

April 2019

A VISION OF URBAN TRANSPORT IN THE FUTURE

The future of mobility urban strategy





It's 2040 and you are visiting your grandma on the other side of the city from where you live. You ask Alexa the best way to get there today. Alexa gives you several options. You could take an automated Uber. There's one only a minute away and it will take you 20 minutes. If you can wait a bit longer, you can share a ride in an electric minibus to your grandma's flat: there are 5 other people from near where you live who are going in that direction shortly. That will cost you less than the Uber. But then Alexa reminds you that you haven't done much exercise lately, it's a sunny day and if you cycle to your grandma's it will only take you 30 minutes along the segregated cycle lane and you will burn off 250 calories (earning you that slice of cake that Grandma will no doubt offer you when you get there). There's a dockless bike just around the corner from your house, according to the map on your phone.

Will this be what urban mobility looks like in 20 years' time? Quite possibly, if it's managed right. That is what the Future of Mobility Urban Strategy is trying to do. But before we look at it in detail, let's put it in context.

The Future of Mobility is one of the Grand Challenges in the Government's [Industrial Strategy](#). The way we move around is just starting to change and the UK wants to become a world leader in shaping the future of mobility. This also nicely links with the other three Grand Challenges: helping us meet the needs of an Ageing Society, capitalising on UK strengths in Artificial Intelligence and Data and supporting Clean Growth.

Following on from the Industrial Strategy came the [Future of Mobility Call for Evidence](#) which ran from 30 July to 10 September 2018 and asked for views and evidence to inform a Future of Urban Mobility Strategy; and how government can support innovation across the country, to inform wider work on the Future of Mobility Grand Challenge.

Now the Government has published the [Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy](#), with a rural strategy to follow in due course.



What's changing?

"We are on the cusp of a profound change in how we move people, goods and services around our towns, cities and countryside" says the Future of Mobility Grand Challenge. Data and connectivity are transforming journeys. We don't need multiple paper bus and train timetables, or even a road atlas. We can plan multi-stage journeys using websites or apps. Google Maps and similar satnav services can already pick up on real-time traffic data and suggest diversions to avoid congestion and in the future more open data combined with machine-learning will make journey times much more accurate.

Transport is becoming more automated. The first self-driving vehicles will be on UK public roads by 2021 and meanwhile the European Commission has [adopted new rules](#) stepping up the deployment of Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems on Europe's roads, which will allow vehicles to 'talk' to each other, to the road infrastructure, and to

other road users – for instance about dangerous situations, road works and the timing of traffic lights. The EU has also provisionally agreed rules on [ISA \(intelligent speed assistance\) technology](#) that will help drivers stay below the speed limit: a first step towards full autonomous driving.

Transport is becoming cleaner: the Government has already pledged in the [Road to Zero](#) that by 2040 all new vehicles sold in the UK will be electric or hybrid. New modes of transport are emerging, such as drones, electric scooters, e-bikes and e-cargo bikes.

The way we use transport is changing. According to the DfT's road traffic forecasts, we are travelling less per person now than one or two decades ago but overall transport demand is rising, largely due to population growth. We're commuting less but doing more online shopping (with same day delivery fast becoming the expected norm).

Young people are less likely to own a car, but older people are driving more than they used to. There are new digitally-enabled business models such as ride-hailing (Uber being the prime example) and mobility as a service (MaaS). MaaS is the term for digital platforms (often smartphone apps) through which people can access a range of public, shared and private transport, using a system that integrates the planning, booking and paying for travel.

We are also just starting to see more shared mobility – not just the traditional mass passenger transit (or buses in other words) but also ride sharing, car clubs like ZipCar and both docked and dockless bicycles.

What could go wrong?

It's 2040 and you are visiting your grandma on the other side of the city from where you live. You ask Alexa the best way to get there today. Alexa tells you there is an Amazon bus leaving in 20 minutes from a bus stop near your house. But you are sure there is a quicker way (that Alexa hasn't told you about) so you look on your smart watch and find the Uber app, where you can see there is an automated Uber only a minute away. You decide to take that. The trip ends up taking 35 minutes as the roads are congested with other automated Ubers each with a single passenger. You pass several abandoned dockless bikes on the way and are further delayed by a teenager who thinks it's funny to ride his electric scooter in and out of the slow-moving line of automated cars, setting off their proximity sensors and causing near-collisions. Oh, and you always have to visit your grandma rather than her coming to you as she is 95 and has never got on with "new technology". She can't work out how to plan a journey: she doesn't drive and journey planning apps are a mystery. She wishes bus stops still had paper timetables on them.

Also, the buses she used to use have stopped running as they just couldn't compete with other services.

This is how things could look if current transport trends (as described under What's Changing? above) continue unchecked

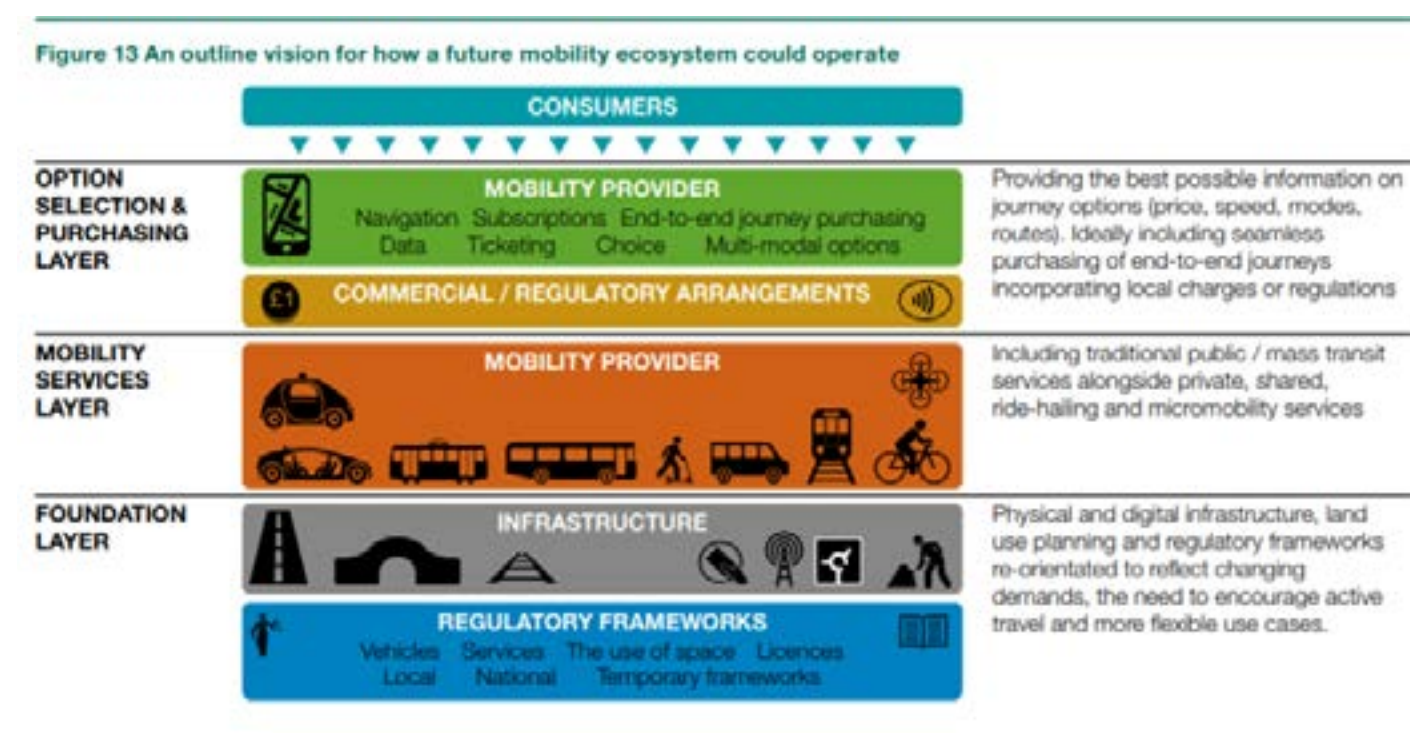


Nine Principles

Change will happen quickly so the Government wants to set down some Principles to make sure it can harness the benefits and minimise the risks. The idea is that these Principles will guide Government decision-making, industry and local authorities. These are the nine Principles the Government is putting forward:

<p>1. New modes of transport and new mobility services must be safe and secure by design.</p> 	<p>2. The benefits of innovation in mobility must be available to all parts of the UK and all segments of society.</p> 	<p>3. Walking, cycling and active travel must remain the best options for short urban journeys.</p> 
<p>4. Mass transit must remain fundamental to an efficient transport system.</p> 	<p>5. New mobility services must lead the transition to zero emissions.</p> 	<p>6. Mobility innovation must help to reduce congestion through more efficient use of limited road space, for example through sharing rides, increasing occupancy or consolidating freight.</p> 
<p>7. The marketplace for mobility must be open to stimulate innovation and give the best deal to consumers.</p> 	<p>8. New mobility services must be designed to operate as part of an integrated transport system combining public, private and multiple modes for transport users.</p> 	<p>9. Data from new mobility services must be shared where appropriate to improve choice and the operation of the transport system.</p> 

There's a helpful diagram in the Future of Mobility Urban Strategy outlining how a future mobility ecosystem could operate:



What's next?

The main priority for 2019 is to implement a flexible regulatory framework (so starting at the bottom of the above diagram as this underpins everything else). There is to be a Future of Mobility Regulatory Review which will form a central part of the DfT's work for 2019. The Regulatory Review will have four new areas of focus:

- ▶ **Micromobility vehicles, and how to trial them** (e.g. electric scooters, e-cargo bikes)
- ▶ **Mobility as a Service** – this needs the seamless integration of multiple modes of transport, which is an intrinsic challenge to the regulatory framework, as there is a need to open up data. This has already been the subject of a [Transport Committee inquiry](#)
- ▶ **Transport data** – whether to have regulatory or incentive mechanisms to support sharing of it

- ▶ **Modernising bus, taxis and private hire vehicles legislation.** “Innovative services that sit across the boundaries between buses, taxis, and private hire vehicles are challenging the structure of our regulations” such as flexible (dynamic demand) bus services and self-driving buses.

Other priorities for 2019 include:

- ▶ the launch of up to four Future Mobility Zones with £90 million of funding as part of the Transforming Cities Fund: a [competition was launched](#) alongside the Strategy with a deadline of 24 May
- ▶ [New Regulations under the Bus Services Act 2017](#) to require bus operators or local authorities to publish information on timetables, routes, fares, tickets, live information and stops from early 2020, and [£4 million funding](#) for a new digital platform enabling app developers to use information from GPS trackers fitted to buses

- ▶ Preparing the urban environment, through publishing guidance to support local decisions about the design and allocation of urban space
- ▶ Updating the Government transport appraisal and modelling strategy to account better for recent and future developments, including in technology – we expect a response to a [consultation](#) on this from last year, which we mentioned in [this article](#)
- ▶ Launching a £2m e-cargo bike grant programme on 1 April 2019 as a response to the [Last Mile call for evidence](#)
- ▶ Continuing analysis and research to build the evidence base for new transport technologies and their impacts, such as the recent [Light Rail call for evidence](#) (which is open until 19 May).

Comment

The Future of Mobility Urban Strategy is part of a connected Government approach to transport, alongside measures to promote cycling and walking and to improve air quality and decarbonise passenger and freight transport. It is encouraging to see the Government thinking holistically about this and trying to develop a set of principles to steer the changes, working collaboratively with industry and local authorities to encourage innovation rather than imposing rigid rules that cannot adapt as things change.

Follow our Trends in Transport series for further developments and commentary.



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