

South West Freight Strategy

Year 1 summary monitoring report
May 2023

AECOM



Executive Summary

Freight is a vital part of the transport sector for the South West region. It is the lifeblood of communities and businesses, bringing in essential commodities and taking out goods to market. The freight industry and its supply chains operate across a broad regional, national, and international geography with its own set of unique challenges and opportunities. As a result, the South West Freight Strategy is a collaboration between Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway sub-national transport bodies (STBs). Covering the period to 2050, the freight strategy aims to focus on the three sustainability pillars of environment, economy, and society. It is aimed at delivering the freight vision as part of the wider strategies and priorities for both Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway. This will enable the region to address the challenges, opportunities and priorities for freight in the South West through an agreed set of 46 freight interventions.

The implementation of the interventions commenced in May 2022 and this document is a progress report at the end of the first year. Having a Freight Strategy that joins up both Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway STBs to form one unified South West Freight Strategy is critical to its success.

Although the timeframe is to 2050, around half of the interventions were recommended for development in the short term, which is the period from 2022 to 2024. This monitoring report discusses progress made by mode. In each section the interventions are listed, along with the primary owner and a colour coded progress table. Green shows an intervention where substantial progress has been made, amber some progress and those in red have yet to start.

It is good to report that approximately 60% of the interventions have been started in year one. A full list of interventions and how they contribute can be found on page 58. Quite a few of the interventions are being progressed by a range of stakeholders in conjunction with the STBs. Thanks goes to organisation such as National Highways, Network Rail, GBRTT, the ports, trade associations, LEPS and several more for their help in moving the strategy forward.

Perhaps the most overarching intervention of the Freight Strategy was to establish a Freight Steering Group with representatives from Trade Bodies, hauliers, ports, rail freight, shippers, the aviation

sector, academics, LEPS, Local Authorities and other interested parties. The overall function of the Freight Steering Group is to drive forward the Freight Strategy implementation by considering information and discussion held between individuals and the modal sub-groups that meet in advance of the main steering group session. The typical attendance at the sub-group meetings has been around 20 to 25 and the number at the main steering groups has been consistently over 30. This is a very encouraging response from industry and shows the appetite for moving the strategy forward, the subject matters covered and the value of time spent attending the sessions.

The STBs are keen to continue the strong progress already made and are drawing up a programme of work for years 2 and 3 of the implementation process. By working together and having a Freight Steering Group, Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway are well placed to enable the region to address the challenges, opportunities and priorities for freight in the South West over the next 30 years.



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Introduction

The development of this Freight Strategy in 2021 was partly to inform the production of the regional Transport Strategy but also was aimed at helping to address the challenges, opportunities and priorities facing the freight sector in the South West over the next 30 years – to 2050. The objectives centre around three sustainability pillars of environment, economy and society.

Originally the work was commissioned by the Peninsula Transport Sub-National Transport Body (STB). It became obvious early on, that the strategy should be extended to include the Western Gateway STB area as the spatial interdependencies between the two areas, particularly for freight movement, had significant merit in having a joint approach. A STB is a type of organisation aimed at providing strategic transport governance at a much larger scale than existing local transport authorities, by grouping councils together.

Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway have been pleased to collaborate in developing and now implementing this strategy which covers the diverse areas of the South West. Whilst each STB has their own specific priorities for their areas, as you can see in the Vision Statements, both recognise the importance of freight. This provides a holistic and

joined up approach reflecting the reality that freight and their wider supply chains operate on a more regional, national and international basis than is the case for passenger movements. For example many large companies have just one distribution centre to cover the whole of the region.

The strategy development went through several stages including data collection, development of case studies, stakeholder engagement and problem and issue identification. A workshop was held to bring the issues together and discuss and prioritise the problems by mode of transport. Following that a long list of potential interventions was developed (79 ideas) to address the problems and these were tested in a subsequent workshop and ideas were scored and ranked in importance by a range of stakeholders. From this some of the interventions were combined, removed or amended as appropriate and a shorter list of 46 agreed. These ideas were prioritised and allocated to an indicative timeframe (short, medium and long term) and cost. In addition as the STBs have limited funds and scope it was necessary to look for stakeholder partners to help take forward the initiatives. The implementation of the initiatives commenced in May 2022 and this document is a progress report at the end of the first year.

STB's Vision Statements

“

Transforming transport across the Peninsula, enabling our society and economy to thrive and our unique and outstanding environment to flourish. The vision is underpinned by the five key goals. Improving connections between people, businesses, and places, to enhance resilience of the transport network, to deliver affordable, zero-emissions transport for everyone, to help to improve the health and wellbeing of communities in the peninsula and to help the peninsula to be a great place to live and work.”

- Peninsula Transport

“

The Vision of the Western Gateway STB is to enable sustainable economic growth by identifying a long-term investment programme designed to deliver a well-connected, reliable and resilient strategic transport system; that closes productivity gaps and makes the Gateway area more competitive, while respecting its world class natural and built environments.”

- Western Gateway

Overview of the South West

The South West is a region with unique characteristics, marked by its extensive coastline, varied landscapes and dispersed population. It is geographically the largest of the nine official English Regions and the third least populous. However in the past century its population has grown by nearly a million people to over 5.6 million and population growth is forecast to continue at or above the average rate for the United Kingdom.

Within the South West there are a number of key areas of focus, including the urban centres of Exeter, Plymouth, Taunton, Bristol, Bath and Bournemouth/Christchurch/Poole, the surrounding suburban areas and market towns throughout the region. Vital assets such as dockyards and MoD sites often generate enough freight traffic to be considered as distinct destinations in their own right.

Connections within the region are critical for connecting communities who are often located a long distance from the main population centres whilst land connections to other parts of the country rely on a central spine converging around Exeter and then diverging through Somerset and Dorset. There are a number of vital transport corridors,

including the M5 corridor, M4 corridor, A303, A386 and A31 to name a few, and all of which vary in their utilisation and capacity for freight demand. These networks hold a number of challenges and potential opportunities for the South West. The challenge for the region is one of overcoming higher than average journey times to deliver sustainable, economic growth and to ensure communities are well connected to jobs, markets and vital services.

Although rail routes in the region are limited, the potential for key mainline rail freight hubs such as at Exeter and Bristol are key in how the freight industry adapts to cope with changing demands and community pressures on congestion and decarbonisation. Unlike passenger trips, many goods movements are planned on a regional and national basis. This means that whilst it is useful to investigate local issues it is also important to understand wider strategic policy and operational issues as these impact the South West region.

During the last year there have been several new developments worthy of note. A new regular log train has started from Newton Abbot to Wales. Cargo bike operations have begun in Bristol and will

soon be running in Plymouth. Bristol has introduced its new Low Emission Zone which includes cars as well as commercial vehicles. Bournemouth and Southampton Universities are involved in a trial of drones for the movement of products for the NHS. Spaceport Cornwall which is the first registered space location in the UK saw its first flight which although the end result was unsuccessful it was history in the making. Exeter launched three fully electric Dennis Refuse vehicles in August. The South West of England is the largest maritime cluster in the UK employing 20% of the national workforce in the region. An exclusive opportunity was launched to design, develop, test, and manufacture autonomous vessels and technologies to support a cleaner, greener maritime industry.

Having a freight strategy that joins up both Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway STBs to form one unified South West freight strategy is critical to its success. Apart from implementing the strategy a key role is to gather information across a diverse transport and logistics sector that is critical to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the region.

Freight Steering Group

Perhaps the most overarching intervention of the Freight Strategy was to establish a Freight Steering Group with representatives from Trade Bodies, hauliers, ports, rail freight, shippers, the aviation sector, academics, LEPS, Local Authorities and other interested parties. Having a mix of representatives from various public and private sector interests, with a cross section from representative sectors is essential in taking forward actions discussed as part of the freight strategy development. It was important that stakeholders bought-in to what Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway are aiming to achieve and hence help provide evidence and guidance to the process.

The overall function of the Freight Steering Group is to drive forward the Freight Strategy development by considering and implementing interventions developed as part of the Freight Strategy. A Terms of Reference was developed for the group which will meet regularly throughout the life of the project to drive forward the recommended implementations and consider the practical nature of how measures can be introduced.

The stakeholder engagement process gave a number of opportunities for individuals to indicate whether they would be willing to serve on a Freight

Steering Group. It was positive to report that there was an encouraging number of volunteers from a variety of different stakeholder groups willing to continue their involvement. Many stakeholders have continued to engage with the STBs and project team in the implementation stage; around 60 people out of about 100 involved in the development of the strategy continue to be involved which is a positive level of interest.

Due to the large number of interventions included in the freight strategy, it was decided to establish sub-group meetings for the various modes of transport, air/maritime, rail and road. The reason behind this was to ensure that sufficient time would be available to discuss some quite detailed interventions so for example the rail sub-group have been able to examine the potential of between 10 and 20 sites for consideration as to the attributes and disadvantages of each location to make a rail freight terminal to meet the needs of the modern rail sector. A summary of this was then presented at the main steering group. By using this technique it means that the details are captured for those that need them but most people that do not need the extra layer of information remain at a higher level and are more likely to stay engaged.

Notes and minutes of all of the sessions are taken and made available to interested parties. It is important for Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway to keep track of progress on the implementation of initiatives and as well as the opportunity for organisations to feedback in the group meetings there is a record kept of actions and one-to-one discussions on the interventions. Some of the interventions are owned by third party organisations, trade associations, Network Rail and National Highways. Separate calls are made with these organisations on a regular basis to ensure progress is being made and recorded. The notes and minutes have been used to develop the progress sheets in this end-of year review document.

Some interventions are being taken forward by the STBs and in some cases a separate piece of work commissioned for example investigating alternative fuel hubs. Feedback on this research has been facilitated through the Freight Steering Group and a record of these has also been recorded.

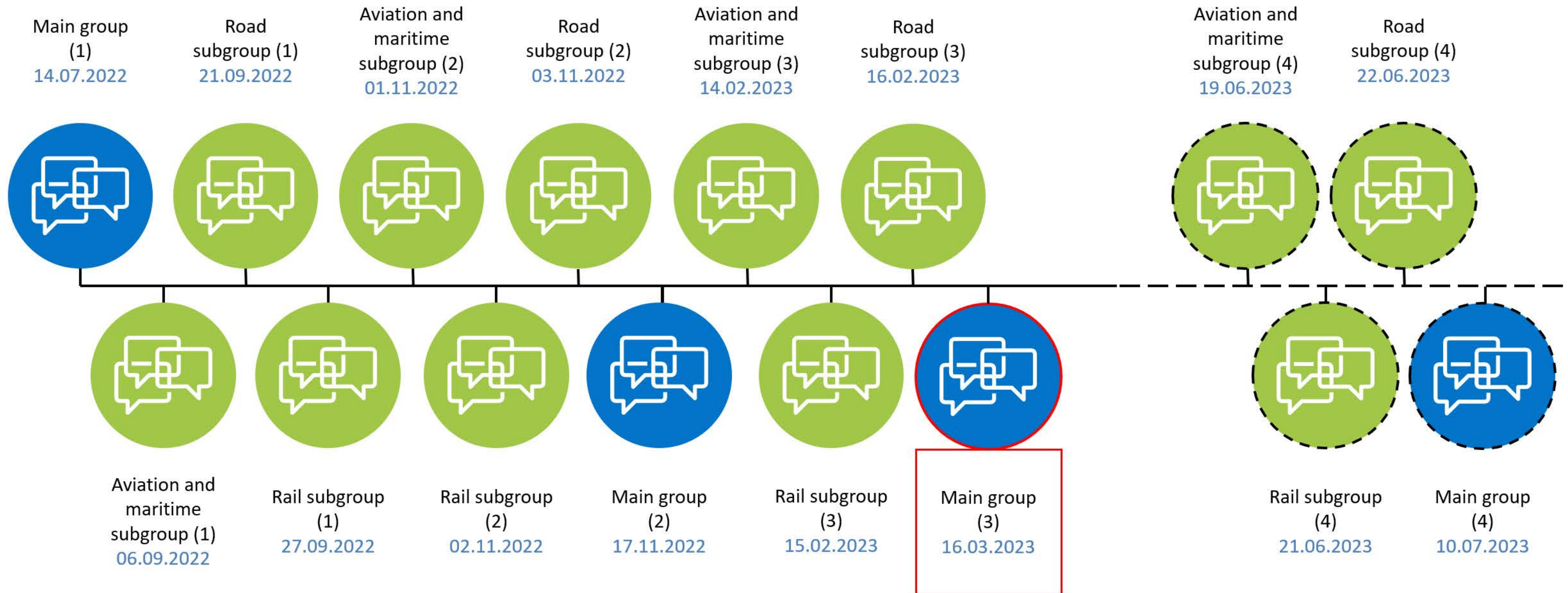
There are a number of interventions which are cross boundary and even national in nature which would benefit from an all STB approach and plan – particularly for the integration with the planning work being undertaken by National Highways / Network

Rail for RIS3 / CP7. Examples of joint national infrastructure planning such as Solent – Midlands Study (Phase 1) are likely to become more common place. Hence having Network Rail, GBRTT, National Highways and the Ports involved is positive in making sure issues being progressed at a national level are being reported to the region. The STBs have agreed that the pattern of both the Steering Group and the modal sub-groups meeting every four months will be continued at least for the next year starting from April 2023. Clearly the interval between meetings can be adjusted if required at some point in the future.

The meeting dates of the main steering group are shown in blue circles and the modal groups in green circles in the adjacent diagram. Full minutes on the discussions can be viewed on the Western Gateway/ Peninsula Transport Freight section of the website. There are plans to make this more accessible during the next year.

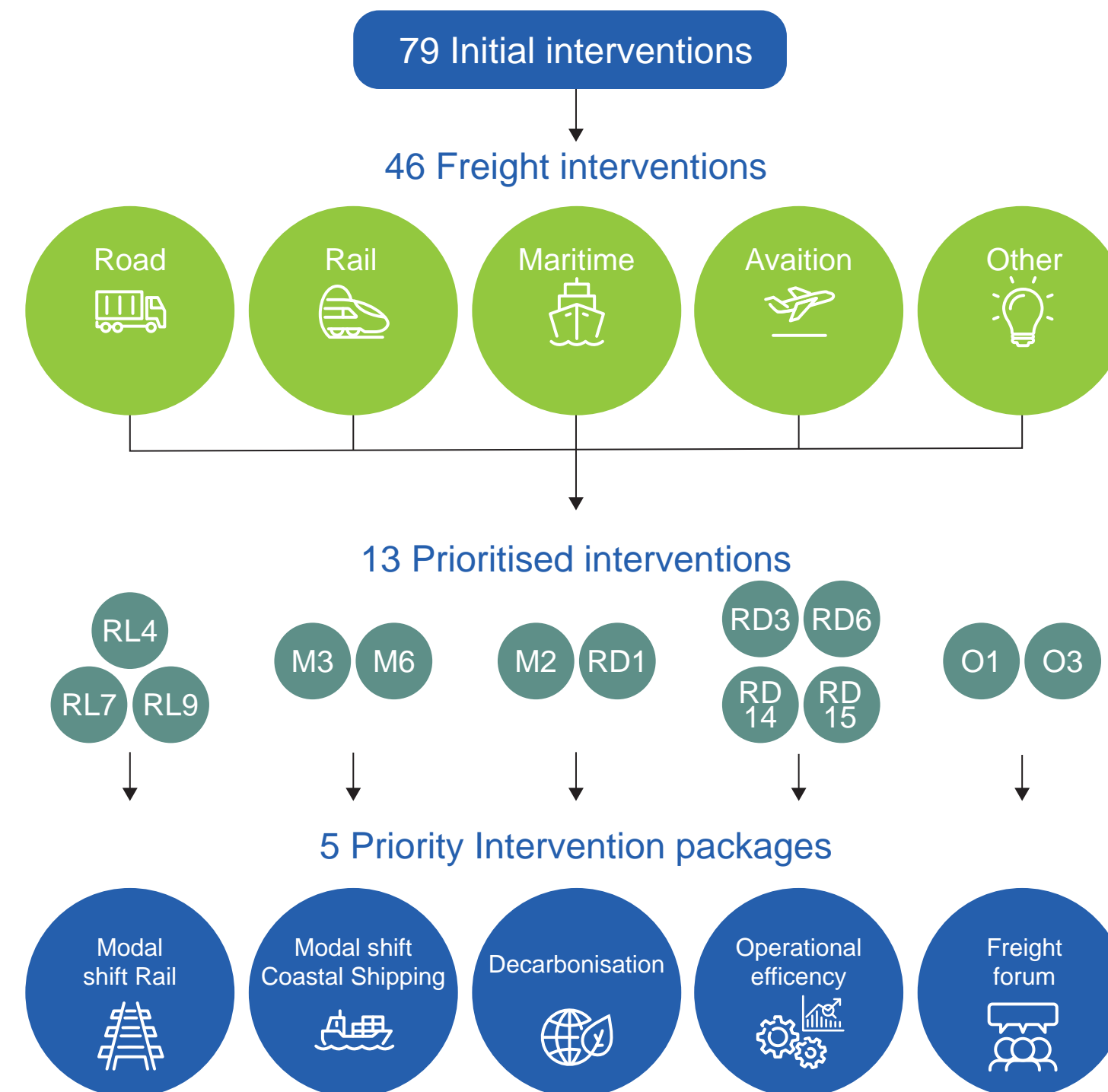
If you would like to join future meetings you would be most welcome, for further information please contact any of the project team whose details are on the back page.

Steering group and sub-group meetings

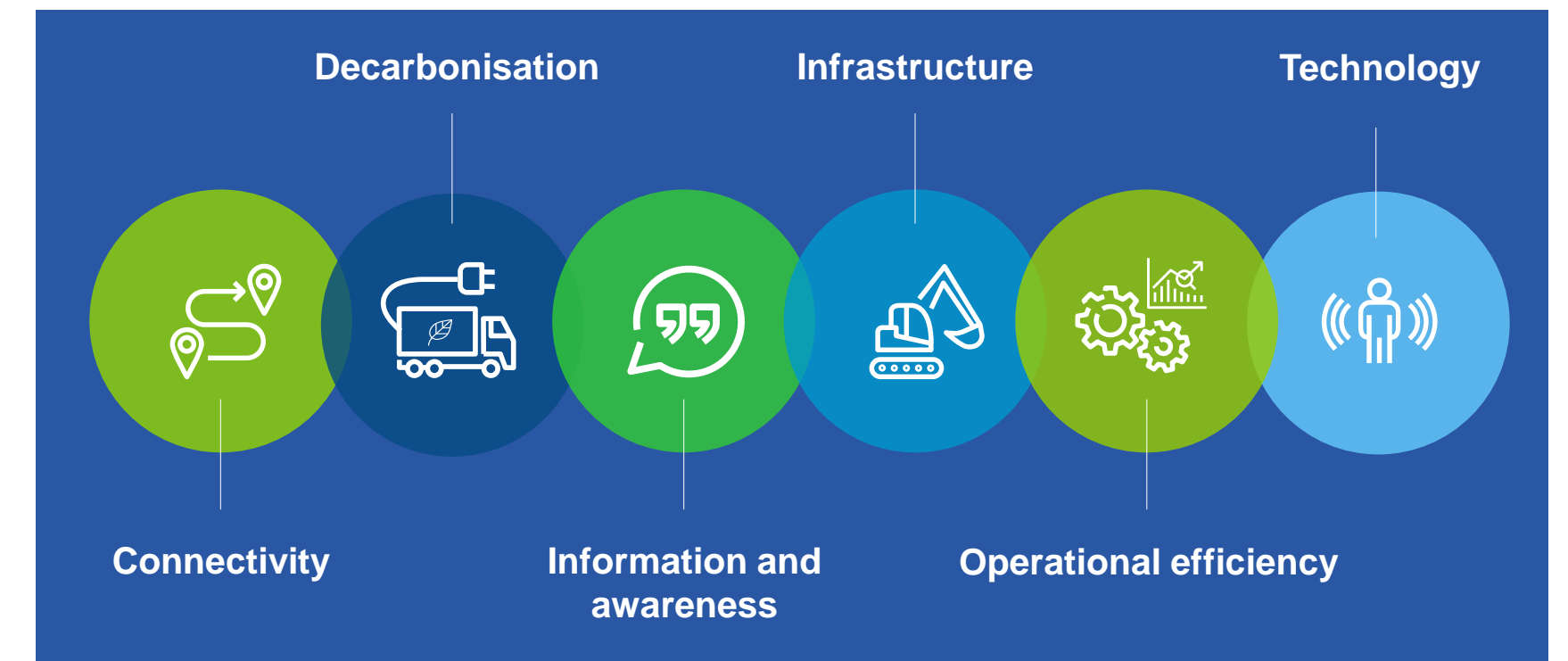


Implementation

The implementation process of the strategy began in May 2022 with a view to taking forward the 46 recommended interventions. Although the timeframe of the Freight Strategy is to 2050 around half of the interventions were recommended for development in the short term, which is the period from 2022 to 2024. The rest of the report discusses progress made by mode. In each section the interventions are listed, along with the primary owner and a colour coded progress table. Green shows an intervention where substantial progress has been made, amber some progress and those in red have yet to start. It is good to report that approximately 60% of the interventions have been started in year one. If the intervention has not commenced, then there will not be a page in this monitoring report for example there is no A3.



The following six themes are used to categorise interventions for each mode throughout this section.

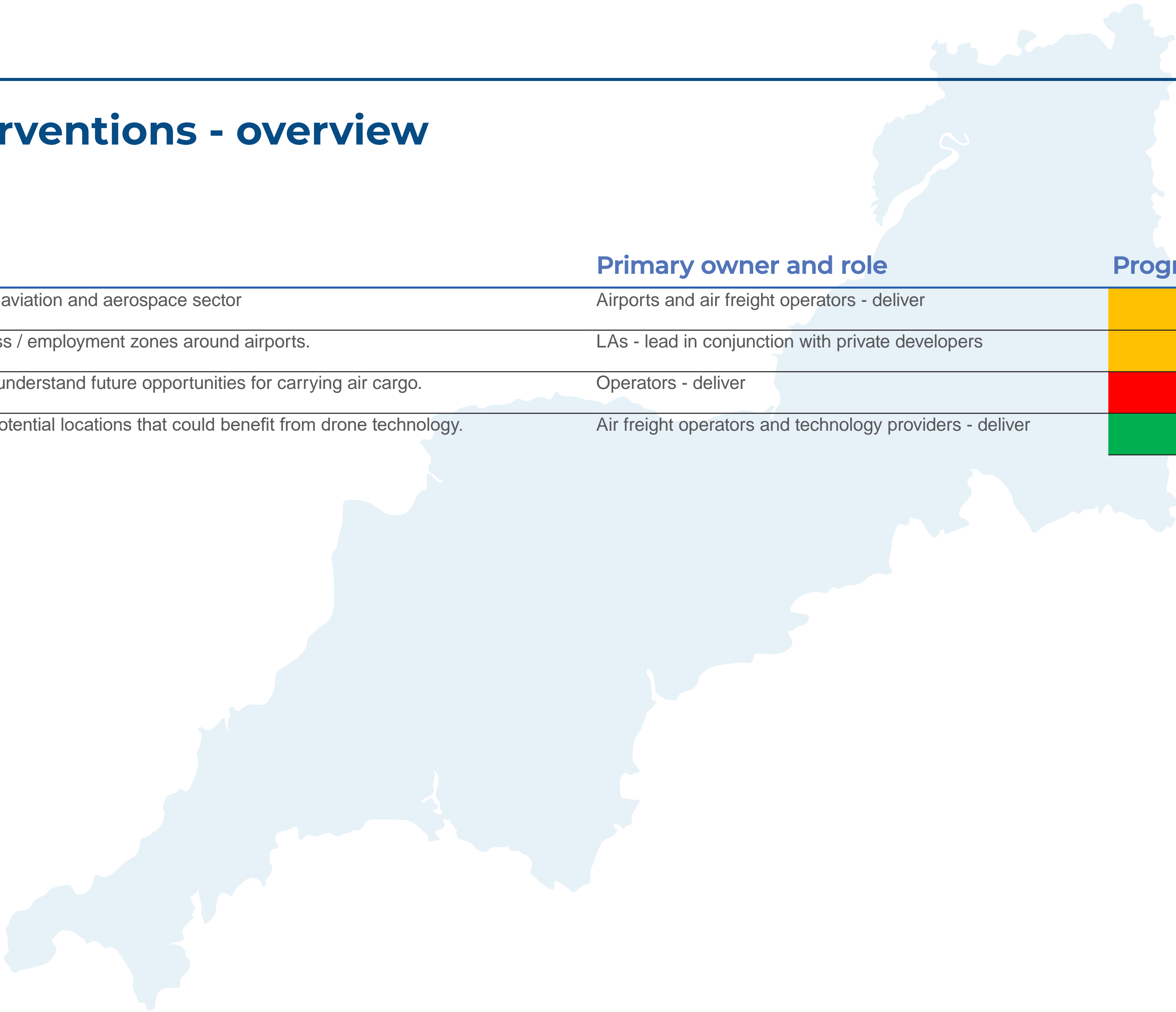


It should also be noted that this document is the summary monitoring report at the end of the first year of the implementation process. There is a more comprehensive and detailed report that provides more information on relevant research and progress.



Aviation interventions

Aviation interventions - overview



ID	Interventions	Primary owner and role	Progress level
A1	Support for sustainable aviation and aerospace sector	Airports and air freight operators - deliver	Yellow
A2	Further develop business / employment zones around airports.	LAs - lead in conjunction with private developers	Yellow
A3	Work with operators to understand future opportunities for carrying air cargo.	Operators - deliver	Red
A4	Review suitability and potential locations that could benefit from drone technology.	Air freight operators and technology providers - deliver	Green


A1

Work with operators to understand future opportunities for carrying air cargo.



 **Short term**

A horizontal timeline with four tick marks. The first segment is highlighted in orange, indicating the current time period.

 **Owned by:**
Airport operators

 **Connectivity**

Intervention description

Optimising existing commercial passenger services for moving goods or considering the potential for dedicated cargo freighters

Progress to date

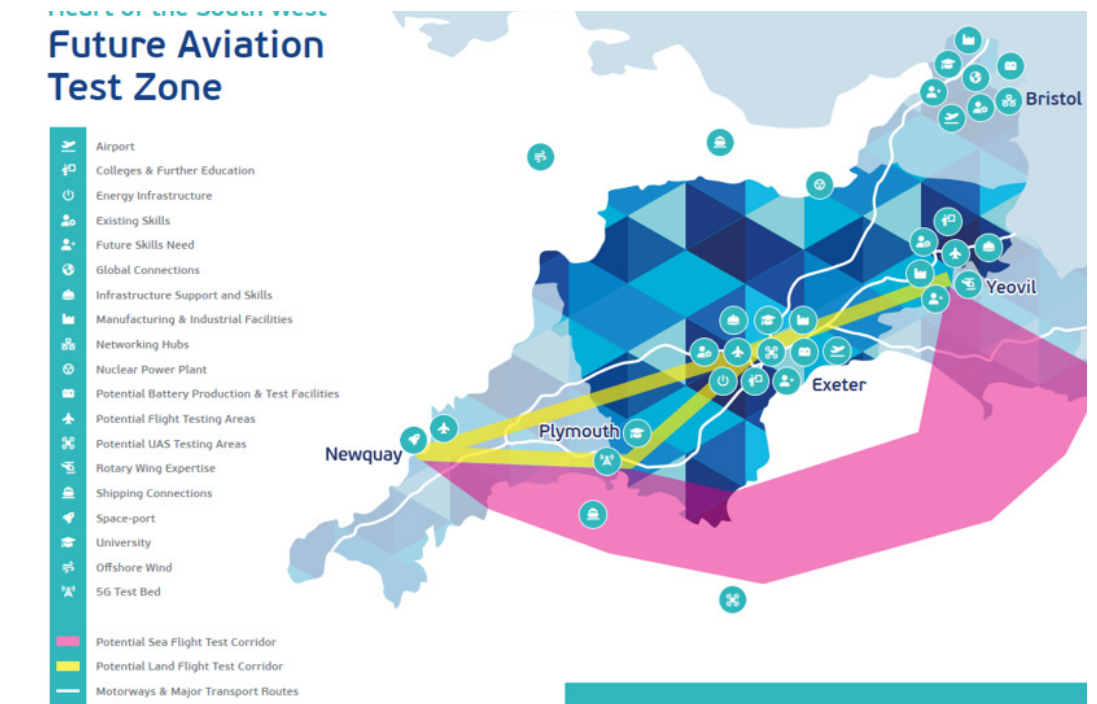
An example of growth in air cargo has been seen at Bournemouth Airport with Cargo First offering new services building on business developed during the Covid pandemic. European Cargo has dedicated cargo aircraft now based at the airport. Both passengers and freight operators are striving to reach the same goal of making air travel more sustainable, with significant investment from the UK Government and businesses to support more jobs and make the aviation industry more sustainable. The Heart of the South West is also developing a Future Aviation Test Zone with the aim of developing and testing sustainable aviation technology. This includes alternative fuels, alternative propulsion, drones and hi-tech aviation systems.

Next steps

Continue to ensure that projects related to developing sustainable aviation are funded appropriately and continue to be supported by industry to ensure that these projects can be as successful as possible. Also, ensure that once projects and trials are completed there is support and funding available to ensure that sustainable aviation can be as successful as possible at larger scales and in more 'real-world' scenarios. We will report on the work of other institutions, such as the University of Exeter Centre for Future Clean Mobility. There are also projects looking at green hydrogen for use in aviation, such as projects led by Rolls-Royce to develop a zero emission liquid hydrogen combusting jet engine.

A2

Further develop business / employment zones around airports.



Long term

Owned by:
Heart of South West LEP
and Airport Operators

Connectivity

Intervention description

Include assessing the success of smaller regional airports and how this can be applied to other zones surrounding airports in the region, such as Bournemouth, Exeter and Newquay.

Progress to date

The Future Aviation Test zone being developed by the Heart of the South West LEP is helping to create employment zones in the South West for developing and testing sustainable technology. In addition, there are other employment zones that are being created and utilised around airports such as Bournemouth and Exeter. There are also several parks such as the Plymouth Smart Sound Connect 5G test bed, Gravity Park Enterprise Zone and Exeter & East Devon Enterprise Zone (Skypark) that have been or will be developed going forward.

Next steps

Ensure that the planning process for new parks to support the aviation sector is as smooth as possible so delays are minimised, to allow these to be up and running as soon as is feasible. Continue to promote the visibility of the industry to attract local people to work at these employment zones, and take steps to make the freight sector as attractive as possible for prospective workers and local people.

A4

Review suitability and potential locations that could benefit from drone technology.



Medium term



Owned by:
Awaiting owner



Technology

Intervention description

Review the potential role of drones and their benefits. One application is to facilitate easier delivery of parcels to areas which are labelled as difficult to reach by current supply chains and whether they could benefit from drone technology. Trials have already included Isles of Scilly and the Isle of Wight and these could be extended to remote rural areas.



Progress to date

- A technical note has been prepared which looks at use of drones for goods movement and how they compare to traditional delivery methods.
- Some of these advantages include that deliveries can be faster and more efficient, more environmentally friendly than conventional delivery methods, easier to access remote areas, closely tracked in real time, reduce transportation costs and more convenient for customers and businesses.
- The note also considers several trials that have been taking place, both within and outside of the south west that have investigated drone deliveries.
- This includes trials that have taken place involving stakeholders such as the NHS and Royal Mail, whilst the first commercial drone flight between two airports took place between Lands End airport and the Isles of Scilly.
- Bournemouth University have also conducted research into the public perception of drones, with findings including that the public do not have much exposure to logistics drones, and for those that have it is mainly associated with the NHS.

Next steps

- Ensure that the South West remains involved in drone trials and continues playing a part in the development of new technologies.
- Where new trials take place, ensure that stakeholders in the South West are aware of these and if there is any funding available.
- Consider how the evolution of drone technology more generally can make logistics in the South West more efficient and contribute to the decarbonisation of the region.



Maritime interventions

Maritime interventions - overview

ID	Interventions	Primary owner and role	Progress level
M1	Develop business case for coastal feeder services to help remove road vehicles.	Port authorities - deliver	Red
M2	Explore opportunities to diversity ports into renewable energy production.	Port authorities - deliver	Yellow
M3	Awareness campaign of coastal shipping opportunities for supply chains.	Port authorities - deliver	Red
M4	Develop and expand growth into new sectors at ports.	Port authorities - deliver	Yellow
M5	Investigate improvements in road and rail links to Port terminals.	Port authorities, highway authorities and Network Rail - deliver	Yellow
M6	Review of ports in the South West (Already done for WG).	STBs - deliver	Green
M7	Review of ports planning guidance.	LAs – lead and deliver	Red

M2

Explore opportunities to diversify ports into renewable energy production.



 **Medium term**



 **Owned by:**
Port authorities and operators

 **Decarbonisation**

Intervention description

Include exploration of alternative fuels including LNG, electric and green hydrogen, as well as shoreside power for bunkering facilities and promoting Eco Port status and Port Environmental Review System (PERS) accreditation for Ports within the region through investment in energy efficiency and electrification.

Progress to date

There are plans to build a 10 Megawatt hydrogen hub on the edge of Plymouth which will provide the local community with hydrogen that is easy to access. This site is part of the Plymouth Freeport and will help support growth of renewable energy generation. In addition to this, an event was held on 21st February 2023 in Poole focusing on clean maritime funding, with part of this focusing on new funding for clean maritime and energy support in the south west region.

Next steps

Continue to explore the potential for other alternative fuels such as LNG and electric alongside the existing work done so far on hydrogen. Ensure that sustainable shore power is investigated as part of this research. Additionally, continue to look for funding opportunities to develop renewable energy production in the South West. Also, consider any opportunities for ports in the South West to be involved in trials or the development of new technologies in relation to renewable energy production.

M4

Develop and expand growth into new sectors at ports.



 **Medium term**



 **Owned by:**
Port authorities and operators

 **Infrastructure**

Intervention description

Include exploring new sectors such as aggregates, animal feed and agriculture and how the ports need to adapt through infrastructure and management.

Progress to date

There is a great potential for growth in the bulk sectors at ports. A new cargo line has been established at Portland Port delivering several commodities including orange juice from Ghent in Belgium. This is part of an overall aim of mode shift away from road, in order to remove lorry journeys from roads within the South West. Other ports in the South West are also looking at opportunities to support this through similar initiatives. In addition, ro-ro freight has increased in the South West with unaccompanied freight being moved by South West based hauliers which demonstrates a shift in the way ports are operating.

Next steps

Continue to explore how different commodities can be moved through South West ports to encourage modal shift. Also, identify any barriers to modal shift and consider ways that these can be alleviated. Where measures have been successfully implemented at particular ports, consider how they can be expanded to other ports and/or industries to enable the benefits to be felt as much as they can region wide.

M5

Investigate improvements in road and rail links to Port terminals.



 **Short term**



 **Owned by:**
National Highways

 **Infrastructure**

Intervention description

Recognising the existing Western Gateway Port Access Study, investigate improving links to intermodal sites and commercial ports, such as Poole, Plymouth and Falmouth, and the level of investment required. The outcome of this could lead to the need for additional funding for infrastructural improvements.

Progress to date

Several ports in the South West have expressed an interest in introducing rail connections to ports. Falmouth Docks has rail lines still in place at the docks from previous use and the retaining wall is good for screening noise from activity. The Hamworthy Branch also has rail lines still in place at the docks as well. There has also been a positive conversation between the port of Poole and Network Rail to establish a connection to the network in order to move more goods by rail. These links will be important in supporting the south west region to decarbonise.

Next steps

Continue to take the required steps in order to get these rail links to ports fully up and running. As part of this, identify any barriers that are preventing these connections and how these can be overcome. In addition to rail links, identify any road upgrades that need to take place and ensure stakeholders work collaboratively to ensure there are plans in place for these upgrades to be completed.

M6

Review of ports in the South West (Already done for WG).

 **Medium term**


 **Owned by:**
STBs (WSP / AECOM)

 **Operational efficiency**

Intervention description

Recognising the existing Western Gateway Port Access Study, include a port capacity review, review of traffic management plans, review of highway access improvements required, opportunity for multimodal connections to ports (such as rail), consolidation sites with booking systems in close proximity to ports, and Strategic Warehousing Audit.



Progress to date

- WP12 involved a detailed review of international gateways in the South West, with ports included as part of this scope alongside airports.
- This full detailed report included key sections focusing on ports in the South West. Topics included the role that ports play within the region, detailed multi-page profiles on the largest ports within the South West, snapshot statistics to help convey the importance of ports, a stakeholder engagement exercise to enable further understanding of flows through ports as well as current and future trends, regional drivers of growth, sectorial trends and opportunities and challenges facing ports.
- Key conclusions from this study included that ports are constantly having to adapt to current and future requirements, including decarbonisation challenges as well as changes to supply chain activity. They are also under increasing pressure to diversify, for example entering into new markets and looking at new and alternative ways to gain revenue.
- A further technical note has been produced which summarises the international gateways piece. This focuses on key themes such as the role of ports in the South West and an overview of the dashboards, statistics, opportunities and challenges and key outcomes.



Next steps

- Key next steps will include considering the recommendations set out as part of the WP12 International Gateways review, and the required steps that can be taken to implement these recommendations.
- The recommendations in this International Gateway report are produced by the same authors and deliberately dovetail into other workstreams, including referencing this Freight Strategy interventions. This implementation process is seen as one mechanism for taking forward the ideas in the Gateway report.





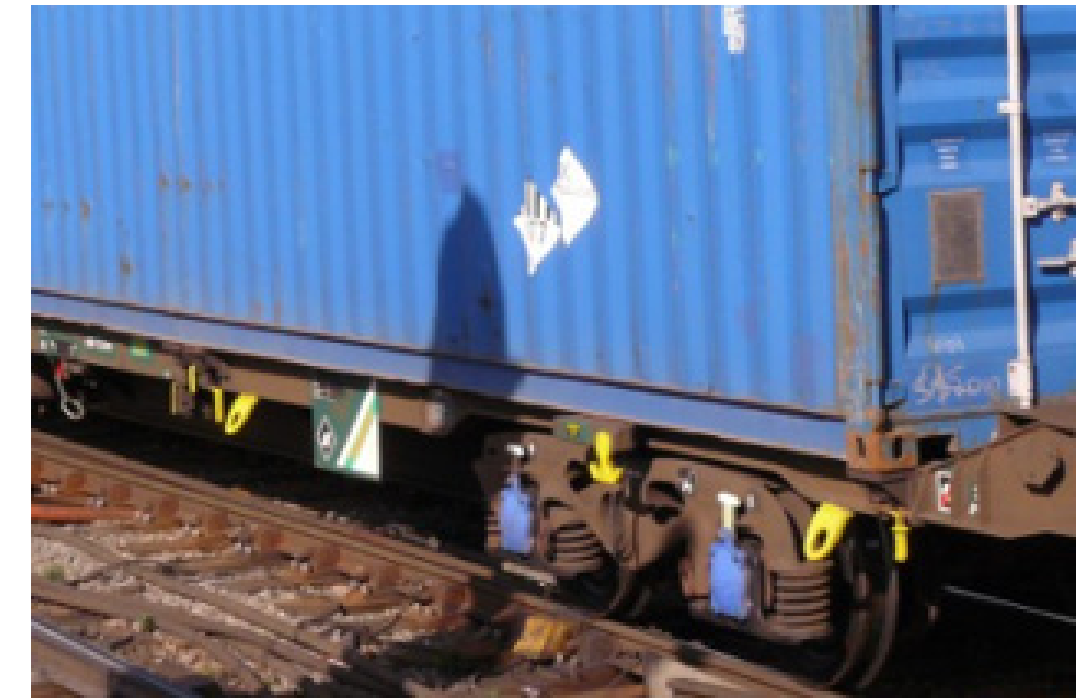
Rail interventions

Rail interventions - overview

ID	Interventions	Primary owner and role	Progress level
RL1	Feasibility study to operate intermodal container trains from deep sea ports to intermodal sites.	Network Rail and FOCs - deliver	Yellow
RL2	Support electrification and gauge enhancement of the core rail network.	Network Rail and FOCs - deliver	Yellow
RL3	Pursue rollout of new alternative fuel locomotives and wagon technology.	Network Rail and FOCs - deliver	Yellow
RL4	Support and signpost businesses and local authorities to transition to rail freight.	STBs - deliver	Red
RL5	Understand the availability of grants to help facilitate modal switch to rail.	Network Rail and FOCs - deliver	Red
RL6	Partnership working with stakeholders to promote South West priorities.	STBs - deliver	Yellow
RL7	Encourage the establishment of rail freight intermodal sites in the South West. There are various possible locations to give regional coverage for example Bodmin/Burngallow, Bridgwater, Bristol, Exeter/Newton Abbot, Plymouth, Poole and Westbury.	Network Rail and FOCs - deliver	Green
RL8	Safeguard rail freight sites through developing Supplementary Planning Guidance.	LAs – deliver	Yellow
RL9	Allocate sufficient freight train paths on the main line and diversionary routes.	Network Rail and FOCs - deliver	Yellow

RL1

Feasibility study to operate intermodal container trains from deep sea ports to intermodal sites



 **Short term**

A horizontal timeline bar with a yellow segment on the left, indicating the short-term nature of the project.

 **Owned by:**
Network Rail and Freight
Operating Companies

 **Connectivity**

Intervention description	Progress to date	Next steps
<p>Include how more road freight can be moved by rail to its destination for last mile logistics. There should be at least three to four intermodal terminals in the South West, see intervention RL7</p>	<p>A discussion has taken place with a Freight Operating Company regarding movements of China clay in deep-sea intermodal containers from Mid Cornwall to a south coast deepsea port. A process is underway to seek additional third party traffic to make the business case for the rail service viable. A process is also underway to investigate and secure third party funding to enhance loading facilities, for example concrete pad upgrades to help support axle weights of the reach stackers required to support the intermodal container transfer from train to road vehicles. Port of Poole is exploring possible use of bulk and intermodal trains. Discussions are also on-going about an intermodal train from the Midlands to Devon / Plymouth.</p>	<p>Engagement with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEPs) in order to consider potential. Funding mechanisms including any levelling up opportunities. Also, to continue to look at other opportunities for operating intermodal container trains from deep sea ports to intermodal sites in other areas of the south west.</p>

RL2

Support electrification / infill electrification and gauge enhancement of the core rail network



 **Long term**

—————|—————|—————|—————|—————

 **Owned by:**
Network Rail and Freight
Operating Companies

 **Decarbonisation**

Intervention description	Progress to date	Next steps
<p>Electrification projects normally facilitate gauge enhancement. Include W12 / S45 standards for all current W10 cleared routes and diversionary routes. An urgent but modest scheme would be to electrify the connection to the Mendip quarries. Longer term would see the electrification of the main line to Plymouth.</p>	<p>The Peninsula Rail Task Force have continued to advocate for electrification of the core network. The South West rail strategy has taken on board the recommendations from the WP09 Freight study, including electrification of the core route as well as recommendations surrounding loading gauge enhancements. There has also been general discussion around electrification of the core freight route as part of the south west rail freight sub-group</p>	<p>Dialogue will continue with the Peninsula Rail Task Force and to continue advocacy for the electrification of the core route (Birmingham – Bristol – Exeter – Plymouth) as well as provision of freight paths. This can include potential ‘flexing’ of existing underused or underutilised passenger paths for use by freight services.</p>



Pursue rollout of new alternative fuel locomotives and wagon technology.



Long term

Owned by:
Network Rail and Freight Operating Companies

Decarbonisation

Intervention description

Although it is recognised that rail freight is more environmentally friendly than road freight, it can be even more beneficial if diesel traction is replaced by electricity or potentially other modern alternative fuel. Pursue rollout of new alternative fuel locomotives and wagon technology

Progress to date

Currently, all rail freight in the South West is hauled using diesel locomotives. Recently, dual mode locomotives such as the Class 88 and Class 93 (expected during 2023) have been introduced in the UK and trials of hydrogen and battery units have been conducted both in the UK and abroad. One or more of these modes may be suitable for use in the South West. Additionally, regarding wagons, it may be possible to use pocket wagons or other low-wheel intermodal wagons in the South West, especially to enable more freight to be moved by rail prior to any gauge enhancements taking place.

Next steps

Continue to research and consider which type(s) of alternatively fuelled locomotives are most suitable for the South West, and begin planning a route towards their implementation. Similarly, for wagons, once it has been decided which wagons are optimal for particular lines and routes in the south west, consider what is the best way to procure these and identify any barriers to their use and how these can be overcome.



Partnership working with stakeholders to promote South West priorities



 **Short term**


 **Owned by:**
STBs

 **Information and awareness**

Intervention description

Include Great British Railways, local rail teams, core freight units, councils, Sub-National Transport Bodies, local government and the Department for Transport.

Progress to date

Several meetings have taken place with stakeholders in the South West including local authorities, Network Rail, Great British Railways Transition Team, Freight Operating Companies, Local Enterprise Partnerships and the Rail Freight Group to gain a better understanding of their current priorities and how these fit in with work that has taken place within the south west. This has also been fed back as part of the main South West Freight Strategy steering group, sub-groups and subject-specific technical notes. This work has also been aligned with that of the Peninsula Rail Transport Taskforce.

Next steps

Continue to engage with stakeholders including those that groups that have not yet been consulted with. These include stakeholders involved in alternative fuels and the provision of energy, as well as town planners and local authority planners in regions in the South West that have not yet been consulted with.

RL7

Encourage the establishment of rail freight intermodal sites in the South West.

 **Long term**

 **Owned by:**
Network Rail and Freight Operating Companies

 **Infrastructure**

Intervention description

Identify rural and urban sites (e.g. Bodmin/ Burngullow, Bridgwater, Bristol, Exeter/Newton Abbot, Plymouth, Poole, and Westbury), demand generator areas, sites with connections to ports and bring back online key existing sites. Potential locations should include sites in a catchment area of one hour by HGV and consideration required for vehicle access needs.

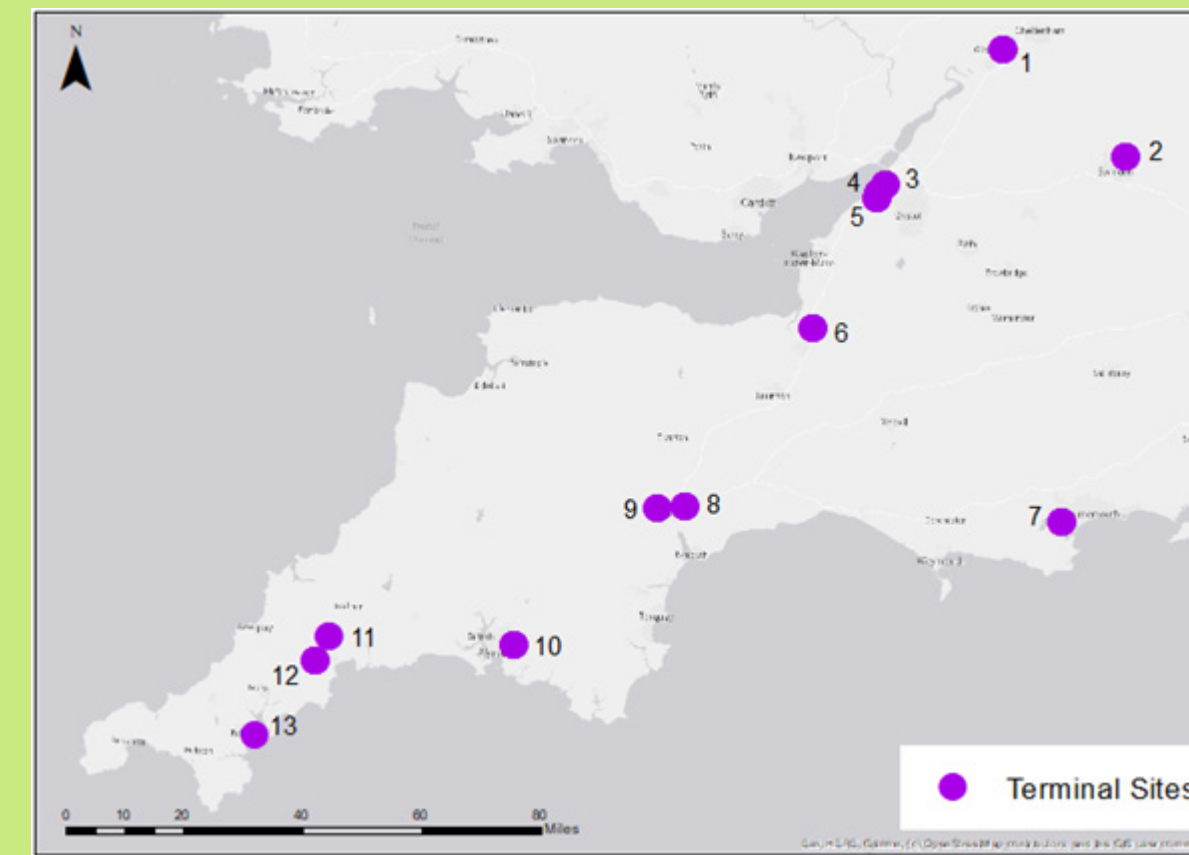


Progress to date

- A desktop research exercise was conducted to gain key details of potential sites for rail freight terminals in the South West, to help both identify locations for potential sites as well as to gain an understanding of some of the key details and characteristics for these sites.
 - A shortlist of approximately 12 locations was compiled, as well as a set of criteria to allow potential terminal sites to be compared.
 - Calls were also made with representatives of Network Rail and the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) in order to help fill in some gaps in information. In some cases, where location-specific information was missing, individual bodies such as ports were contacted to ensure these gaps were filled.
 - Once all information was gathered, one page case studies were developed for each site.
- Profiles also include maps of the sites both within the local area and within the South West region as a whole. These profiles also include a summary of advantages and disadvantages for each of the shortlisted sites.
 - Network Rail and GBRTT conducted a visit to some of the shortlisted sites in the South West from this study, and the technical note also includes some images and notes from these visits.

Next steps

- The key next steps will be to work towards finalising priority sites for development as rail freight terminals from those that have been shortlisted.
- Once the initial list of pilot sites has been finalised, the next key phase will be to work with relevant bodies to overcome any barriers to getting these terminals up and running.

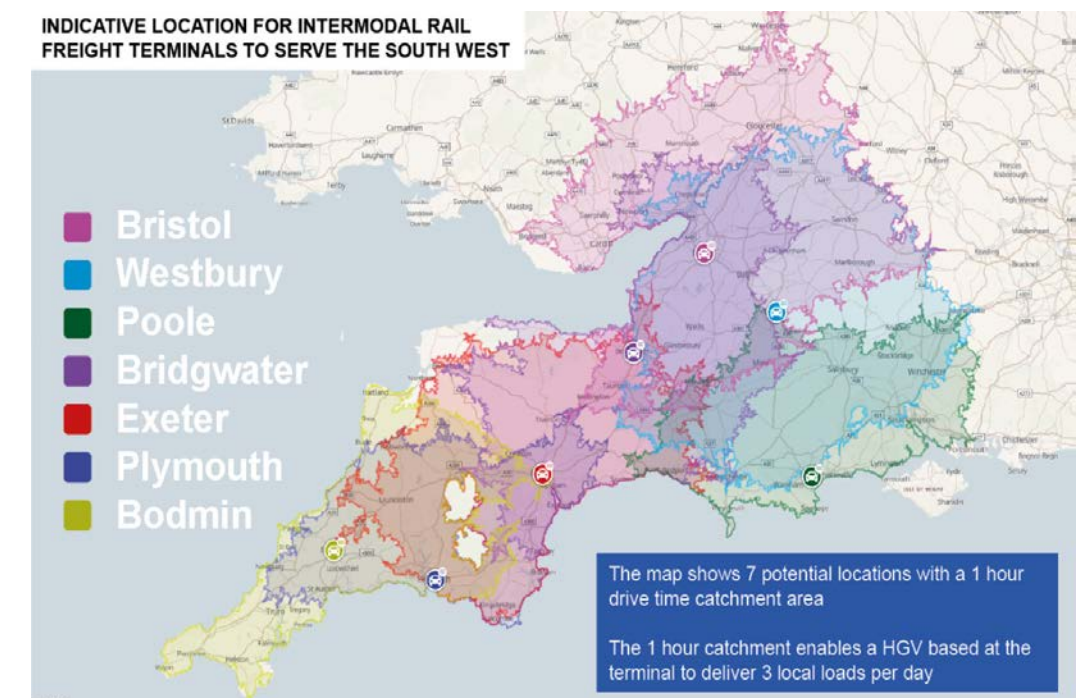


South West terminals

Number	Name
1	Gloucester Yard
2	Swindon
3	Chittening
4	Avonmouth Docks
5	Portbury Docks
6	Gravity Park
7	Poole Harbour
8	Exeter Gateway
9	Exeter Riverside
10	Tavistock Junction
11	Goonbarrow
12	Burngullow
13	Falmouth Docks



Safeguard rail freight sites through developing Supplementary Planning Guidance.



Medium term

Owned by:
STBs and Local Authorities

Infrastructure

Intervention description

Include adequate land in urban and industrial areas to promote rail freight consolidation along with how sidings on the network could be adapted to support intermodal rail freight

Progress to date

All local authorities in the study area were contacted and asked whether they had any information on sites in their region that either could be used or reinstated for rail freight and/or be earmarked for safeguarding for possible future freight terminals. Responses were received from around 40% of local authorities, with varying amounts and detail of information received. There was also some concern about the issue of planning blight in relation to safeguarding sites.

Next steps

Aim to get responses from all local authorities in the South West who are yet to provide their insight so that a more complete picture of information held by local authorities can be obtained for the South West. In addition, continue to liaise with local authorities regarding potential sites, and gain a greater understanding of concerns local authorities have and potential solutions to these.

RL9

Allocate sufficient freight train paths on the main line and diversionary routes



 **Medium term**

Timeline bar with 4 segments, the first is highlighted in orange.

 **Owned by:**
Network Rail

 **Operational efficiency**

Intervention description

Ensure that lack of rail capacity and insufficient train paths do not limit the growing market for intermodal, bulk and parcels and identifying alternative freight train routes to avoid hotspot areas

Progress to date

The Greater Bristol Strategic Network Study (February 2023) provides recommendations relating to the provision of freight paths, loops and other requirements that need to be met in order to meet industry growth forecasts. In addition, work has been undertaken by NR / GBRTT looking at the provision of freight paths in Devon and Cornwall.

Next steps

Network Rail should continue to ensure that sufficient freight paths are allocated to meet industry growth forecasts. Studies should also be conducted for stretches that have not yet been investigated or reported on in detail, especially beyond Taunton. Additionally, relating to the mid-Cornwall metro, it is important to ensure that the mid-Cornwall metro plans currently being taken forward can also accommodate the future provision of freight paths into port of Falmouth to support the re-connection of the Port to the national railway network.



Road interventions

Road interventions - overview

ID	Interventions	Primary owner and role	Progress level
RD1	Strategically plan network of alternative fuel stations and promote existing sites. Development of new sites by private sector	Private sector -deliver	Green
RD2	Promote resources and training to help operators avoid bridge strikes.	Network Rail – deliver	Green
RD3	Promote solutions to driver shortages.	Logistics UK and RHA - deliver	Green
RD4	Work with hauliers to understand how they can be supported in the uptake of alternatively fuelled vehicles.	STBs - deliver	Red
RD5	Review of current lorry parking facilities in the South West.	LAs with private developers - deliver	Green
RD6	Support for infrastructure improvements and investment where suitable.	National Highways - deliver	Yellow
RD7	Continue support for routine road maintenance activities but broadcast plans so hauliers can better plan.	National Highways - deliver	Yellow
RD8	Identify cluster locations where logistics plans are needed along with facilities for last mile logistics.	STBs - deliver	Yellow
RD9	Promote use of swap trailers to reduce demands for long distance trunking between regions.	Logistics UK and RHA - deliver	Red
RD10	Feasibility study on consolidation sites for last mile logistics.	Local authorities and logistics operators - deliver	Red
RD11	Promoting suitable alternative routes in the event of adverse weather.	National Highways and local authorities - deliver	Yellow
RD12	Review options to deliver smarter during quieter periods of the day or week.	Local authorities and logistics operators - deliver	Red
RD13	Support improvements to strategically important roads that require better journey time reliability	National Highways - deliver	Yellow
RD14	Review suitability of technologies from trials and their potential for the South West.	National Highways - deliver	Green
RD15	Promote a trial of the use of a load and vehicle matching exchange to reduce empty running for 10 hauliers for a year.	STBs - deliver	Green
RD16	Explore collaboration between delivery companies to service hard to reach areas.	Logistics operators - deliver	Red

RD1

Strategically plan network of alternative fuel stations and promote existing sites. Development of new sites by private sector.

 **Long term**

 **Owned by:**
Atkins and Cenex

 **Decarbonisation**

Intervention description

Promoting, identifying, and mapping out a cohesive network of multi-fuel energy propulsion sites and work with fuel providers to scale up infrastructure provision and future production for serving the road haulage sector and its energy transition to lower emission fuels and then zero emission fuels when the technology is available. This should not just be approached for road but include cross-modal synergies e.g. many modes could refuel at a port.



Progress to date

- In 2019, Atkins and Cenex were commissioned by Midlands Connect STB to undertake research to forecast the uptake in alternative fuels in the road haulage industry. They were also commissioned by Western Gateway STB and Peninsula Transport STB in 2022 to repeat elements of the original study for the South West of England. The findings from the work undertaken by ATKINS / CENEX work will drive forward this intervention.
- The study was comprised of four components, a policy review, stakeholder engagement, forecasting of fuel uptake, and a high-level site identification of fuelling locations.
- The findings of the project were presented to the main South West Freight Strategy steering group which included details of the locations of alternative fuel fuelling locations and the coverage of this network of locations.
- Following on from this work, ATKINS / CENEX are looking to determine the feasibility of co-locating refuelling sites with ports, airports, and rail terminals to maximise their potential.



Next steps

- Continue the further work to help determine if there are any opportunities to co-locate refuelling sites with ports, airports, and rail terminals.
- Investigate the potential need for upgrades to electricity infrastructure.
- Work with stakeholders to ensure the development of a cohesive refuelling network, which meets the needs of freight and logistic operators.
- Influence the policy development processes of partner local authorities to ensure freight and logistics see greater representation.



RD2

Promote resources and training to help operators avoid bridge strikes.



Short term



Owned by:

Network Rail, National Highways and Road Haulage Association /Logistics UK



Information and awareness

Intervention description

Investigate the scale of the bridge strike problem in the South West which is not just related to rail bridges. Then aim to reduce the number of bridge strikes and interventions. Include working with map providers to map vehicle restrictions and recommend routing plans, support use of Bridge Strike Toolkit, use of technology on commonly struck bridges and potential height constraint removals where feasible.



Progress to date

- All local authorities in the south west have been contacted and asked if they can provide information on bridge strikes in their area (including any figures or key locations) and if any action is being planned by the highway authorities.
- Following this request, responses were received by some local authorities, including some who provided data on their worst hit bridges.
- In some cases, maps were produced to show bridge strike locations in key regions, enabling a better visualisation of the area spread of bridge strikes in these locations.
- A desktop research exercise was conducted looking at frequency of bridge strikes as well as economic impacts and impacts of damage on the infrastructure. This includes examples both outside the south west and within the south west region and looked at both rail bridge strikes and road bridge strikes. This research also looked at the causes of bridge strikes, and how this can differ in different regions.
- Profiles of particularly frequently struck bridges are also included including consideration of some of the measures that have been put in place to prevent these strikes from occurring. Solutions can include passive systems, sacrificial systems (a fixed height barrier before the bridge to receive any initial impact of an over-height vehicle, alerting the driver and avoiding damage to the bridge) and active systems.
- Discussion around bridge strikes also took place during the south west freight forum sub-group sessions, including helping to gain an understanding of some of the potential mitigations in place across the south west.

Next steps

- Key next steps will include working to implement solutions within the south west that are identified as part of the desktop research and consultation with local authorities and other stakeholders.
- This may include recommended routing plans for vehicles, enabling them to avoid low bridges. Next steps will also involve continuing to support use of the Bridge Strike Toolkit.



RD3 *Promote solutions to driver shortages*

 **Medium term**


 **Owned by:**
Road Haulage Association
and Logistics UK

 **Information and awareness**

Intervention description

Include advocating for changes to the industry to encourage uptake, promote opportunities to access driver training facilities in the South West, use of smart delivery patterns for the short term gap



Progress to date

- A technical note has been prepared which looks at the current overall HGV driver shortage in the UK, and some of the key causes. Key information for this has been gathered following a desktop research exercise which reviewed sources such as news articles and releases from the UK Government.
- Some of the key causes of the nationwide issue include an ageing workforce, demanding work, a lack of secure lorry parking facilities, drivers having left the UK due to Covid not returning, the UK leaving the EU and a backlog of HGV driving tests.
- Ways in which the shortage of HGV drivers can be alleviated specifically in the South West is also explored as part of this technical note, as there are several ways that the HGV driver shortage can be potentially solved at a local level.
- Potential solutions explored include increasing driver training, having more freight depots spread around the South West and improving the provision of lorry parking sites and the facilities available at these locations.



Next steps

- Next steps include looking at what the best ways are to increase training and job opportunities for current and prospective HGV drivers in the South West.
- Also, it will be important to ensure that owners and managers of lorry parking sites in the South West are aware of funding available to them to help improve facilities and encourage applications to be made for this funding.
- Check on progress with the University of West of England (UWE) on their research on driver shortages which the early stages were featured in the roads small group session.



RD5

Review of current lorry parking facilities in the South West.

 **Short term**

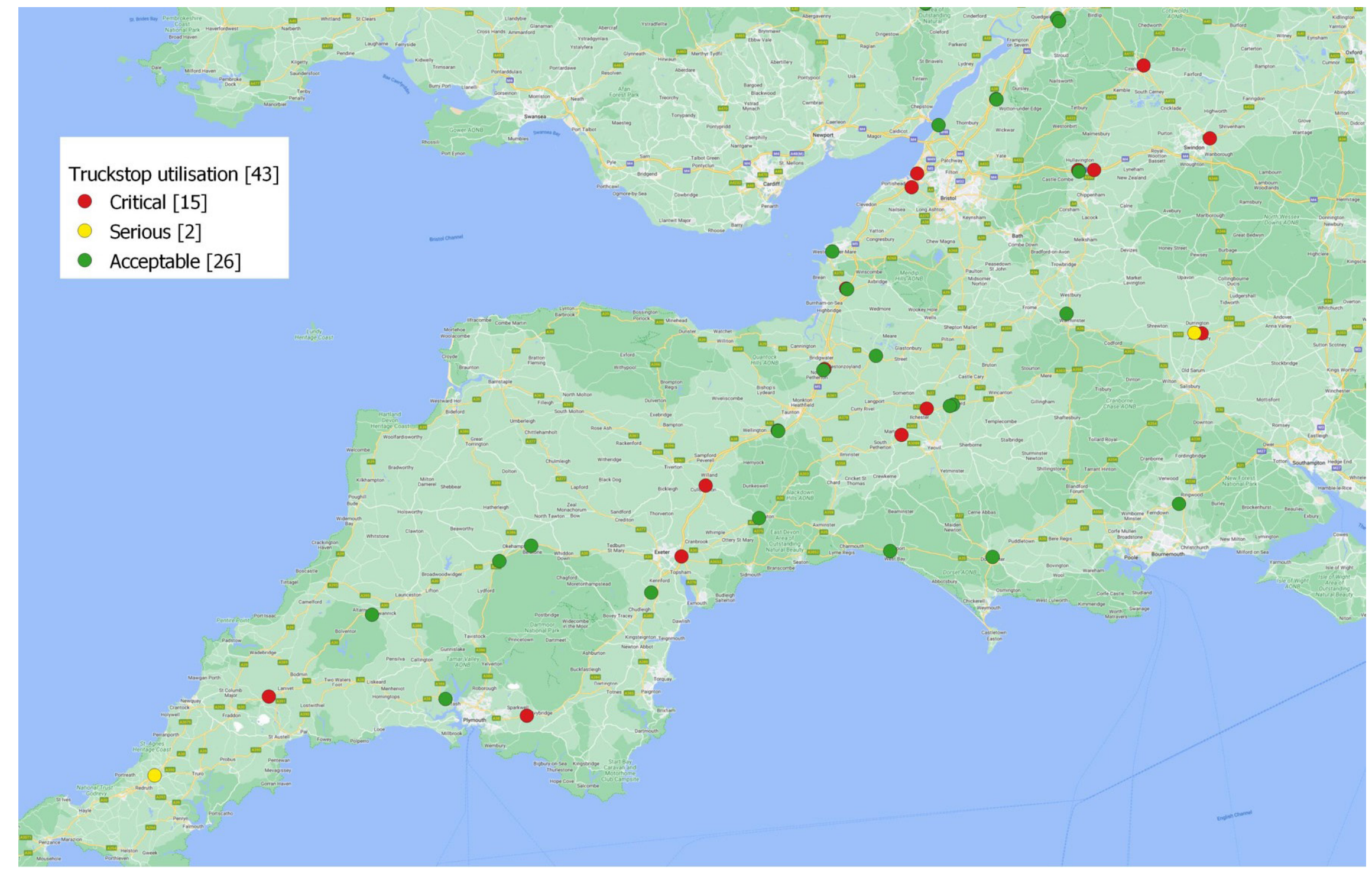


 **Owned by:**
National Highways

 **Infrastructure**

Intervention description

Although the South West does not have the same shortage of lorry parking as the South East, there are still locations where there is insufficient capacity as can be seen from the red dots on the map. These locations are regularly full and additional spaces or other facilities are needed especially on the M5 corridor. Additionally some of the existing sites are in need of refurbishment as the standard and quality of the facilities is poor. National Highways and DfT have projects aimed at helping the situation and interventions. Include identifying improvements and additional sites required to support drivers and the industry.



Progress to date

- In 2022, the Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned AECOM to undertake the national survey of lorry parking. This was an audit of lorry parking within five kilometres of the strategic road network (SRN) in England, including in the South West.
- This full detailed report included information on lorry parking sites in the South West including the number of sites, capacity, total number of vehicles parked, percentage of UK and non-UK registered vehicles and on-site utilisation. Maps were also produced showing the spread of on-site lorry parking sites in the South West that had critical, serious and acceptable levels of utilisation
- The regional breakdown of the South West showed that most of the on-site lorry parking sites are at an acceptable level of utilisation, although there are also a significant number of sites that are at a critical and serious level of utilisation. The rating system for facilities also showed that on-site lorry parking facilities in the South West have a lower overall rating compared to England as a whole. This means that lorry

parks in the South West, in general, have a lower provision of facilities, with no sites in the South West having the highest rating (5).

- A further technical note has been produced which summarises the outputs from the national survey of lorry parking for the South West which draws out region-specific themes and conclusions.



Next steps

- Key next steps will include considering the key study observations and concluding comments that were made in the national survey of lorry parking, as well as reviewing facts, figures and statistics relating specifically to the South West.
- Look at how the facilities available to drivers can be improved in the South West, as well as how the number of spaces can be increased at locations with serious or critical utilisation levels.



RD6

Support for infrastructure improvements and investment where suitable.



 **Long term**

 **Owned by:**
National Highways

 **Infrastructure**

Intervention description

Include engagement with National Highways on the Road Investment Strategy 2, future Road Investment Strategy 3, local authority road schemes and route study schemes for HGV alignment and width easement. Also includes good connectivity to ports, rail hubs and airports.

Progress to date

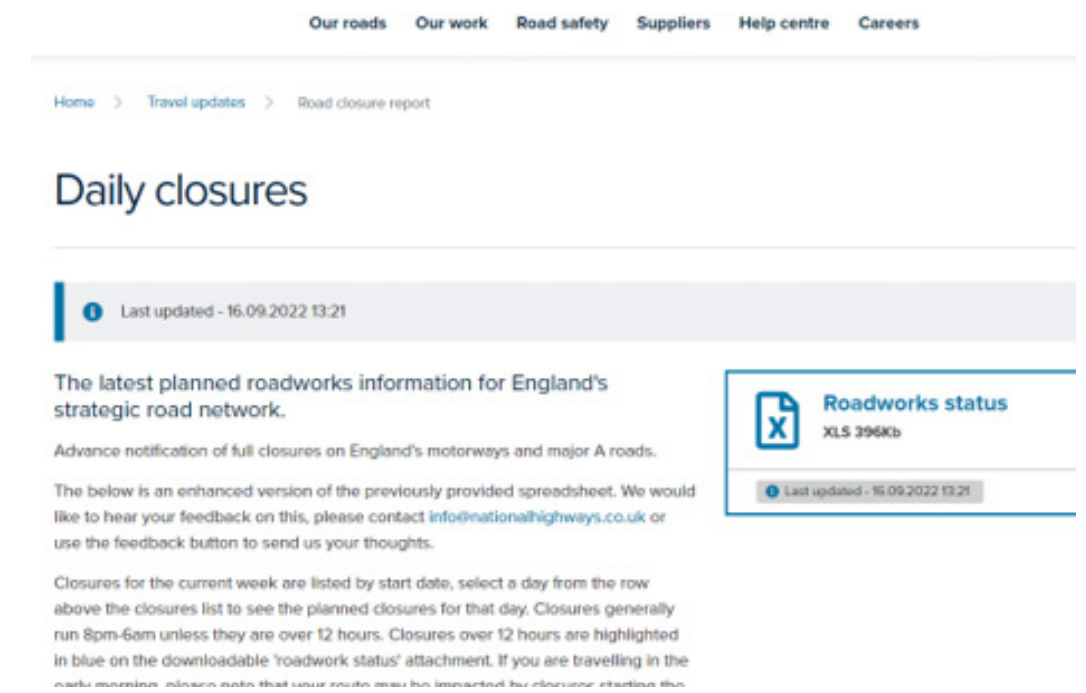
Several clean air zones have been implemented in the South West which are generally considered to be effective so far. The A30 Chiverton to Carland Cross scheme is underway, dualling an 8.7 mile section of road to 70mph dual carriageway, with several other schemes underway or in planning. Several safety schemes are also proposed, for example the A38 Trerulefoot to Carkeel Safety Package, which is aimed at encouraging safer and more reliable travel in the South West.

Next steps

Continue to identify key hotspots that require infrastructure enhancements, and ensure these are included in future Road Investment Strategy (RIS) planning periods. Consider how future enhancements and safety schemes can assist connection to key gateways in the South West as well as areas of economic activity.



Continue support for routine road maintenance activities but broadcast plans so hauliers can better plan.



 **Medium term**

 **Owned by:**
National Highways

 **Infrastructure**

Intervention description	Progress to date	Next steps
<p>Include effective and far reaching communication plans for users of the network regarding new road schemes and road maintenance programmes to reduce disruptions.</p>	<p>When highway network improvements are made in the South West, these are planned well in advance. Where there are diversions in place, operators are advised of these. All planned and unplanned maintenance activities are published using Twitter with full details of closure and diversionary routes. In addition, it is noted that instances of a person in crisis is causing significant constraint on the network as a whole. The number of incidences of this is on the rise.</p>	<p>Consider additional ways to make information on both planned and unplanned maintenance as accessible and detailed as possible. Also ensure that road maintenance schemes can be planned to reduce disruption to the freight industry, but also still ensuring schemes can be implemented as efficiently as possible to help provide the greatest benefits overall.</p>

RD8

Identify cluster locations where logistics plans are needed along with facilities for last mile logistics.



 **Short term**

A horizontal timeline with a yellow bar at the beginning, indicating a short-term duration.

 **Owned by:**
STBs

 **Operational efficiency**

Intervention description

Include undertaking a rolling programme of rural delivery service plans, for example - key tourist centres.

Progress to date

The CRAFTeD project ran from November 2020 to May 2021, which brought together several stakeholders to help plan a path to decarbonise the freight industry in the South West by 2050. There were several policy recommendations, including the requirement for greater cross-sectoral engagement and the need to have a greater understanding of the climate impacts of the freight sector. More generally, it is understood that there are a variety of solutions needed for last mile logistics and that different solutions are likely to work better in different environments.

Next steps

Consider the policy recommendations from the CRAFTeD project and how they can be implemented alongside interventions from the South West freight strategy. Additionally, ensure progress is made on a programme of logistics plans, including rural delivery service plans, and identify any barriers to their implementation and how these can be overcome.

RD11

Promoting suitable alternative routes in the event of adverse weather.



 **Short term**


 **Owned by:**
National Highways

 **Operational efficiency**

Intervention description	Progress to date	Next steps
<p>Include how National Highways and local authorities work together to clearly communicate with the industry to ensure their effectiveness.</p>	<p>There has been an ongoing study with National Highways on this subject with diversionary routes needing to be considered carefully to ensure they are suitable for all vehicles, including freight vehicles. Recently, there have been issues where Police have closed roads and introduced diversionary routes that were not suitable for HGVs.</p>	<p>Continue engagement with National Highways and local authorities to ensure that information about diversionary routes, including those in place due to adverse weather, is as accurate and easy to understand as possible. Also, consider additional methods of communicating diversionary routes so this is as widespread as it can be, and ensure that when diversionary routes are planned these are suitable for large vehicles.</p>

RD13

Support improvements to strategically important roads that require better journey time reliability.



 **Short term**

A horizontal timeline with a yellow bar indicating the current period.

 **Owned by:**
National Highways

 **Operational efficiency**

Intervention description

Include data on HGV routing, assessing options for future road enhancements. Involve stakeholders in discussions regarding reliability. Examples of this include the A303, A35, A37 and A39.

Progress to date

There has been activity with the STBs and other bodies which has been demonstrated as part of National Highways' programme of major projects going forward. These include improvements to the A358, the A30 Chiverton to Carland scheme, A417 missing link between Brockworth and Cowley and the ongoing M4 to Dorset Coast Study. Each of these schemes go through a planning process including public consultation.

Next steps

Continue to ensure that investment is made in the SRN in the South West and that this continues to be based on the efficiency of the network and the safety of existing roads. Ensure that HGV data, such as that relating to routing and journey time reliability, is used as part of the planning process to ensure that roads that require a better level of journey time reliability receive improvements where this is required.

RD14

Review suitability of technologies from trials and their potential for the South West.

 **Medium term**


 **Owned by:**
National Highways

 **Technology**

Intervention description

Include opportunities for a smarter SRN through data collection, vehicle technologies, fuel technologies including electrification and pilot concept with plug in points for static vans.



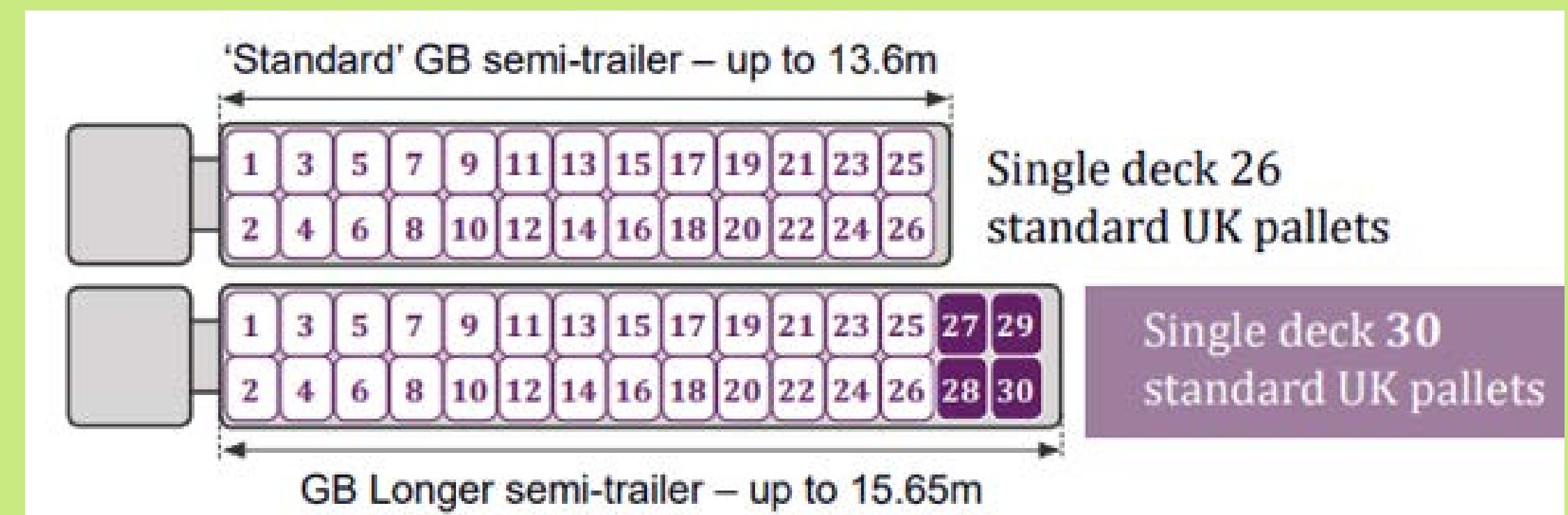
Progress to date

- A technical note has been prepared which outlines some of the key new technologies in the freight and logistics sector that are being trialled or have recently been trialled.
- These include trials relating to alternatively fuelled vehicles (battery electric, electric road and hydrogen trials), increased vehicle size (use of heavier vehicles and longer semi-trailers) and automation (platooning and examples where driverless vehicles have already been introduced).
- The technical note also discusses how, if implemented, these technologies can benefit the South West region.
- This includes increased decarbonisation, assisting with the alleviation of driver shortages, using the network more efficiently, offering opportunities for demand responsive transport and the potential for additional skilled jobs.



Next steps

- Ensure that stakeholders in the South West are aware of trials that are taking place, and consider whether it may be worthwhile getting involved in these trials.
- Also, make sure that stakeholders are monitoring whether funding is available to support them with taking part in trials or adopting new technologies.
- Continue to monitor opportunities to introduce technologies in the South West, in particular the way the SRN can be made 'smarter' and to provide more data to understand type of flows.
- DfT has been running a trial to measure the benefits of LSTs. As can be seen by the diagram of the lorry platform a LST can typically carry an extra 4 pallets. LSTs are now approved to wider application.



RD15

Promote a trial of the use of a load and vehicle matching exchange to reduce empty running for 10 hauliers for a year

 **Short term**



 **Owned by:**
STBs

 **Technology**

Intervention description

In order to demonstrate helping to reduce empty running, the aim is to establish a pilot project to show how using an internet based load matching service can generate efficiencies and reduce emissions as a result. Hauliers and their customers benefit and so do road users as there may be slightly fewer HGVs on the road.”



Progress to date

- A technical note has been prepared which looks at the issue of empty running and the key benefits that can be felt by reducing the amount of empty running on the road network following a desktop research exercise.
- Key advantages to trucks not running empty include reduced fuel and CO2 emissions, reduced congestion on the network, optimisation of drivers' hours and optimisation of capacity on the network, demonstrating both societal and economic benefits.
- Around 22 per cent of the vehicle kilometres in the South West run empty. This figure comes as a result of analysis of data from the Continuous Survey of Road Goods Transport (CSRG).
- There are several recent technological innovations such as online backloading and load matching services, which helps to make loads more visible and enable hauliers and businesses to communicate more effectively to reduce levels of empty running.

- A trial will be taking place in the South West which will offer an opportunity for 10 small to medium sized operators within the region to trial a backloading scheme for free. The aim of this is to have 5 operators from each of the Peninsula and Western Gateway regions involved in this initiative.



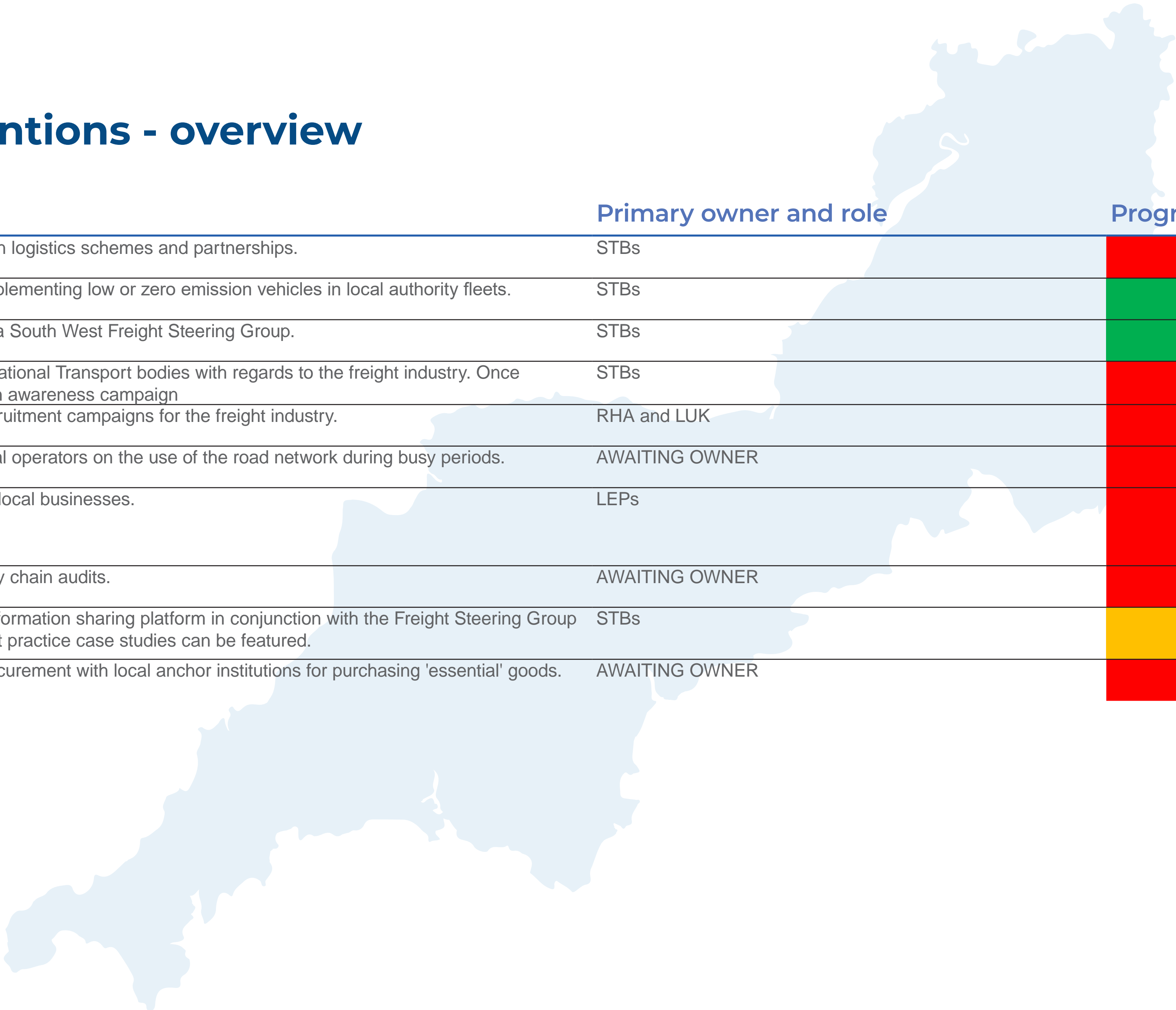
Next steps

- Next steps include taking required steps to get the backloading scheme up and running, and ensure that effective marketing is in place to ensure that as many businesses in the South West are aware of this as possible.
- Continue to investigate wider initiatives to encourage less empty running within the South West and encourage as many businesses as possible to engage with these.
- Look to promote the benefits of not running empty to hauliers and businesses as part of wider measures to reduce empty running in the South West.



Other interventions

Road interventions - overview



ID	Interventions	Primary owner and role	Progress level
O1	Develop engagement on logistics schemes and partnerships.	STBs	Red
O2	Lead by example by implementing low or zero emission vehicles in local authority fleets.	STBs	Green
O3	Establish and promote a South West Freight Steering Group.	STBs	Green
O4	Agree the role of Sub-national Transport bodies with regards to the freight industry. Once established carry out an awareness campaign	STBs	Red
O5	Assist with targeted recruitment campaigns for the freight industry.	RHA and LUK	Red
O6	Guidance for agricultural operators on the use of the road network during busy periods.	AWAITING OWNER	Red
O7	Promote sourcing from local businesses.	LEPs	Red
O8	Undertake sector supply chain audits.	AWAITING OWNER	Red
O9	Consider creating an information sharing platform in conjunction with the Freight Steering Group so that for example best practice case studies can be featured.	STBs	Yellow
O10	Exploring collective procurement with local anchor institutions for purchasing 'essential' goods.	AWAITING OWNER	Red

02

Lead by example by implementing low or zero emission vehicles in local authority fleets



Medium term



Owned by:

STBs



Decarbonisation

Intervention description

Include details around how the transitional process takes place and the support that stakeholders can obtain to aid transition.



Progress to date

- A technical note has been prepared which considers the barriers to fleet transition and the progress that the south west has made with regard to transitioning to alternatively-fuelled vehicles.
- Local authority vehicle fleets are comprised of a wide range of vehicle types including cars, vans, minibuses, people carriers and multi-purpose vehicles.
- Some of these barriers include that in many cases there is limited charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, the limited range of electric vehicles, a gap in skills, a high initial purchase cost and the progress of hydrogen fuel cell technology.
- Local authorities in the south west are at different stages on their paths to fleet transition. For example, some have different target years for going net zero with the vehicle fleet, whilst all have different numbers of vehicles in their fleets including a different number of electric vehicles.



- The south west based local authorities also have their own challenges relating to fleet transition, but there are also opportunities to help overcome these, for example by seeking external advice or by looking to implement current successful schemes in other areas.

Next steps

- Continue to monitor the alternatively-fuelled vehicles industry and investigate whether, when introduced over time, new technology can benefit local authorities and their fleets.
- Consider which are the most important barriers to fleet transition for local authorities and encourage local authorities to work together and collaborate to overcome these.
- Ensure that local authorities in the south west have as much support available as they can to enable them to continue transitioning their fleets as quickly and efficiently as possible.



03

Establish and promote a South West Freight Steering Group.

 **Short term**



 **Owned by:**
STBs

 **Information and awareness**

Intervention description

Include Network Rail, National Highways, Traffic Commissioner, trade bodies, public authorities, and industry stakeholders to identify workstreams/packages in the Freight Strategy.



Progress to date

- 12 meetings have been held so far, including three main group events and three for each of the aviation and maritime, rail and road sub-groups.
- The freight steering group has provided a forum where issues can be discussed, including the interventions that have been developed as part of the Freight Strategy.
- Attendances at the main group and the sub group meetings have been good, with 40 people in attendance at the last main group meeting in March 2023.
- Stakeholders that have attended come from a variety of different backgrounds and sectors, including academics, local authorities and LEPs and other regional organisations. This has encouraged a broad spectrum of knowledge and expertise.
- There have been several interesting discussion points at both the main group and sub group sessions, with topics including the identification of potential sites for alternative fuel stations and a discussion regarding the measures implemented by the Government to reduce the HGV driver shortage.



Next steps

- The key next step is to create the online information sharing platform and ensure that all stakeholders can access this and are able to use it.
- Continue to share updates on the work being undertaken on each intervention using this platform and assign owners for interventions to have responsibility for making these updates.
- Once the platform is up and running, review regularly to consider if there are any useful additions that can be made to enable it to be as effective as possible.



09

Consider creating an information sharing platform in conjunction with the Freight Steering Group so that for example best practice case studies can be featured.



 **Short term**

A horizontal timeline with a yellow bar indicating the current period.

 **Owned by:**
STBs

 **Operational efficiency**

Intervention description	Progress to date	Next steps
Include promoting safety such as specifying accreditation to best practice schemes e.g. FORS / CLOCS and engagement with the Traffic Commissioner to communicate their role and regulatory powers.	Early discussions have taken place regarding the best format for a sharing platform. This would enable access to the latest freight information for the south west, including an opportunity to share best practice and a repository for intervention updates. This would also be a location where content of main group and sub-group sessions could be shared so those unable to attend could still access the content. Potential formats include the STB website or a channel on Microsoft Teams.	Finalise the format that the sharing platform is going to take, and ensure that all stakeholders have access to this and content within it. Consider how content is going to be structured to ensure that information is easy to find within the platform. Ensure that content owners are designated, who can upload content and make sure that it is in the correct place within the platform.

Summary of interventions in progress

Code	Description	Theme	Economic			Social			Environmental			
			EFFICIENCY	RESILIENT & RELIABLE	COMPETITIVE	JOBS	HEALTH & WELLBEING	CONNECTIVITY	DECARBONISATION	AIR QUALITY	SAFETY	GREAT PLACE
A1	Support for sustainable aviation and aerospace sector	Connectivity	✓					✓✓	✓✓	✓✓		
A2	Further develop business / employment zones around airports.	Connectivity			✓✓	✓✓		✓				
A4	Review suitability and potential locations that could benefit from drone technology.	Technology	✓	✓		✓		✓✓	✓	✓		
M2	Explore opportunities to diversify ports into renewable energy production.	Decarbonisation	✓	✓✓		✓			✓✓	✓✓		
M4	Develop and expand growth into new sectors at ports.	Infrastructure	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓						
M5	Investigate improvements in road and rail links to Port terminals.	Infrastructure	✓✓	✓✓				✓✓	✓			
M6	Review of ports in the South West (Already done for WG).	Operational Efficiency			✓✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
RL1	Feasibility study to operate intermodal container trains from deep sea ports to intermodal sites.	Connectivity	✓		✓✓	✓		✓✓	✓			
RL2	Support electrification and gauge enhancement of the core rail network.	Decarbonisation	✓✓						✓✓	✓✓	✓	
RL3	Pursue rollout of new alternative fuel locomotives and wagon technology.	Decarbonisation	✓✓	✓	✓	✓			✓✓	✓✓		
RL6	Partnership working with stakeholders to promote South West priorities.	Information and Awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓		✓✓
RL7	Encourage the establishment of rail freight intermodal sites in the South West.	Infrastructure	✓		✓			✓✓	✓	✓		
RL8	Safeguard rail freight sites through developing Supplementary Planning Guidance.	Infrastructure			✓			✓✓	✓	✓		
RL9	Allocate sufficient freight train paths on the main line and diversionary routes.	Operational Efficiency	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓			✓✓				
RD1	Strategically plan network of alternative fuel stations and promote existing sites. Development of new sites by private sector	Decarbonisation		✓					✓✓	✓✓		
RD2	Promote resources and training to help operators avoid bridge strikes.	Information and Awareness		✓✓			✓				✓✓	
RD3	Promote solutions to driver shortages.	Information and Awareness		✓		✓✓						
RD5	Review of current lorry parking facilities in the South West.	Infrastructure				✓	✓✓	✓			✓✓	✓
RD6	Support for infrastructure improvements and investment where suitable.	Infrastructure	✓	✓✓				✓✓				✓
RD7	Continue support for routine road maintenance activities but broadcast plans so hauliers can better plan.	Infrastructure	✓	✓✓				✓				
RD8	Identify cluster locations where logistics plans are needed along with facilities for last mile logistics.	Operational Efficiency	✓✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		
RD11	Promoting suitable alternative routes in the event of adverse weather.	Operational Efficiency	✓	✓✓			✓				✓✓	
RD13	Support improvements to strategically important roads that require better journey time reliability	Operational Efficiency	✓	✓✓				✓✓				✓
RD14	Review suitability of technologies from trials and their potential for the South West.	Technology	✓✓						✓	✓	✓	
RD15	Promote a trial of the use of a load and vehicle matching exchange to reduce empty running for 10 hauliers for a year.	Technology	✓✓						✓			
O2	Lead by example by implementing low or zero emission vehicles in local authority fleets.	Decarbonisation	✓						✓✓	✓✓		
O3	Establish and promote a South West Freight Steering Group.	Information and Awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
O9	Consider creating an information sharing platform in conjunction with the Freight Steering Group so that for example best practice case studies can be featured.	Operational Efficiency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

✓ Contributing towards key themes and priorities

✓✓ Very contributing towards key themes and priorities

Concluding remarks

The South West Freight Strategy is a culmination of the work between Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway which has incorporated the fact that freight and the associated supply chains operate on a more regional, national and international basis than is the case for passenger movements. This South West Freight Strategy regards freight and logistics as an opportunity and not an afterthought. It is centred around three sustainability pillars of environment, economy and society. This strategy contains standalone freight-specific initiatives as well providing supporting evidence for the overall transport strategy. Due to the reliance of the freight sector on key assets such as ports, rail terminals, airports and highway corridors, the freight strategy is aligned with relevant strategies and policies beyond the South West. There are links to the 2020 Port Access Study produced for Western Gateway, the Peninsula Transport WP12 International Gateway report which covers the whole of the South West and several more national and regional documents on critical issues such as decarbonisation, the need for better connectivity, driver shortages, the need for economic growth and many more topical issues. The Freight Strategy was signed off by both STB boards in early 2022.

Since May 2022 the implementation process of the strategy has begun with a view to taking forward the 46 recommended interventions. Although the timeframe of the Freight Strategy is to 2050 around half of the interventions were recommended for development in the short term, which is the period from 2022 to 2024. It is good to report that approximately 60% of the interventions have been reviewed and started although some have only had modest progress to date. Nevertheless it has been a positive start and quite a few of the interventions are being progressed by a range of stakeholders in conjunction with the STBs. Thanks goes to other organisation such as National Highways, Network Rail, GBRTT, the ports, trade associations, LEPS and several more in their help in moving the strategy forward. This document has only given an overview of progress made to date and a number of interventions are covered in more detail in a supporting word document across several themes.

Effective partnerships and strong planning is needed to implement the measures in the strategy, with the financial support and guidance of the Department for Transport. Partnership working was demonstrated

by the stakeholder engagement process that was conducted successfully during the creation of the freight strategy by providing a strong platform for sharing ideas and hearing views. This was evidenced by the positive feedback received from stakeholders and the willingness of most to take part in the subsequent development stages. The success of the workshops was enhanced by the knowledge and wide variety of stakeholders from many backgrounds that took part, as well as their direct input and discussions during the sessions.

The nucleus of those in the workshops has formed the main freight steering group, to help implement the strategy. In addition to this we established three sub-groups meetings based on the main modes of transport, aviation/maritime, rail and road, to have more detailed discussions on the relevant themed interventions. Both the sub-groups and main steering groups have met three times on a four monthly basis which has proved to be about the right time to make real progress for further commentary and discussion. We have also included some external speakers either doing related work or key stakeholders providing more information about a specific issue(s).

The typical attendance at the sub-group meetings has been around 20 to 25 and the number at the main steering groups has been consistently over 30 which has been good, to ensure we collect a range of views. All meetings so far have been on-line although this may not always be the case should it be beneficial to combine a meeting with a site visit at some point in the future.

The STBs are keen to continue the strong progress already made and are drawing up a programme of work for years 2 and 3 of the implementation process. By working together and having a Freight Steering Group, Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway are well placed to enable the region to address the challenges, opportunities and priorities for freight in the South West over the next 30 years.



The project team are keen to support stakeholders with their interventions for the South West freight strategy. If further information or support is required please get in contact with the team.

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