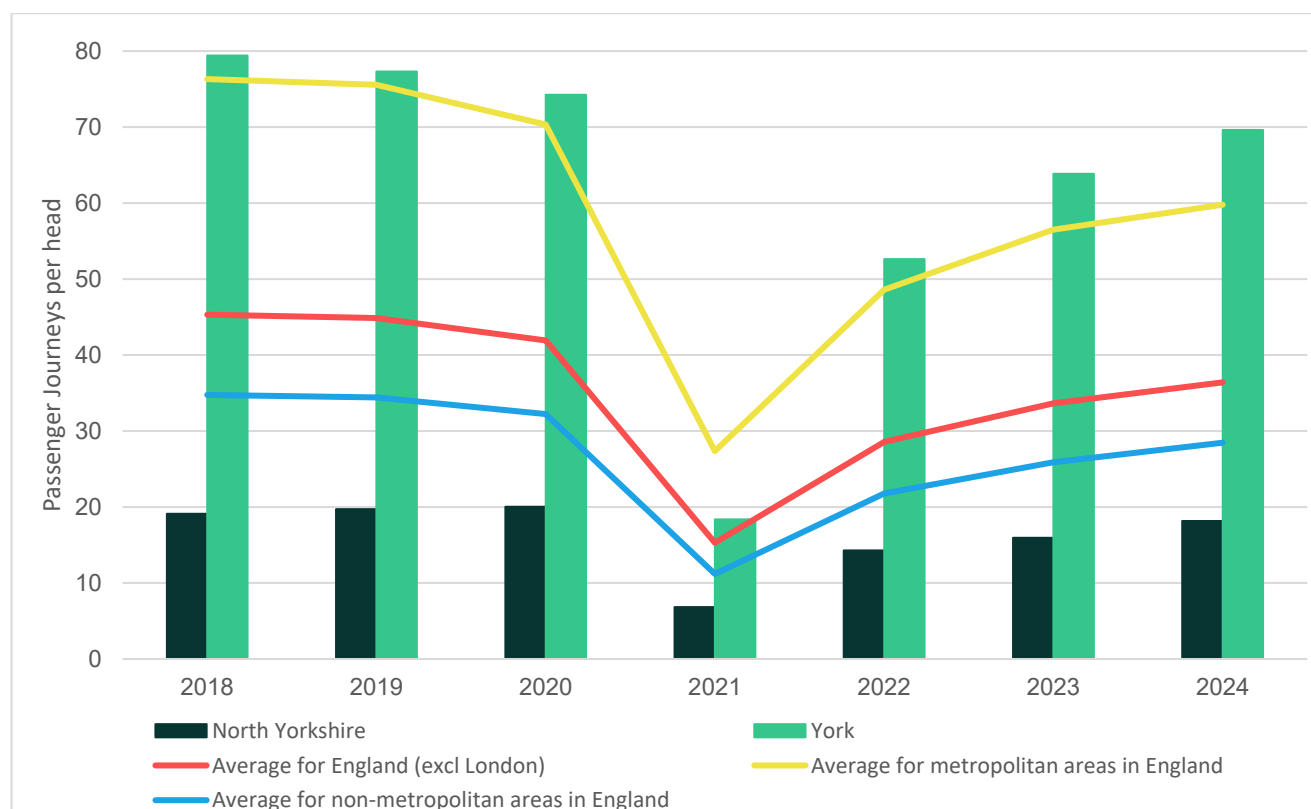


Figure 2-15: Passenger journeys per head of population in York and North Yorkshire

Passenger journeys per head of population have seen a strong recovery compared to the pre-pandemic baseline. North Yorkshire has recovered but per-capita usage remains around 12% below pre-pandemic levels. This reflects the more structural challenges of sustaining demand in a largely rural network, where lower frequency services and dispersed populations continue to constrain usage. York has achieved a stronger recovery, reaching 91% of 2019 levels, demonstrating greater resilience in an urban market with a denser network and higher baseline demand.

Overall, the data indicates that while both areas have experienced sustained recovery, urban demand has rebounded more strongly than rural demand and the per-capita usage remain above that of the 82% recovery seen nationally, outside of London.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, we have closed the gap compared to other combined authority areas, regarding the number of journeys made per head of the population.

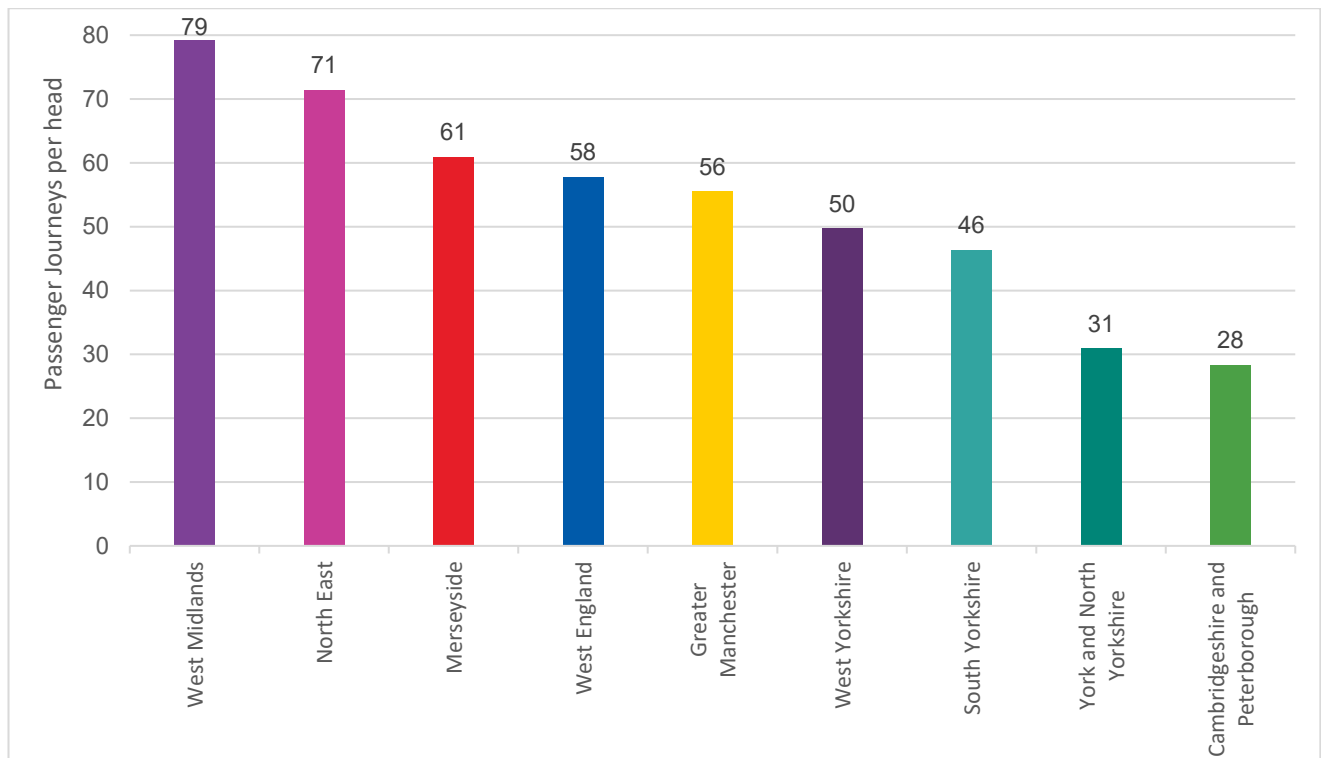


Figure 2-16: Passenger journeys per head of population in 2024 - Combined Authority comparison

2.6.2 Customer Satisfaction

The 2025 Transport Focus Your Bus Journey Survey finds that, according to bus users, satisfaction is relatively high, as shown on Figure 2-17. By area, satisfaction in York and North Yorkshire is 87%. Compared to the 2024 results, this is an improvement from North Yorkshire's score of 86% but a decrease for York from 88%. The highest rated satisfaction in the survey is 93% and the lowest 73%, with the average for England 85%.

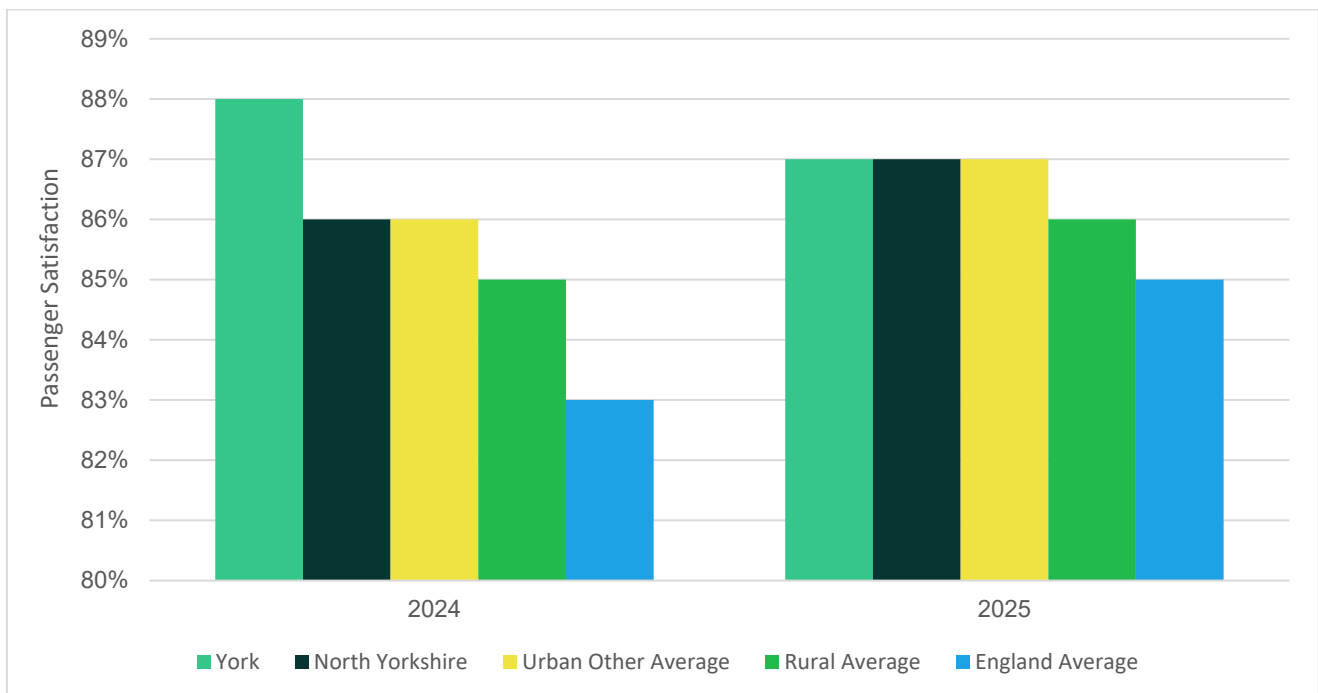


Figure 2-17: Your Bus Journey Passenger Satisfaction comparison. Source: Your Bus Journey, Transport Focus Survey results for York and North Yorkshire (2025)

The Your Bus Journey survey (2025) also surveys public satisfaction with headline journey measures, with the highest satisfaction for the bus driver (90%), followed by the time the journey took (84%) and the bus stop (82%). The lowest satisfaction was with waiting time at the bus stop (76%). See for a breakdown of the results. See Figure 2-18 for a breakdown of the results.

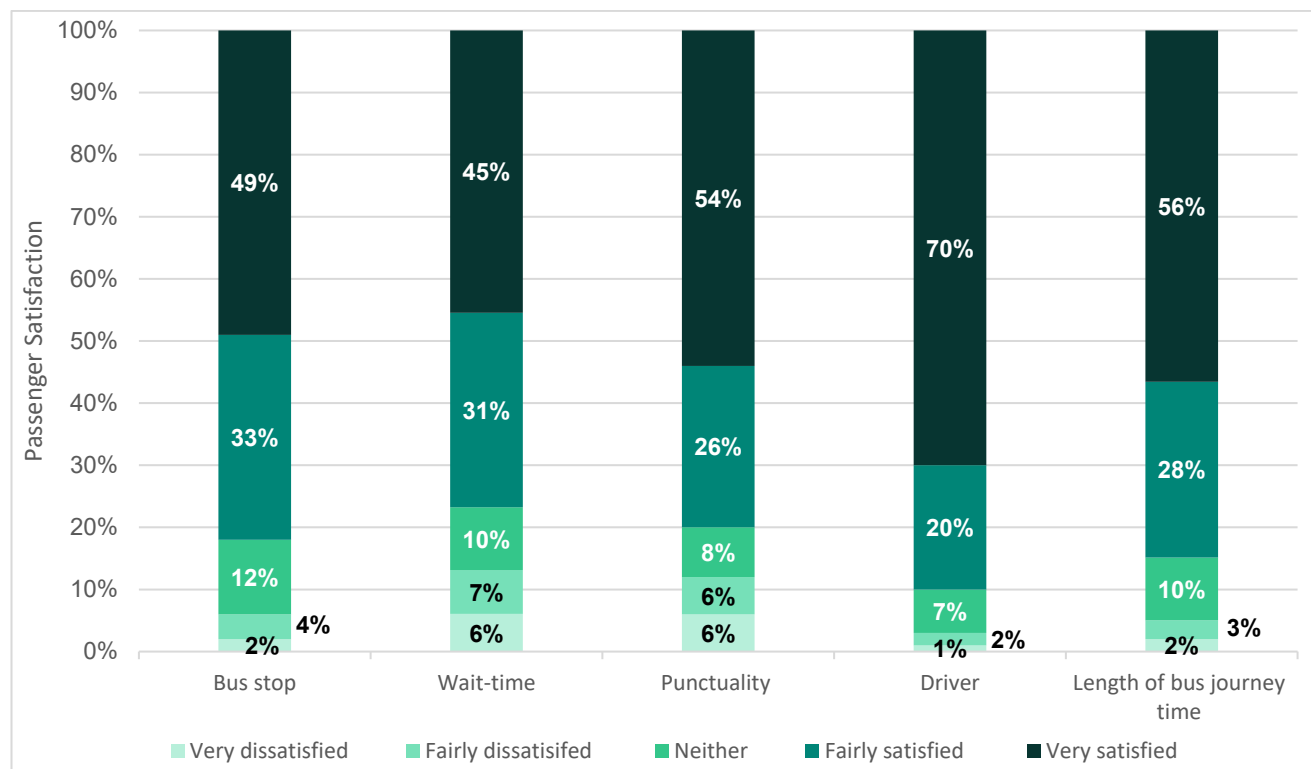


Figure 2-18: Percentage satisfaction with headline journey measures. Source: Your Bus Journey, Transport Focus Survey results for York and North Yorkshire (2025)

The public satisfaction with bus stops in general is captured in the headline journey measures above, and the satisfaction with specific elements of bus stops are explored in further detail in Figure 2-19. The different elements – security, information, litter and general condition – all receive similar levels of public satisfaction, with personal security scored the lowest at 72% satisfied and clear of litter scored the highest at 79% satisfied.

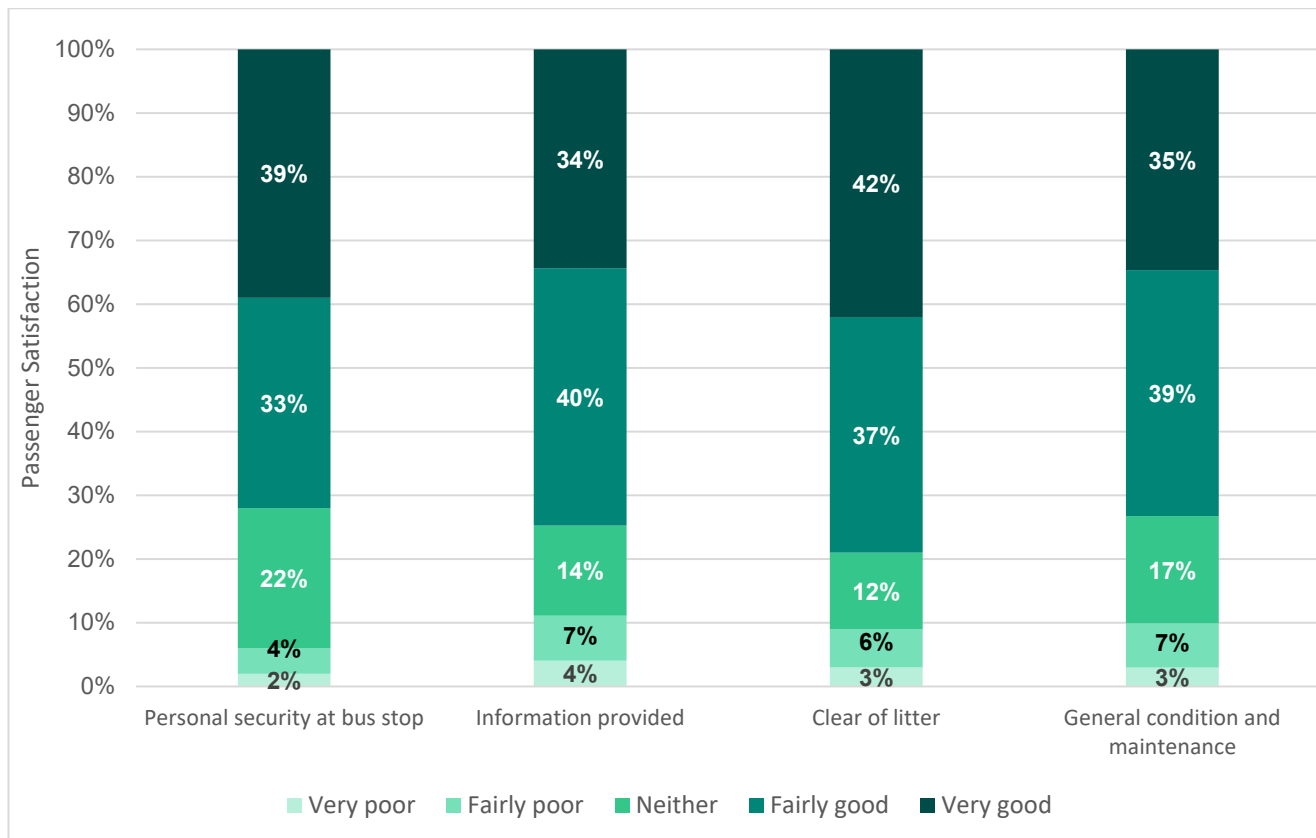


Figure 2-19: Percentage satisfaction with bus stop measures. Source: Your Bus Journey, Transport Focus Survey results for York and North Yorkshire (2025)

Similarly, the public satisfaction with specific elements of local bus service provision in York and North Yorkshire is captured, see Figure 2-20 for the results. The coverage of the bus network is the most satisfactory factor. The current provision of services taking the public to places they want to go to receives the highest level of satisfaction, at 84% satisfied, closely followed by the ease of getting to local amenities such as shops and hospitals receiving a total of good satisfaction of 83%. The cost of bus fares is the least satisfactory factor, at 58% satisfied, followed by the reliability of services at 67% satisfied.

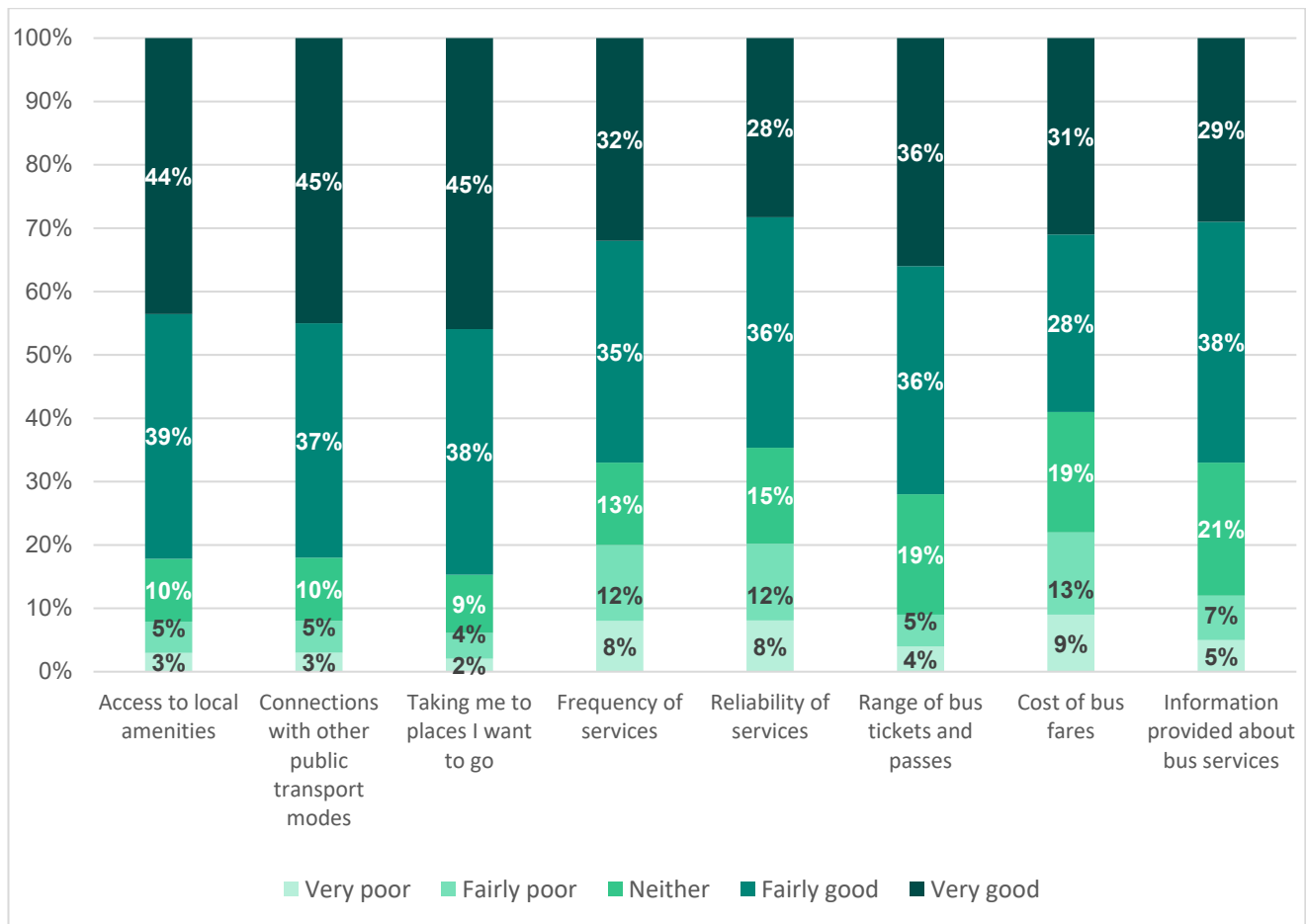


Figure 2-20: Percentage satisfaction with local bus service measures. Source: Your Bus Journey, Transport Focus Survey results for York and North Yorkshire (2025)

The total satisfaction with a journey's 'value for money', amongst fare payers, is 65%. Influential were surveyed to explore what has the biggest influence on rating 'value for money' which found the specific aspects of the cost of the bus that the public find particularly dissatisfactory. Notably, the cost of the bus now compared to 12 months ago has the highest percentage of not satisfied answers, followed by the cost for the distance travelled and the cost of bus fares in York and North Yorkshire compared to other places.

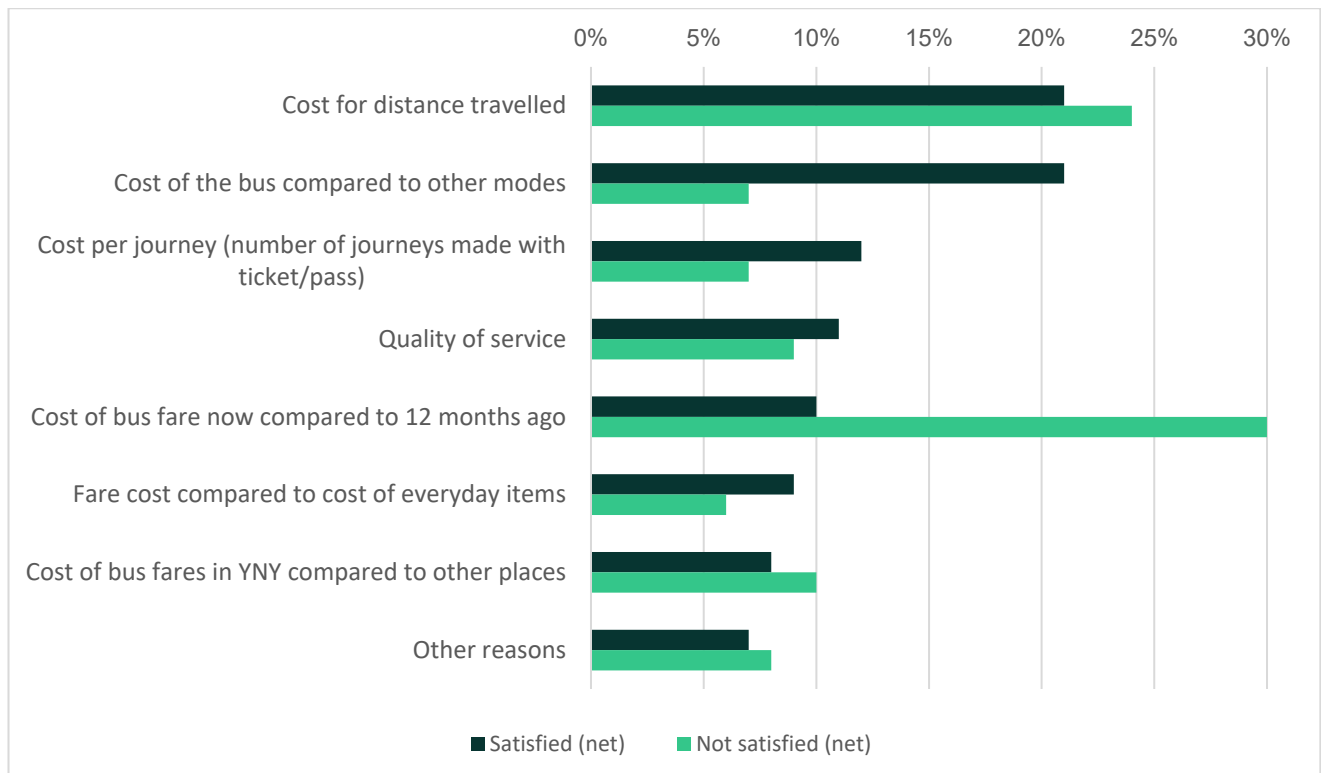


Figure 2-21: Percentage satisfaction with value for money factors. Source: Your Bus Journey, Transport Focus Survey results for York and North Yorkshire (2025)

The public were also asked the main purpose of their bus journey. Commuting for work represents the largest proportion of purposes for travelling by bus, followed by shopping and leisure purposes. These three purposes make up 70% of bus journeys in York and North Yorkshire, made by the public answering this survey. Business purposes and travelling to an appointment represent the smallest proportions of purposes for travelling by bus.

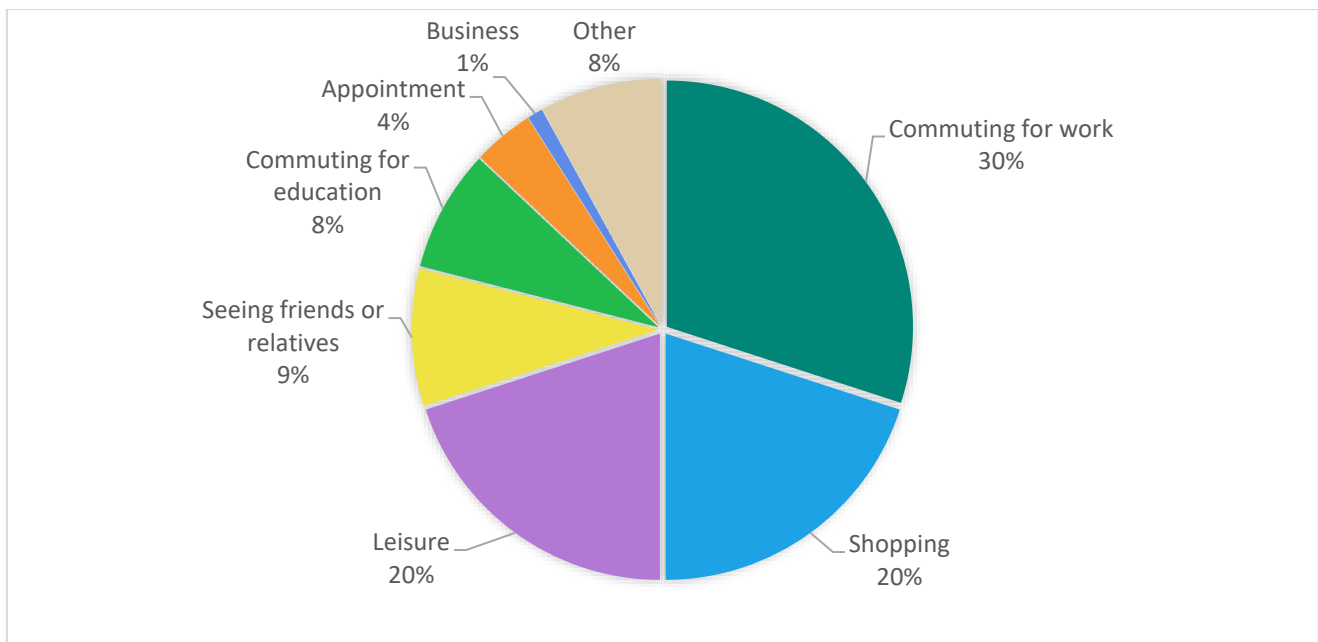


Figure 2-22: Main purpose for using the bus. Source: Your Bus Journey, Transport Focus Survey results for York and North Yorkshire (2025)

The ranking of satisfaction by operator in the 2025 Your Bus Survey identifies four of our operators; East Yorkshire, First York, The Keighley Bus Company and The Harrogate Bus Company as being in the top 50 in England for satisfaction, whilst the 2024 survey identified four operators in our region as within the top 30 in England for satisfaction, out of over 400 operators nationally.

On the other hand, North Yorkshire's and the City of York's Local Transport Strategy's public consultations identify low customer satisfaction with public transport, and specifically bus, provision.

"Timetables are really important, but the buses aren't reliable so you can't use them" - quote from York's Local Transport Strategy Consultation

The North Yorkshire Council's 'Let's Talk Transport' survey in 2023 found that 59% feel that the transport system, including all modes available, does not meet their needs very well or at all well. Lowest satisfaction was reported from Selby and Ainsty and highest satisfaction from Harrogate and Knaresborough. In particular, seldom heard groups, such as respondents from rural areas, older populations, women, and people with disabilities or long-term limiting conditions, show higher dissatisfaction than their counterparts.

The 'Our Big Conversation' Local Transport Strategy consultation undertaken in York, in 2024 found that just under half of respondents are not satisfied with the current provision of bus routes, indicating to a lower dissatisfaction than those in North Yorkshire. Most respondents find public transport accessible. In response to "Do you feel buses and trains are accessible to you?", 68% said yes, 23% no and 9% did not know. Respondents with disabilities reported lower perception of accessibility to buses and train (59%).

"Too expensive, unreliable and limited" – quote from York's Local Transport Strategy Consultation

2.6.3 Punctuality and Reliability

Bus punctuality and reliability are essential for a trustworthy network. Poor punctuality undermines confidence, value for money, and disproportionately impacts those most dependent on buses. Enhancing reliability and reducing journey times are key to increasing patronage, supporting inclusive growth, and meeting National Bus Strategy objectives.

Congestion plays a key part in the punctuality and reliability of bus services in urban areas, particularly York, where the historic layout and high traffic volumes, constrains vehicular flow and makes it difficult to mitigate congestion. Congestion is perceived as the most serious problem in York, as recognised in the York Local Transport Strategy. The transport network in York is highly constrained in terms of space, meaning bus improvements cannot be achieved through conventional measures such as road widening. In many locations, this would require property demolition or encroachment into green space. As a result, any strategy to improve bus services and support sustainable modes must involve trade-offs between different road user groups.

As a predominantly rural county, North Yorkshire does not suffer from widespread congestion but there are significant issues in the urban centres of Harrogate, Scarborough, Selby and Malton, as well as in school areas around start and finish times, where air quality is also a concern. Seasonal tourist traffic adds pressures to the road network in the summer months, particularly in popular visitor destinations such as Scarborough and Whitby, the North York Moors and the Yorkshire Dales.

Department for Transport 2025 data on the percentage of non-frequent bus services running on time by local authority, reports 70% for North Yorkshire and 78% for York. These are below the average for the Yorkshire and the Humber region, and the average for England, at 80%.

Real-time location data from the Bus Open Data Service (BODS) and timetable information provides an average punctuality for all stop-level activity, presented in Figure 2-23. The majority of Lower Super Output Areas in our region had a 61% to 80% punctuality rate between October 2023 and April 2024.

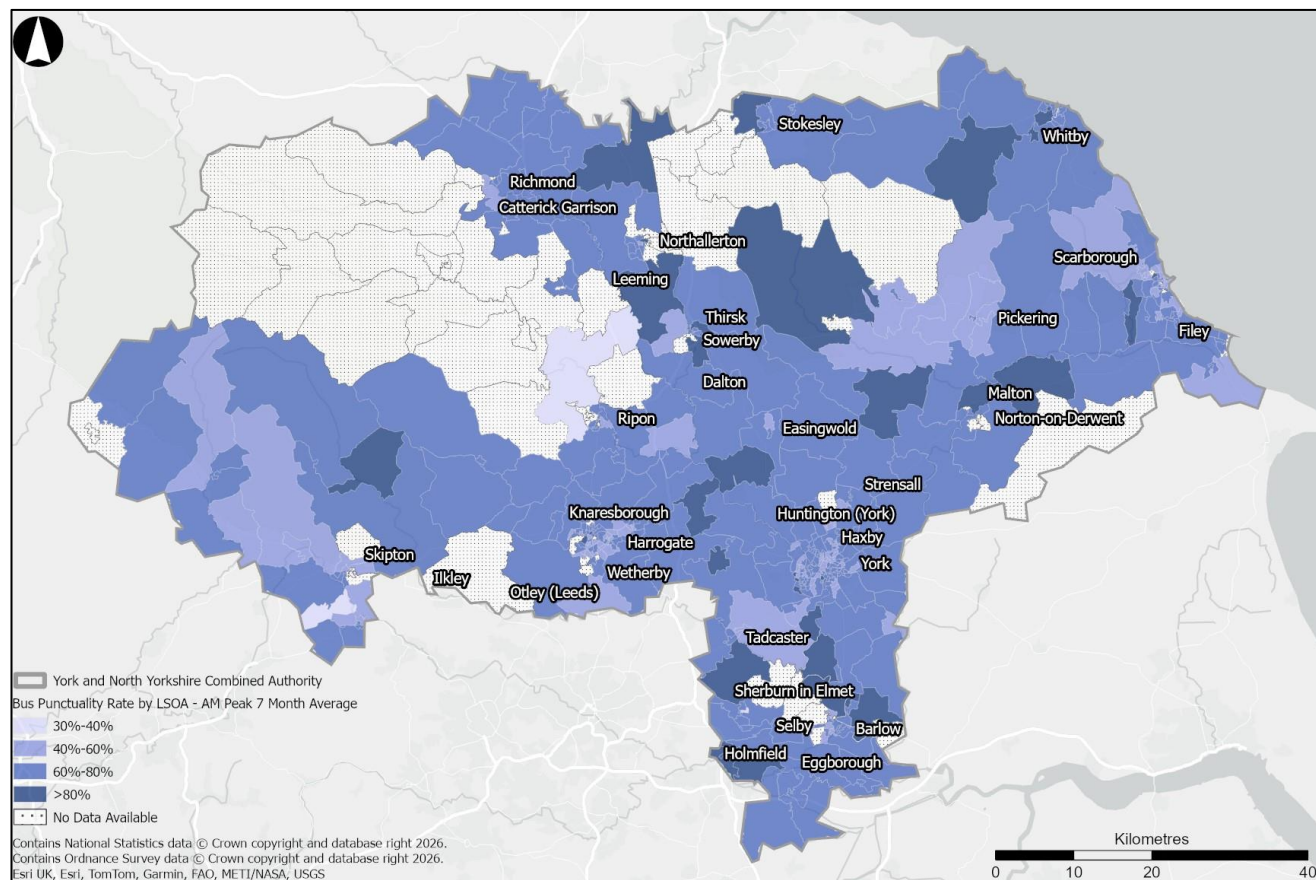


Figure 2-23: Bus punctuality rate by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)

The highest punctuality rates between 81-91% can be seen scattered particularly throughout the central belt of the region. The lower punctuality rate between 41-60% tends to be concentrated in and surrounding the urban centres of York, Harrogate, Scarborough, Selby and Richmond as well as to the south of the North Yorkshire moor, Pickering, and to the west, Skipton. Transparent LSOAs have no data available and a limited number of LSOAs have less than 40% punctuality, to the west and north of Ripon.

The York EP Forum uses a published measure of bus punctuality which is calculated using timings from every bus service in the York area for which real-time information is available. The measure provides a picture of overall punctuality across all routes in York over a 12-month period.

The decline for the year-on-year change in punctuality could be attributed to a range of congestion inducing events and highways works undertaken in the year up to April 2025. Emerging data for the year up to March 2026, shows an improvement in punctuality, attributed to the near completion of the Station Gateway works.

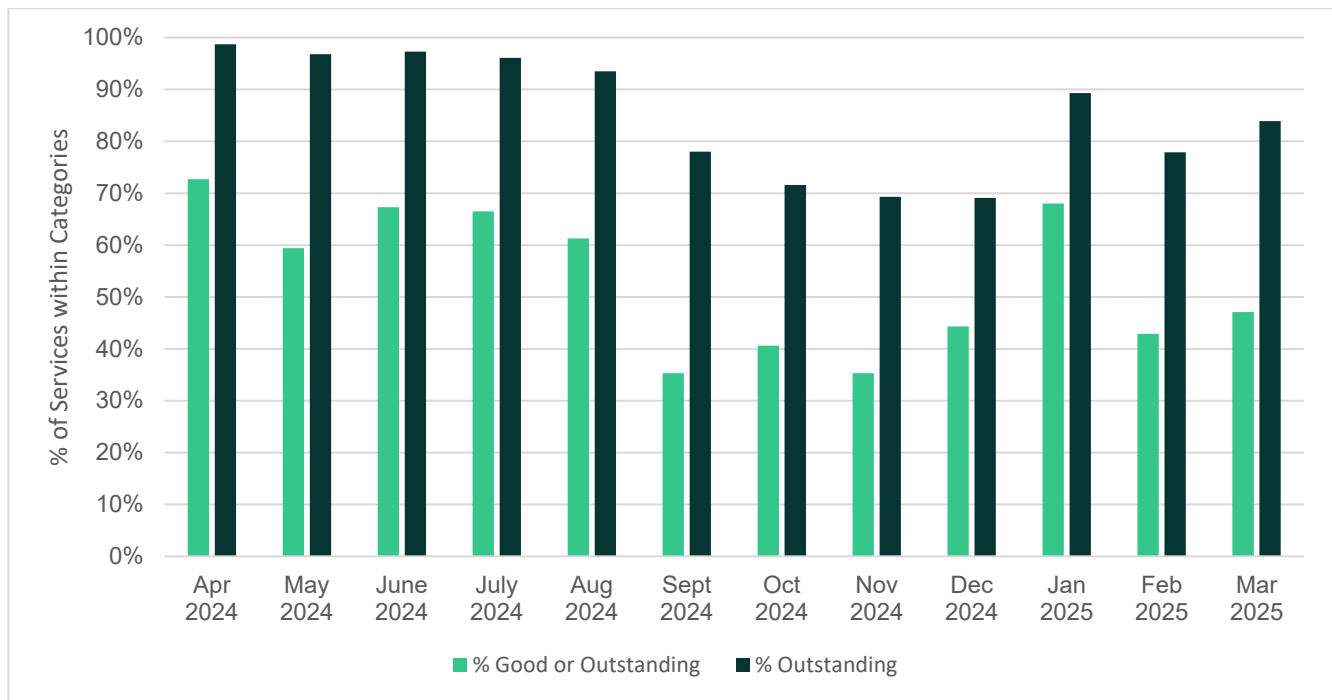


Figure 2-24: York EP's monthly bus punctuality measure

Some of this improvement in punctuality can also be attributed to more realistic running times from operators. Whilst this improves reliability, the resulting impact is to slow down journey times which impacts the passenger experience, something that has been raised by passengers and operators in City of York. Work is currently underway with the approved Rougier Route scheme, to address this issue in City of York with further information on its impact expected to be available once the bus priority is up and running.

Bus punctuality and service reliability are critical aspects of service quality and highly important to passengers; that is why we are working hard to improve reliability and reduce impacted journey times through addressing network pinch points and improving bus priority infrastructure.

2.6.4 Fares and Ticketing

Tickets can be purchased through individual operator websites and apps. All buses in York offer contactless and app-based ticketing. The York by Bus card is a contactless smartcard that can hold certain All York, Park and Ride, Transdev (Coastliner, York and Country) and First York tickets. The All York ticket allows travel on any bus service within the York boundary and ensures users pay no more when travelling with multiple operators than with just one. All York tickets are available as adult, young person, family, multi-day, weekly and monthly options.

The UK Government £3 single fare cap applies to eligible bus routes until 31 March 2027. Under the £3 cap, no eligible single journey costs more than £3, and fares already below £3 can only rise in line with inflation, meaning some remain below the cap. The £3 fare cap does not affect concessionary fares or free travel entitlements. The £1 young persons' fare (for ages 18 or under) applies to most journeys within North Yorkshire and York; the scheme excludes school services and tours.

Operators offer a range of adult, child, student and family tickets, and multi-day bundles. York concessionary passes include Older Person's Bus Pass, Disabled Person's Bus Pass, Blind Person's Bus Pass. City of York Council offers a YOzone age ID card which can be used as proof of age to unlock discounted fares for young people aged 11–16 and 16–18. PlusBus tickets can be added when purchasing a train ticket for integrated bus and rail travel to and from major rail stations including

York. North Yorkshire concessionary passes include the Older Person's Bus Pass and the Disabled Person's Bus Pass.

There is a wide range of bus ticket types on sale in North Yorkshire with each operator having their own branding and pricing approach to weekly, monthly and longer-term tickets. The introduction of the National Fare Cap scheme in January 2023 has significantly changed the fares landscape, making bus travel much more affordable, particularly for less frequent travellers and those travelling long distances in our region. The Scenic Explorer multi-operator ticket provides a single ticket for 6 routes in the coastal area of the region for one or three days of unlimited travel. The ticket includes travel on the 840 and 843 Coastliner services that connects Scarborough and Whitby with York and Leeds, as well as local services in and around the coastal towns and villages

Provision of discounted fares for younger people is has seen strong improvement through the York and North Yorkshire Under 19s £1 fare offered across all operators.

Beyond the aforementioned tickets, there is little in the way of multi operator or multi-modal ticketing. PLUSBUS is available for bus and train travel from selected rail stations and can only be bought from train operating companies. Travelling by more than one operator or mode generally requires the purchase of separate tickets. Daily fare capping is not currently widely available in North Yorkshire.

2.6.5 Customer Information

iTravel York is a long-standing behaviour change initiative, and travel planning programme led by City of York Council, supporting residents, schools and employers to make more sustainable travel choices. The programme promotes walking, cycling and public transport through targeted engagement, personalised travel planning and partnership working, helping to reduce car dependency, improve air quality and support a healthier, more accessible city. The platform but acts as a dedicated hub for local information about travelling in York.

Many bus stops across York feature Real-Time Information displays. Bus stop timetables feature QR codes to link passengers to live service information. Individual operator apps including Arriva, First Bus, East Yorkshire and Transdev, provide real time bus information.

Across North Yorkshire, the council promotes Traveline, downloadable PDF bus timetables and bustimes.org, alongside individual operator apps for journey planning and service updates.

There is a commitment in the York Enhanced Partnership Plan for operators to provide printed timetables, these sources remain particularly important for those with limited digital connectivity.

2.7 Fleet and Decarbonisation

We are committed to decarbonising transport and reducing emissions, with ambitious targets for zero-emission and low-emission vehicles across York and North Yorkshire.

2.7.1 Existing Bus Fleet

We have over 700 buses operating throughout our region. All buses operating in North Yorkshire are Euro III or higher. Throughout York, buses are of a high standard, with a limited number of vehicles Euro IV, Euro V and Euro VI, the majority are battery electric. This supports York's Clean Air Zone (CAZ) for buses, which was introduced in 2020 to improve local air quality, for which buses need to meet Euro VI standards, or be fully electric. Restrictions apply to each vehicle used to provide local bus services making 5 or more entries into the CAZ area (i.e. the York Inner Ring Road) per day.

2.7.2 Carbon Negative Ambitions

The York and North Yorkshire Strategy for a Sustainable Future sets out a clear ambition to become England's first carbon negative region, whilst achieving economic transformation and healthy, thriving communities. It emphasises collaborative delivery across local authorities, businesses, communities and public bodies, alongside capturing the economic and social opportunities associated with the transition to carbon.

Transport is identified as one of the most significant sources of emissions in the region and a critical area for change. The region's transport system remains the largest source of emissions in, accounting for 32% of our total emissions. Total emissions have fallen by 15% between 2005 and 2023, with the decarbonisation and electrification of buses as a contributing factor.

The Strategy for sustainable futures highlights clean, affordable and reliable power, and accessible, convenient transport as high impact sectors. It calls for a substantial reduction in car dependency alongside major increases in walking, cycling and public transport mode share. The strategy aims for 25% of the bus fleet to be electric by 2030, and 95% by 2038.

2.7.3 Decarbonisation highlights

The transition to zero-emission buses (ZEBs) began back in 2014, with the introduction of Poppleton Bar Park and Ride in York, which has been served wholly by electric buses since its opening date.

Especially in York, we are well underway with the transition towards zero-emission bus (ZEB) operation, through investing in vehicles and infrastructure. Our partnership with First York, and the award of four tranches of funding from central government saw new all-electric buses enter service following funding awards in 2014, 2015, 2018 and 2022, leading to First York's entire fleet of buses being fully electrified by 2024. The electric fleet in York is supported by the electrification of First's James Street depot, which was completed in 2024.

Currently our region has a total of 94 electric buses in operation, with 39 further vehicles on order.

In North Yorkshire, alongside Transdev and following a successful ZEBRA bid, we have invested £7.8m million to support transforming Harrogate's fleet and the electrification of the Harrogate depot and implementation of opportunity charging technology at Harrogate bus station.

In York, the Park and Ride network served by a fully electric bus fleet and the electrified First bus depot achieving a 90% reduction in depot emissions since 2020. ZEBRA funding, secured in 2022, has been invested in expanding the electric bus fleet across North Yorkshire, including routes in Harrogate and Knaresborough.

The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Strategy for a Sustainable Future sets targets to increase bus passenger kilometres by 49% by 2030 and 56% by 2038 — projections that are currently on track. Further electrification of the bus fleet will support our carbon-negative ambitions while attracting new passengers, helping us achieve our long-term goal of raising modal share of public transport to 10% of all journeys by 2050.

2.8 Stakeholder Engagement

2.8.1 North Yorkshire

Engagement feedback from North Yorkshire's 'Lets Talk Transport' survey in 2023 showed clear concern about transport availability and reliability, especially with public transport, with 77% citing availability and reliability of travel as a frequent issue, followed by affordability (62%), road safety

(60%) and climate impacts (56%). When asked which measures would most improve transport, the highest support was for increasing public transport use (62%), followed by traffic and highway improvements (60%) and encouraging walking and cycling (57%).

For frequent journeys (daily or several times a week), respondents most commonly walked (80%) and used petrol/diesel cars (68%), with buses ranked third (18%). Bus was most used only several times a year or less at 39% and daily bus use was the lowest of all categories at 4%, see Figure 2-25 below.

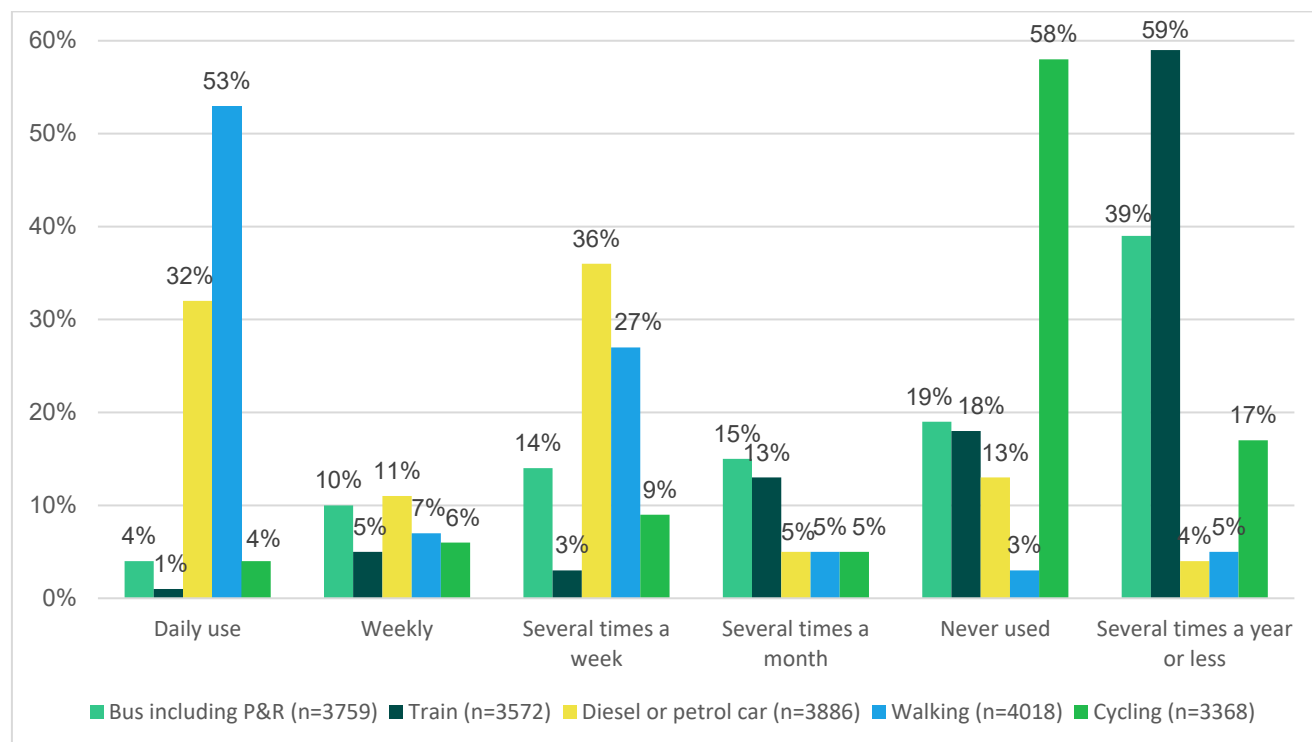


Figure 2-25: Results to the question "How often do you use the following ways of getting around North Yorkshire?" (Source: North Yorkshire Council, Let's Talk Transport: Survey Findings 2023)

2.8.2 York

The York 'Our Big Conversation' engagement involved a questionnaire with over 1,300 respondents, 50 events and more than 1,000 in-person participants, including 350 children and students. Questionnaire respondents (17%) said they undertake more than 80% of trips by car, compared to 12% who do not use a car at all. Looking ahead five years, 24% expect to reduce car use.

Responses suggested a greater desire to use sustainable modes than is reflected in current behaviour. This is consistent with previous York surveys that show residents are multimodal, using several modes to get around according to the needs of different journeys, and have a preference to use sustainable travel more than they do now.

This is also reflected in the question asking the public what steps they would take to reduce congestion and pollution in York, with the most popular answer being "taking public transport more".

For daily journeys, bus use is low, lower than the proportion of respondents who answered that they have "not used" the bus. The proportion of answers for "several times a week", "several times a month" and "less often" are similar, with the largest proportion of all answers for bus use being "several times a year".

The bus is most used for journeys to "entertainment (e.g. cinema, restaurant)" destinations, followed by for "leisure (e.g. parks and open spaces)" and thirdly for "services (e.g. shopping, doctors)". When

asked for what types of journeys people would prefer to travel via different modes for, the most popular journey people would prefer to use the bus for was “leisure/entertainment”, followed by “visiting friends/relatives locally” and thirdly “shopping small items”. Journeys for “shopping heavy items”, “going to work” and “visiting friends/relatives longer distance” follow with similar respondent counts.

Respondents identified the most effective bus improvements as more frequent and reliable services, a more extensive network, and better/cheaper ticketing. Nearly half (48%) said they would use buses more if more bus priority existed, with another 35% saying “maybe”, and 17% saying it would not influence them. Nearly two-thirds of respondents to the question said they would use a city centre shuttle bus, and 75% supported converting Park and Ride sites into multi-modal hubs, an approach progressed through York’s previous individual BSIP. On fare policy, improving affordability was seen as most likely way to increase bus use, followed by simplifying fares.

2.9 Bus Network Review Findings

In 2026, a Bus Network Review was undertaken for York and North Yorkshire to inform ways in which our network can be improved to achieve a set of minimum expectations for each community in our region. The methodology undertaken to review our network and develop improvement proposals is detailed in Figure 2-26.

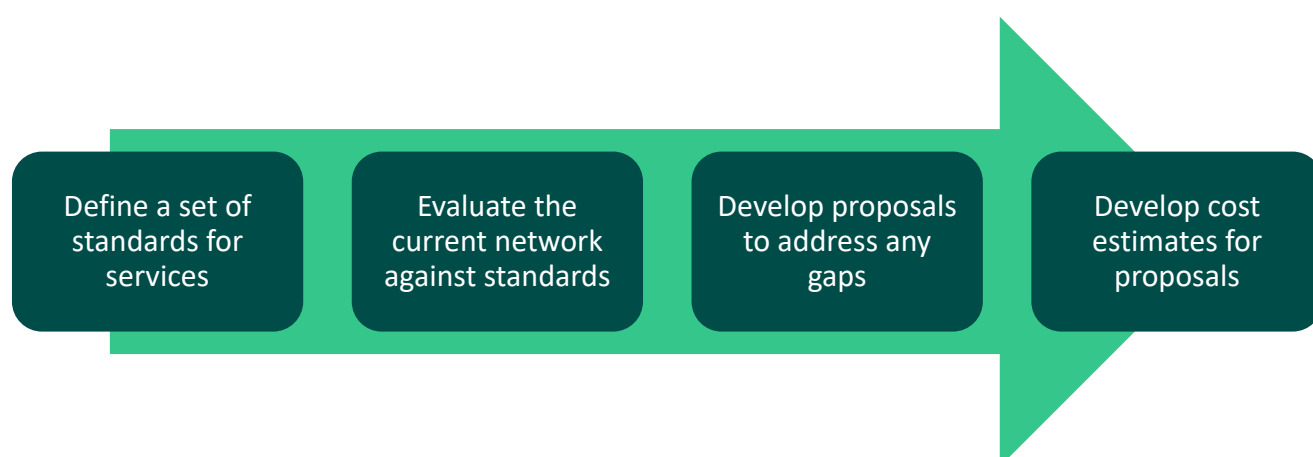


Figure 2-26: Bus Network Review Methodology

The purpose of the Bus Network Review is to take a strategic view of the bus network across York and North Yorkshire, and to propose ways in which the network can be improved to set a minimum expectation of services in communities across the region. This purpose aligns to the Mayoral Priorities for connecting communities across York and North Yorkshire.

The review’s outputs determined service improvements and proposals recommended to improve the overall accessibility of the network, resulting from a gap analysis of the current network and stakeholder engagement with operators. Engagement found that operators are broadly supportive of the Bus Network Review ambitions, with a consensus that most of the logistical challenges that the recommended improvements present, are surmountable. Stakeholders identified the biggest risks are policy uncertainty, short-term funding and inflexible support arrangements. It was concluded that establishing a long-term, stable approach to network development, that aligns with transport for education, driver training and cross-boundary planning is critical for successful implementation.

2.10 Summary

The current bus offer in York and North Yorkshire demonstrates strong progress in recent years, supported by significant investment through BSIP and Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG) and delivery by City of York Council, North Yorkshire Council and the Combined Authority. Improvements over the past five years provide a strong foundation for future investment and network development, while also highlighting areas requiring further intervention.

Improvements to date have focused on strengthening the network, attracting passengers, enhancing infrastructure, improving passenger information and maintaining affordable fares. The network comprises a mix of commercially operated urban and inter-urban services, alongside publicly supported and community transport provision, which play a critical role in rural areas where low population density and high car dependency limit the financial sustainability of services.

Bus patronage has recovered strongly since the pandemic, particularly in York; however, challenges remain across the network. In many rural areas, services are infrequent, coverage is limited, and residents are unable to rely on buses for regular journeys. Performance against the Bus Service Standard ambition benchmark also highlights gaps in frequency and accessibility across both urban and rural areas. While urban and interurban corridors benefit from higher frequencies and stronger connectivity, rural areas continue to experience sparse provision, constraining access to jobs, services and opportunities.

Infrastructure such as Park and Ride and the transition towards zero-emission buses represent key strengths, supporting reliability, reducing emissions and enhancing the attractiveness of bus travel. However, issues remain around reliability, waiting times, and the complexity and affordability of fares, with engagement highlighting a clear desire for simpler ticketing and more frequent, reliable services.

Addressing these challenges will require targeted improvements to frequency, connectivity, affordability and integration. There is also an opportunity to build on existing strengths through expanding bus priority measures, improving interchange and developing Park and Ride sites into multi-modal hubs. Alongside continued decarbonisation of the fleet, these measures will support wider objectives to reduce congestion and pollution.

Overall, a more comprehensive, reliable and integrated bus network will improve access to employment, education, healthcare and services, reduce inequalities in connectivity, and support inclusive economic growth and sustainable travel across York and North Yorkshire.

3. Improvements programme from 2022 to 2026/27

Since the submissions of York's and North Yorkshire's BSIPs in 2021 and EPs in 2022 progress has been made delivering several improvements to the region's bus system. This section will examine the delivery of improvements from the 2022 to 2026/27 using BSIP and LABG funding.

3.1 Investment

Capital investment to date has prioritised bus stops and passenger facilities, with widespread upgrades to stops, shelters and interchange environments across York and North Yorkshire. York especially, has seen a marked improvement in widespread delivery of bus stop enhancement. Bus stop investment has improved accessibility, passenger comfort and the visibility of bus services, particularly at key stops in urban hubs and more rural town centres. Significant progress has been made in information and marketing in York, including expanded real-time information provision, timetable improvements and targeted campaigns to rebuild passenger confidence following the pandemic and make travelling by bus a more attractive proposition for residents and visitors.

At the same time, the bus industry has faced a marked increase in operating costs, including vehicle procurement and maintenance, insurance, staffing, property rental and fuel. These pressures have been compounded by national challenges in recruiting bus drivers and engineering staff, alongside supply chain issues affecting the availability of spare parts. Collectively, these factors have undermined the financial sustainability of many services, particularly in rural and less densely populated areas.

In parallel, funding has supported service enhancements and network stabilisation, including the retention and enhancement of socially important services, protecting the network from shrinking where possible and providing additional journeys at evenings and weekends, and targeted initiatives for young people and other priority groups. BSIP Phase 3 funding has been majority spent on service enhancements which has led to passenger number stabilisation. These measures have been especially important in a large, predominantly rural geography such as North Yorkshire, where maintaining connectivity to employment, education and services is a critical priority and supports the economy.

Across York, early delivery has focused on bus stop accessibility, corridor-based improvements and preparatory work for future bus priority and traffic management schemes. In North Yorkshire, delivery has emphasised service resilience, rural connectivity and incremental enhancements to information and passenger facilities. Alongside this, partners have invested in capacity and capability, establishing the governance, partnership working and programme management arrangements required to deliver an increasingly complex programme at scale.

3.1.1 Fares and Ticketing

Across the region, we have worked hard to keep bus fares as affordable as possible, hand in hand with the national fare cap, at a time of rising costs, with a particular focus on supporting those most likely to be affected by changes to the network and ticket costs. Targeted fare initiatives have been prioritised for vulnerable users, key workers, families and young people, recognising the essential role that affordable bus travel plays in accessing education, employment, services and social opportunities. By maintaining lower fares for key groups, we aim to reduce financial barriers to travel, encourage long-term travel habits among younger passengers, and ensure that the bus network remains inclusive and accessible for those who rely on it most.

We have also made it easier for bus users to pay for their services. The introduction of Tap On Tap Off payments on buses in York and some areas of North Yorkshire represents an important step towards simpler, more modern travel. The system removes the need to know fares in advance or purchase tickets before boarding, making bus travel easier and more intuitive for both regular users and those new to the network.

3.1.2 Bus Priority Infrastructure

Investment in bus priority infrastructure has focused on improving reliability and journey times in key locations, particularly within York city centre and on priority corridors. Targeted measures such as bus lanes, junction improvements and updated signalling have been progressed to reduce delay and improve service punctuality. These interventions support the efficient movement of buses through congested areas, helping to make services more attractive and reliable.

3.1.3 Bus Stops, Stations and Interchanges

Significant progress has been made in upgrading bus stops, stations and interchange facilities across York and North Yorkshire. Improvements include enhanced accessibility, shelter upgrades, signage, seating and maintenance works, with a particular focus on high-use locations and key gateways such as York Railway Station. These enhancements improve passenger comfort, visibility and safety, while supporting inclusive access for users with reduced mobility.

3.1.4 Information and Marketing

Delivery has prioritised clearer, more consistent passenger information through expanded real time information displays, improved signage and better disruption communications. This has been complemented by targeted marketing and promotional activity to build confidence in bus travel and raise awareness of service improvements. Together, these measures support a more user-friendly network and help passengers plan journeys with greater confidence.

3.1.5 Bus Service Support

Funding has been used to stabilise and enhance bus services, including supporting routes at risk of withdrawal and introducing additional journeys where demand or social need is greatest. This includes improvements to evening and weekend services, additional rural journeys and support for seasonal services to key leisure and tourist destinations. These interventions help maintain essential connectivity and protect access to jobs, education and services.

3.1.6 Development of Future Proposals

Alongside delivery, investment has supported development work to prepare future schemes, including option development, feasibility studies and design work for both service and infrastructure interventions. This preparatory activity strengthens the pipeline of deliverable projects, ensuring the authority is well placed to bring forward further improvements as funding becomes available and to scale up delivery over time.

3.2 Improvements programme

The region's bus network is increasingly reliant on public sector support to protect the base network across the region. Funding has been targeted at strengthening the network, protecting it in the short-term and alongside targeted fares schemes, marketing and infrastructure improvement progress has been made to improve the bus system offer available for new and existing users. Table 3-1 details the

measures we have been working hard to deliver since the implementation of the separate, existing BSIPs and receipt of funding.

Table 3-1: City of York Council, North Yorkshire Council and York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Bus Improvement Delivery

Scheme Category	Title of scheme or proposal	Description
City of York Council, North Yorkshire Council and York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority delivery since 2025		
Bus stops / Stations / Interchanges	York Station Gateway	Support funding for the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) to address unanticipated cost inflation and completion of the bus interchange aspects of the flagship scheme. Investment will secure additional benefits (that would otherwise be descoped) to passengers using buses and trains, supporting the scheme in developing the important gateway to the region.
	Bus Stop Accessibility Improvements and Upgrades	An initiative led by City of York and North Yorkshire Council to install improved access arrangements between important bus stops and local communities. Investment has improved access for all bus users including particular benefits for people with reduced mobility.
	Bus Stop/Flag Replacement Programme	Part of a Combined Authority-wide initiative to replace life-expired flags with up-to-date branding and information. This is part of a programme to establish a new standard for bus stop information.
	Park and Ride Site Improvements	Continued investment in the Park and Ride sites surrounding York to improve their quality and attractiveness for users. Investment aimed to attract new users to Park and Ride and encourage more frequent use amongst existing users, delivering environmental and congestion benefits to the city's radial roads.
	Grimston Bar Park and Ride Bus Access Improvements	Highway works to address issues with the approach to one of York's Park and Ride sites.
Bus Priority Infrastructure	City Centre Sustainable Transport Corridor	Support funding for Transforming Cities Fund scheme to address unanticipated cost inflation and to improve bus reliability and reduce journey times. Investment will secure additional benefits (that would otherwise be descoped) to passengers using buses throughout York's historic city centre.

Scheme Category	Title of scheme or proposal	Description
Improved information, marketing	Real time information displays at bus stops in North Yorkshire	Programme to enhance service information at key boarding locations in Harrogate. Investment has improved passenger reliance on bus services.
	Real time information displays at bus stops in York	Citywide programme to improve up to date service information at key boarding locations. Investment has improved passenger reliance on bus services.
	Disruption information management: enhanced back office	Improvements to existing system architecture and data sources. Investment will enable more timely and accurate information about bus service disruption to be identified and disseminated, improving passenger reliance on bus services and driving greater use of the bus. The investment dovetails with proposals for more real-time information displays.
	Roadside information production	Increased budget for 2025/26 to meet supplier cost inflation. Investment enabled the reliability and coverage of timetable information at bus stops to be maintained.
	Roadside information system	Commissioning of new back-office system to produce roadside bus timetable displays. Investment has allowed more attractive and readable timetables to be introduced.
	Public transport website overhaul	Investment to improve the website functionality and ensure it reflects the Mayor's responsibilities for bus services. Investment has provided a better way for potential and existing bus passengers to get integrated information about travel choices.
Simpler/more affordable fares	£1.50 flat fare for York Hospital Staff	Joint scheme with York Hospitals Trust and bus operators to provide NHS staff with a £1.50 maximum fare on York's buses. Investment encouraged bus use and reduced the pressure of car journeys on congested roads around the Trust's sites in York.
	All York Family Day Ticket Discount	Investment encouraged more families to use the bus, specifically by capping the price of a family day ticket at less than the cost of two hours city centre car parking, avoiding the significant cost differential between bus and car when travelling as a family.

Scheme Category	Title of scheme or proposal	Description
	Young Independent Living and Transport Skills scheme for disabled 18–25-year-olds	Personalised travel training sessions in conjunction with a free annual travel pass, intended to build long-term sustainable travel habits for disabled young people.
	Trybus scheme staff enhancement	Scheme to provide free ‘taster tickets’ to regular car commuters to showcase the benefits of bus travel and reduce car dependency.
	YNY Under-19 £1 fare scheme	Provision of a £1 fare for Under-19 bus users across York and North Yorkshire. Investment has encouraged younger people to travel more by bus or use the bus for the first time.
Bus service support/network development	BSOG Payments	BSOG payments provided to City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council in line with previous years to help support bus services. Investment has improved accessibility and utility of bus services across many of York and North Yorkshire’s communities.
	Service enhancement programme	Continuation of 39 service enhancement contracts for a further 12 months to maintain core networks, introduce new services and improve early morning, evening and weekend frequencies. Investment improved accessibility and utility of bus services across many of YNY’s communities.
LTA delivery/admin costs	Capacity and Capability Funding	Capability funding used to support the work on developing bus services and preparing a BSIP. Enabled us to deliver improved outcomes for bus users.
Development of future proposals	Bus reform preparatory work	Study to explore the case for bus reform in York and North Yorkshire and prepare proposals for bus networks, integrated ticketing and information/branding. Investment allowed us to determine to best course of action to deliver widespread benefits to bus users in the future.
	Bus stop accessibility improvements - preparatory design work	Development of further scheme designs for key market town locations including Helmsley, Easingwold and Leyburn.

Scheme Category	Title of scheme or proposal	Description
	Bus station upgrade work - preparatory design work	Development of further scheme designs for bus stations at Skipton, Whitby, Selby and Malton. Investment enabled improvement of the amenity of bus stations in future years and grow the bus market in these towns.
City of York Council Delivery up to 2025 (Excluding schemes continued in partnership with York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority)		
Bus stops / Stations / Interchanges	Additional real time information screens	Approximately 100 new screens to provide effective and easily readable information on bus services.
	Bus stop upgrades	Rolling programme of lighting, painting, timetable case replacement etc. to support the objective of making the network as inclusive and accessible as possible.
Bus Priority Infrastructure	Tactical small scale bus priority schemes	Total reconstruction of Strensall bus terminus, delivery of yellow box junctions and improved signage.
Simpler/more affordable fares	Development of Tap on Tap Off fares	Introduction of Tap on Tap off readers onto buses to speed up boarding and improve payment options for customers.
	Young persons fare reductions	Initiatives to increase the amount of young people using the bus network and embedding a culture of bus use.
Bus service support/network development	Development of core network	Support and enhancement of identified routes.
	Restart of Poppleton Park and Ride	Re-opening of Poppleton Park and Ride following its closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
Improved information, marketing	Travel Behaviour Change Campaign	Measure to increase the number of bus users via targeted marketing campaigns.
North Yorkshire Council Delivery up to 2025 (Excluding schemes continued in partnership with York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority)		

Scheme Category	Title of scheme or proposal	Description
Bus stops / Stations / Interchanges	Enhanced cleaning and repair of bus stop infrastructure	Tidying up and improved maintenance of bus stops, including repair where necessary.
Bus service support/network development	Additional journeys on Saturdays	Additional services to support leisure and social access by bus as a more attractive option.
	Additional journeys on Sundays and Bank Holidays	Additional services to support leisure and social access by bus as a more attractive option.
	Enhancements to weekday timetables, including improved frequencies and additional early morning, peak time, evening or shopper journeys	Improved connectivity for various journey types on buses, improving the attractiveness of leisure and commuter trips by bus.
Simpler/more affordable fares	£1 maximum single fare for young people	Initiative to increase the amount of young people using the bus network and embedding a culture of bus use.
Improved information, marketing	Improved bus service information	Improving information and customer experience through improved marketing and promotion as well as providing additional customer service support at very busy bus stations

3.3 Summary

Since 2022, significant progress has been made in delivering bus improvements in York and North Yorkshire through BSIP and LABG funding. Investment has focused on strengthening and stabilising the network, with increasing reliance on public funding to protect services, particularly in rural areas.

Delivery has prioritised upgrades to bus infrastructure, including stops, stations and interchanges, alongside targeted bus priority measures to improve reliability and journey times. Improvements to passenger information, including real-time information displays, digital systems and marketing have enhanced journey planning and passenger confidence. Funding has also supported the introduction of more accessible and affordable fares, particularly for young people, key workers and vulnerable groups, which alongside the national fare cap, ensures that buses are more affordable for everyone.

Funding has been critical in maintaining the core networks and enhancing services, with a range of services running later, more frequently or more consistently on Sundays and Bank Holidays. This has been especially beneficial for improving rural communities' accessibility, helping connect people with work, education, healthcare or social occasions.

Despite the improvements delivered so far, the network continues to face challenges from rising operating costs, meeting carbon reduction ambitions and declining financial sustainability, particularly in rural areas. As a result, investment has also focused on building capacity and capability, strengthening partnerships and developing a pipeline of future proposals, ensuring the region is well positioned to deliver our and our communities' network ambitions.

4. Ambitions and proposals from 2027-2032

This section sets out our ambitions for the bus network over the medium to long term, alongside the strategic proposals through which these ambitions will be delivered. It builds on the investment and improvements delivered to date through previous BSIP funding and reflects our objectives for across both urban and rural communities. Therefore, our proposals aim to enable wider benefits through transport interventions, prioritising measures that enhance access to opportunities, such as jobs, education, and healthcare, as well as leisure to prevent transport related social exclusion. Our BSIP recognises that there is a nuanced disparity in the transport provision across our region and focuses on building the network in areas with established demand, providing transport options to accommodate for new developments, and levelling-up provision in more transport-deprived areas, with an inclusive access for all approach.

Proposals are shaped by a strong emphasis on partnership working through the Enhanced Partnership, corridor-based planning, and the efficient use of both capital and revenue funding. Together, they provide a clear framework for future investment decisions, ensuring that limited resources are focused on measures that improve network performance, deliver tangible benefits for passengers, and support long-term patronage growth.

This section sets out both the interventions we are committed to delivering over the coming years, which we intend to fund and deliver based on our current funding envelopes, and our longer-term ambitions, which remain subject to securing additional funding. Allocated funding will enable us to sustain our current programmes; however, achieving our full ambitions and delivering the proposed enhancements will require additional revenue and capital investment. Securing increased revenue funding will be critical to support our delivery and capacity for long-term success.

4.1 Development of proposals

4.1.1 Policy review and stakeholder engagement

Proposals for bus service and network improvements have been informed by robust evidence base and engagement, ensuring alignment with political priorities and public aspirations for the future of bus in York and North Yorkshire, building on the delivery and investment achieved since the original BSIP award.

This approach has been underpinned by a comprehensive and iterative review of the evidence base available, drawing on the strategic direction set out from the emerging Mayor's Local Transport Plan, which provides the overarching vision and context for transport interventions and supporting strategies. The development of proposals has also built directly on the priorities, objectives and delivery experience established through previous BSIPs, ensuring continuity with established ambitions for a more frequent, reliable, coordinated and accessible bus network.

Further refinement has been informed by the Mayoral Vision and priorities, alongside member authorities' local transport strategies and climate change strategies, ensuring that proposals support wider objectives for economic growth, decarbonisation, social inclusion and improved access to services. Evidence from the bus network review and the bus reform study has been used to identify opportunities to enhance network efficiency, integration and long-term sustainability, including consideration of future governance and delivery arrangements.

Finally, proposals have been shaped through transport surveys and engagement with community members, stakeholders and operators, ensuring that they reflect lived experience, respond to

identified barriers to bus use, and support a passenger-focused and place-based approach to network improvement.

4.1.2 Strategic network planning

We provide the strategic leadership needed to plan, coordinate and improve the bus network across York and North Yorkshire, working with local authorities, operators and partners. Its role in strategic network planning is to take a regional view of connectivity, identify where the network should be strengthened, and direct investment towards services and corridors that deliver the greatest benefits for communities.

As such, we commissioned a Bus Network Review to evaluate the current bus network and inform the development of proposals. The report explored the uplift of baseline provision needed to achieve a set of minimum expectations for our communities. The study set out network scenarios defining different level of ambitions for existing services and bus stops, as well as identified from areas where new, improved or re-started links could generate sustainable growth and respond to demand.

The network scenarios presented in this work have influenced the ambitions, in particular, those to build on the frequencies of existing services to build up to three and four buses per hours for core and urban / frequent services. For rural, rural connector and contracted routes, our target frequency is one bus every two hours as a minimum. Whilst this enhancement may seem less aspirational than others, it should be noted that the volume of routes included in these categories is large and the associated cost and complexity of applying higher frequencies would likely be prohibitive.

Coupled with the network frequencies improvement, a gap analysis workshop was undertaken as part of the Bus Network Review to identify further network development opportunities. Engagement identified areas that are currently under-served, lack any formalised public transport service and future development zones that will require a service in the future. There is the potential for new, improved and re-instated inter-urban and orbital links identified are included in our medium to long term ambition of the proposals.

This work has directly shaped the priorities and proposals set out in this BSIP, as part of a wider evidence base for focusing investment. However, network development is a continuous process of review, refinement and improvement, requiring a long-term approach that responds to changing travel patterns, growth, funding availability and local priorities. This BSIP therefore forms part of an ongoing programme of strategic network planning, aligned with the wider direction of the Mayor's Local Transport Plan.

4.2 Improving reliability and punctuality

Our ambition is to deliver a bus network that is consistently reliable and punctual, reducing journey times and unreliability that deter existing and potential passengers. Improving reliability is essential to supporting patronage growth, operator efficiency and wider network sustainability, particularly on core urban and inter-urban corridors where congestion and delay currently undermine service performance.

Reliability improvements will be prioritised on corridors with the greatest passenger demand and performance pressures, taking a corridor-based approach that integrates infrastructure, operations and network management. In York, this includes the delivery of targeted bus priority measures on key radial corridors where congestion and variability significantly affect bus performance. Across North Yorkshire, corridor-based interventions will be developed in towns including Harrogate,

Scarborough, Selby, Whitby and Skipton, informed by local operating conditions and passenger demand.

Improving bus reliability and punctuality is a central ambition of the BSIP and a prerequisite for growing patronage and restoring confidence in bus travel. This will be supported through sustained capital investment in journey time and operational improvements across both urban and rural networks.

Table 4-1: Proposals for improving reliability and punctuality

Proposal	Description	Category
Fulford Road corridor (York) (Commitment)	Delivery of dedicated on-carriageway priority and targeted bus priority measures such as, bus gates and junction priorities.	Bus priority infrastructure
Wigginton Road corridor (York) (Commitment)	Development of an integrated scheme to understand how best to improve bus journey times and passenger interchange at York Hospital.	Bus priority infrastructure
Targeted corridor interventions (York and North Yorkshire) (Commitment)	Development of integrated packages which combined bus priority, junction improvement, and stop upgrades to support operational improvements at locations which will have the most impact for passengers across North Yorkshire. For York city centre, work alongside the emerging movement and place plan to improve bus flow and journey times around the city centre.	Bus priority infrastructure
Timetable stability and change dates (Commitment)	As part of the ongoing Bus Network Review, support timetable stability and change dates on lower-frequency rural and inter-urban routes to improve reliability, perception and usability.	Bus service support/ network development
Enhanced on-street network management (Ambition)	Deployment of technology and staff to manage disruption, respond effectively to incidents affecting service reliability, and future-proof the network to accommodate emerging technologies and evolving operational needs.	Safety and security
Expanded punctuality monitoring (Commitment)	Extension of quarterly bus punctuality and reliability reporting to include North Yorkshire services.	LTA delivery/admin costs

4.3 Enhancing connectivity through a frequent and legible core network

Improving access to opportunities requires a bus network that is simple, reliable and easy to use, enabling people to travel confidently to employment, education, healthcare and other essential services. Our ambition is to deliver a network that supports sustainable travel choices, reduces reliance on the private car and drives passenger growth, by providing a clear and consistent offer that meets the needs of different communities across York and North Yorkshire.

To achieve this, we will establish a clearly identifiable core network operating at turn-up-and-go frequencies where demand supports it with an ambition to hit the DfT definition of frequent services, whilst aligning broader service levels to place typologies across urban and rural areas. Through our Bus Network Review, we have identified existing urban and inter-urban corridors where services will operate at frequencies of 20 minutes or better, supported by a strong daytime and seven-day offer to underpin everyday travel. On the busiest corridors, particularly within York, services will be enhanced with more direct routing, improved waiting environments and targeted bus priority aimed at improving punctuality and reliability as well as reducing journey times.

Furthermore, we will prioritise investment on corridors that improve quality of life by providing access to jobs, healthcare, and education. The wider network will evolve to better reflect current travel patterns, improve interchange and reduce unnecessary duplication, while maintaining coverage and accessibility across the region.

As South Yorkshire Combined Authority and West Yorkshire Combined Authority move into franchised bus operations, we will work with these and other neighbouring Combined Authorities on shared priorities. This will enhance our management of cross-boundary service challenges more generally as the region is heavily dependent on cross-boundary services for connectivity, especially between Scarborough and East Yorkshire, the Dales and Skipton, into Keighley and Ilkley, Harrogate and York into Leeds, and Richmond and Northallerton into the Tees Valley. This will help maintain seamless passenger journeys and network connectivity.

Table 4-2: Proposals for enhancing connectivity through a frequent and legible core network

Proposal	Description	Category
Develop a core network (Commitment)	Identify and develop services that provide key connectivity in the region to form a core network of urban and inter-urban services across York and North Yorkshire, in particular those connecting larger urban areas and towns.	Development of future proposals
Frequency enhancements for existing urban / frequent and core services (Ambition)	Build on urban / frequent and core urban services with established demand, with the ambition to meet the DfT definition of frequent services on those services whilst meeting a minimum frequencies of three buses per hour, where unmet demand can be served sustainably.	Bus service support / network development
Develop inter-urban and orbital route services (Ambition)	Working with operators and the Enhanced Partnership forum to trial, and deliver where successful, more frequent inter-urban services and test orbital services, such as Northallerton to	Bus service support / network development

Proposal	Description	Category
	Richmond, Settle to Skipton, York to Wetherby and Clifton Moor to Acomb.	
Understand socially necessary services (Commitment)	Undertake a study to define and identify the socially necessary services across the region, supporting stronger oversight and protection of services that operators cannot provide on a commercial basis.	Development of future proposals
Evening and Sunday enhancements (Commitment)	Supporting existing services with existing demand to extend their services to or improve frequencies in evening, Sunday, early morning and late-night services, progressing towards a consistent seven-day network.	Bus service support / network development
Route optimisation and coordination (Commitment)	Develop a Network Study further identify the potential route optimisation and route adjustment to improve interchange, corridor efficiency and network legibility. As well as ensure orbital connectivity between key destinations to complement radial routes and support cross-city journeys.	Development of future proposals
Develop joint working with other Combined Authorities (Commitment)	Working with surrounding Combined Authorities; West Yorkshire, Hull and East Yorkshire, Tees Valley, North East, Cumbria and South Yorkshire, in partnership to mitigate against risks emerging from their respective franchising or enhanced partnership schemes, ensuring services remain consistent and cross-boundary services remain unaffected.	Development of future proposals

4.4 Strengthen rural and visitor connectivity

Our ambition is to ensure that rural communities and visitor destinations in York and North Yorkshire are supported by a reliable bus offer, recognising that a single delivery model may not meet all needs. We will build on existing experience and current rural mobility offer that combines conventional supported bus services and community transport. Closer collaboration with rural operators will underpin the delivery of this offer. We will aim to address feedback received on North Yorkshire's previous Demand Responsive Travel (DRT) scheme, which ended in 2023, following two years of operation.

Inter-urban and leisure-focused services linking York with the coast, market towns, National Parks and National Landscapes will be maintained and enhanced, reflecting their importance to both residents and the visitor economy. Improved connectivity will be prioritised between rail and coach stations and town centres, Park and Ride sites and key visitor destinations, and urban centres and surrounding rural attractions. Additionally, strengthening weekend and seasonal services, aligning provision with visitor demand rather than commuter peaks alone, will support longer-term financial sustainability.

Table 4-3: Proposals for strengthening rural and visitor economy

Proposal	Description	Category
Optimise and support our Rural Connector and Urban Contracted services (Ambition)	Support services within currently classified as rural and urban connectors, with an ambition to improve and run at a minimum 120-minute frequency / 0.5 bus per hour.	Bus service support / network development
Connecting communities across rural contracted services (Ambition)	Ambition to support the rural bus network between our villages, small towns and large towns with a consistent service expectation. Services within this route classification will run at a 120-minute frequency / 0.5 buses per hour.	Bus service support / network development
Seasonal and weekend frequency boosts (Commitment)	Explore frequency enhancements to align to visitor demand for service that connect visitor destinations, such as York, coastal towns, market towns, the National Parks and the National Landscapes.	Bus service support / network development
Improved interchange at visitor gateways (Commitment)	Improved bus access and connections at rail stations for visitor destinations, with targeted visitor information.	Bus stops / stations / interchanges
Enhancing Park and Ride function (Commitment)	Continue to work with both local authorities in the development of Park and Ride sites. Support City of York in delivering its current programme of enhancements and strengthening sites as high-quality multi-modal interchanges, with the ambition to expand working hours. Ensure the Park and Ride offer remains attractive and represents good value for money compared with city centre parking, developing a shared approach to pricing and customer incentives that supports patronage growth whilst contributing to wider transport and city centre objectives. Work with North Yorkshire to replicate the success of this programme at Park and Ride sites in Whitby and Scarborough.	Bus stops / stations / interchanges
Developing new Park and Ride sites (Ambition)	Develop future Park and Ride plans in line with the Mayor's Local Transport Plan aspirations.	Development of future proposals

Proposal	Description	Category
Develop a multi-day and visitor ticketing offer (Commitment)	Introduce a simple, flexible and integrated multi-day ticketing offer tailored to residents, visitors and leisure users, enabling travel across multiple days, operators and modes. The offer will be designed to support the visitor economy by providing easy-to-understand products that encourage longer stays and increased use of public transport to access key destinations, attractions and market towns regardless of operator. This uptake will be monitored as part of the targets identified in this BSIP.	Ticketing equipment / systems
Enable leisure trips and reduce social isolation (Commitment)	Identify rural areas at risk of Transport Related Social Exclusion and develop proposals for new service connectivity and frequency enhancements.	Development of future proposals
Rural Bus Franchising pilots (Commitment)	Development and testing of rural franchising pilots to explore alternative delivery and funding models for the provision of rural services.	Development of future proposals

4.5 Keep fares affordable and simple

We are committed to affordable bus travel, which aims to compete with the private car, particularly for young people, frequent users and lower-income households. By simplifying fares and ticketing, we remove unnecessary complexities and confusion, making it easier for all passengers to understand their options and to access the best value.

The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme provides a simple and nationally recognised entitlement, allowing eligible older and disabled users to travel on local bus services with a single pass that is accepted across York and North Yorkshire. Increasing use of the scheme is a key target, as it improves accessibility, reduces transport inequality and encourages sustainable travel, helping more people stay connected to essential services and their communities.

Our approach is essential for encouraging more people to choose the bus, reducing financial and practical barriers to use, and supporting sustained growth in bus patronage across York and North Yorkshire. Ultimately, these measures will help to build a more inclusive and accessible public transport network that meets the needs of the whole community.

Table 4-4: Proposals for keeping fares affordable and simple

Proposal	Description	Category
Fare offers for targeted groups (Commitment)	Continued affordable fare offers for targeted groups, including promotion activities or fare offers and concessionary fares.	Simpler / more affordable fares
Employer-led fare pilots (Commitment)	Targeted fare initiatives with major employers to encourage commuting by bus.	Simpler / more affordable fares
Virtual Rail Connections (Commitment)	Free bus travel to users with a rail ticket, to connect settlements near train stations with more frequent existing bus services, providing through-ticketing for rail users.	Simpler / more affordable fares
Cross-boundary travel (Commitment)	Engage with operators and neighbouring local authorities to better understand the integration of ticketing for cross-boundary services.	Development of future proposals

4.6 Enable inclusive access for all

We are committed to delivering a bus network that is safe, inclusive and accessible for everyone, including disabled passengers, older adults, young people and women. Our ongoing dedication to accessible vehicles, stops and interchanges will be underpinned by robust evidence, partnership with accessibility forums and phased investment programmes, ensuring we address any gaps in accessibility, safety and quality.

We will upgrade waiting environments by enhancing shelters, seating, lighting, real-time information and maintenance, with a particular emphasis on key corridors in suburban and rural areas. Our investment in infrastructure will be complemented by greater engagement and behaviour change initiatives, including driver training, accessibility awareness programmes, targeted marketing for under-represented groups, as well as bus buddy and travel training schemes.

Table 4-5: Proposals for inclusive access for all

Proposal	Description	Category
Network-wide accessibility audits (Commitment)	Audits of stops and stations to identify and prioritise accessibility improvements, which in turn will influence the Bus Stop Improvements Programme (see below).	Bus stops / stations / interchanges

Proposal	Description	Category
Bus Stop Improvements Programme (Commitment)	Investment in marked bays, lighting, shelters, seating, CCTV, and maintenance at key stops and interchanges. Stops are to include digital and physical information, in both auditory, tactile and visual formats, when possible, to avoid digital exclusion and improve accessibility. Higher priority bus stops should include real-time information. This will define standards and expectations across the network.	Bus stops / stations / interchanges
Accessible vehicles (Commitment)	Work in partnership with operators, through the Enhanced Partnership, to transition the fleet in line with evolving regulatory requirements, and to upgrade in-vehicle audio-visual information systems. Complement accessible access offer with other multi-modal programmes, such as the York Accessible Taxi Pilot Scheme.	Vehicles
Support for Section 22 and community transport operators (Ambition)	Explore avenues of support for Section 22 and community transport operators and develop an ambition for community transport operations across the region, including their needs in providing accessible vehicles.	Bus service support / network development
Driver training and awareness (Commitment)	Working alongside Confederation of Passenger Transport to ensure that accessibility, equality and personal safety training for drivers is provided.	Safety and security
LCWIP integration (Commitment)	Alignment of bus investment with walking and cycling improvements to improve walking routes to stops at key corridors and bus stations, maximising use of said infrastructure and enabling inclusive access.	Other

4.7 Create a safe and welcoming network

Improving personal safety sits at the heart of our efforts to boost passenger confidence and encourage bus use throughout the day and week. We will match physical accessibility improvements with actions to address perceptions and experiences of safety, especially at stops, stations and interchanges. Moreover, we aspire to enhance passengers' sense of security onboard buses, acknowledging that concerns about antisocial behaviour can deter people from travelling.

Table 4-6: Proposals for creating a safe and welcoming network

Proposal	Description	Category
Awareness and outreach programmes (Commitment)	Enable partnership working with CYC, NYC and accessibility forum partners to raise awareness and promote positive actions to make public transport more accessible to all users.	Improved information and marketing
Bus buddy and travel training schemes (Commitment)	Continue and expand schemes that provide targeted support to build confidence among young people, new and vulnerable passengers. We will maximise community and bus user groups to promote and deliver the schemes.	Improved information, marketing
Safer travel partnership (Commitment)	Enable partnership working with the Combined Authority, Enhanced Partnership members, British Transport Police and local police, to support vulnerable users and deter antisocial behaviour and violence against women and girls with clear escalation routes and coordinated response expectations.	Safety and security

4.8 Accelerated decarbonisation for a healthier environment

Our ambition is to accelerate the transition to a zero-emission bus fleet across York and North Yorkshire, building on existing Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) investment and replicating the success story of electrified depots in York and Harrogate. This will reduce carbon emissions and improve local air quality while maintaining service reliability and affordability. This responds to the targets set by the Strategy for a Sustainable Future, to decarbonise the bus fleet by 25% by 2030, and 95% by 2038.

Table 4-7: Proposals for accelerated decarbonisation for a healthier environment

Proposal	Description	Category
Zero-emission fleet expansion (Commitment)	Enable partnership working through Enhanced Partnership to support continued rollout of electric and zero-emission buses building on existing ZEBRA funding and seeking opportunities for future funding.	Vehicles
Charging infrastructure investment (Ambition)	Consider depot-based and Park and Ride bus charging infrastructure provision, building on existing ZEBRA investment to support the transition to a zero-emission fleet.	Vehicles
Fleet alignment strategy (Commitment)	Work in partnership with operators to develop a coordinated approach to fleet replacement across York and North Yorkshire.	Development of future proposals
Low-emission community transport (Ambition)	Support for the transition to low or zero-emission community transport vehicles.	Vehicles

4.9 Deliver high-quality, informed and integrated journeys

Buses will be better integrated with other modes to support seamless, sustainable journeys, reducing reliance on private cars and supporting access to towns, cities and rural areas. Collaboration with local authorities, Network Rail, Active Travel England and operators, is essential to improve service coordination, interchange facilities, access to stations, and real-time information.

Integration is not limited to bus and rail, but includes wider integration with active travel, public realm, and community facilities.

Our ambition is to present the bus network as a single, coherent, and integrated transport system (including rail and active travel) that is easy to understand and attractive to use, with consistent information, high-quality waiting environments and reliable real-time information. Improving the end-to-end customer experience is central to repositioning buses as a core part of the transport system and growing patronage.

Bus stops and shelters will be upgraded and prioritised based on passenger demand, ensuring that waiting environments are attractive, comfortable, well-lit and accessible, particularly on core routes and at key interchange points. The provision of real-time passenger information will be expanded, especially in rural and suburban areas where service certainty is most valued due to lower frequency, and where digital connectivity tends to be more uncertain.

Table 4-8: Proposals for delivering high-quality, informed and integrated journeys

Proposal	Description	Category
Simplified multi-operator and multi-stage tickets (Commitment)	Introduce simplified and integrated multi-operator and multi-stage ticketing products to enable seamless travel across different bus services and operators. This will build on the existing offers across York and North Yorkshire, looking at opportunities to introduce fare-capping or 'hopper' style tickets, reducing complexity for users and ensuring passengers can access the most convenient services without needing multiple tickets	Ticketing equipment / systems
Enable contactless payment (Commitment)	Expand and standardise contactless payment across the network, including tap-on tap-off functionality where appropriate, to provide a simple, flexible and cashless payment option. Implementation will build on existing smart ticketing platforms, and PAYG trial scheme, and ensure consistency across operators. This will prepare the network for multi-modal ticketing in the future.	Ticketing equipment / systems
Mobility hubs (Ambition)	Development of mobility hubs at key bus stations and interchanges across Urban and Large Towns typologies. Multi-modal facilities such as cycle parking, changing facilities and pick-up/drop-off will support all types of first-mile users, with particular attention to better connecting to the cycling network.	Bus stops / stations / interchanges
Haxby York North station links (Commitment)	Further develop the proposals to improve bus connectivity between Strensall, Haxby and the planned Haxby rail station, supporting seamless interchange between bus and rail.	Bus service support / network development
Rail-bus integration (Commitment)	Align bus services with rail timetables and improved interchange facilities with real time information and ticket purchasing facilities, especially in locations where there are low-frequency or limited bus services that provide onward connectivity (such as key rural interchanges).	Bus stops / stations / interchanges
Expanded real-time information (Commitment)	Rollout of RTI, particularly in lower-frequency rural and suburban areas, where it will provide the highest benefits and contribute to a 15% provision across all stops.	Improved information, marketing
Digital real-time information offer (Ambition)	Development of a single digital bus information platform which will be hosted online and will be fed with real-time information.	Improved information, marketing
A single brand (Commitment)	Implement a single brand across the York and North Yorkshire area, including infrastructure and information, supported through the Bus Stop Improvement Programme.	Improved information, marketing

Proposal	Description	Category
Composite timetables (Ambition)	Rollout composite timetables beyond York to wider North Yorkshire, providing combined schedules in a comprehensive list.	Improved information, marketing

4.10 Summary

This section has set out our service and network proposals to meet our medium to long term ambitions. Our ambitions and proposals have been built on the investment and delivery achieved to date through BSIP funding and aligns with our published transport strategies and wider objectives for inclusive growth, decarbonisation and improved connectivity for all our rural and urban communities.

Proposals have been shaped by a strong emphasis on partnership working through the Enhanced Partnership, corridor-based planning, and the efficient use of both capital and revenue funding. Together, they provide a clear framework for future investment decisions, ensuring that limited resources are focused on measures that improve network performance, deliver tangible benefits for passengers, and support long-term patronage growth.

Whilst allocated funding will enable us to maintain our current programmes, achieving our ambitions and delivery of proposed enhancements will necessitate additional capital and revenue investment.

5. Targets, performance monitoring and reporting

This section sets out the key performance indicators for achieving the BSIP vision and objectives, which will only be realised through the realisation of our commitments and ambitions outlined in Section 4. The progress of the key performance indicators will be monitored with the aim of achieving the targets specified. An overarching aim for the bus network is to improve the public use of the bus, measured by an increase in patronage on local bus services across the Combined Authority. This target has been developed in conjunction with both North Yorkshire Council and City of York Council, aligning with their ambitions set out in respective strategies as well as the emerging Mayoral Local Transport Plan.

Improved punctuality and reliability will be indicated by reduced wait times on higher frequency services and non-frequent service buses running on time. DfT defines frequent services as every 10 minutes or better, non-frequent services as fewer than 6 buses an hour and wait time/punctuality typically as buses arriving no more than 1 minute early or 5 minutes 59 seconds late. We have defined the core network as core and urban/frequent classified routes through the Bus Network Review as current routes with a frequency of 20 minutes or better, mapped in Figure 2-4. The aim is for the urban/frequent classified routes to operate at a frequency of 10 minutes or better.

To ensure that improved punctuality and reliability does not just result in longer journey times, and to recognise the commitment that has been made to improve bus priority and deliver corridor improvements, a measure will also be introduced to monitor journey times across York and North Yorkshire. Further work is needed to develop this, in conjunction with the operators and key stakeholders, alongside the passenger perception measure for which existing data is available.

Table 5-1 below for an overview of the objective targets, with baseline measures to compare future progress against. The sources of data include secondary sources; DfT Bus Statistics data, Bus Open Data Statistics, Your Bus Journey Transport Focus surveys, operator data, and primary collected data by local authorities.

Table 5-1: Objective targets

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Target (By 2032)	York and North Yorkshire baseline measure	York baseline measure	North Yorkshire baseline measure
Overarching aim	Growth in passenger journeys on local bus services by local authority	14% increase on bus patronage in York and an 8% increase in North Yorkshire, equating to an 11% growth average	25.8 million passenger journeys on local bus services in York and North Yorkshire (2025)	14.7 million passenger journeys on local bus services in York (2025)	11.1 million passenger journeys on local bus services in North Yorkshire (2025)
Improved punctuality and reliability	Excess wait time on more frequent services	Excess wait time for frequent services will be no more than 45 seconds ¹	1.6 minutes (2018)	1.6 minutes (2018)	N/A
	Percentage of buses running on time for non-frequent services	90% of buses running on time for non-frequent service	N/A	80.31% (2025)	81.32% (2025)
	Passenger satisfaction with perceived punctuality	85% of passengers satisfied with punctuality of bus at stop (arriving on time)	79% (2025)	N/A	N/A
	Journey time improvements	TBD ²	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Passenger satisfaction	90%	84%	N/A	N/A

¹ There are no 'frequent' services in York and North Yorkshire as defined by DfT, with a headway of every 10 minutes as a minimum. This target will be implemented if any service frequency is enhanced to 10 minutes.

² Baseline and target to be determined in conjunction with the respective Enhanced Partnerships. Whilst the development of the measure is in place

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Target (By 2032)	York and North Yorkshire baseline measure	York baseline measure	North Yorkshire baseline measure
	with journey times				
Enhancing connectivity through a frequent and legible core network	Percentage of core network services at 20-minute frequency (weekday daytime) or more frequent	TBD ³	3% (2025)	N/A	N/A
Support rural and visitor economy	Uptake of Park and Ride, visitor and multi-day tickets	33% increase, surpassing peak years Park and Ride bus patronage ⁴	Total patronage of 1,688,229 for all Park and Ride sites (2025)	N/A	N/A
Affordable fares	Passenger perception of value for money	75% of favourable passenger perception of value for money ⁵	65% (2025)	N/A	N/A
	Uptake of concessionary tickets	14% increase in concessionary bus journeys made	Total of 7,783,614 concessionary bus journeys made by York and North Yorkshire (2025)	N/A	N/A
	Uptake in youth tickets	25% increase in under 19's tickets sold	Total of 2,217,840 Under 19's	N/A	N/A

³ To be confirmed upon identification of our core network

⁴ Additional targets will be implemented for visitor and multi-day tickets when they are implemented for the whole of York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority Area, as the current offer is fragmented.

⁵ This may be impacted by wider National Fare Cap policy.

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Target (By 2032)	York and North Yorkshire baseline measure	York baseline measure	North Yorkshire baseline measure
		above underlying patronage growth	tickets sold in 2025.		
Inclusive access	Proportion of bus stops with inclusive access infrastructure (shelter)	29% of stops with inclusive access infrastructure (shelter) ⁶	18% (2026)	32% (2026)	15% (2026)
	Proportion of bus stops with inclusive access infrastructure (raised kerb)	49% of stops with inclusive access infrastructure (raised kerb) ⁶	N/A	Information not available	24% (2026)
Safety	Passenger perception of safety on buses	90% personal security whilst on the bus as good	87% personal security whilst on the bus as good (2025)	N/A	N/A
	Public perception of safety at bus stops	82% rated personal security at bus stops as good	72% rated personal security at bus stops as good (2025)	N/A	N/A
Accelerated decarbonisation	Proportion of zero-emission vehicles in fleet	A minimum of 25% by 2030, and 95% by 2038.	12.7% (2024)	57.3% (2024)	1.4% (2024)
	Proportion of Euro VI and Euro VI Retrofit buses in fleet	100% of services should be operated at Euro VI	60% (2024)	91% (2024)	52% (2024)

⁶ As per defined as Very High and High priority bus stops by the Bus Network Review.

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Target (By 2032)	York and North Yorkshire baseline measure	York baseline measure	North Yorkshire baseline measure
		standard or higher			
Enhanced, integrated, and informed journeys	Region-wide multi-operator ticket uptake	TBD ⁴	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Customer satisfaction	95% satisfaction by 2032 (Transport Focus Survey)	87% overall customer satisfaction (2025 Transport Focus Survey)	N/A	N/A
	Proportion of bus stops with Real Time Information displays	15% of bus stops with real time information displays	3.7% (2026)	20.2% (2026)	0.6% (2026)