



Rees Jeffreys Road Fund

Established 1950

Integrated National Transport Strategy
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

18th February 2025

By email: INTS@dft.gov.uk

Submission of ideas for the Integrated National Transport Strategy

Why Roads Matter to all of us

Roads are fundamental to how Britain functions. Our country runs on its roads, commercially, socially and economically and the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund Trust objectives are focused on helping to deliver a better road network for all. To make the improvements that we believe are an essential part of a better road network, it is important that the key role that roads play is recognised in the transport network and that any Integrated National Transport Strategy (INTS) addresses the following:

- Improved safety that reduces the unacceptable toll of death and injury that still persistently occurs on our roads and burdens our economy and society.
- The integration of a transport strategy with Land Use Planning to ensure that future changes, including major developments such as housing, are best suited and served by an effective road network supporting transport services.
- How we use the capacity of our roads and how options for sustainable transport need to be reflected in the design and allocation of space for different forms of transport, including walking and cycling. Taking into account the needs of a diverse society and making travel more accessible is an important outcome for the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund.
- The sustainability and resilience of our roads by improving their current poor condition to ensure the availability and suitability for the future demands of travel on local and national roads, including footways and cycleways.

To help develop such a strategy, we have set out below in more detail how we believe the priorities we have summarised above should be addressed, referencing, where appropriate, the projects we have funded.

There is growing evidence that three factors are seriously influencing how we can view the future of roads. One, is the funding for local roads, second, is

Address: 22 Jetty Court, London E14 3SX **Telephone:** 0560 384 9370

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how people's behaviour is changing as road users, and thirdly the education, and skills required to provide the appropriate capability among those who lead road transport planning, design and delivery in the future.

For the first point, recognition of the need to resolve local road funding in the short to long term is required. Secondly, people's response to road transport solutions have changed and without a different approach to consulting people then the different range of responses will be missed. More local decision making may help with addressing these issues but central Government needs to be clear about its role in terms of funding commitments and setting the boundaries of people's choice.

On the third point, we have consistently funded studies and initiatives to help educate those who may play a part in future road transport aspects. We consider it essential that Government sets out which skills are necessary to deliver an integrated national transport strategy and how these skills should be provided and funded.

Lastly, we have identified key areas for development of the use of technology on roads to improve safety and efficient use of capacity by all modes.

Who we are

Rees Jeffreys Road Fund is a registered charity established by Trust Deed in 1950. We are a grant-making charity led by 10 trustees who are all leading figures in the transport sector, volunteering their extensive knowledge and expertise.

A list of our trustees can be found [here](#) . We do not have any employees. We are content to be contacted by email secretary@reesjeffreys.co.uk

Rees Jeffreys Road Fund (the Fund) was created by William Rees Jeffreys (1871 to 1954), a visionary who played a significant and influential role in the development of the UK highways system. Much of how our roads and national highways system looks today has its roots in his ideas and leadership. [William Rees Jeffreys - Wikipedia](#)

Our mission

William Rees Jeffreys set up the Fund to carry on his life work. He prescribed the Objects of the Fund, which are to promote:

- Educational activities that will lead to improvements in the design of highways and adjoining land;

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- Engagement, co-ordination and interchange of ideas between designers/manufacturers of vehicles, the land-use planning profession and highway engineers;
- Improvements in design, efficiency and safety of highways;
- Enhancement and conservation of the beauty of roads and the roadside.

William was as interested in footpaths, cycleways and the experience of people living near roads as he was in use of roads by vehicles.

As we celebrate 75 years as a charity, we seek to continue his life work and vision through grant-making and bursaries, distributing around £250,000 each year. We have made reference in this document to projects delivered through our grant funding, where we think these will be informative to the development of the new Strategy.

What should guide the development of the new Integrated National Transport Strategy to avoid past mistakes?

We have summarised above the key areas an Integrated National Transport Strategy should seek to address. In this section we have set out each key area with links to some of the projects we have funded, that could help inform the development of a Strategy

Improved Safety: Improved safety on our roads benefits us all and reduces the impact of casualties on the stretched NHS and Social Services. The previous focus on road safety targets and safety improvements helped focus attention in a way that resulted in a significant fall in casualties for both road users and road workers. To deliver the results that are necessary to see a fall in casualties the Government needs to commit to the overall objectives of casualty reductions and work with road safety organisations and highway authorities to deliver real change. The introduction of Vision Zero, based on the belief that **no death or serious injury (of road users or road workers) is acceptable on roads** has been adopted by many road authorities, organisations across the UK and the wider world road network, could provide a catalyst for action. Any Integrated National Transport Strategy should acknowledge the considerable disparity in casualty figures between modes and address how road casualties are to be reduced in the future through the promised road safety strategy that will presumably accompany the INTS.

Integration with Land-Use planning: The demands for more developments, whether housing, commercial or industrial, is a consequence of growth, but current approaches to transport development has not kept up with such demands for movement of goods and people. A vision-led approach to planning for transport and communities, ensuring integrated transport is

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designed-in from the start and properly connects into existing systems, is crucial to making the most effective use of land and for embedding sustainable transport options that will support the drive to net zero. [Stepping off the Road to Nowhere by Sustrans & Create Streets [New report: Stepping off the Road to Nowhere - Create Streets](#) ; Transport for New Homes report [Building-Car-Dependency-2022.pdf](#) ; Living Streets Pedestrian Pound [Pedestrian Pound](#)]. The studies we have funded have helped in understanding the poor outcomes that continue to occur in both urban and rural developments. An important role for the Strategy is to set the context of other Government ambitions for growth with how transport, and roads in particular, will play their part. The roles of national and local government in transport and planning development need to be clearly identified for the future so that there is clarity about the responsibility for the outcomes as well as the outputs of plans.

How road capacity is utilised in a sustainable future. Some of the grant requests to Rees Jeffreys Road Fund are for projects and studies associated with providing greater choice of transport modes, with the added benefit of greater accessibility. How we use the capacity of our roads and how options for sustainable transport need to be taken into account in the design and allocation of space, both in built up areas and in more rural environments. We receive a number of requests for funding projects that study or want to develop alternative forms of transport to the car, to better serve local communities. These are often also seeking to provide alternatives for more diverse needs and making roads more accessible, which is an important outcome for our Fund. We suggest the Integrated National Transport Strategy should address the factors that currently embed car dependency and limit choice, particularly for new developments.

We have seen a growing demand for road transport design and solutions that enable people with a disability or diverse needs to undertake journeys using various road-based modes. A recent study by the Royal College of Art shows how important the involvement of a diverse group of road users is when considering new strategies all the way down to the design of local roads [Streets for Diversity by RCA [Streets for Diversity | Royal College of Art](#) ; The GET-IT toolkit [Gender Equality Toolkit in Transport - GET IT](#); Engaging Young People Toolkit [EYPiC Homepage](#)] The GET-IT toolkit has successfully been taken up by other groups who have recognised the importance of addressing gender issues in transport design. We consider both areas to be important and recommend further study at both a national and local level, to build on the findings of these projects.

We support greater use of roads to better serve more needs, especially where this achieves improvements which are sustainable in the future. From a Rees

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Jeffreys Road Fund perspective, the use of limited road space should take account of what trips can be accommodated and the environmental impact of those trips. We recognise that there are difficult decisions to make when weighing up the needs of different road users, but policy choices need to address the impacts in terms of costs, service levels and choice for different road users. [Carlton Reid, 1930's Cycle Tracks [About us | British Cycle Tracks](#); CycleStreets.net [Mapping modal filters and LTNs – CycleStreets](#)]

Resilience and Sustainability: It is recognised that the road network (local and national roads, including footways and cycleways) need to be more resilient and sustainable. The improved condition of the network will ensure the availability and suitability for the future demands of travel and provide a real option for safer walking, cycling and for greater variety of modes of transport. The improvements shown by local highway authorities in recycling and reducing carbon in materials is a real success in the roads sector, but there is much more to be done and Government needs to provide a stronger steer of what is expected in policy and any funding settlements for national and local roads authorities and other transport modes. [University of Nottingham and others [Lay-Summary-RJRF-Asphalt-Circularity-Project.pdf](#)]

Given we already have a maintenance backlog and can foresee even greater need for funding improvements to meet the demands of climate change we think the INTS should support choices which offer reduced carbon impacts and support the work of industry and local authorities to implement carbon reduction measures. Some examples of what might be included in the Integrated National Transport Strategy include:

- Long term funding for maintenance to support the improvement of the existing road and footway network, which needs to go beyond the current provision of a maintenance block grant and an unpredictable series of one-off pothole repair allocations to address the programmes needed to improve sustainability and resilience in the long term.
- We should expand the way in which we see the environmental impact of roads and road use, including pollution from rainwater run-off [CIWEM/Stormwater Shepherds [Bold, new report on pollution from highway runoff to raise awareness of the problem and possible solutions – Stormwater Shepherds](#)], and the scope for biodiversity-enhancing solutions [ADEPT Value of Trees Toolkit [The Value of Trees report | ADEPT](#); Plantlife Good Verge Guide [Managing Grassland & Green Space - Plantlife](#); CIRIA, improving the performance of linear assets through green infrastructure [Delivering green infrastructure along linear assets. Scoping study phase 1](#)]
- The benefits of Technology in monitoring and improving the performance of roads are important to ensure the resilience of this critical network, both

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locally and nationally. Funding to support highway authorities for such developments is a key part of an Integrated National Transport Strategy.

Who will lead in ensuring our roads are fit for the future?

We continue to pursue William Rees Jeffreys' ambition to improve the skills and expertise of transport professionals. For decades the Fund has provided bursaries every year to enable transport professionals to study for an MSc in transport planning or transport engineering. In 2024, we launched a new grant scheme aimed at supporting transport professionals to acquire the new skills they will need if they are to deliver the transport vision and plan for the future of roads.

Our new grant scheme Ready for the Future allows transport professionals to identify for themselves the skills they feel they need to acquire for the future. We anticipate seeing applications relating to fields such as behavioural science; big data; AI; safe systems; equality and inclusion; digital twins; cyber security; quantum engineering and computing; machine learning; nature-based solutions to climate mitigation.

Equipping transport professionals to gain these under-represented skills and add them to their transport skills will be vital to ensure the workforce is in place to both develop and deliver the new Integrated National Transport Strategy. However, our perception is that employers are reducing the amount of support they are offering to employees for such training. We seek to play our part in attracting talent to the sector by raising the profile and function of roads with young people [IET Faraday Challenge [Roads and highways FCD](#) ; Fun Kids Radio Roads to 2050 [Road to 2050 - Fun Kids - the UK's children's radio station](#)] but we believe Government needs to do more to directly support training and development needs for the Transport sector (which is not solely about new Technology and AI), and to recognise in the INTS the various sectoral skills and capability issues that need to be addressed.

We believe that Government can articulate the role and importance of roads for all road users in an integrated transport system as a way of helping the next generation of transport professionals realise the value of joining the sector. By setting out the skills that will be required and how funding can be made available, Government can provide a clarity for potential transport professionals, employers and training providers.

How could technology be used to improve the transport network?

This is an extensive subject and so we have picked out a selection of road-specific issues which we believe require attention in the INTS:

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- Technology can be deployed for optimisation of transport use - more services per hour, more throughput per station, more vehicles per road lane/signalised intersection. We believe there is scope to make more use of technology in this way, but also, particularly on roads, there is a pressing need to repair, restore, re-tune and maintain the many traffic control systems across England's towns and cities where, for example, the sensors on which they rely need to be replaced, and where changes in traffic patterns have yet to be incorporated into the tuning' of the systems. AI offers a great opportunity here, but the basic data must be in place from sensors. It is also the case that some advances themselves require upgrades in systems – for example the arrival of LED lighting has made replacement of previous generation but now obsolete bulbs impossible.
- More could be done to derive value from increased connectivity and the data thus generated for those responsible for designing and operating our transport services. A case in point would be eCall in cars and vans, a mandatory fitment generating data which could be of value in understanding where and why crashes and breakdowns occur. We have had various requests for funding new ideas about using technology for a range of road transport users such as demonstrating how technology can digitally connect cycles and walkers. We are aware of other projects that have looked at scooters and veteran cars where data has been gathered and distributed, to identify hazards.
- Connectivity is reliant on data transfer networks – often but not exclusively the mobile phone network. It is important that the INTS recognises both the potential and the limitations this creates – 'phone shadows' exist in built up areas, not just in remote rural districts. The availability of one network is no substitute for the availability of all – this can create problems for example where parking payment or EV charging machines rely on connectivity or the use of phone apps. DfT needs to address this and work with DCMS and OFCOM to find approaches that work in line with the commercial realities of these systems.
- The DfT has previously tried relatively small-scale but still valuable programmes that appear to have stalled due to financial constraints such as the Intelligent Traffic Management Fund. Such schemes can have great value in demonstrating the business case for more widespread action beyond the benefits secured from the individual schemes thus funded. Our aim at Rees Jeffreys Road Fund is to encourage solutions that have the potential to move from pilot/pathfinder to widespread application, an approach we'd commend to DfT and its associated bodies including National Highways and GBR.

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- DfT can play a key role as a convenor and catalyst for initiatives that offer considerable value for very little public investment – a case in point would be the, currently stalled, National Parking Platform, which has the potential to benefit the parking managers and the motoring public in equal measure.
- Of course, technology is not a cure-all, and with some technology comes risk – for example we are alive to the concerns about in-vehicle technology distracting drivers (e.g. IAM RoadSmart and TRL report of digital services on driver performance [TRL Report](#)), and on the connectivity and data front there are issues of cyber-security. We would propose that these should be priority areas for exploration through DfT research programmes and flagged as such in the INTS.
- Technology is important in addressing the performance of services – having apps that advise of late or cancelled trains and buses or traffic hold ups are valuable, but more is needed to address the root causes of service breakdown.
- Lastly, at Rees Jeffreys Road Fund we are aware from approaches we've had for funding, that much of the innovation that could feed through into improved services could come from SMEs. However, despite successive governments' stated enthusiasm for working with smaller companies, the reality is that departmental procurement and risk aversion favours bigger established suppliers. The desire to share in the upside from development of new ideas effectively robs SMEs of their intellectual property as the price for government funding. This clearly needs attention if Britain's best and brightest ideas are to be harnessed to the benefit of the Government's growth ambitions.

We look forward to the Government's Strategy and welcome the opportunity to offer our views for your consideration.

Ginny Clarke

Chair of Trustees, Rees Jeffreys Road Fund

This submission reflects the views of the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund, but not necessarily the views of individual trustees and their respective organisations.

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