



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest
to create a better borough

TravelTelford



National Bus Strategy

Bus Service Improvement Plan

January 2025



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1. Our Bus Vision

This Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) covers the entire administrative area of Telford & Wrekin Council, as illustrated at Figure 1-1. It does not cover any other authority's area. It has been developed in partnership with operators and sets out the vision, objectives and measures to improve local bus services in Telford & Wrekin.

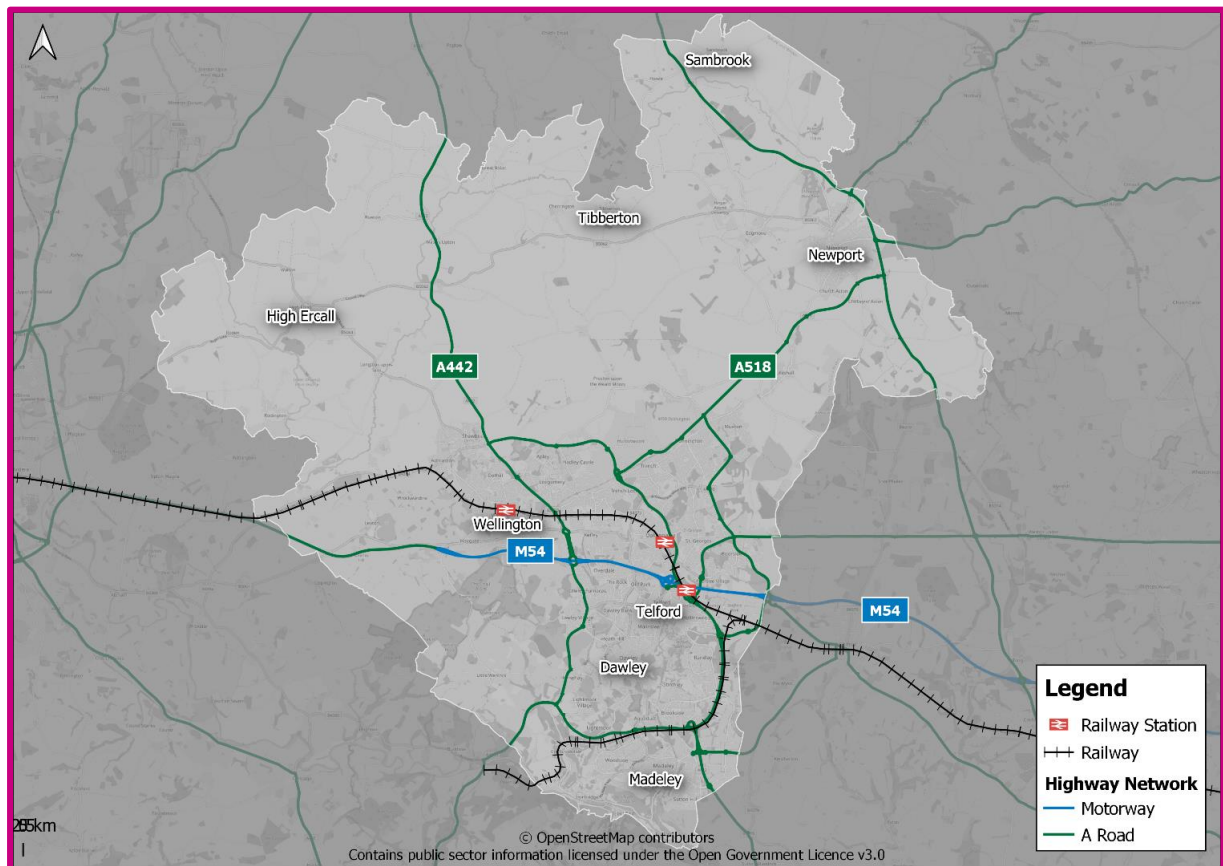


Figure 1-1 Telford & Wrekin Council Administrative Area

This Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) was first published on 29 October 2021, following the publication by the Government in March 2021 of 'Bus Back Better'¹ which is the first national bus strategy for England.

Telford & Wrekin Council published a review of the first BSIP on 31 October 2022 as then required by the Department for Transport (DfT), with this June 2024 BSIP being produced as a further refresh in line with DfT requirements.

This document should be read in conjunction with the separate Baseline Data Analysis Note (BDAN), which provides more detailed analysis of background data summarised in this BSIP.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-back-better>

Telford & Wrekin Council has entered into an Enhanced Partnership, which came into force on 1 April 2022, and will be the means to delivering bus service improvements in Telford & Wrekin. Its notice can be found here: https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20174/public_transport/5300/the_national_bus_strategy

Going forwards, as required by the DfT, the BSIP will be regularly reviewed, and we expect to produce monitoring updates in line with guidance.

1.1. Context

Telford and Wrekin is situated in the north-west of the West Midlands region, with borders to Shropshire and Staffordshire. It is a unitary authority, covering approximately 290 km². The principal urban area of Telford includes the towns of Dawley, Ironbridge, Madeley, Oakengates and Wellington, with the market town of Newport situated in the north of the Borough as a focus for the more rural northern half of the authority's area.

The current population of the authority's area is approximately 180,000, giving an average population density of 620/km². Approximately 26% of the population is aged 20 and under, with approximately 24% aged 60 and over.

Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the Baseline Data Analysis Note (BDAN) provide an analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics of the Borough, and the locations of major sources of demand for travel. They show slightly higher than average levels of no car ownership in the south of the main urban area, higher levels of deprivation, and pockets of high population densities. Population density has increased between 2011 and 2021, with much of this associated with major new housing developments, but with some areas of density reduction within urban Telford. The background is therefore one in which providing effective and attractive bus services which are also affordable is a challenge – but one that we show in this BSIP we are facing proactively.

1.2. BSIP Vision and Objectives

The vision of this BSIP is to:

Provide a bus network which offers residents access to opportunities available across the Borough, with safe, reliable, affordable and regular services.

Drawing on the results of previous user surveys, our focus is on improving the bus network to allow more residents to have a choice in the way they make journeys, making services more desirable through safety, reliability and coverage.

This vision will be supported through the delivery of measures to achieve key objectives which are aligned to achieving Telford and Wrekin's Corporate and Local

Transport Plan 3 Objectives and the Government's National Bus Strategy priorities. The relationship between the objectives is shown in Figure 1-2 below.

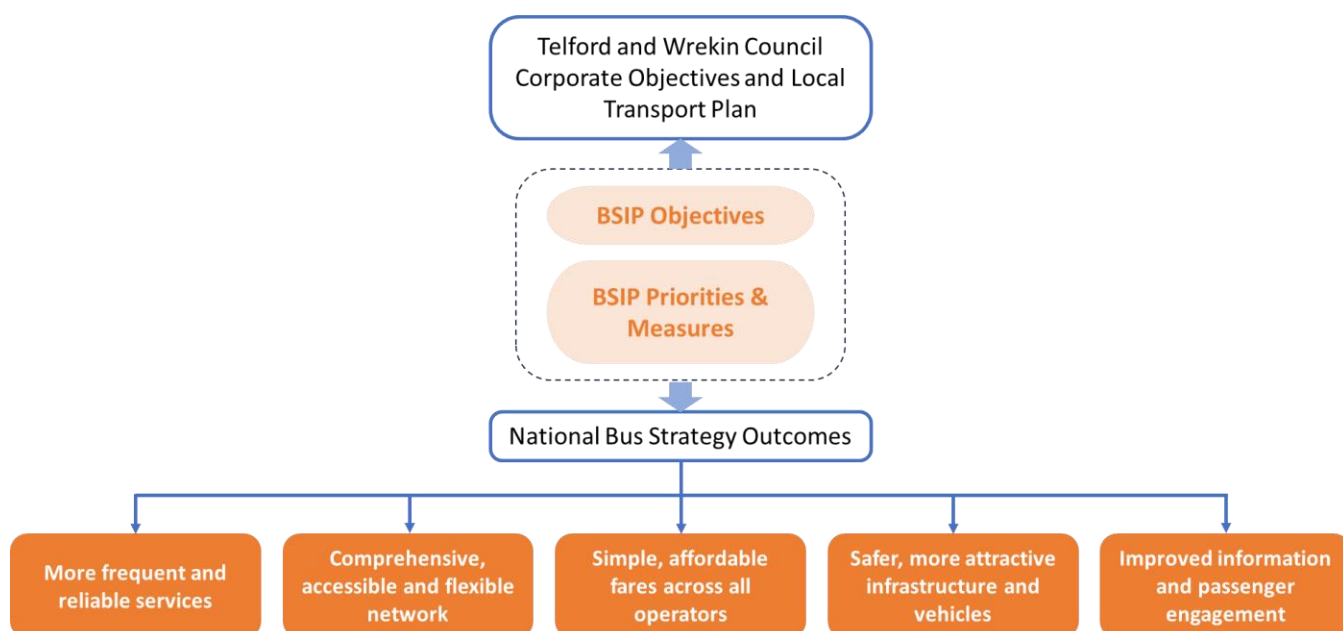


Figure 1-2 Alignment of BSIP objectives in achieving local and national priorities

We want a bus network which supports our residents and visitors, giving them a choice of mode when making journeys across the borough. Providing regular, reliable links across the poly-centric urban area and efficient services across the more rural areas, removing barriers to accessing employment, education, health and leisure services will allow the local economy to grow. With major urban developments anticipated, it is vital that new and existing residents are able to make sustainable travel choices without putting additional private car trips on the local highways network.

Our ten key principles in making this happen are:

- ✓ **Frequent** – services in the urban area operating at least every 30 minutes, with a core network of turn-up-and-go routes between the key urban centres;
- ✓ **Reliable** – create a network of services running to time, allowing efficient interchange;
- ✓ **Accessible** – a network of scheduled and demand-responsive services that can be used by all;
- ✓ **Affordable** – fares which offer value-for-money travel;
- ✓ **Flexible** – multi-operator ticketing which removes the cost burden of using more than one operator's services;
- ✓ **Comprehensive** – a network that provides access to employment, education, health and leisure opportunities;
- ✓ **Green** – services operated by low, ultra-low and zero-emission vehicles, in line with the declared climate emergency ambitions;
- ✓ **Attractive** – bus stops, interchanges and vehicles which are clean and well-maintained;

- ✓ **Safe** – ensure everyone can feel safe waiting for and travelling on bus services at any time of the day;
- ✓ **Informative** – easy-to-access information which is comprehensive and easy to understand.

1.3. Policy context

The BSIP is consistent with the wider Local Transport Plan 3 covering the period 2011 – 2026 and has been developed in conjunction with, and aligned to, the emerging Local Transport Plan 4. LTP3 can be found here:

https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/1019/roadworks_transport_and_streets/497/local_transport_plan

The Plan identifies the key challenges facing the borough, which although set in 2011, are still relevant today. The challenges were taken through to the six Local Transport Plan goals, of:

- ✓ Making travel more reliable and efficient, to attract jobs and support growth and regeneration.
- ✓ Maintain highways effectively and efficiently.
- ✓ Reduce carbon emissions to help tackle climate change.
- ✓ Allow everyone to access jobs, education, healthcare, shops and leisure.
- ✓ Improve safety and security on the transport network and promote active travel choices which encourage people to be healthier.
- ✓ Improve the quality of life by reducing the visual, noise, air quality and other impacts of transport on people and the local environment.

The patterns of settlement within the Council's area present some transport challenges. As a former 'New Town', the concentration of the population in the Telford urban area, significant transport infrastructure dates from the 1970s and 1980s. Some original office and retail developments are now becoming life-expired and no longer satisfy modern shopping and employment requirements, leading to major regeneration projects with associated changes to travel needs.

Shifting travel habits means that some areas, both urban and rural, are facing greater challenges of transport social exclusion. Within urban Telford, levels of car ownership vary, but with overall generally high levels meaning that bus services particularly to employment locations have been difficult to sustain commercially. In the more rural north, dispersed patterns of demand have been challenging to serve effectively by scheduled bus services.

In July 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to ensure its activities and operations are carbon neutral by 2030, stepping beyond the ambitions of LTP3, and which will be reflected in LTP4. A comprehensive and affordable bus network will underpin the authority's delivery of these transport decarbonisation targets.

1.4. Funding for Improving Bus Services

Pre-BSIP Achievements

Consistent with the themes and objectives of the LTP documents, Telford & Wrekin Council has invested heavily in public transport infrastructure and development in recent years.

Using its own funds, capital programmes to upgrade public transport infrastructure has seen great successes. The award-winning refurbishment of Wellington bus station has set a high standard for major interchanges, with unattractive and life-expired bus stands replaced by new shelters and information displays which are powered solely by solar panels and wind turbines. The upgraded interchange is now much more attractive and provides a safe waiting location for passengers at all times of the day.

Investment has also been made into the bus shelter stock. Further contributing to the authority's decarbonisation objectives, trials have taken place with off-grid bus shelters at key locations. Similar to those installed at Wellington bus station, these new shelters are powered by solar panels and micro turbines, meaning that shelters can be installed in locations previously too expensive to connect to mains electricity for lighting and information displays.

Successful trials have taken place of installing planted roofs on shelters, to boost biodiversity, contribute to flood water capture and also to reduce the urban heat island effect.

Telford has long-standing successes in using funding secured from new developments to support and enhance the bus network. Recent reviews of tendered services have led to amended tendered routes better targeting home to school transport requirements and also providing enhanced links to major employment and healthcare sites.

BSIP Awards

BSIP and BSIP2

Telford & Wrekin Council did not receive any funding in the first round of BSIP awards, but has subsequently received funding in the BSIP+ (BSIP2) allocations.

A total BSIP2 allocation was made of £1.3m in May 2023. This was split evenly over the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years.

This spend is described in more detail in Section 2. Table 1-1 provides a summary of what this has been spent on to date (April 2024).

Table 1-1 BSIP2 Spend Summary

Topic	Initiatives
New bus routes	Service 100 'Works Express' providing services to all three major business and industrial areas, with timetables focused on shift and core working times. Sustain tendered network with the remainder of the funding.

BSIP3 (Network North)

In October 2023 Telford and Wrekin Council was allocated £1.055m BSIP Phase 3 funding for the 2024/25 financial year. This is part of the Network North funding from the cancellation of HS2 Phase 2.

More detail is provided in Section 3, however Table 1-2 outlines how the money is intended to be spent.

Table 1-2 BSIP3 Spend Summary

Topic	Initiatives
Network stabilisation and targeted enhancements	Review of the tendered services, using BSIP3 money to provide some frequency enhancements, alongside re-focusing other routes to better support evolving demand patterns. Supporting key links whilst alternative service delivery approaches are assessed
New services	Introduce a DRT scheme
Targeted discount fare schemes	Develop and launch targeted fare schemes across supported services and targeted passenger groups, based on feedback, where identified as having the potential to generate additional demand. Specific period discounts such as school holidays, evening offers. Example of the successful 50p fare offer during half term.
Infrastructure measures	Continue shelter upgrade programme.

Other initiatives	<p>Work with operators to introduce a Passenger Charter.</p> <p>Procure additional in-depth passenger surveys to provide more detailed understanding of trends in satisfaction.</p> <p>Recruitment of additional Council resources to deliver the implementation of the DRT scheme, more closely monitor service delivery and engagement with major employers and education sites to ensure that bus services best meet needs.</p> <p>Procurement of new MaaS app, to cover bus fares and other travel/mode options, by development of local presence on the Citymapper app to improve information provision.</p> <p>Marketing campaigns highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tourist destinations accessible by bus • new bus service promotion • Citymapper app for information
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2. Current Offer to Bus Passengers

2.1. Background

This section describes the bus service offer in Telford, assesses its quality and suitability for Telford residents, and analyses the impact of background highway and socio-demographic conditions on buses. At a number of points it refers to Baseline Data Analysis Note (BDAN) which addresses these issues in some details and to which the reader is referred for more detail.

2.2. Analysis of Existing Local Bus Services Compared to BSIP Outcomes

Operator Context

Telford's bus network is provided by four operators, with a split between commercial services and others operating under tender to Telford & Wrekin Council. Many services operate wholly within urban Telford, with longer-distance routes extending out to Stafford, Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Much Wenlock and Wolverhampton.

The majority of services are operated commercially by Arriva Midlands, with Banga Buses operating the 891 route to Wolverhampton. Chaserider operates tendered services 100, 102, 103, 104 and 105, with Select Bus Services operating the tendered service 101, as well as a commercial extension of service 96 from Ironbridge to Telford town centre.

To the south-east is the West Midlands, but none of the conurbation's major operators, including National Express West Midlands and Diamond Bus, operate into Telford.

Separately, Telford & Wrekin Council also operate a small in-house fleet, providing dial-a-ride and other specialist, bespoke services. Additionally, the in-house fleet team will start operating a Demand Responsive Transport Service in 2025 initially in the Ironbridge Gorge area.

Change since 2021

The bus operator situation in Telford has been relatively stable over the past years.

Engagement is continuing with operators in surrounding areas, as part of efforts to expand the list of companies for tendering opportunities, but recent driver-retention issues have impacted willingness to participate in bidding for routes away from these companies' main operating areas.

The local bus operators are now reporting that the driver recruitment and retention situation has improved, with no significant issues with staffing levels. It is understood that some operators are experiencing issues with the supply of spare parts for

vehicle maintenance and repairs, but they are taking steps to ensure that service delivery in Telford is not impacted.

2.3. Bus Service Supply

Figure 2-1 shows the bus map for Telford as at May 2024.

Figure 2-1 Telford whole bus network, May 2024

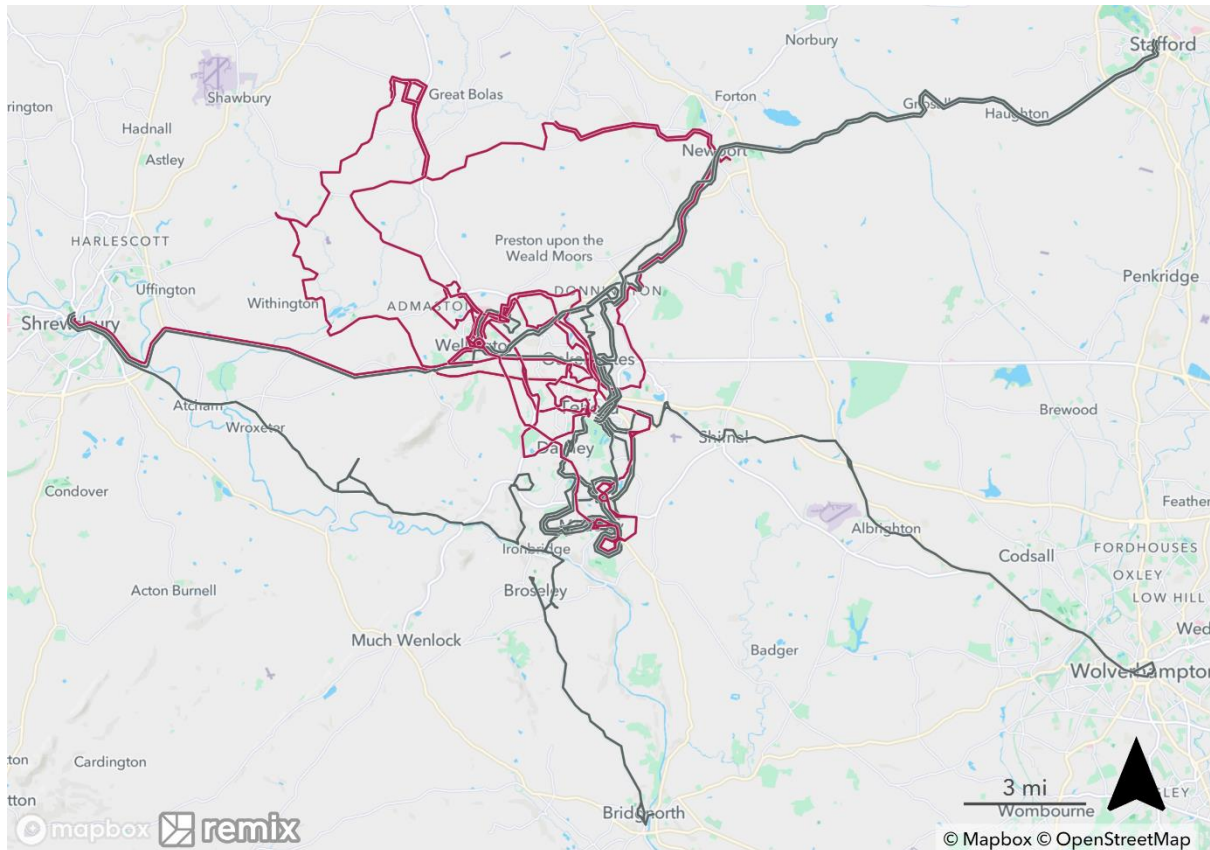
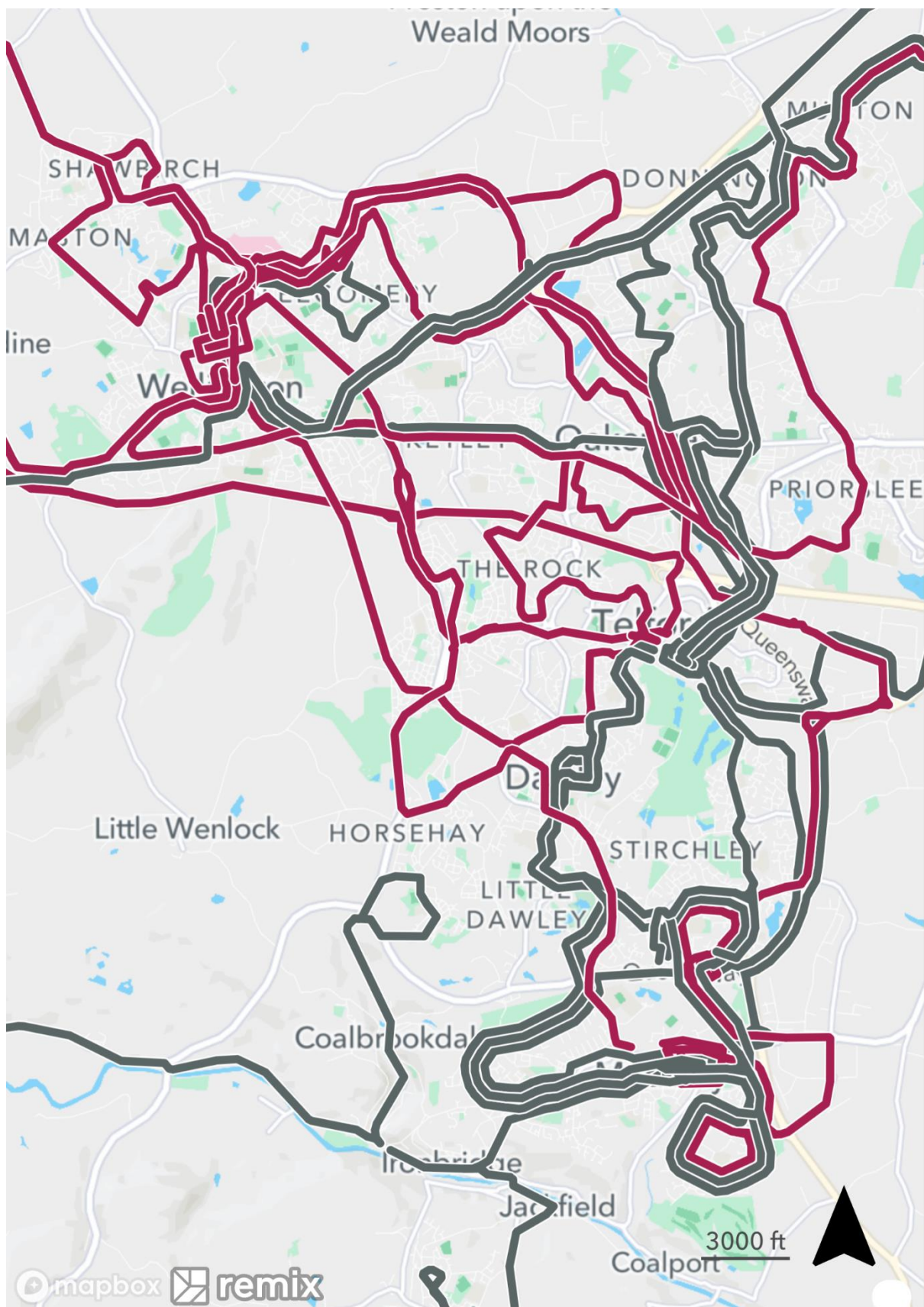


Figure 2-2 shows the network for the main Telford urban area.

Figure 2-2 Bus network coverage in urban Telford



The highest frequency is Arriva Midlands' service 4, which operates between Leegomery and Madeley every 10 minutes Monday to Friday daytimes, every 12 minutes Saturday daytime, and a half-hourly operation evenings and Sunday daytime. The enhancement of the 4's timetable from mid-May 2024 returned it to its pre-pandemic level of service.

Next is Arriva Midlands' 3 from Telford bus station to Brookside, which operates every 15 minutes daytimes and half-hourly Monday to Saturday evenings and Sunday daytime.

Most other Arriva commercial services operate half-hourly Monday to Saturday daytimes, with half-hourly or hourly evening and Sunday daytime services on the 1/2, 5 and 7.

Across the commercial network, those routes with an evening service generally finish by 21:00 Monday to Saturday, and 18:00 on Sunday.

The longer-distance services operating away from the authority's area have frequencies matched to demand. Arriva's service 5/5A/5E to Stafford operates twice an hour Monday to Saturday daytimes, with three evening journeys. Sundays have an hourly service. The routes to Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth both operate hourly Monday to Saturday daytimes.

Other commercial services are:

- ✓ Banga Buses' 891 to Wolverhampton, offering 11 journeys each way Monday to Friday, five journeys each way Saturday; and
- ✓ Select Bus Service's 96, with a commercial extension to Telford town centre of Shropshire Council's tendered Shrewsbury to Ironbridge service, offering seven journeys each way Monday to Saturday.

Seven tendered operate across the Council's area, with a revised network of routes introduced from December 2022 replacing the previous supported services. The new routes are supported by a combination of BSIP2 funding and Section 106 funds, in addition to internal funding from Telford & Wrekin Council's education department to fund places for home-to-school transport of eligible pupils.

The services are:

- ✓ 99A/C: orbital services, Telford – Oakengates – Hadley – Princess Royal Hospital – Wellington – Telford, eight journeys each way Monday to Saturday;
- ✓ 100 Travel Telford Express: Sutton Hill – Halesfield – Madeley – Stafford Park – Telford railway station – Hortonwood – Princess Royal Hospital – Wellington, 17 journeys each way Monday to Saturday, 16 each way Sunday, timed around key shift times at the three major employment estates;
- ✓ 101: Princess Royal Hospital – Wellington – Lawley – Horsehay – Madeley, eight journeys each way Monday to Saturday, with four each way operating additionally via Arleston;

- ✓ 102: Newport – Donnington Wood – Priorslee – Princess Royal Hospital – Wellington, Monday to Friday, eight journeys towards Wellington, six journeys towards Newport;
- ✓ 103 Newport - Tibberton - Ellerdine - High Ercall - Rodington – Wellington, Monday to Friday, six journeys towards Wellington, seven journeys towards Newport; and
- ✓ 104 and 105: schools services.

Current situation compared to National Bus Strategy aspiration:

- ✓ One service provides ‘turn-up-and-go’ frequencies of 6 buses per hour, with evening and Sunday services half-hourly.
- ✓ Routes operate cross-boundary to key surrounding towns of Shrewsbury, Stafford, Bridgnorth and Wolverhampton
- ✓ Improved connectivity to major employment areas
- ✓ Core evening and Sunday daytime network, although very limited services weekday and Saturday late evenings, or Sunday evenings at all. Low frequency services to and within the rural north of the borough, and reliance for these on local authority funding.

Change since 2021

Figure 2-3 and Figure 2-4 show the bus networks within the borough for 2021 and 2024.

Figure 2-3 Bus services within Telford and Wrekin Q3 2021

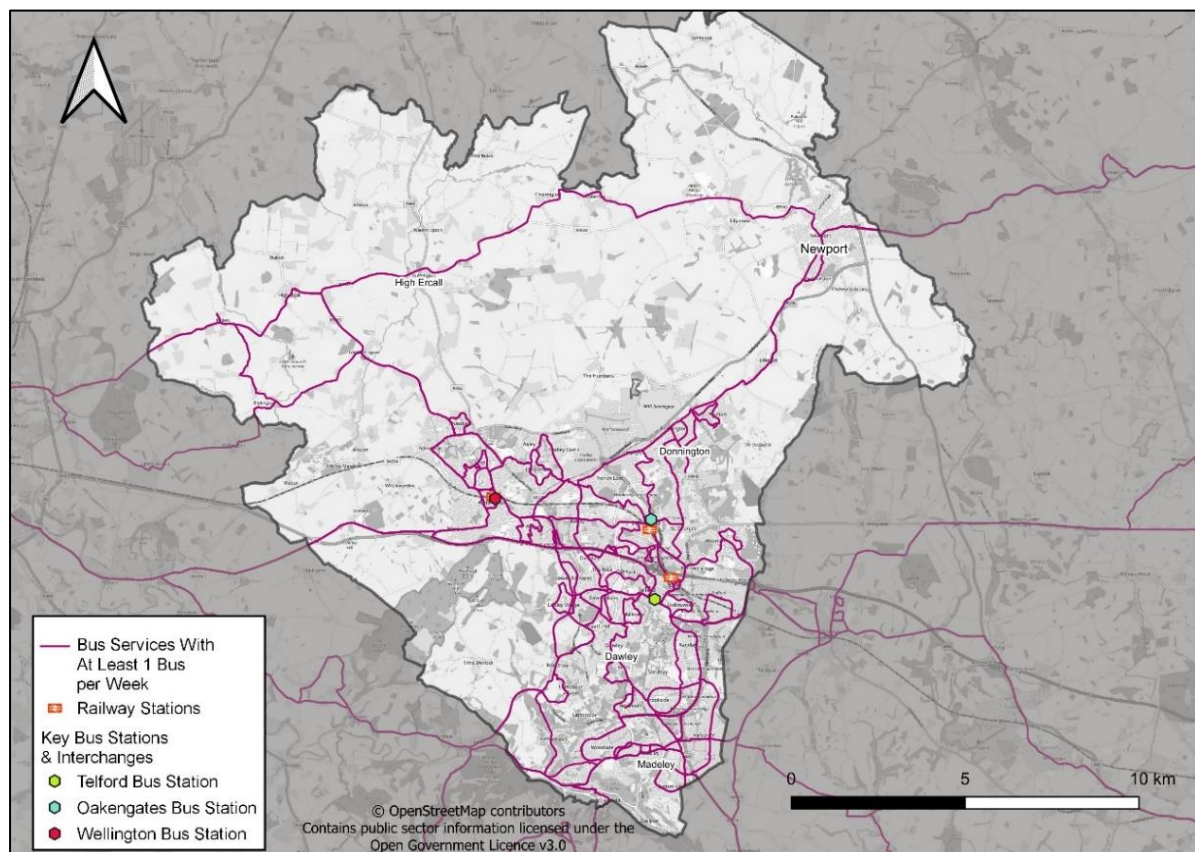
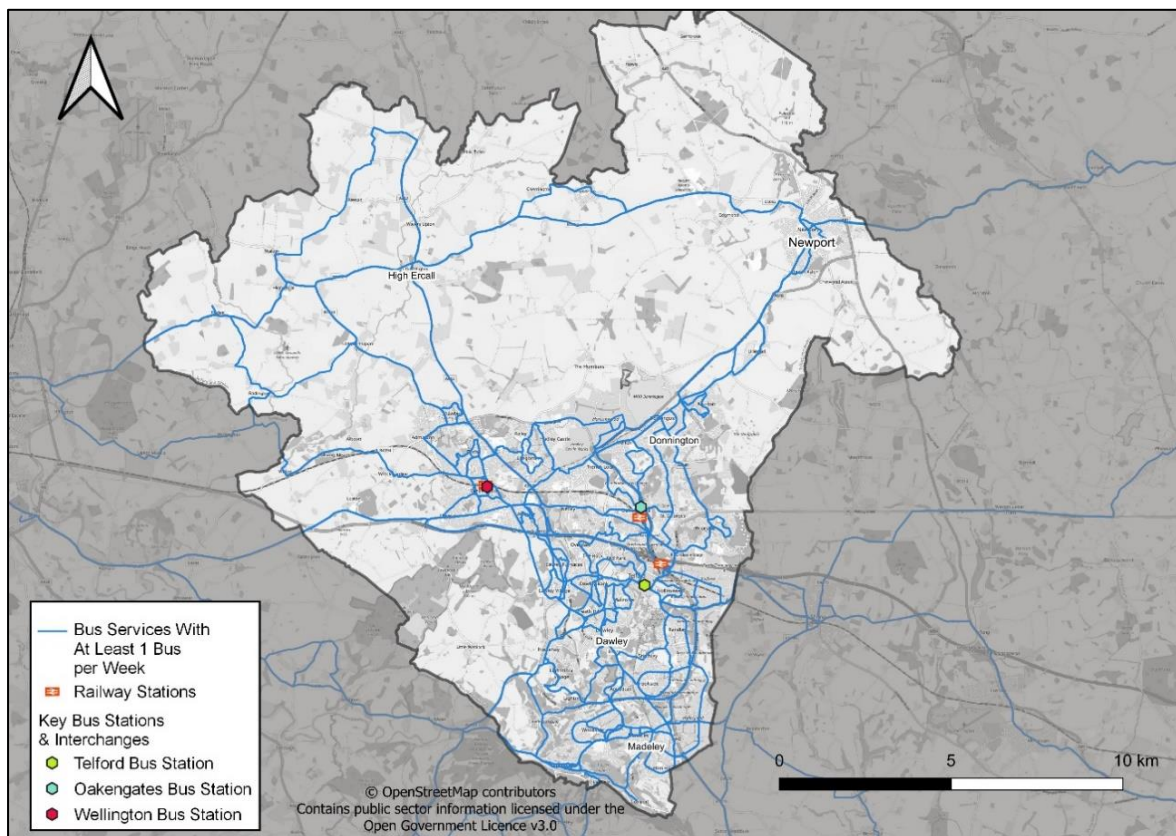


Figure 2-4 Bus services within Telford and Wrekin Q1 2024



The most significant change since the first BSIP is the new network of tendered bus services. In particular, the improved connectivity to all three major employment areas of Telford with the introduction of the 100 'Works Express' is proving to be successful. Feedback from users includes comments that the new service is saving one passenger approximately £100 per week, having previously been forced to use taxis to travel to their job. Patronage levels are continuing to grow, now at approximately 10,000 trips per month, demonstrating the positive outcome from the 2021/22 bus network review and gap analysis.

Similarly the new circular services 99A/C are providing improved connectivity around the north of urban Telford. Timed to support shift change times at Princess Royal Hospital, as well as key school start and finish times, the growth in usage, and estimated potential additional patronage, is sufficient to enhance the timetable using BSIP3 money to provide an improved hourly timetable.

The whole tendered network is designed around improving connections to the Princess Royal Hospital, with journeys provided where possible to tie in with key shift change times. Home-to-school movements have also been incorporated, encouraging children to use scheduled bus services rather than procured coach operations or more bespoke transport solutions.

The tendered routes have also been designed to complement the commercial network, avoiding where possible potential abstraction of patronage and hence maintaining the viability of the wider bus network across the borough.

The restoration of service 4 to a turn-up-and-go ten-minute frequency from May 2024 provides a welcome boost to passengers in its catchment. The enhancement demonstrates the continued rebuilding of patronage post-pandemic.

Whilst poor usage has led to the withdrawal of support for the tendered service provision late evenings and for some routes on Sundays, the lack of a comprehensive bus network covering the urban area across all days of the week is disappointing. The costs associated with procuring scheduled tendered services at these times, with their higher operating costs mostly due to driver pay structures for unsocial hours working, means that consideration is being given to reintroducing new service provision using alternative delivery formats. The success of the 100 demonstrates the need for services operating across the full week, to remove barriers to accessing employment, leisure and health opportunities.

Lower-frequency services in the borough are the routes outside the main urban area, including those to and within the rural north and to major settlements outside Telford.

2.3.1. Bus Service Outcomes

According to DfT bus statistics, there are around 17.5 bus passenger journeys a year for every resident in Telford & Wrekin. This bus passenger trip rate has fallen substantially, from high points of 35.5 in 2010/11 (just after the introduction of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme). Figure 7-2 of TBDAN shows that the decline in bus passenger trip rate is significantly steeper than in England as a whole or for the Midlands region.

Figure 7-3 of the TBEB compares the bus passenger trip rate against zero household car availability. It suggests that at the rate of zero car ownership observed in Telford at the 2021 Census, the projected bus passenger trip should be around 12 percentage points higher at around 30.

The reasons for this are various and are not fully understood but include:

- ✓ Dispersed patterns of employment
- ✓ Previous poor levels of non-car access to employment sites
- ✓ Journey time un-competitiveness for bus against car
- ✓ The urban layout of Telford

2.4. Supported Services

Figure 2-5 shows the network of services provided with financial support across the authority's area. Note that this figure shows the full extent of the supported network. It is likely that a number of the routes shown are overlaid by commercial services.

Telford & Wrekin Council currently has 3 contracts for tendered local bus services on 7 different services. These are for the operation of entire daytime services, with a focus on fulfilling mobility needs across the authority's area.

These contracts are expected to carry around 380,000 passengers per annum, or around 10% of the total passengers. The net cost – after fare-paying revenue and concessionary travel reimbursement – is expected to be around £1.3m.

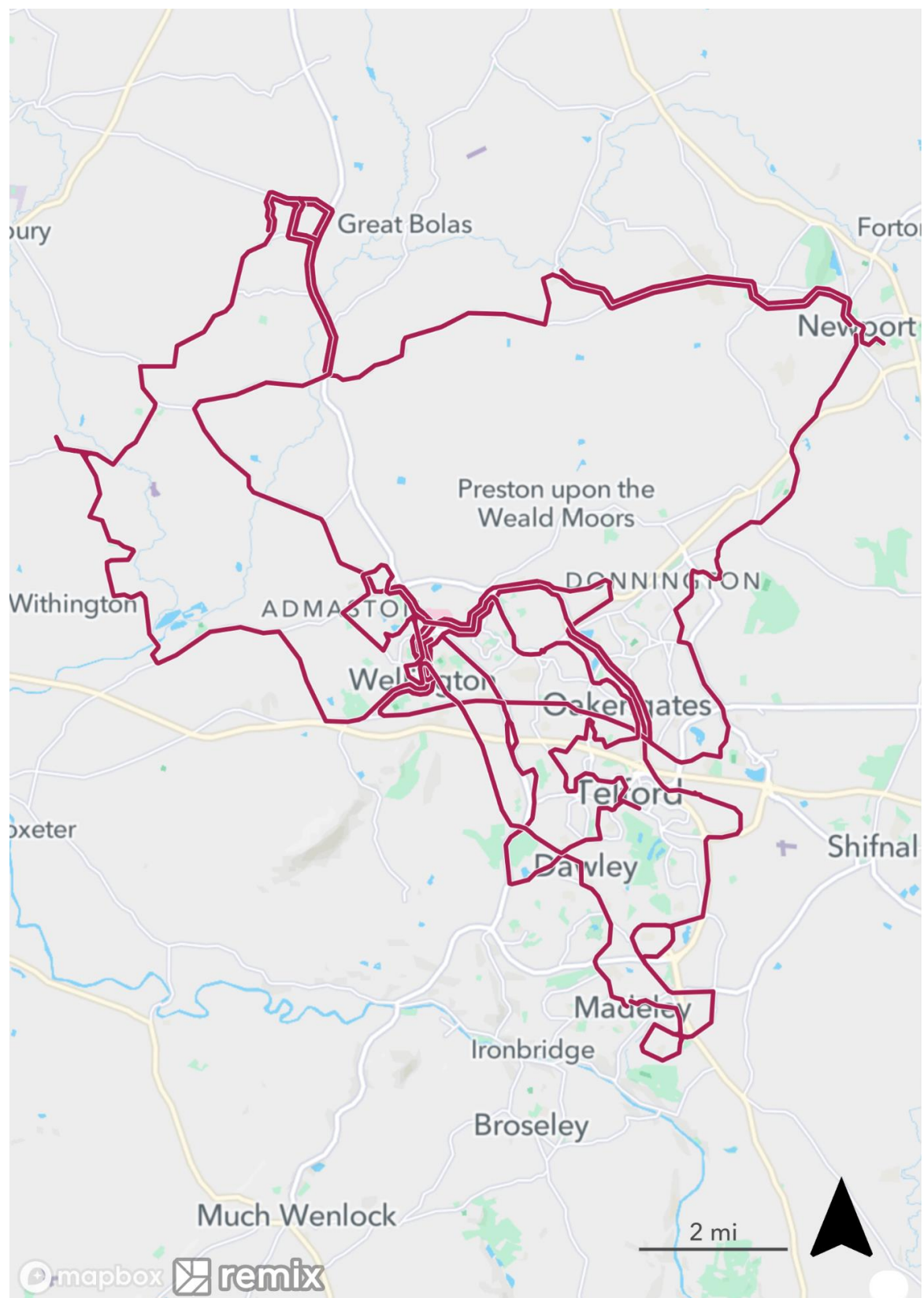
Table 6.2 in Section 6.1.3 of the TBDAN shows that 94% of the authority's population lives within 400m of a bus service, an increase of 3.7% on the 2021 situation. In 2024, 43% of the population live within 400m of a service with a frequency of 4 or more buses per hour, an increase of 12% on 2021. In contrast, the proportions within 400m of an hourly evening or hourly Sunday daytime service have reduced, following the network changes resulting from the authority's financial constraints and being unsuccessful in securing BSIP1 funding.

Change over 2021

Whilst the number of supported services has remained broadly the same, the opportunities afforded to residents by the tendered network have greatly improved. The revised network focused on improving connections to employment and education facilities, which has been achieved by removing duplicated mileage from the urban area and redeploying resources particularly to the more rural parts of the authority's area.

Continuing to be supported by existing and new Section 106 funds, along with the initial implementation of the 100 using the authority's own reserves (but now using BSIP2 funds), the financial position has broadly remained consistent.

Figure 2-5 Supported bus services in Telford and Wrekin, 2024



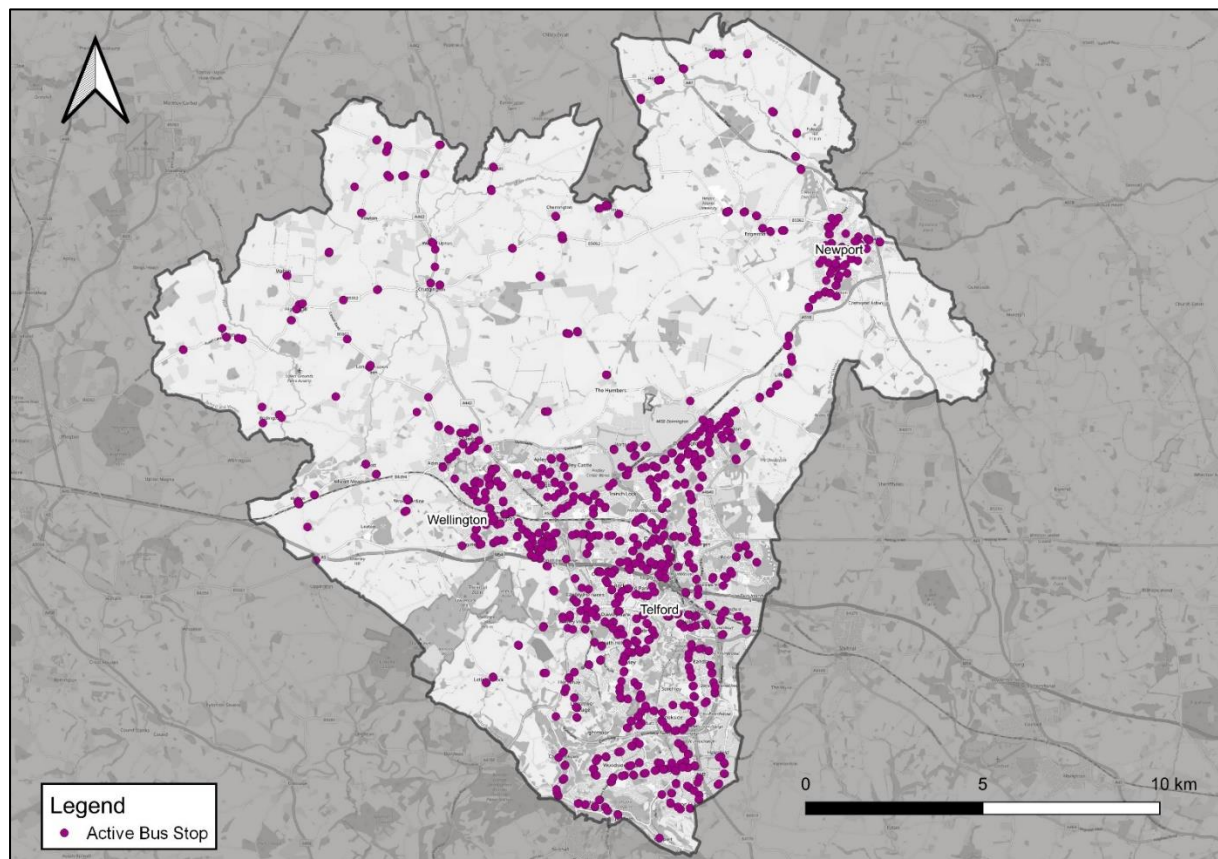
2.5. Bus Service Infrastructure

As of June 2024, there are currently 1022 bus stops in Telford and Wrekin², which are evenly distributed across the local authority area. Telford and Wrekin also feature bus stations within central Telford, Wellington, Oakengates, and Newport, along with local interchanges in Madeley and Hadley. The hub at Princess Royal Hospital, whilst on the hospital's land, acts as a focal point for main services within the area, although passenger facilities are constrained.

Overall, accessibility to bus stops is high with few residents outside a 400-metre walking distance.

Figure 2-6 displays the distribution of bus stops within Telford and Wrekin.

Figure 2-6 - Bus stops in Telford and Wrekin ²



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All bus stations feature CCTV for added security, with the CCTV at Wellington being upgraded by the council in 2022 as part of the comprehensive refurbishment of the bus station.

² [DfT \(2024\), NaPTAN and NPTG download options \[Sourced June 2024\]](#)

The authority is continuing with its investment programme to upgrade bus shelters across the borough. Approximately 10-15 shelters are being replaced annually, where possible installing solar panels and/or micro wind turbines in order to reduce on-going revenue costs for electricity connections.

Delivering the National Bus Strategy

Spend on infrastructure has been from the authority's own funds, as follows:

- ✓ 2021/22: £500,000 (includes the refurbishment of Wellington bus station)
- ✓ 2022/23: £250,000
- ✓ 2023/24: £250,000

2.6. Bus Fares

Although the national £2 single fare cap initiative has been welcomed, bus fares in Telford vary substantially. TBDAN Section 6.3 provides a summary of published fares. From this there is substantial variation in fares and the offers to different groups, notably younger people.

Table 2-1 illustrates some key fares charged by Telford's bus operators as of 2021 and 2024.

Table 2-1 - Adult Fares by Operator, Operation Area and Ticket Type

Operator	Operation Area	Day Ticket	Flexible 5 Days	Week Ticket	28-Day Ticket
Arriva Midlands North	Telford Local Zone (Including Telford, Newport and Shifnal)	£5.70	N/A – Available in day bundles	£22.00	£81.00
Arriva Midlands North	Travel Telford Local Zone (Route 99)	£4.00	N/A	£15.00	£50.00
Arriva Midlands North	Shropshire and Telford (Covering all of Shropshire including to Wolverhampton, Stoke, Stafford, Kidderminster, and Wrexham)	£7.90	N/A – Available in day bundles	£31.00	£103.00
Banga Buses	Route 891	£5.90 - Whole route Return £4.20 - Shifnal to Telford Return	N/A	£22.00	N/A
Chaserider	Travel Telford Local Zone	£4.00	N/A	£15.00	£50.00

Single and return cash fares information is not readily publicly available from most operators.

All operators accept payment on-bus by cash or contactless payment. Arriva and Chaserider both also offer tickets via their individual mobile phone apps.

The fares charged on the supported services are set by Telford and Wrekin Council as part of the tendering requirements. Adult single fares are £2, separately from the national initiative, with the child fare £1. Arriva's day and period tickets are also accepted at no extra charge, in order to remove cost barriers to travel for passengers requiring to use services of more than one operator.

Bus fares are slightly higher than rail fares, with Telford Central to Oakengates or Wellington being £3.80 Anytime return, falling to £3.30 Off Peak return. Telford has an active taxi and private hire market, although for most journeys the bus fare will be cheaper than a taxi fare for a single passenger. Group travel is often cheaper by taxi than bus.

Concessionary Travel

The provision of concessionary travel to older and disabled people is mandated by the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, and Telford & Wrekin Council operates the scheme between 09:30 and 23:00 on weekdays and all-day on Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays.

The provision of discounted fares to young people varies, with the fare reduction varying between operators. Availability of information relating to child fares is difficult to determine before boarding the bus. The Telford Teen Card has recently been relaunched jointly between Telford & Wrekin Council and Arriva. It is available to people 16-19 years old living in the authority's area, and allows the holder to purchase an adult weekly ticket usually priced at £18 at a reduced £15 fare.

Multi-Operator Ticketing

There is no multi-operator ticketing scheme in Telford.

Arriva's day and period tickets are accepted on the supported services, as part of Telford and Wrekin Council's efforts to reduce the costs of travelling by bus. At this point there is no reciprocal agreement in place for Arriva services, however, positive discussions are on ongoing between both parties.

Current situation compared to National Bus Strategy aspiration:

- ✓ There is no multi-operator ticketing scheme.
- ✓ Young persons' fares are not standardised.
- ✓ Lack of consistent fare offers for key groups, including students and job-seekers.

2.6.1. Bus Passenger Information

Telford & Wrekin Council provides timetable information for its supported services, but signposts users to Traveline West Midlands and operators' websites for commercial services information. For journey planning purposes, all operators provide websites with service information. Paper timetable leaflets are generally no longer provided publicly following the closure of the Travel Shop at Telford Bus Station, although can be requested direct from some operators.

Provision of fares information is variable.

Real-time information and journey planning is available on Citymapper the council's Travel Partner App for bus services in the borough. This is also available for Arriva's services on their mobile phone app. Telford & Wrekin Council has also introduced QR code real-time information, which has been rolled out across the Borough. Real-time information is available at Telford Town Centre, Wellington and Oakengates bus stations via screens and information totems.

The authority is also trialling an e-ink screen at its International Centre bus stop which is the country's first completely off grid bus shelter, powered through a combination of energy harvested from shelter-mounted solar panels and a vertical axis wind turbine. e-ink screens have also been installed at Wellington, as part of its comprehensive refurbishment.

The authority has a bus shelter replacement programme to roll out further real-time information screens at key interchange hub locations.

Current situation compared to National Bus Strategy aspiration:

- ✓ The environment of different operators providing services results in a potentially confusing presentation of information to passengers.
- ✓ There is no all-services map for the Borough.
- ✓ Information on fares is particularly opaque, with different operators providing different levels of information, and very limited information provided at stops.
- ✓ Limited provision of at-stop real time passenger information across the Borough.

2.7. Bus Fleet

Table 2-2 shows a breakdown of the combined vehicle fleet across all operators usually operating services in Telford, by emission standard. It can be seen that only around 55% currently conform to the latest Euro VI emission standard.

Table 2-2 - Bus Emission Standards

Number of vehicles in fleet	Euro IV	Euro V	Euro VI
Total: 64	8	21	35
percent	13%	34%	55%

There are currently no zero-emission vehicles operating in Telford, although the aspiration remains to introduce these ahead of any mandated deadlines.

Table 2-3 shows the provision of passenger facilities on vehicles. Around 6% the fleet has 'next stop' announcements in some form and around a 34% have on-board USB chargers.

Table 2-3 - Bus Facilities

Bus Operator	Number of vehicles in Telford services fleet	Next stop audio announcements*	Next stop visual announcements	WIFI	USB chargers
Arriva	55	0	0	0	18
Banga	2	0	0	0	0
Chaserider	6	4	0	0	4
Select	1	0	0	0	0
percent		6%	0%	0%	34%

*Note – becoming mandatory for all buses by 2026

Current situation compared to National Bus Strategy aspiration:

- ✓ A mixed fleet of poorer emissions standards, not supporting net zero carbon targets.
- ✓ Fleet presentation is variable, as is the quality of the passenger saloon and seating
- ✓ No vehicles provide next stop announcements.

2.8. Bus Priority Measures

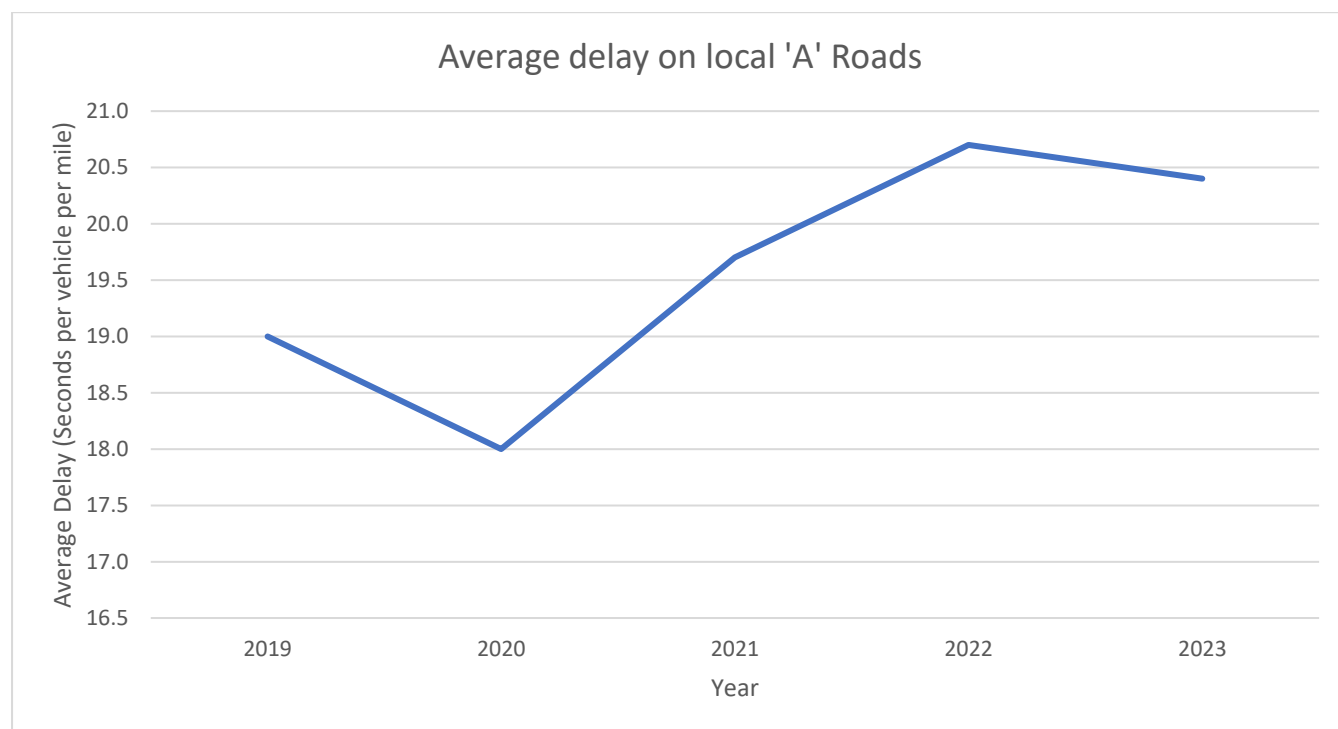
Telford & Wrekin Council have few physical bus priority measures, those present are mostly on the approaches to bus stations and interchanges. The measures are:

- ✓ Telford Central Railway Station bus gate
- ✓ Haybridge Road (Wellington Fire Station / Telford College) bus gate
- ✓ Trench Lock Roundabout bus gate
- ✓ King Street, Dawley, bus gate

Traffic congestion within the authority's area is variable, with the older parts of the area (Wellington, Oakengates) having more constrained highway networks and junctions, and so are more prone to congestion. The new town areas of Telford generally have wider distributor roads, with bus services routed through the residential districts and local centres, which can experience slower traffic speeds due to schools traffic and general local access movements.

Average speeds and delays within Telford are generally significantly better than the national average, suggesting there is limited congestion and delay on the locally-managed A roads. Figure 2-7 shows average delays across Telford's highway network, as measured by Seconds Per Vehicle Per Minute. As can be noted, delays have increased since the low of 2020, but the drop in 2023 is as a result of the conclusion of several sets of roadworks which impacted the 2022 figures.

Figure 2-7 - Average Delay on local 'A' roads in Telford and Wrekin



Current situation compared to National Bus Strategy aspiration:

- ✓ Few priority measures and a number of pinch-points on the bus network.
- ✓ Some sensitive junctions space-constrained, so consideration of intelligent solutions.
- ✓ No 'whole route' bus priority measures

2.9. Views of Passengers and Stakeholders

Public Consultation

To understand perception of Telford's current bus network, a public engagement questionnaire was launched in late July 2021 and ran for three weeks. The survey was promoted via the Council's social media channels, and also by Arriva. Engagement was sought from existing bus users and non-users; of the 253 responses received, 106 were bus users and 147 non-users.

Of bus users, 70% stated that they used them for shopping, with social activities and health and medical appointments, at 59% and 29% being the second and third top responses. 19% said they used it to travel to and from work and 10% said they used

buses during the course of their employment or business activities. When asked about feelings of safety, 64% of bus users said they felt safe when travelling on the bus.

For non-users, when asked why they don't use bus services, the responses shown in Figure 2-8 were given.

Why don't you currently use about the bus service? (select all that apply)

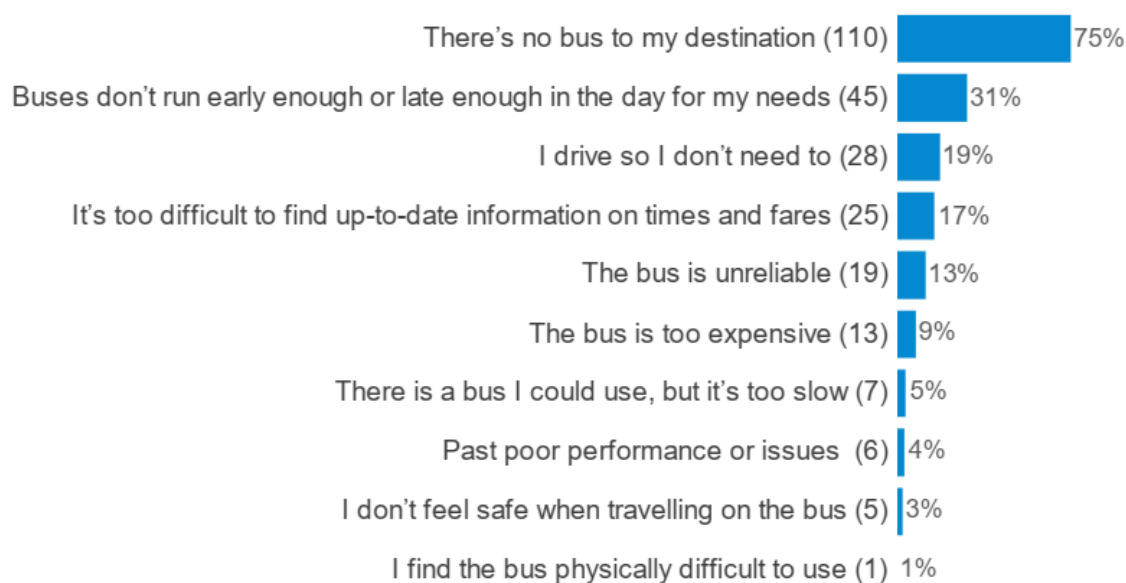


Figure 2-8 Non-user reasons for not using the bus

Cuts to services during the pandemic, particularly in the rural north of the Borough, have led to feelings of social isolation. One such route, provided under contract by a neighbouring authority due to the links it provided within that authority's area, was mentioned several times.

Fares (simpler, better value, multi-operator and payment options), network coverage (number of destinations and earlier/later journeys), service reliability/journey times and information availability (timetables and real time) were key themes amongst both groups of respondents, indicating that the well-understood basics of bus service delivery (punctual, reliable, frequent, value-for-money fares and easily-understood network) are still key concerns amongst passengers and potential users in Telford.

In addition, internal links within Telford & Wrekin Council have been used to explore issues some key vulnerable groups have identified with using bus services. In particular, a Learning Disability Consultation exercise identified that 42% of respondents felt that access to public transport was not easy and safe. Some of the issues around access relate to understanding fares and timetables, gaining experience with using buses and being able to cope when problems arise with bus services (late or very busy buses). Travel training programmes will be considered to assist users identified as being able and willing to use buses on their own, once

appropriate familiarisation and support has been given. Disability awareness training will also be considered for the operators.

Recent engagement has been focussed on enquiries about reduced fares for teenagers (the Teen card) and options for expanding this fares initiative. As was highlighted, the National Bus Strategy and the Bus Service Improvement Plan's funding request presents opportunities for securing funding to improve the discount offered and also to expand the scheme to other young person ages, thereby supporting access to education, training and employment opportunities and also to promote continued bus travel rather than learning to drive.

A further public consultation exercise recently concluded in December 2024 with over 350 residents responding. In addition, Telford is considering procuring more in-depth surveys from Transport Focus, over and above its 'Your Journey Matters' programme.

As part of the continuous monitoring of the tendered services, feedback (both positive and negative) is received from passengers across a range of points. Consideration is being given to more targeted engagement with current passengers of these services, in order to understand their perceptions of the route, why/how they use them, and what focused improvements might be made subject to funding.

Stakeholder Consultation

Telford & Wrekin Council consulted with the Members of Parliament, disability and bus user groups, key education establishments, the NHS, Chambers of Commerce, National Highways and tertiary education establishments. This engagement sought the views of these establishments and drew attention to the residents' survey just described.

Responses received considered issues of accessibility, particularly to employment locations, and for residents of a number of settlements. A desire for improved passenger information and integrated ticketing featured highly in responses. Department for Work and Pensions also provided feedback on general and specific issues faced by jobseekers which we have taken into account in preparing this BSIP.

Further engagement is secured through the participation of various stakeholders in the Enhanced Partnership Forum, with items raised then discussed as relevant by the EP Board and/or Telford and Wrekin officers.

As part of the development of the tendered services, particularly in the rural areas, consideration is being given to more targeted engagement with parish councils to seek views on how the services might be amended within available funding.

3. Improvements programme to 2025

Telford & Wrekin Council has committed to using its BSIP Phase 2, BSIP funding to support and develop the commercial bus network in targeted ways. The Council's funding allocation was as follows:

Funding stream	2023/24	2024/25
BSIP2 (BSIP+)	£650,938	£650,938
Network North	-	£1,055,000
TOTAL	£650,938	£1,705,938

The following summary shows the breakdown of how the Council has committed its funding up to the March 2025. A portion of the funding has not yet been committed in order for the Council to be able to react to any future unexpected demands on this funding. It will also allow the Council to taper this funding more gradually into the summer of 2025 if further funding is not made available.

Initiative	Funding
New DRT scheme to provide more tailored access opportunities to major employment locations	£485,000
Network stabilisation and targeted enhancements, supporting key links whilst alternative service delivery approaches are assessed	£901,000
Understanding passenger and non-user perceptions of bus services, including barriers to use and perceived network gaps	£20,000
Targeted discount fare schemes across supported services - specific period discounts (e.g. school holidays, evening offers) and targeted passenger groups, based on feedback	£150,000
Procurement of new MaaS app, to cover bus fares and other travel/mode options	£100,000
Marketing campaign highlighting tourist destinations accessible by bus, also new bus service promotion	£50,000

Funding use 2023/24

The BSIP2 funding allocated for 2023/24 has permitted the Council to continue supporting its new network of tendered services as outlined previously, providing stability to the new routes and allowing patronage to grow. In particular the 100 Work Express route is seeing strong patterns of use with a growth of 13,000 passengers per month, but still with some challenges for long-term viability.

The more recent introduction of services 99A and 99C, using a combination of S106 funds and BSIP2, has enabled improved links to be provided to many areas of Telford, where previous routes focused solely on links to Telford town centre did not fully cater for other demand movements.

English National Concessionary Travel Scheme

Telford & Wrekin Council committed to maintaining ENCTS reimbursement to operators throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, to give operators maximum certainty possible over funding sources. In 2023/24 this was paid at 100% of pre-COVID levels.

For financial year 2024/25, reimbursement will revert to a fixed pot at a similar value to 2023/24, but with discussions continuing with operators to explore how additional concessionary trips could be encouraged back to use the bus.

3.1. Developing the bus offering for 2024/25

Continuing with the network improvements from 2023/24, the Council will continue to commit its BSIP2 and Network North funds to target further development of the network. Due to the lack of certainty of on-going funding, and inflationary pressures on contract costs, the Council is taking a balanced approach to initiatives with a view to increasing revenue received on its tendered services and hence moving some towards being commercially viable. The Council will also continue working with operators to improve the viability of commercial network, maintaining coverage and/or extending operating hours without additional support.

The most significant improvement to be launched in 2024/25 will be the new Demand Responsive Transport service. This will initially be implemented in the Ironbridge Gorge area, which has proven difficult to serve by larger vehicles more commonly available in operator fleets.

Fares

The Council will continue working with operators towards the introduction of a multi-operator ticketing product, so that residents can use all services with no further fare penalty, particularly to remove barriers to accessing employment opportunities on the tendered services.

The council will also continue to launch, fund and promote targeted fare schemes. One such example is the recent half term 50p promotion week which saw a 10% increase in patronage over the week. Most recently the council has provided the 50p promotion between 16th December 2024 and 12th January 2025.

There is also a commitment to keep fares on the tendered services capped at £2 per journey, Fares have always been capped at £2 per single journey (£1 child) and fully funded by the authority, which was introduced before the national fare scheme was in place.

Bus passenger infrastructure

Continue to upgrade shelters including real time information where appropriate. Add a point about considering sustainable power, green roofs etc. Wherever possible to support wider climate emergency and green agenda.

The council will continue working with its operator partners to commit to a **passengers' charter** which will be succinct and offer clear definitions of:

- ✓ Responsibility;
- ✓ Channels for feedback;
- ✓ Standards for information supply and
- ✓ Targets for responding honestly and individually.

It will outline aims in relation to:

- ✓ Quality;
- ✓ Safety;
- ✓ Reliability;
- ✓ Cleanliness and presentation;
- ✓ Environmental targets and
- ✓ Accessibility.

It is also likely to include some form of refund promise or mechanism following failure to deliver and a 'get you home' promise if last journeys fail to run. Where relevant, the charter will be aligned to those of neighbouring authorities, in order to strengthen passengers' awareness of the charter and avoid confusion where standards differ between adjacent authorities.

In addition to the anticipated standard Transport Focus short user questionnaire, TWC will procure additional in-depth annual surveys of passengers, to provide more detailed understanding of trends in satisfaction, and supporting the delivery of the Enhanced Partnership by indicating where targeted improvements may be required to improve passenger perception of the network and facilities.

Local transport authority staffing within the Council is constrained, with two full-time officers covering public transport functions alongside other responsibilities such as home-to-school transport and management of the in-house minibus fleet.

With the implementation of the DRT services and the ambition to undertake more regular monitoring of the commercial network and delivery of tendered routes, additional resources are being considered. These may also support with the coordination of the programme of infrastructure improvement works, promotion of bus services across the Borough, and more regular engagement with major employers and education sites to ensure that bus services best meet employee and scholar transport needs.

Bus operator staffing is generally not a significant problem within Telford, particularly for driving staff.

The Council will continue to discuss and monitor resource issues with operators on a regular basis, using Enhanced Partnership meetings and other opportunities to understand the evolving issues. The authority is happy to support initiatives introduced by operators to try and encourage more staff into the public transport industry.

4. Ambitions and proposals for 2025 and beyond

4.1. Bus network planning and improvements to bus services: service level and network coverage

As part of the Enhanced Partnership ambition to support **collaborative network development**, including the identification of network improvements, Telford & Wrekin Council have invested in bus network planning software to provide evidence-based discussions to explore network enhancements with greater probabilities of being more commercially viable. Existing regular meetings with operators will be used to understand network delay locations and to identify where interventions may be of benefits. In addition, the fitting of passenger counting and Tap On Tap Off equipment to the whole Telford bus fleet will provide more detailed boarding and alighting information to be collected, further improving the understanding of network usage patterns and to be fed through to further network planning initiatives.

Regular reviews of patronage trends will identify where further service enhancements could be made commercially, or with short-term targeted support, such as extending service provision later into the evenings. This may be achieved in conjunction with service delivery improvements by the authority, with the Enhanced Partnership agreeing operators reinvest savings back into the network (as later services).

Services to employment areas are still a key concern, despite the success of the new services. Continuing to draw on available data such as economically inactive and journey to work statistics, working with employers and the Employment Service, and recognising the need for cost-effective service options to ensure long-term sustainability (ideally commercial provision but likely initially requiring service support within adopted criteria), further options for network enhancements will be explored, particularly as employment and residential zones continue to be developed. These may take the form of Demand Responsive services, which are better suited to dispersed trip patterns and flexible enough to cater for different working patterns across large employment parks, and/or supplement the levels of service of the scheduled bus network. Alternatively, funding contributions will be used to target amendments to existing services, so as to bolster viability and ensure that new residents and employees benefit from more comprehensive bus network coverage.

Service frequencies at present are matched to demand and service viability, with some core services still operating at lower frequencies than before the pandemic. Working with partners, service frequency improvements towards an ideal of a 10-minute daytime headway on core services will be agreed, currently only one service operates to this frequency, the target will be to expand this to four services by 2030. Second-tier routes will have an ambition of standardised half-hourly daytime headways.

Evening and Sunday service frequencies will be reviewed with the aspiration to introducing additional services to boost connectivity across Telford at all times of day, particularly for vulnerable users and to areas of low car ownership. Sunday evening service provision will be discussed with partners to determine the factors likely to support their introduction – consideration of trial services with suitable promotion, tied-in with major events, will be discussed to determine stakeholders' opinions.

Overall network stability is a key ambition, to provide sound, viable services on which frequency and other enhancements can then be made. By securing the core network, through targeted support funding, network enhancements build up from existing patterns rather than trying to re-establish previous journey opportunities.

Further opportunities will be monitored from new housing and employment developments. We will work with colleagues within the authority to adopt a Special Planning Document relating to bus service funding, which will set out funding formulae and the level of service to be provided, to provide improved transparency to developers of the levels of bus support sought to match the aspirations set out in this BSIP.

Opportunities have been identified where **Demand Responsive Transport** services could provide valuable additions to the public transport network. These will continue to be explored alongside the main public bus network.

Ambition summary

- ✓ Continuation of the DRT scheme, including expansion into additional areas
- ✓ Review and enhancement of existing supported services, offering extended service hours and targeted coverage improvements
- ✓ Service enhancements for new developments, using Section 106 funding to introduce financially-sustainable network amendments

4.2. Bus priority: delivering faster and more reliable services on priority routes/corridors

We will work with operators to build a stronger network with faster links between key centres and improved services connecting into these hubs. We propose a range of measures, from some new physical priority interventions, through the use of telematics to provide virtual priority, and reviewing Traffic Regulation Orders, to reduce bus journey times and facilitate reliable operation.

The following bus priority measures are proposed, subject to funding, technical and construction feasibility and delivery:

- ✓ Traffic signal enhancements and Selected Vehicle Detection at Hollinswood, Apley and two other junctions, identified by using delay and patronage data, to allow buses to pass through the junctions more quickly;

- ✓ Reviews of all routes to identify pinch-points and deliver improvements to reduce regular delays, including infrastructure, re-sited bus stops, revised TROs; and
- ✓ Review of traffic signal coordination to better match bus journey times through sections.

We recognise there are other means by which journey times can be improved, and by which reliability will be enhanced. We will:

- ✓ Review the process of communicating roadworks with operators, with the aim of enabling better planning and communication of diversions; and
- ✓ Review Traffic Regulation Orders in force at bus stop clearways, with a view to standardising on '24-7' operation.



Finally, we will undertake a review of each bus route, to identify locations where minor works or a review of parking and loading controls could ease pinch-points for buses. It will also review the potential to fill in bus stop laybys, which are identified with delays to buses departing from the stop, and review the location of all stops to determine whether there are any which would benefit from minor relocation. Subject to funding we will commit to a programme of reviewing 3 bus routes a year under the Enhanced Partnership.

Ambition summary

- Review of all routes for potential focused highway improvements at delay locations, with physical mitigation or the implementation of other techniques, to reduce bus unreliability.

4.3. Improvements to fares and ticketing

The underlying range of single, return and day tickets are a legacy from historic fare structures, and are higher than fares in many comparable areas. As part of Telford & Wrekin Council's long-held bus network development aspirations, the desire to reduce the price of a day ticket is being realised, subject to funding.

Acknowledging the current legal framework regarding fares reductions and reimbursement, with reimbursement funding the price of single-operator day ticket products would be reduced to £4, valid within the T&WC area.

The national move to £3 single fare cap will be monitored, and discussions held with operators to understand whether it is possible to commercially maintain single cash fares better aligned with the £4 day ticket aspiration. If the fare cap is removed completely, initial discussions with Arriva have indicated that they are willing to

simplify their current 12 single tickets down to a much simpler fare structure, with corresponding child/teen and return fares.

In advance of the national bus ticketing back office, including fare capping, discussions are continuing with operators to introduce a simple multi-operator ticketing product. This may take the form of mutual acceptance of each other's day tickets within the Telford & Wrekin boundary, or the sale of a specific multi-operator ticket for the same price as the operator's own day ticket (allowing usage to be monitored, but with revenue lying where it falls). Once the multi-operator day ticket is established, work will continue to expand the product range to longer period tickets and across all age ranges.

Alongside the reduction of the day ticket price, support is being given to the operators to bring their fare zones into alignment, and to agree a consistent young persons' eligibility criteria and discount.

Recognising the difficulties faced by some age groups or those with protected characteristics, the Council will develop targeted ticketing initiatives which will remove the potential barrier of travel costs from their daily considerations.

If the dynamic of the bus market were to change in Telford, the role and form of a multi-operator product would be reviewed. If a more formal product with revenue allocation is deemed to be required, best practice knowledge would be sought from the Centre of Excellence, and with neighbouring or similar authorities who already have ticket products with revenue allocation.

It is the ambition that Telford & Wrekin would take an early lead in the rollout of ticketing solutions which better support fare-capping, multi-modal journeys and ticket purchase across bus, rail and cycling.

Tap On, Tap Off ticketing equipment will also be introduced, to support fares capping for all contactless payment methods, including those unbanked

Ambition summary

- ✓ Introduction of a £4 all operators day ticket
- ✓ Targeted promotions/period tickets on supported services and/or for specific demographic groups
- ✓ If the current £2 single fare cap ends, work with operators to simplify fare structures and standardise concessions offers

4.4. Improvements to the bus passenger experience:

Improved bus stops, bus stations and interchanges

Telford and Wrekin are seeking to further decarbonise their roadside infrastructure, with an aspiration to replace this on-grid supply with additional off-grid renewable energy shelters. There is a requirement for more real-time and timetable information at bus stops, which will need powering. The e-paper screens have minimal power

requirements as they are a “bi-stable” display, meaning that they only consume power as the display updates, placing markedly lower stress on the batteries being charged by the solar panels/wind turbine.

When upgrading shelters sedum roofs will be installed which provide a habitat or at least a food-source for a diverse number of species. As well as the biodiversity advantages of sedum roofs, there are pollution reduction benefits which will help the council achieve its aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Furthermore, as part of the shelter replacement programme, and subject to funding the new shelters in key air-quality hot-spot locations will be fitted with air quality monitoring equipment. Current air quality monitoring within Telford is limited to a single monitoring site in Hollinswood. Information available for the surrounding areas is based upon synthesised computer modelling, not hard data. The implementation of a dense network of low-cost and low-power sensors will allow the authority to obtain more accurate representations of air quality in the Borough, specifically roadside, measuring the impact of our proposed upgrade of bus fleets.

The data gathered will be used to develop future service enhancement strategies, shaped around introducing zero-emission buses on routes through the areas of concern, as well as guiding wider policy initiatives at managing and reducing poor air quality from road traffic in general.

Ambition summary

- ✓ Continuation of the bus shelter upgrade programme
- ✓ Refurbish remain interchanges and hubs, to bring up to the standard of Wellington bus station

Improved bus information and network identity

The availability of accurate and clear information was a clear theme from the public engagement survey. We propose a suite of measures to improve the situation:

- ✓ The continued development and rollout of our CityMapper in 2024, which provides access to clear timetable information, fares and ticketing details and also supports access to the DRT scheme booking facility, future cycle hire scheme, walking routes and aspiration to include rail for integrated journeys.
- ✓ Through the bus stop upgrade programme, ensure that at-stop information is standardised, to allow easy use and updating, including consistent network brand presentation and access to online information. This applies to both e-ink and paper timetable displays.
- ✓ Roll out QR codes to all services nudging passengers to download the Citymapper app, ensuring the codes are prominently displayed at each stop. The QR codes also improve accessibility, as they leverage the users’ own device to provide information, and services can be announced directly from their smart phone.

- ✓ Subject to funding, roll out solar-powered e-paper static timetable information displays (with push-button assisted audio technology) to 100 stops, as part of a large-scale demonstration project (potentially tying-in with other authorities seeking to deliver similar schemes).
- ✓ Utilise the new digital and e-paper technology to further raise awareness of improvements to the bus network. Effective Content Management of the displays will allow Telford to deliver advertising campaigns highlighting new fare structures and services.
- ✓ Display infrastructure and Citymapper will further enable the local authority to disseminate key disruption messaging, enabling the authority to get key information to the passengers waiting at stop.
- ✓ Subject to funding, expand the shelter replacement programme, building on the success of the demonstration shelters installed across the borough.

The council are keen to create a strong local brand for travel within the Borough, a brand that is local, giving people a sense of pride in their network. The majority of buses operating in Telford are based at locally, with only a limited number travelling extensively beyond the authority's boundary. Therefore the rollout of the Travel Telford brand to vehicles operating wholly within Telford will mean that the majority of services will be distinctively branded and aligned to wider information and promotional visual identities. New services operating under tender to the council, where the buses are dedicated to these routes, will use local branding on vehicles and staff uniforms.

TravelTelford



For vehicles which are not based locally, or are allocated to services into other authority areas, we will work with operators to determine an appropriate brand presentation, ensuring that passengers are aware that the service is part of the Travel Telford brand and any associated ticketing initiatives.

Bus stop infrastructure upgrades will ensure that information is presented in a consistent manner, using the Travel Telford brand and colours. The website and Citymapper app will be similarly-branded, further strengthening network identity and familiarity.

Ambition summary

- ✓ Install new stop flags and timetable cases at all stops without a shelter
- ✓ Roll out the Travel Telford branding to all stops

Accessibility, inclusiveness, personal safety and security

The installation of standardised bus stop infrastructure will provide reassurance to passengers who will know what to expect at each stop type, including availability of real time information (confirmation of waiting time), seating (for passengers not able to stand for periods) and also regular maintenance and cleaning, meaning that waiting facilities are safe. We will identify and develop solutions for bus stops which do not meet accessibility standards. This will include the route reviews, where the filling-in of bus stop laybys could assist with improving the quality and accessibility of stops, as well as reducing delays to buses in re-joining traffic flows (improving service reliability).

We will review access routes to bus stops, including footpaths as part of the series of route reviews described previously. We will incorporate safe route assessments and draw on recent research into safer design for lone female passengers, relevant for other vulnerable users. The opportunity will also be taken to trim or remove excess vegetation around stops, further increasing visibility of waiting passengers. We will implement CCTV at the key interchanges and upgraded bus shelters as part of their refurbishment programmes. All new shelters will be glazed, improving passive surveillance and hence improving personal safety at stops.

Building on earlier successes, the post 16/ adult Travel Training programme will continue. This will provide focussed support to any person who is unsure about using the bus network, whether due to mobility issues, neurological divergence or general apprehension about how to access and pay for bus travel. This programme will be delivered through the authority's expanded Public Transport team's capabilities, thereby ensuring that correct information is provided as part of the individual's targeted support sessions. Bus driver disability awareness training will also be required to be provided as part of the Enhanced Partnership, with all drivers to have received the training within 12 months of the introduction of the EP.

Finally, we will ensure that as part of closer working with Planning colleagues, new developments take account of the needs of bus users, and efficient use by bus operators.

Ambition summary

- ✓ Programme of 'Getting Home Safely' audits and consequential improvement programme, such as installing raised kerbs where absent, improved lighting and safe crossing points

Implementing the Bus Passenger Charter

The council will continue working with its operator partners to commit to a passengers' charter which will be succinct and offer clear definitions of:

- ✓ Responsibility;
- ✓ Channels for feedback;

- ✓ Standards for information supply and
- ✓ Targets for responding honestly and individually.

It will outline aims in relation to:

- ✓ Quality;
- ✓ Safety;
- ✓ Reliability;
- ✓ Cleanliness and presentation;
- ✓ Environmental targets and
- ✓ Accessibility.

It is also likely to include some form of refund promise or mechanism following failure to deliver and a 'get you home' promise if last journeys fail to run. In addition to the anticipated standard Transport Focus short user questionnaire, TWC will procure additional in-depth annual surveys of passengers, to provide more detailed understanding of trends in satisfaction, and supporting the delivery of the Enhanced Partnership by indicating where targeted improvements may be required to improve passenger perception of the network and facilities.

Ambition summary

- ✓ Additional service monitoring, including tendered services, to ensure continuous improvement and consistent service delivery.

4.5. Improvements to the bus fleet

In July 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to ensure its activities and operations are carbon neutral by 2030. opportunities with associated infrastructure over the coming years. Working with operators, we will seek funding to deliver a migration to zero-emission bus fleet, with the core network of key services being the initial focus for zero emission vehicle investment. In order to encourage take-up of opportunities, this funding offer would be subject to State Aid requirements, and be delivered via the Enhanced Partnership to ensure all parties contribute positively, but would provide a greater proportion of the differential costs than has been possible through other recent initiatives.

Recognising the current age profile of the combined Telford bus fleet, in the interim we will work with operators to identify a programme of fleet investment, and subject to funding, introduce a refurbishment programme to deliver an improved standard of presentation on vehicles with reduced emissions and better-quality passenger environment. The refurbishment programme will deliver vehicles with as-new qualities of presentation and provide passengers with a much-enhanced on-board ambience.

Although no area of Telford is an Air Quality Management Area³, poor air quality is still a concern. Recognising the age profile of the current fleet, as a lower-cost alternative to zero emission vehicles for the 4, we will implement the retrofit of exhaust treatment systems to the whole fleet, as part of the refurbishment programme. This will reduce bus emissions during the transition to a zero-carbon fleet.



Support will be given to wider bus industry initiatives, in collaboration with DfT and the Government, through the reform of Bus Service Operator's Grant to better incentivise and provide ongoing funding certainty for zero emission vehicles.

Ambition summary

- ✓ Work with operators to improve the presentation of the local fleet
- ✓ Continue to seek funding for the introduction of zero-emission vehicles ahead of any mandated timescales

4.6. Longer term transformation of the network

Given the positive relationship with bus operators, the Council will continue to pursue improvements to the bus network through the Enhanced Partnership. However, the Council will monitor closely any changes to the regulatory landscape which may permit it to take greater control over the bus network, and will look to work closely with operators and other neighbouring authorities which may also consider franchising bus services.

³ https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/16967/annual_status_report_2020

5. Target Development

This section outlines our revised targets for:

- ✓ Patronage;
- ✓ Customer satisfaction;
- ✓ Bus speeds; and
- ✓ Bus reliability.

It expresses ambitious targets, on the basis that current levels of investment in the bus proposition continue, further funding is secured to enable us to fulfil our aspirations described in Section 4, and that development and land-use decisions and outcomes are favourable to facilitating the delivery of speedy, reliable and efficient bus services and are favourable to encouraging more residents to travel by bus more often.

Delivery against the targets outlined above will be assessed on a regular basis, according to the guidance that DfT delivers.

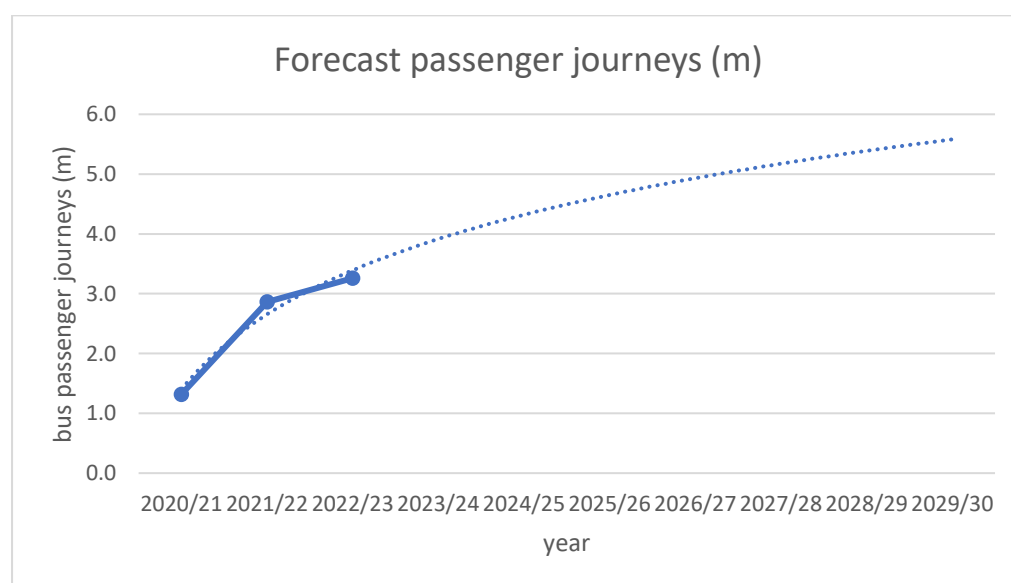
5.1. Bus patronage

Patronage has increased since 2021. This is likely to have been in response to improved bus service delivery, more supported bus services, and improvements to roadside infrastructure.

Target Development

Figure 5-1 shows a trajectory of current patronage trends for Telford and Wrekin Council to 2030.

Figure 5-1 Estimated Patronage Trajectory to 2030



This suggested trajectory represents 72% growth over 2022/23 levels. However, this is based on the rebuilding of patronage since 2020, using two years' data.

For this BSIP target, we are aiming for 4.5 million passenger journeys by 2030, representing 36% growth, which is felt to be realistically ambitious. For reference, the 2029/30 target is the same as the patronage carried in 2016/17.

We expect this target to be achieved by the application of funding which improves performance under these broad headings:

- ✓ Improved reliability
- ✓ Improved punctuality
- ✓ Network development, including the implementation and expansion of DRT services
- ✓ Improved fares offers, particularly towards those with protected characteristics
- ✓ Buses: next stop audio-visual; conversion to zero-emission
- ✓ Improved accessibility at bus stops
- ✓ Improved information online and at bus stops

5.2. Passenger Satisfaction

Telford and Wrekin Council does not currently participate in Passenger Focus's "Your Bus Journey" programme of interview surveys with bus passengers. However, it intends to in the future.

Target Development

The current average for overall satisfaction in semi-rural authorities participating in the survey is 83% (range 79% to 85%). Our aim will be to baseline at 83%, with increases each year to achieve 85% by 2030. We expect to achieve this through:

- ✓ Improved reliability
- ✓ Improved punctuality
- ✓ Enhanced network and more frequent services
- ✓ On-bus next stop audio-visual announcements
- ✓ Improved quality of information, and easier access to it
- ✓ Improved bus stop accessibility

5.3. Bus Speeds

Analysis undertaken on the service 4 indicates a journey time differential between peak hour and off-peak trips of approximately 12 minutes, suggesting that bus speeds in the peak hour in the peak direction would need to increase by an average of 16% to match average interpeak speeds.

Target Development

We do not believe it is realistic to achieve parity between peak and interpeak journey times as even with the introduction of extensive bus priority measures it is inevitable that buses will still encounter congestion and other time delays. We therefore believe that a 6% increase in speed in the busiest peak hour and direction is a stretching but achievable target.

We will achieve this through:

- ✓ Improved roadworks (means fewer diversions);
- ✓ Quicker boarding (TOTO; simpler fares);
- ✓ Tap On, Tap Off ticketing equipment will also be introduced, to support fares capping for all contactless payment methods, including those unbanked;
- ✓ Targeted bus priority measures; where evidenced as beneficial to buses without disbenefit to general traffic.

5.4. Bus Journey Time Reliability

The measures put forward above will also deliver greater consistency of journey times, which will translate into improvements in reliability.

The percentage of buses recorded as on-time at timing points in 2021/22 was 84.6%, with 2022/23 being 83% - an improvement over the years prior to the Pandemic (2014/15 to 2018/19 where a range of 64% to 87.7% (average 76.4%) was experienced.

Our baseline is therefore 83% of buses on-time.

With the recent improvement of the timetable for service 4, restoring it to its pre-pandemic frequency of six buses per hour, this now means that the service can be considered high frequency.

Such services can alternatively be monitored in terms of the 'Excess Wait Time' (EWT) formula. EWT measures the additional time that, on average, a passenger who turns up at a bus stop at random can expect to wait for a bus and is considered to be a measure that better reflects the passenger experience of reliability for high frequency services than deviation from the timetable.

Target Development

Our target is to improve this by 7 percentage points to 90%. We expect to deliver this through:

- ✓ Improved roadworks management;
- ✓ Bus priority - particularly targeted selective vehicle detection; and
- ✓ Quicker bus stop boarding times through TOTO and fares simplification.

The target for any services meeting the definition of high frequency (six or more buses per hour) is to have an Excess Wait Time of 1.0 minutes.

6. BSIP schemes and proposals overview table

BSIP Overview table (required format for all BSIPs)

Name of Local Authority or Authorities Telford and Wrekin Council

Enhanced Partnership(s) and/or Franchising Scheme(s) covered by the BSIP Telford and Wrekin

Date of publication 24/03/2025

Web address (URL) of the published BSIP https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20174/public_transport/5300/the-national-bus-strategy

Improvements programme to 2025 **List of named schemes and measures** Where appropriate provide location and cost Budget/est. cost (£k)

Bus priority infrastructure	-	-
Other bus infrastructure	Bus shelter upgrade programme	150 (authority's own funds)
Bus service support	New DRT scheme	485
	Network stabilisation and enhancement	901
Fares support	Targeted schemes on supported services	150
Ticketing reform	MaaS app	100
Other schemes & measures	Survey programme	20
	Marketing campaign	50

Ambitions and proposals for 2025 and beyond	Description (60 words max) Description of proposals listing named schemes/measures with location, where appropriate	Estimated cost/order of cost (£k)
Service level and network coverage	DRT continuation	2,500
	Tendered enhancements	2,500
	New services	1,500
Bus priority	Package 1	4,000
	Package 2	2,500
	Package 3	1,500
Lower and simpler fares	£4 day ticket, targeted promotions	3,500
Ticketing	Tap On, Tap Off	160
Waiting and interchange facilities	Shelter improvement programme	2,000
	Interchanges upgrades	1,200
Bus information and network identity	Roadside information improvement	200
Bus passenger experience	Passenger charter	100
Bus fleet	Brand extension – vehicle presentation	750
Accessibility and inclusion	Stop access and safety	3,000
Longer term transformation of the network	-	-

Appendix A. List of Bus Services

Number	Route	Operator	Commercial or tendered
1 / 2	Telford to Sutton Hill	Arriva	Commercial
3	Telford to Brookside	Arriva	Commercial
4	Telford to Leegomery and Madeley	Arriva	Commercial
5 / 5A / 5E	Telford to Donnington and Stafford	Arriva	Commercial
7	Telford to Wellington	Arriva	Commercial
8 / 8A	Telford to Bridgnorth and Much Wenlock	Arriva	Commercial
X10 / X11 / X12	Shrewsbury to Telford and Newport	Arriva	Commercial
96	Shrewsbury to Ironbridge and Telford	Arriva	Part tendered
99A / 99C	Telford to Shawburch (circular)	Arriva	Tendered
100	Sutton Hill to Hortonwood and Wellington 'Works Express'	Chaserider	Tendered
101	Madeley to Wellington	Select Bus Services	Tendered
102	Newport to Priorslee and Wellington	Chaserider	Tendered
103	Newport to High Ercall and Wellington	Chaserider	Tendered
104	Ellerdine to Wellington (school service)	Chaserider	Tendered
105	Burton Borough School to Tibberton (school service)	Chaserider	Tendered

Appendix B. Letter of support



TBC



Date: 21/03/2025

Bus Service Improvement Plan Update – Letter of Support

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to confirm the wholehearted support of Telford & Wrekin Council for the Enhanced Partnership developed in partnership with bus operators across the council's area.

We have long valued the partnership between operators and the council, and this has produced many successful developments in the provision of public transport. We look forward to delivering both the BSIP and EP in order to deliver on its ambition, provide a real opportunity to advance public transport provision for the communities we serve.

Since our original BSIP, we have made huge strides in changing our local bus network, including the creation of 7 new bus routes which have now carried in excess of 500,000 passenger trips since their inception, and supported a step change in connected areas, such as home to school transport.

Our BSIP also championed lower fares, with the Council introducing a £2 fare before the national scheme was introduced, and we have now committed to extend that on our services even after the national cap rose to £3 in January this year.

We have also invested heavily in bus infrastructure, implementing new shelters with real-time information as well as ensuring they are as environmentally friendly as possible using recycled materials, green roof's, solar and wind power.

Telford & Wrekin is an ambitious town, and we need reliable public transport to ensure that our residents can get to work, businesses have confidence in investing here and our students can get to places of learning. This revised BSIP will allow us to continue to make a significant contribution to decarbonisation, air quality improvement, social inclusion and cohesion, place making and economic wellbeing.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Ollie Vickers

Cabinet Member for The Economy

Telford & Wrekin Council

Appendix C. Data analysis note