

West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Levy Expenditure

2023 - 2024



Transport for
West Midlands



West Midlands
Combined Authority

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Introduction

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) as part of West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is funded in the main by the Authority's Transport Levy of £119.4m. Each of the seven Metropolitan Councils of the West Midlands pay their levy based on the population figures that they have published.

When the councils set their council tax levels, they must take into consideration the levy after they have allowed for any grants that they receive towards the cost. More than half the levy funds the National Concessionary Travel Scheme for free or half-priced bus, train and tram travel for those who qualify, as well as funding subsidised bus services.

Our Journey Never Ends

This is an exciting time for Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), as we embark on a new agenda transforming our infrastructure and services as well as resetting our statutory transport plan. This sets the framework to realise the opportunities ahead and truly ensures transport provides access to journeys that help move the region forward.

As the Statutory Transport Authority, WMCA through TfWM, is responsible for setting the transport strategy for the West Midlands through the Local Transport Plan.



Recently refreshed, we have set the strategy in line with the WMCA's 2041 carbon objectives, while addressing the social, environmental, and economic challenges the region faces, through improved connectivity. These improvements are not just about wheels and rails – our investment connects communities and opens up opportunities, giving people easier access to housing, jobs, training and leisure opportunities.

While we plan and move forward with our plans for 2023/24, it is important to reflect on the previous 12 months. 2022 was not without its challenges, as we continued to work with Government and transport operators to rebuild our public transport system in line with the public's post-pandemic commuting and lifestyle changes. The remaining challenges Covid-19 brought, partnered with increased running costs, driver shortages and industrial action across Rail and Metro meant that as the Transport

Authority for the region, we needed to rethink the way we utilise funding and deliver services to ensure access to work, school and essential services is maintained for residents.

Even with these challenges, 2022 saw TfWM deliver an award winning, world-class transport programme for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. Preparations saw the opening of the refurbished Perry Barr Rail Station, Phase 1 opening of University Station with widened platforms and the completion of Phase 1 of Sprint. During the games, we transported over 1.5m spectators, 40,000 workforce, all while keeping the residents of the West Midlands at the heart of what we do, by ensuring we minimised disruption to their daily lives through an enhanced Travel Demand Management and Traffic Management programme.





As we move forward, our investment in infrastructure to build and improve rail stations, extend the Metro, and enhance our roads to make bus journeys more reliable and road users safer is keeping us busy. Through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funding we have the ability to deliver a longer term, sustainable transport investment programme with an established programme of projects.

We are also embarking on a huge programme of change for our bus services through the implementation of the Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP). This will include bus service reform and changes to registration powers, welcoming an all-electric bus city at Coventry and introducing hydrogen buses onto our network, whilst also improving the customer experience with improved access to information and ticketing.

Cycling and walking remain a crucial part of our plans for a healthier and carbon neutral future. This year there will be new

cycle lanes, junction improvements and events or training in local communities to improve safety, people's confidence and ability to travel more actively.

During 2023/24, TfWM will continue to work with partners to ensure we deliver operational services, improvements, and investments across the region that meet the WMCA's core objectives around social, environmental, and economic outcomes for our residents and businesses.

Our journey to better connect the West Midlands is one that never ends as we continue our mission to develop and manage an integrated transport system that is safe, reliable, affordable, and accessible for all.

Delivering our Priorities

TfWM continues to manage its obligations under the 1985 Transport Act to provide contracted bus services where the commercial market can no longer do so. The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic have been followed by subsequent increases in costs for fuel, and the ongoing shortage of drivers, coupled with a significant reduction in bus operators since 2020, all of which have impacted the tendered bus market. TfWM continues to manage the relationship with the remaining bus operators and seeks the best value for money from the available budget.

The Government, through the Department for Transport, provided some additional funds to assist with this during 2022/23 and we continue to negotiate further funding into the future to help maintain these essential services providing tens of millions of journeys per year to customers across the West Midlands.

We continue to work in partnership with bus operators, through the West Midlands Bus Alliance, to deliver the objectives and aspirations of the Partnership and move forward with the deliverables set out in the BSIP which aims to improve services, infrastructure, information and ticketing.

Working with Coventry City Council and bus operators, we continue to deliver the Coventry all electric bus city. This will

see all bus services in the city operated by electric buses by the end of 2025.

We continue to provide a comprehensive Ring & Ride service for people for whom fixed route public transport is not a suitable or viable option. The service is operated in all parts of the region and uses fully accessible vehicles and specially trained drivers. In early 2023, we began a trial in Coventry to merge our Ring & Ride and West Midlands Bus on Demand services to offer customers an enhanced experience. The outcomes of this trial will influence how we move forward with this essential service across the region.

The Integrated Services team are also responsible for the maintenance and customer information at over 12,000 bus stops and 1,400 real-time information displays.



West Midlands Rail Executive

We continued to push forward delivery of our station projects. Perry Barr station opened on time and on budget, ready to welcome spectators to the Commonwealth Games. University station also played a key role in the Games and we delivered Phase 1 opening widened platforms and the public realm providing vital space for passengers. Construction is now underway on all of our projects, including 5 new stations at Moseley Village, Kings Heath, Pineapple Road, Willenhall and Darlaston.

We continue to look ahead to the future, relaunching our updated West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy and developing a pipeline of future station works. We are also working closely with the Great British Railway Transition Team, championing a greater role in the running of our local railways to benefit communities across the West Midlands.

Network Resilience and the Regional Transport Coordination Centre

Network Resilience comprises a number of teams to support performance of the transport network, community safety and ensure programmes of work that are undertaken across the West Midlands are coordinated, mitigations put in place, and information shared with our communities, businesses, visitors and partners.



The newly created Behaviour Change Hub has continued the team's partnership work with HS2 and National Highways around the Interchange Station site in Solihull and at Curzon Street in Birmingham city centre. The team are also supporting the upgrade of Birchley Island (M5 J2), the regeneration of Dudley town centre and the ongoing work to extend the Metro in Birmingham Eastside and Wolverhampton City Centre, helping to create a region that is fit for the future, safe, green and connected.

The Regional Transport Coordination Centre (RTCC) is a pioneering facility enabling multiagency management of the transport and highways network across the region. Providing strategic and operational planning, alongside real-time information, covering all modes of transport, the RTCC coordinates across numerous partners, including national and West Midlands' transport authorities and agencies, emergency services, as well as bus, rail and tram operators. This creates a single point of contact for both unplanned and planned events on the network including cultural and sporting

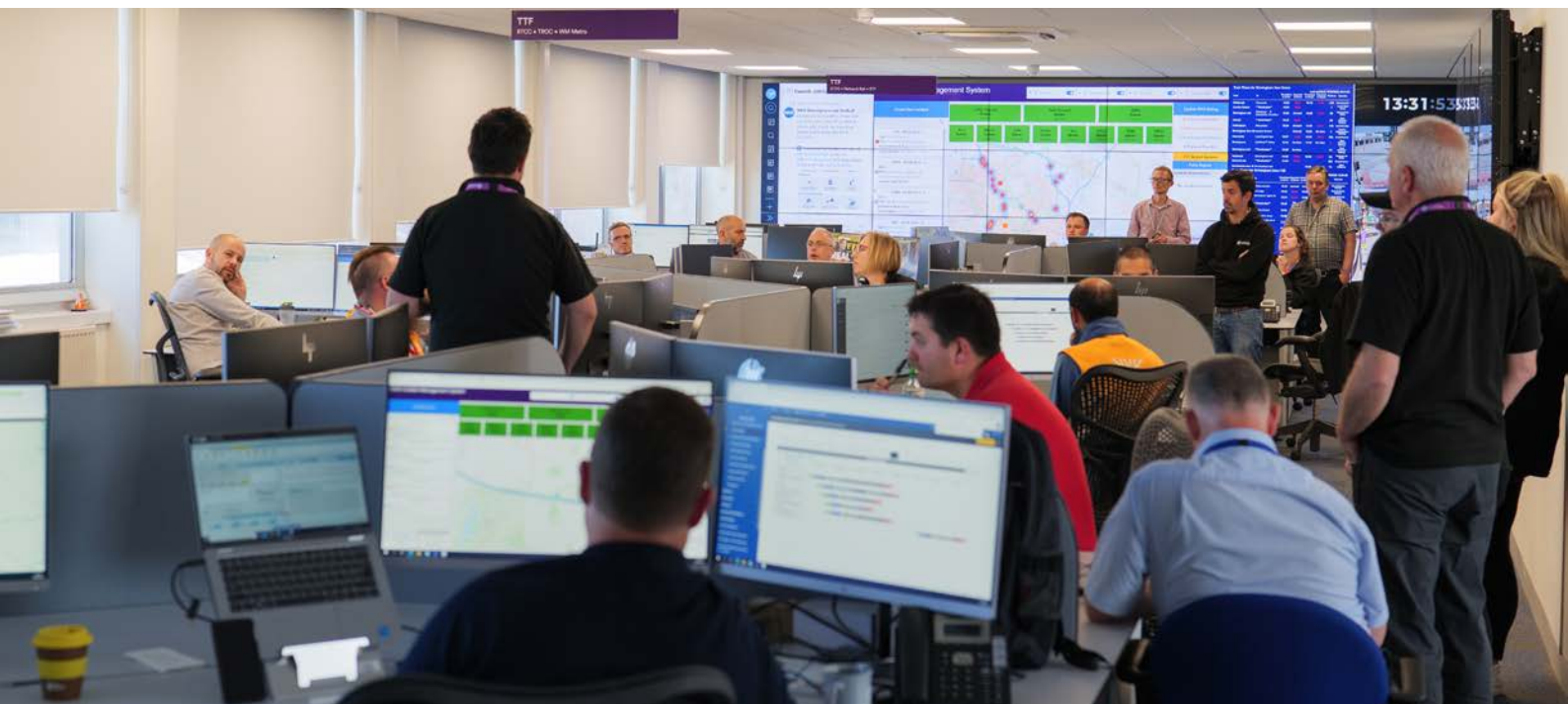
events, and infrastructure projects such as HS2, and ensures a true view of the network, which is communicated to the public to enable them to make decisions on how and when to travel.

Network Resilience is responsible for delivering the Safer Travel Plan (2021-2024). The Safer Travel Partnership now has 11 Transport Safety Officers (TSOs), whose primary role is to provide a visible presence on the public transport network in the West Midlands, providing good customer service to staff and passengers, to tackle low level anti-social behaviour and to improve the perception of safety for users of the transport network.

Within the Safer Travel team, five staff have been trained as General Visual Line of Sight drone pilots, which has given us the ability to live stream images from the drone into the RTCC. This allows coverage of incidents where there are no fixed cameras and enables the RTCC duty managers to mitigate congestion and keep the travelling public informed.

Road safety also falls under the remit of Network Resilience and in 2023/24, we are updating the Regional Road Safety Strategy (to take us to 2030). This will integrate Vision Zero as the long-term mission, reducing the casualty target by 50% by 2030 and aligning with the Local Transport Plan.

To support the region in its ambition to meet the skills requirements of the future, a Transport Skills Academy has been established. Following the commissioning of a Skills Insight Report, in 2023/24 the Academy will support the skills and training priorities for developing the Future Technical Leaders workforce over the next ten years. This will involve targeting existing employees, creating apprentices and supporting opportunities to use the skills learned and offering work experience to young people, both in person and virtually.



West Midlands Metro

Following the success of bringing the Edgbaston extension into operation last year, we will be opening the next extension into Wolverhampton station plaza this year. This extension will integrate into a major multi-modal transport hub, with Rail, Metro, bus, and cycling all co-ordinated into one central interchange. This completes the second of four extensions to the Metro network.

We will continue work on the other two extensions throughout the year with construction ramping up along the old South Staffordshire railway corridor to link the existing Metro route at Wednesbury through to Dudley, as Phase 1 of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill extension.

The majority of the construction for this line will be delivered in this financial year with the line opening to passenger service at the end of 2024.

This will provide a major improvement to public transport in a region which is in need of improved connectivity to the wider Black Country, Birmingham and the rest of the West Midlands.

In parallel, work will continue on the Birmingham Eastside Extension branching off the current line at Bull Street in Birmingham City Centre and connecting through to Digbeth.

This will provide a key link from and to the new Curzon St station being built for HS2, connecting passengers from Edgbaston, Dudley and Wolverhampton

through to Digbeth and HS2.

Although HS2 works have been delayed, we will continue with our extension so that we are ready as soon as possible to carry passengers to this developing quarter of Birmingham.

To operate the new extensions, we have procured a new fleet of 21 trams. The final delivery of ten trams will come in the first half of this year, bringing the fleet of trams to 42.

We have also started work on expanding the depot at Wednesbury and making key investments into the existing Metro infrastructure which is over 20 years old.

This work will continue throughout 2023/24. When these projects are all completed, we will have a modernised and greatly extended Metro network providing the West Midlands with a sustainable, safe and reliable service.



Policy, Strategy and Innovation

The Policy and Strategy Team led a refresh of the Local Transport Plan, with a new Core Strategy being approved in early 2023 and a set of 6 Big Moves being developed throughout 2023/24. The Team has also led the transport elements of a future Trailblazing Devolution deal with Government.

The Transport Planning Team played a leading role for TfWM, working alongside local authority partners, in securing a £1.05 billion City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) agreement with the Government over the next five years.

The Human Intelligence Team has further enhanced the powerful public engagement tool set and has utilised the understanding of every household across the region to be able to develop deeper conversations and better influence the needs and requirements of our citizens.

The Transport Data Insight Team played an essential part in delivering a successful Commonwealth Games. Their technical expertise led on a “Transport Data Cell”, which provided TfWM and partners with the ability to monitor, log and evaluate issues and performance of the transport network. They provided forecasts of transport usage for the Games and compared this to real-time data to enable the whole Games team to act.

The Future Mobility Team continued to deliver the UK’s first Future Transport



Zone. We are embedding Mobility Credits and Mobility Hubs in local areas as well as expanding West Midlands Bus On Demand via a merger with Ring & Ride in Coventry.

TfWM is committed to delivering its Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) programme during 2023, a cross collaboration project with local service providers. At the same time the team is working to deliver another multi-local authority project, seeking to digitise all traffic orders. This project is an enabler for further exploration of digital roads.

In January 2023, TfWM launched The Influencing Transport Lab. This is a national programme which aims to change behaviours to reduce traffic and create safer streets to walk, wheel, cycle and scoot.

Swift continued to grow in popularity across the region, with Swift vending machines now at all key bus stations and Birmingham Airport, with more vending machines rolling out across the network during 2023. Swift Go is still the leading multi-modal best value cap outside of London after being rolled out across buses and trams, with plans to expand this to rail. Customer satisfaction for Swift is at a record high of 90% based on this year's satisfaction survey with more people moving away from cash payments to Swift.

In partnership with Midlands Connect and national bus operators, the Swift Team will also deliver a 'broker' that will enable London style best value capping for customers using their bank card as their travel token – this project will launch in the West Midlands before rolling out nationwide.

As a part of BSIP, the Swift Team have worked closely with Integrated Transport Services and Bus Operators to simplify bus ticketing that will see the current 3000, overly complex, ticketing options reduced. As well as this, they are working on an incentive programme focused on elapsed, non-users and those that find accessing buses challenging. This will be launched during late Spring 2023.

The Local Transport Plan

The new Local Transport Plan "Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands" Core Strategy is a long-term plan addressing the changing transport

needs of our citizens as we seek to create a better connected, more prosperous, fairer, greener and healthier region.

It sets out the aim of providing safe, convenient and affordable transport services and infrastructure so that local amenities are within a 15-minute trip by walking, wheeling, cycling or scooting, and regional facilities and workplaces are within 45 minutes journey by public or shared transport.

While cars will remain an important option for how we travel, a key aim is to design a transport system where private car ownership is not needed in order for people to thrive or enjoy full access to what the region has to offer. The plan states that only by reducing car mileage will the region meet its #WM2041 climate change target to achieve net-zero carbon within two decades as well as the plan's wider aims to deliver Inclusive Growth.

Emerging technology and innovations will also play a part, such as the on-demand bus services being trialled in Coventry where buses are freed from set routes and timetables and can be booked by people over the phone or through an app. Smart travel apps are also a key part of the plan – coordinating transport options and finding the lowest fares - as will be shared transport such as hire bikes and e-scooters.

To deliver against our ambitions, the Core Strategy sets out an approach for a dynamic plan and introduces a range of policies and actions that the region will need to consider and progress across 6

Big Moves.

We have recently launched a further round of public consultation on the key themes of the six Big Moves:

- Behaviour change
- Accessible and inclusive places
- Safe, efficient and reliable network
- Walk, wheel, cycle and scoot
- Public transport and shared mobility
- Green transport revolution

During 2023/24, we will continue to develop our policies and approach to help us ensure we are able to make the right decisions to deliver the most positive impacts for our region, including on carbon and inclusive growth. This will help with on-going discussions with elected members and the public on the challenges and how and where progress can be made.



TFWM 2023/24 Deliverables

Aim: Connect our communities by delivering transport and unlocking housing and regeneration schemes

Objectives	High Level Deliverables
<p>We will deliver and operate a safe, accessible, affordable, reliable, and sustainable transport system together with our partners</p>	<p>Increase the efficiency and performance of transport delivery in the West Midlands.</p>
	<p>Fund essential supported services that provide a social benefit including concessions, Ring & Ride, and tendered bus services.</p>
	<p>Develop and enhance frontline services and infrastructure that deliver high quality experiences that meet changing customer demands at TfWM facilities, bus stations and interchanges.</p>
	<p>Ensure strategic and operational Health and Safety aims and key deliverables are communicated and embedded throughout the WMCA.</p>
	<p>Create and maintain accurate and reliable public transport travel information including the requirements set out in the National Bus Strategy and Vision for Bus.</p>
	<p>Work in collaboration with Government, Operators and the wider rail industry to deliver better outcomes for today's railway.</p>
	<p>Co-manage the West Midlands rail franchise, through West Midlands Rail Executive.</p>
	<p>Manage the West Midlands Transport Network through improved coordination with the Regional Transport Co-ordination Centre.</p>
	<p>Keep the transport system safe and secure .</p>
	<p>Develop and enhance the performance of the Key Route Network (KRN).</p>
	<p>Improve the financial, operational and asset performance of West Midlands Metro to support Metro services and network expansions.</p>
	<p>Maintain and publish a Local Transport Plan and embed transport policy and strategy in the plans and programmes of the wider WMCA and partners.</p>

Objectives	High Level Deliverables
<p>We will deliver and operate a safe, accessible, affordable, reliable, and sustainable transport system together with our partners</p>	<p>Develop and maintain a deep understanding of the needs, attitudes and perceptions of people who use the West Midlands transport system.</p>
	<p>Continue to develop and maintain a robust common data environment for the West Midlands transport system.</p>
	<p>Analyse the transport system to provide deep insight, recommend actions and produce robust and funded evidenced-based business cases for schemes and programmes.</p>
	<p>Create a system for easy to use and affordable payments to access the transport system.</p>
	<p>Walking and Cycling Active Travel Behaviour Change Delivery. Deliver, monitor and evaluate 2023/24 Behaviour change projects.</p>
	<p>Develop a new Behaviour Change Strategy to support and drive the work of the Behaviour Change Hub within Network Resilience.</p>
	<p>Develop an updated Transport Network Resilience Plan.</p>
	<p>Establish Drone Team.</p>
	<p>Develop a Framework that emphasises the importance of Transport for Event Organisers and Key Stakeholders.</p>
	<p>Enhance Partnership working with the region's Local Resilience Forum.</p>
<p>We will build and develop transport infrastructure that is sustainable, active, low-congestion and integrated with key projects like HS2</p>	<p>Ensure the delivery of the CRSTS Capital Programme, including the TfWM Infrastructure programme.</p>
	<p>Plan, deliver and operate the West Midlands Walking and Cycling Programme.</p>
	<p>Deliver our bus vision and BSIP to support inclusive growth.</p>
	<p>Build and plan tomorrow's railways by delivering the Rail Investment Programme.</p>
	<p>Extend the West Midlands Metro Network to better serve people and businesses by delivering Westside (Edge), Wolverhampton City Centre, WBHE and Birmingham East Side extensions.</p>
	<p>Keep the West Midlands Moving by mitigating the impacts of transport investment programmes through Travel Demand Management.</p>

How we spend the Levy money

Capital Expenditure and Funding	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
Transport	359.5	593.6	447.6
Total Expenditure	359.5	593.6	447.6
Grants	319.9	388.5	316.9
Borrowing	39.6	205.1	130.7
Total Funding	359.5	593.6	447.6

TfWM Budget Spending	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m
Concessions for elderly and disabled people	47.8	47.2
Child Concessions	6.7	7.2
Rail and Metro Concessions	4.6	4.6
Accessible Transport	6.6	6.6
Subsidised Bus Services	13.4	14.3
Bus Services and Infrastructure	5.6	5.9
Integration (inc Safety & Security and Passenger Information)	10.1	11.3
Rail & Metro Services	10.3	15.8
Network Resilience	3.7	3.2
Commonwealth Games	18.7	0.0
Strategic Development & Transport		
Democratic Services	5.0	5.0
Business Support Costs	4.3	5.0
Financing Costs	8.4	10.2
Total Expenditure	145.3	136.2
Use of Reserves	9.1	9.2
Business Rates Income	0.0	4.7
Commonwealth Games	18.7	0.0
Efficiency Target	0.6	3.0
Funded by District Levy	117.0	119.4

Council	Population	Levy £m	%
Birmingham	1,144,900	46.8	39.2%
Coventry	345,300	14.1	11.8%
Dudley	323,500	13.2	11.1%
Sandwell	341,900	14.0	11.7%
Solihull	216,200	8.8	7.4%
Walsall	284,100	11.6	9.7%
Wolverhampton	263,700	10.8	9.0%
Total	2,919,600	119.4	100.0%

Alternative Format

If you would like this leaflet in a format more suited to your needs, please call 0345 303 6760.

West Midlands Combined Authority produces this leaflet to give you a summary of the work it does to improve all aspects of public transport. To find out more about the work West Midlands Combined Authority does, including new projects and public consultations, please visit our website: wmca.org.uk.