

Transport for the South East: A better future for freight in the region

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A new strategy that tackles the decarbonisation of the freight sector, lorry parking and driver welfare facilities in the South East of England has been published.

Approved by the sub-national transport bodies board, the new strategy from Transport for the South East highlights the importance of the freight sector to the region. It sets out the challenges faced to enable the growth of the industry to keep up with the growing population and economy in a sustainable manner. In 2021, the number of UK premises for transport and storage including haulage and warehousing grew by 88%, a reflection of the national demand for online shopping and home deliveries.

With population and employment forecast to grow in the region in the decades ahead, demand for goods and services will continue to increase.

Home to a large number of major international freight gateways that enable freight movements to and from the continent and to and from the whole of the UK and the Republic of Ireland South East is the UK's principle gateway for the movement of goods and people. Investment in the South East has an impact on the rest of the UK's economy.

This ambitious strategy recognises that in order to meet this demand the South East region needs holistic investment in strategic transport and logistics networks that are supported by the planning system, to allow an increase in the provision of logistics land and property as well as better local freight and logistics planning.

It also acknowledges the opportunity to harness new technology that would help meet the growing demand and reduce the negative impacts on road networks, residential areas and carbon emissions.

Councillor Keith Glazier, Chair of Transport for the South East – “Our strategy covers road, rail, air and sea port freight, providing a framework for strategic planning and policy development and not forgetting, the investment decisions needed to give private sector organisations the long-term stability they need to plan for sustainable growth.

“The COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit has presented additional challenges when it comes to the movement of goods in, out and around the UK. Now is the perfect time to work together to secure the investment needed to support increased productivity and to grow the South East and UK economy and compete in the global marketplace.

“We haven’t just stopped with the strategy. This strategy comes with an action plan which sets out a series of strategic actions so that together with our stakeholders we can deliver a more sustainable freight and logistics network for the South East and the rest of the UK.”

Transport for the South East will formally launch their Freight, Logistics and Gateways strategy at the ITT Hub on 11 May with a closed roundtable discussion chaired by ANGOKA’s Director of Smart Cities and TfSE board member, Daniel Ruiz. There will be discussions on lorry parking and welfare facilities, decarbonisation of the freight sector and access to international gateways with insights from leading industry experts.

Along with our future mobility strategy and our areas studies the freight, logistics and gateways strategy will feed into our strategic investment plan – the blueprint for future investment in strategic transport infrastructure in the South East for the next thirty years.

Photo credit: Transport for the South East