



# Campaign for Better Transport

## ● Light Years Ahead: a strategic vision for a UK light rail renaissance

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## **○ Representing the public & guiding policy since 1973**

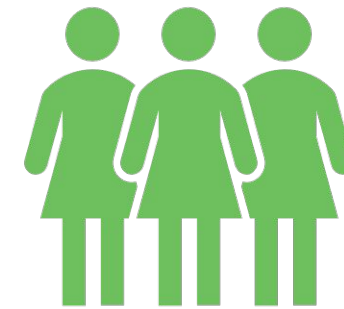
- We are the leading national charity for sustainable transport, and the only one covering all modes.
- We have been a leading, authoritative voice on policy development and public campaigning for 50 years.
- Our vision is for all communities to have access to high quality, sustainable transport that meets their needs, improves quality of life, and protects the environment.



# Making the case for better, greener, fairer transport



**Environment**



**Wellbeing and social equity**



**Health**



**Business**



## Recent campaign successes

- National £2 bus fare cap implemented three times
- Railway station and line reopenings
- Rail fares and ticketing reform
- Saving the Day Travelcard



# Our Research Impact

- *Fare Future: a blueprint for rail fares and ticketing reform (2023)*
- *Better Transport for Better Business (2023)*
- *Pay-as-you-drive: the British public's view of road user charging (2022)*
- *Transport Deserts (2020)*
- *The future of rail (2019)*



## Reopening Rail

## Light Years Ahead

- Our 2017 report '*Expanding the Railways: How to develop and deliver a proposal*' was an influential collaboration between Campaign for Better Transport, Department for Transport and Railfuture.
- Our 2019 report, *The case for expanding the rail network*, called for national programme of rail reopenings and identified disused lines that should be given first priority.
- Using new methodology, we rated lines both for their viability and for the social, economic and environmental benefits they would bring if reopened, identifying 33 top-priority lines that would put 500,000 people in reach of the railways.



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# Light Years Ahead

Light rail is an all-rounder

Potential both to transform long-neglected towns and cities and to enable reopening of regional branch lines

Can play crucial role in reviving urban and rural communities

While new networks in existing urban centres invariably succeed, objections often focus on upheaval and disruption to utilities; therefore planning light rail into new developments makes sense





# Light Years Ahead

At the turn of the century, UK Government recognised the potential of light rail, pledging to build 25 new urban tramway systems by 2010.

However, only five schemes have been built over the last twenty-five years: West Midlands Metro (1999), London Tramlink (2000), Nottingham Express Transit (2004), Blackpool Tramway (2012) and Edinburgh Trams (2014).

By contrast, in much of continental Europe and worldwide light rail is enjoying a renaissance.

For example, within the same time span France has developed more than twenty tramway systems at less than half the UK cost.





## Context

- High street decline
- Regional inequality
- Transport Deserts
- Local transport tensions
- Loneliness and mental health crisis
- Need to build 6 X networks





# ○ Combined Solution

Combined solution to a range of social, environmental and economic challenges. Potential to

- Boost local economies
- Combat isolation
- Revive high streets
- Enhance street safety and the public realm
- Provide accessible and affordable public transport





## Objectives

- ✓ Raise public awareness of the placemaking qualities and community benefits of light rail
- ✓ Demonstrate the socioeconomic benefits of light rail in its various forms to policymakers
- ✓ Assess the potential for new, extended and reopened light rail networks across the UK





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## Objectives

- ✓ Engage local authorities in considering light rail as part of local transport provision
- ✓ Identify the necessary strategies and levers to unlock new networks
- ✓ Engage with policymakers and industry to implement the solutions identified





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# Outputs

## Report

- The economic, social and environmental benefits of light rail
- Historical context and the impact of existing networks in the UK
- Lessons of international models
- Barriers to growth and levers for change
- Opportunities for efficient funding

We will devise a framework for considering light rail projects in UK towns and cities, including:

- Sustainability and use cases of different forms of light rail
- Assessment of current proposals and campaigns' feasibility and next steps
- Principles of design focusing on aspects of town planning, street space design, road safety and transport integration.





# Outputs

## Blogs and Articles

We will write and publish a series of blogs and articles, focusing on different aspects of the project, drawing on our own expertise and from leading voices in the field both in the UK and internationally to raise awareness.

## Stakeholder Engagement

As part of the research, we will meet with and interview a range of stakeholders and policy-makers to identify barriers and possible solutions for light rail investment. We will launch the report at an industry event, with accompanying media and press activity to raise the profile of light rail.





# Outputs

## Local Engagement

We will engage local authorities as part of the research to identify historic issues and considerations of light rail in different geographies.

Post-publication, we will visit subnational transport bodies, combined authorities and councils as part of a national touring programme of engagement, highlighting opportunities and producing media, seeking to progress considerations of projects at the local level.

## Public Engagement

We will aim to shift the dial of public perception and raise awareness utilising our significant combined social media supporter followings and traditional media contacts, with a consistent output of graphic and text assets, press releases and





# Thank you

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