

It's time to level up transport funding in the East Midlands

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Council Leaders, MPs and business leaders are calling on the Chancellor to use his forthcoming spending review (27th October 2021) to level-up transport funding, create jobs and boost trade.

- The Treasury's own figures have consistently shown the East Midland to be lowest funded region per head for transport of any UK region/nation.
- The latest data published in July 2021 confirmed that funding has declined over the last 20 years to just 58% of the UK average.
- If the East Midlands was funded at same level as the UK average, the region would have an extra £1 billion to spend on transport every year.

The Spending Review submission made by Transport for the East Midlands (TfEM) highlights 'shovel ready' schemes that could be delivered quickly if funding was released by the Chancellor and longer-term projects that require a commitment now from the Chancellor to progress.

‘Shovel Ready’ Schemes

- A46 Newark Northern Bypass
- Chesterfield-Staveley Regeneration Route
- Nottingham-Lincoln Line Speed Improvements
- Transport ‘Levelling Up Fund’ Bids: Leicester Rail Station; South Derby Growth Zone: A16 (Boston-Spalding) & Robin Hood Line Extension

Investment Commitments

- Eastern Leg of HS2 via the East Midlands
- Completing Midland Mainline Electrification
- Nottingham-Coventry-Leicester Rail Enhancement
- Leicester Rail Capacity Enhancement
- Access to Toton Phase 1
- M1 Junction 25/A52
- A1 (Peterborough to Blyth)

Sir Peter Soulsby, Chair of TfEM and City Mayor of Leicester said: “The figures show that transport investment in the East Midland has been declining over the last 20 years under governments of all parties. It is time we turned the tide. This spending review presents an opportunity for the Chancellor to prove that ‘levelling up’ is not just a slogan, and to invest in the future of the East Midlands.

“Our submission sets out a series of investment opportunities that will make a real difference to our businesses and communities –and also help the country as a whole to recover from the pandemic.”

CLlr Richard Davies, Vice Chair of TfEM and Transport Lead for Lincolnshire County Council said: “Improving rail links to the Lincoln and the Lincolnshire coast is vital to our visitor economy which took a real hammering during the pandemic. But for the agri-food industry across the region reliable road links are needed to maintain supply chains and keep food on the supermarket shelves.

“The A16 in Lincolnshire plays a vital role in this respect. The A1 is also a national route for freight more generally, but the section in the East Midlands is in need of major investment.”

Nigel Mills MP (Amber Valley), Co-Chair of the East Midlands All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) said: “The East Midlands APPG continues to highlight to Westminster and Whitehall the lack of transport

investment across the region and the economic and social consequences.

“But we need to do more. This spending review represents a real opportunity for the East Midlands. I hope that MPs from all parties across can support the TfEM Submission and will continue to make the case for investment to Ministers right up to the 27th October announcement.”

Lilian Greenwood MP (Nottingham South) said: “We all know that the East Midlands has got a poor deal on transport for many years, which has cost jobs and undermined opportunities for our constituents. Continual delays and changes of policy by Government on big ticket items like Midlands Main Line electrification and HS2 have only made things worse. The people and businesses of the East Midlands deserve better, and this spending review must represent a turning point.”

Chris Hobson from the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce (Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire) said: “Poor transport is consistently highlighted by our businesses as a major inhibitor of growth, so it is very disappointing to see that the East Midlands remains at the bottom of the league table for transport investment. The A46 is a critical route for many of our manufacturing and logistics firms.

“The Newark northern bypass will benefit businesses across the East Midlands and as far north as the Humber Ports and it must be delivered as soon as possible.”

Elaine Clark, Chief Executive of Rail Forum Midlands (RFM), which represents the region’s rail supply chain companies, said: “What our world beating rail supply chain companies need is certainty from Government about future investment. The forthcoming Integrated Rail Plan must set out a clear timetable for the delivery of the HS2 to the East Midlands and beyond.

“But there are also improvements to the conventional rail network that would make rail travel for more attractive to both people and freight in the shorter term, and which would also support local supply chain jobs and kickstart rail’s journey towards net-zero.”

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