

# Greater Nottingham (Robin Hood Area) Enhanced Partnership Plan

Developed by Nottingham City Council,  
Nottinghamshire County Council, and the Bus Partnership Group

**December 2023**



**Nottingham  
City Council**



**Nottinghamshire  
County Council**



# Greater Nottingham Enhanced Partnership Plan



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**Over the past 15 years significant investment has been made by both the local transport authorities and bus operators working together to deliver some of the United Kingdom's best bus services.**

Network coverage is comprehensive and bus emissions from both an air quality and carbon perspective have greatly improved. Investment in zero and low emission buses as well as retrofitting exhaust systems to diesel buses has helped to bring our buses up to the cleanest possible standard. Digital ticketing, the Robin Hood card and contactless payments have been very successful in providing integration between buses and tram, and real time information has been delivered and upgraded. Good priority for buses including at traffic lights has been maintained across the extended urban core.

In Greater Nottingham, we like to keep moving forward and despite a network that currently delivers much of the ambition of National Bus Strategy and objectives of the Bus Service Improvement Plan initiative, our journey is one of continuous improvement. We do not take previous success for granted and are acutely aware of the existential threat that the Covid-19 pandemic has dealt the bus network locally and the potential that the delivery of our Enhanced Partnership Plan, and the scheme that underpins it, has to support the recovery of bus from Covid-19. With this in mind, a detailed analysis of the current network has been undertaken to identify areas which need to be targeted for improvement locally.

Our Enhanced Partnership Plan 2022–2032 sets out an ambitious, achievable and focussed programme of transformational projects which enhance the standing of Nottingham's Bus System as one of the best in the UK. The plan will deliver a strong, balanced partnership, designed and owned by Nottingham's bus operators and Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council. The effectiveness of the plan will be judged and challenged by a wide array of stakeholders including bus users throughout its duration. Ensuring that bus services are delivered for and not to the citizens of our city and the wider urban area.

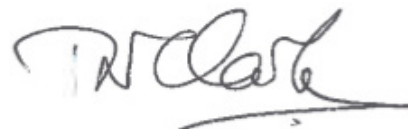
Pressure on public and private resources, and the aftershocks and impact of the pandemic on bus use will mean that partnership will have to do more with less going forward. This reality places even more emphasis on the need to ensure the reliability of bus services, through bus lanes and traffic signal priority. It means that digital information and simple to use ticketing products will become even more important to encourage use of the system and to support the recovery of the bus network. But it does not mean that our ambition to contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions and address the climate crisis or improve health inequalities by tackling air quality through the introduction of both electric and hydrogen powered buses during the lifetime of this plan will be reduced. By 2026, 68 new state of the art the electric buses will be operating in the streets of the Nottingham and by 2030 local operators will only buy new zero emission buses.

# Executive Summary

By adopting a Healthy Streets approach, which fully integrates buses and trams, with walking and cycling we will aim to make these forms of travel the key way to move around our city. Creating a local transport system which is equitable, accessible, works for everyone and takes a leading role in tackling the challenge presented by climate change. Whilst also reducing congestion and supporting our economy to grow by continuing to deliver good connections to our workplaces, leisure destinations and outlying residential areas, by providing a strong alternative to driving we will strive during the lifetime of this partnership to make it even better by bus.



**Councillor Audra Wynter**  
Nottingham City Council



**Councillor Neil Clarke**  
Nottinghamshire County Council

## Greater Nottingham (Robin Hood Area) Enhanced Partnership Plan (1 August 2022 - 31 March 2032)

The Nottingham City Council Enhanced Partnership Plan for buses is made in accordance with Section 138G(1) of the Transport Act 2000 by: Nottingham City Council, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG.

Term	Definition
Bus stand clearway	shall mean a bus stop clearway as defined in accordance with Paragraph 1 (a) of Part 1 to Schedule 19 of The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 but which will permit a local bus to stand within the clearway for as long a may be necessary up to a maximum period of ten minutes;
Bus stop	means all bus stops within the scheme area, including bus stand clearways and bus stop clearways;
Bus stop clearway	shall have the meaning given to it Paragraph 1 (a) of Part 1 to Schedule 19 of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 (SI3113/2002);
Bus stop clearway (regulated)	shall mean a bus stop clearway as defined in Appendix 3 of the Scheme;
Bus stop clearway (non-regulated)	shall mean any bus stop clearway other than a bus stop clearway (regulated);
Commencement date	means the date of commencement of the Scheme pursuant to Clause 2.1, or such later date as the Scheme may commence following any postponement of the Scheme under Section 117 of the Transport Act 2000;
Core local service	means a local service operating at a frequency of four or more buses an hour between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday;
Complementary local service	means a local service other than a core service;
the Council	Nottingham City Council, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham NG2 3NG;
DDA	means the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and "DDA compliant" shall be construed accordingly;
Double stop (regulated or non-regulated)	shall mean a double stop as defined in Appendix 3;
Excluded services	shall mean the category of local services listed in Schedule 4;
Greater Nottingham Bus Quality Partnership Meeting	means the Greater Nottingham Bus Quality Partnership Group, which meets quarterly each year in March, June, September and December;
Local service	has the meaning set out in Section 2 of the Transport Act 1985 (but excluding any excluded services);
NET	means Nottingham Express Transit;
Non-regulated stop	shall mean a non-regulated bus stop as defined in Appendix 3;
Regulated stop	shall mean a regulated bus stop as defined in Appendix 3;
Scheme area	means the area marked on the map at Schedule 1;



Term	Definition
Service change dates	means the closest Sunday to the following:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last Sunday in January</li> <li>• Sunday before May Day Bank Holiday</li> <li>• End of School Summer Term</li> <li>• Start of the new School Year</li> </ul>
Slot booking	means the slot booking system which operators pursuant to the Scheme are required to comply with pursuant to Schedule 3 and Appendix 3 to the Scheme;
Enhanced Partnership	means an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme made pursuant to the provisions of Section 138A of the Transport Act 2000 as amended;
Standards of service	means the standards of service set out in Schedule 3 (Standards);
Traffic Commissioner	has the meaning set out in Section 82(1) of the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981 (for the purposes of this Scheme this is the Traffic Commissioner for the North Eastern Traffic Area);
TRO	means a Traffic Regulation Order;
1985 Act	Transport Act 1985;
2000 Act	Transport Act 2000;
2017 Act	Bus Services Act 2017;
Bus operators (or operators)	means all large operators, medium operators and small operators running qualifying bus services taken collectively;
City Council	means Nottingham City Council;
County Council	means Nottinghamshire County Council;
Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variation	means a formal variation of the relevant Enhanced Partnership Scheme as a result of the voting mechanism set out in Section 7, which will then constitute a formal variation of the relevant scheme for the purposes of s.138E(1) of the 2000 Act;
Facilities	means those facilities referred to in Schedule 2 which shall be deemed such for the purposes of s.138D(1) of the 2000 Act;
Greater Nottingham Bus Partnership	means the committee of selected Nottingham bus operator representatives, City Council and County Council representatives and responsible for formulating recommendations to be put forward to the Greater Nottingham Bus Partnership Board and including specific Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations using the mechanism in Section 7;
Greater Nottingham Enhanced Partnership (or Enhanced Partnership)	means the Enhanced Partnership covering the geographic extent of the administrative of the "Robin Hood" travel zone at Figure 1;
Greater Nottingham Bus Partnership Board	means the committee of all Greater Nottingham bus operators, the City Council and the County Council responsible for making decisions in relation to recommendations made by the Greater Nottingham Bus Partnership (in line with the Greater Nottingham Enhanced Partnership governance arrangements).
Large, medium or small operator	means any single bus operator with registered commercial mileage representing the following proportions of total registered mileage for qualifying bus services in the scheme area will be classified as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25%+: large</li> <li>• 15%-25%: medium</li> <li>• 0-15%: small</li> </ul>
Measures	means those measures referred to in the Greater Nottingham Enhanced Partnership Scheme, Sections 8 and/or 9 which shall be deemed as such for the purposes of s.138D(2) of the 2000 Transport Act.

Term	Definition
Non-qualifying bus service	means the services excluded from classification as qualifying bus services;
Qualifying bus service	<p>means a registered local bus service with one or more stopping place within the geographical area of the Enhanced Partnership, with the exception of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any schools or works registered local bus service not eligible for Bus Service Operators Grant</li> <li>• Any cross-boundary registered local bus service with less than 10% of its registered mileage within the Enhanced Partnership area</li> <li>• Any services operated under Section 22 of the 1985 Act</li> <li>• Any registered local bus service which is an excursion or tour</li> <li>• Any other registered local bus service that the operators (through the Greater Nottingham Bus Partnership Board voting mechanism in Section 7) and City and County Councils decide should be excluded from all or specific requirements of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme</li> </ul> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, a list of qualifying bus services will be published at the start of each City Council and County Council financial year;</p>
Requirements	means those requirements placed upon bus operators to the extent that the same operates qualifying bus services identified as such within Schedule 2 and 3 and meeting the requirements of s.138C of 2000 Transport Act;
Traffic Commissioner powers	means 'relevant registration functions' of Traffic Commissioners to the extent that they relate to a 'relevant service' both within the meanings given to them under Section 6G(10) of the 1985 Act.



**The City Council and bus operators in Greater Nottingham have been members of a Bus Quality Partnership Scheme, for over 15 years with the County Council also present as a key stakeholder.**

During this time, the partnership has delivered significant improvements, which have raised the quality of bus services and passenger facilities in Greater Nottingham and beyond, contributing to growth in patronage across the public transport network (bus and tram) and maintaining Greater Nottingham's position as a national exemplar for public and private partnership working.

Achievements include Robin Hood multi-operator smart ticketing, extensive roadside digital information covering almost all bus stops in the city and extensive bus priority on all arterial routes. Alongside early adoption of low and zero emission bus technologies including electric and biomethane buses which have delivered a Euro VI or better bus fleet in the city centre since 2021, making a significant contribution to improving air quality and Nottingham's ambition to be carbon neutral by 2028.

The City Council and County Councils, in partnership with local bus operators, have now agreed to an evolution of the current partnership arrangement into an Enhanced Partnership which will extend beyond the city core into Greater Nottingham and will offer benefits to the travelling public and wider community which could not be achieved with the current status quo.

This new partnership and this new plan for buses

will deliver the following:-

- Maintenance of pre-Covid high frequency level of services and accessibility across the bus network;
- Roll-out of further bus priority across the network ensuring buses have priority over inefficient transport modes;
- Delivery of measures to address operator pinchpoints on the network;
- Upgrades to the existing real time information estate;
- Improvements to bus stop waiting infrastructure in district centres;
- Roll-out of the new smart ticketing and contactless payment products;
- Bus station and interchange improvements;
- Extension of camera enforcement, traffic regulation orders and new red routes;
- Delivery of an enhanced Robin Hood Network marketing campaign;
- Deliver "Levelling Up" through better access to jobs and opportunities;
- Support the Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan at a local level;
- Secure investment into bus services and supporting infrastructure

The Greater Nottingham Bus Service Improvement Plan, taken together with this Nottingham Enhanced Partnership Plan, will make a substantial contribution to the implementation of Local Transport Plan policies. It will bring benefits to passengers using local bus services in Greater Nottingham by improving the quality and efficiency of the public transport network and support the efficient use of the road network and



the delivery of sustainable growth, limiting the impacts of additional traffic congestion, air pollution and carbon emissions.

Drawing on the Greater Nottingham Bus Service Improvement Plan and City Council and County Council Local Transport Plans, this document fulfils the statutory requirements of an Enhanced Partnership as set out in the 2000 Act (as amended), including:

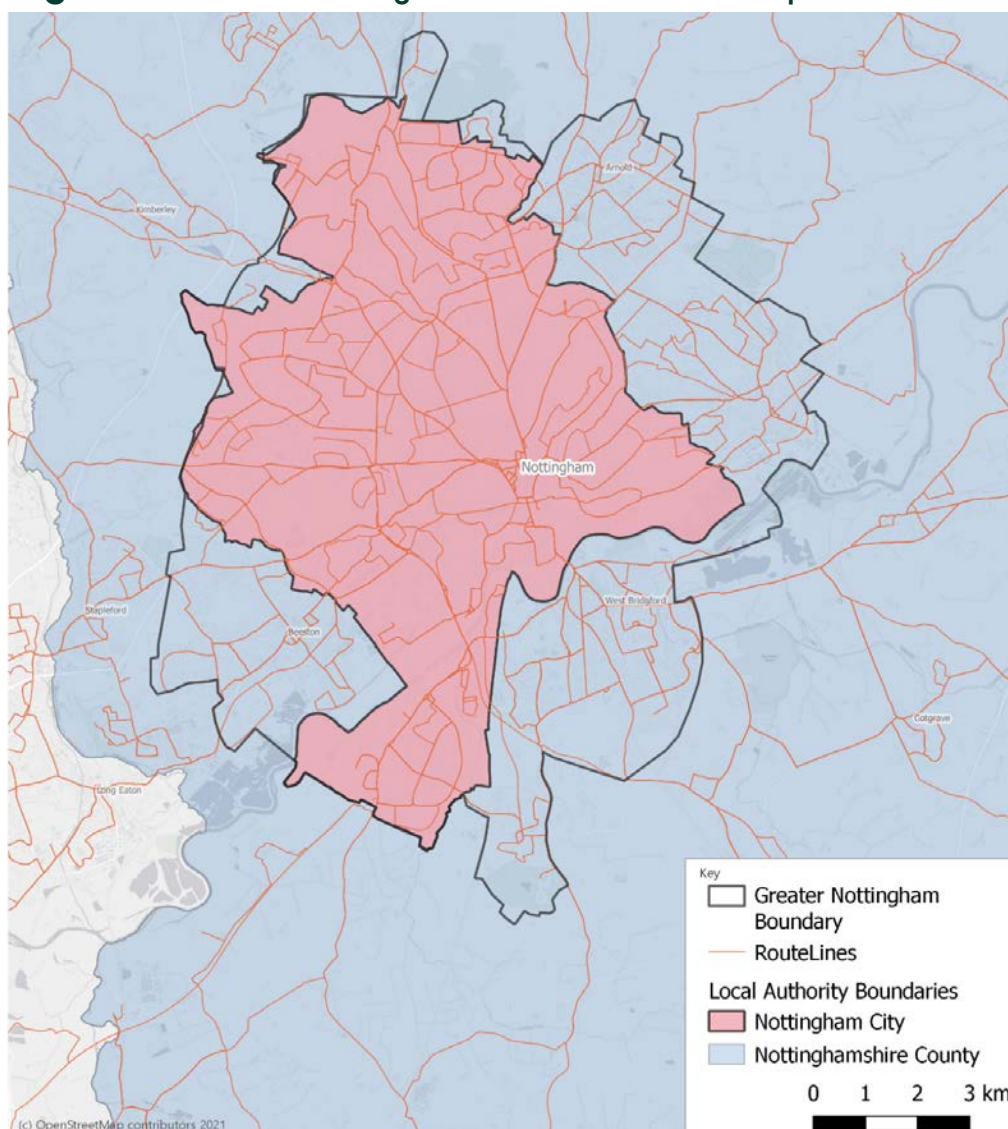
- A map of the geographical area it covers
- All the relevant factors that the parties consider will affect, or have the potential to affect, the local bus market over the life of the plan
- A summary of any available information on passengers' experiences of using bus services in the area and the priorities of users and non-users for improving them
- A summary of any available data on trends in bus journey speeds and the impact of congestion on local bus services
- What outcomes need to be delivered to improve local bus services in the plan area
- What overall interventions the partnership believes need to be taken to deliver those outcomes

The Competitions and Markets Authority has also been consulted on the proposals as required by Section 138F of the 2000 Act.



The Greater Nottingham Enhanced Partnership in line with the Greater Nottingham Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) will cover the geography of the existing Robin Hood Ticketing Area and incorporate the entire Nottingham City Council Local Transport Authority Area alongside a number of urban areas that sit within the Nottinghamshire County Council Local Transport Authority Area, as illustrated in the map below.

**Figure 1. Greater Nottingham Enhanced Partnership Scheme Area**



This Enhanced Partnership Plan will be in place for ten years from adoption (1 August 2022 to 31 March 2032). Enhanced Partnership Scheme 1 will be in place for five years from adoption (1 August 2022 to 31 March 2027). A full review of the effectiveness of the Enhanced Partnership Plan (including its extent, objectives and partnership governance) and Scheme 1 (including measures and facilities provided, and requirements imposed) and compliance of both with competition legislation will take place during the 12 months prior to 31 March 2027, recommending changes to the Enhanced Partnership Plan and details of an Enhanced Partnership Scheme 2 for adoption from 1 April 2027.

## Overview of the Public Transport network

Around 97% of Nottingham's current bus network is operated by commercial services. Nottingham City Transport (the dominant urban operator) has a market share in patronage terms of 85% (71% of mileage operated), trentbarton (18% of mileage operated) (the key inter-urban operator) and others including Stagecoach, Marshalls, CT4N and Centrebus operate the remaining 12% of commercial bus services. The remaining 3% of the network is run under tendered contracts, with financial support, service specification and fares determined by the City Council and County Council under the Linkbus and NottsConnect brands. The Easylink dial-a-ride service is also supported by the two local transport authorities.

There is a limited suburban rail network but the bus network is complemented by a fully integrated tram system with three routes, which prior to the pandemic carried just under 20 million passengers a year.

The local public transport network is supported by two bus and six tram-based park and ride sites. With a new bus park and ride site and expanded existing tram site to the north of the city planned as part of the Transforming Cities programme.

The alignment of the BSIP, which compliments this Enhanced Partnership Plan, against the Robin Hood Ticketing Area ensures that the Greater Nottingham conurbation is incorporated in one plan, covering the "Robin Hood Network" and ensures that the logical travel to work area for

urban bus services is packaged together in an Improvement Plan that reflects how the current bus network operates and how passengers use the bus system locally.

The area covered by this Enhanced Partnership Plan outside of the city of Nottingham falls wholly within Nottinghamshire and Nottinghamshire County Council has been integral to its development and ensuring compatibility and coordination with the BSIP being produced for the rest of Nottinghamshire.

## Greater Nottingham Demographics

The population of Greater Nottingham is estimated as 505,207 (based on a 2019 estimate from Nomis).

Nottingham city ranks 11th most deprived out of 317 districts in England.

Of the total population of Nottingham city, 13% of people are over the age of 65, which is 5% lower than the UK national average, which is not too surprising given the city-focus. 30% of the population are aged 18 to 29; full-time university students comprise around 1 in 8 of the population.

Despite its young age-structure, Nottingham has a higher than average rate of people with a limiting long-term illness or disability.

The county of Nottinghamshire ranks 9 out of 26 shire counties in England (with 1 being the most deprived). Between 2015 and 2019 it changed

ranks by -2, indicating that it is in the lower half of deprived counties, and that it is falling behind other counties in recent years.

The average unemployment rate is 5.2% in Nottinghamshire (0.6% higher than national average), with 25-49 year olds having an unemployment rate of 6.2% (1.6% higher than the national average).

It is also an aging county, where the number of people over 65 years old is 3% higher than the national average.

The average salary in Nottinghamshire ranges between £28.6k and £37.0k across the districts compared to a national average of £38.6k.

In terms of car ownership 20.9% have no access to a car or van (4.9% lower than the national average), 43.4% have access to one car or van (1.2% higher than the national average), 28.1% have access to 2 cars or vans (3.4% higher than the national average) and 7.7% had access to three or more (0.2% lower than the national average). So in summary, car ownership is higher than the national average overall, with disparity between different areas.

As of September 2021, Nottingham city has 15,982 unemployed people, with the highest affected age group being 25-49. The unemployment rate is 6.9% compared to the national average of 4.6%.

In terms of car ownership, 56.3% of households have access to a car or van compared to nationally, where just under three quarters of

households have access to a car or van.

## Levelling Up in Greater Nottingham

The delivery of this plan and the improvements to bus services it will facilitate are key to delivering the Levelling Up agenda locally in Nottingham, which has identified the city as a priority one area.

Figure 2 shows that over half (57.2%) of the city's Local Super Output Areas (LSOAs) fall into the lowest IMD quintile (lowest 20%) for the whole of England, and less than one-in-ten (8%) of Nottingham's LSOAs are in the top quintile (top 20%).

While these trends are comparable with a number of other East Midlands' cities, and also reflect Nottingham city's tightly drawn administrative boundary, they underline the critical importance of levelling-up the local economy and providing access to employment and education opportunities for Nottingham's residents.

With a low Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) ranking, higher unemployment, and lower salaries than the national average, Nottinghamshire requires some 'Levelling Up'.

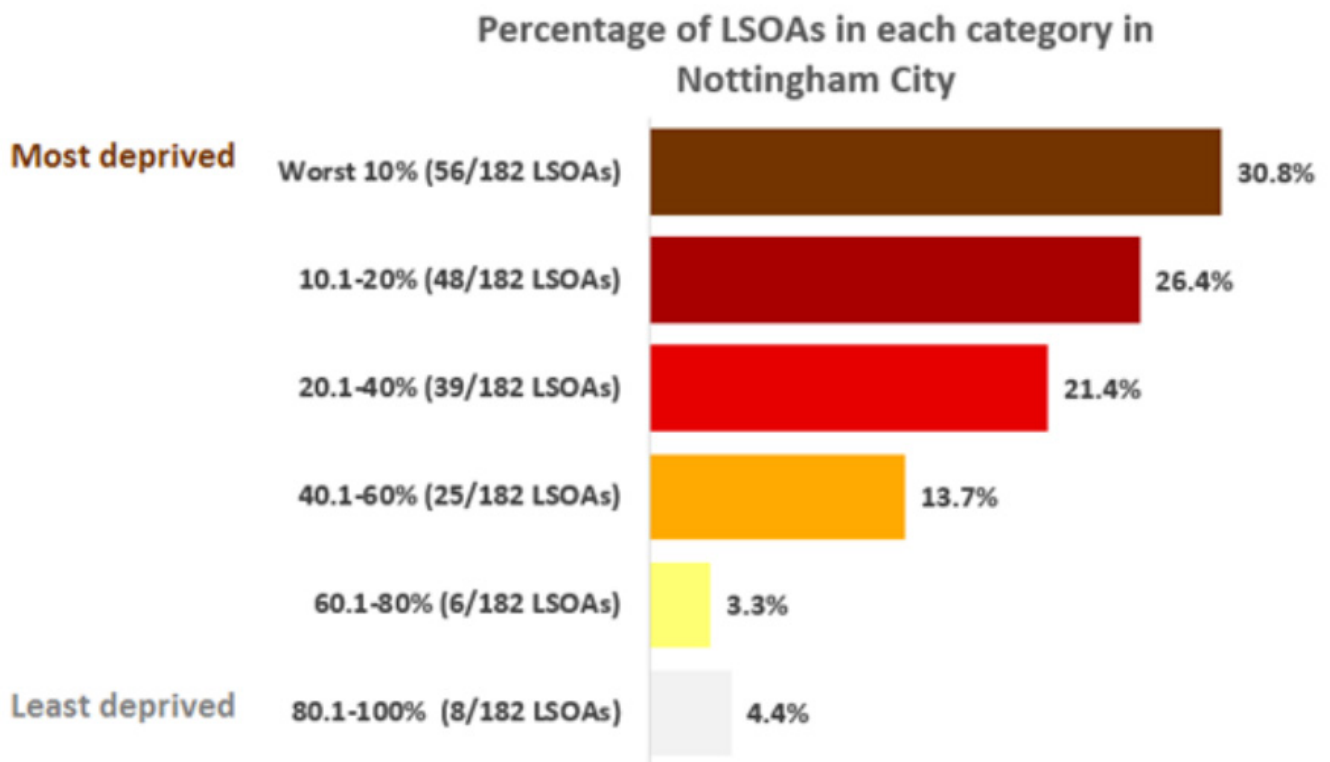
The delivery of this plan and the improvements to buses it will facilitate, are key to delivering the Levelling Up agenda locally in Nottinghamshire, improving access to employment and access to wider opportunities.

A report by Onward concludes that "broken



transport networks have a ‘crippling effect’ on access to jobs.” It shows that chronic transport connectivity puts employment opportunities out of reach and describes the “shocking transport gap” between North and South. This undermines wages, reduces regional productivity, and leads to worse social outcomes. Therefore, improving connectivity between city centres and outlying towns, will be key to the success of levelling up economic opportunity.

**Figure 2.** Indices of deprivation in Nottingham city



Source: [Nottingham Insight](#)



## What do the people think about buses in Greater Nottingham?

An online survey was undertaken during July and August 2021 to gather opinions from both users and non-users of buses in Greater Nottingham as to how bus services could be improved in order to attract more passenger trips. The data was split to only include those residents within the confines of this BSIP area and attracted 1,720 responses, spanning both users and non-users.

65% of respondents used the bus two days or more a week, and the most common reasons for bus travel were for social activities and shopping. People choose to use the car over the bus mainly because the car is more convenient; and the car is significantly quicker than the bus. 76% of respondents who use the car said it was easy or fairly easy to park their car.

When asked what improvements would make them use the bus at all/more, the key issues identified were:

- Better bus stops and shelters (78%) and improved bus information (71%)
- More frequent services (70%) to more destinations (72%), with better connections between services (71%)
- Multi operator ticketing (76%) to make it easier to transfer between services, along with lower fares (72%) and contactless payment (71%)
- Reduced delays (71%)

Additionally, surveys undertaken by Transport Focus also show that satisfaction across a range of

factors is already higher than the national average for the main operator, Nottingham City Transport compared to other operators nationwide, and this has consistently been the case over the last five years (currently standing at overall satisfaction of 94% against other operators' scores ranging between 71% and 97%).

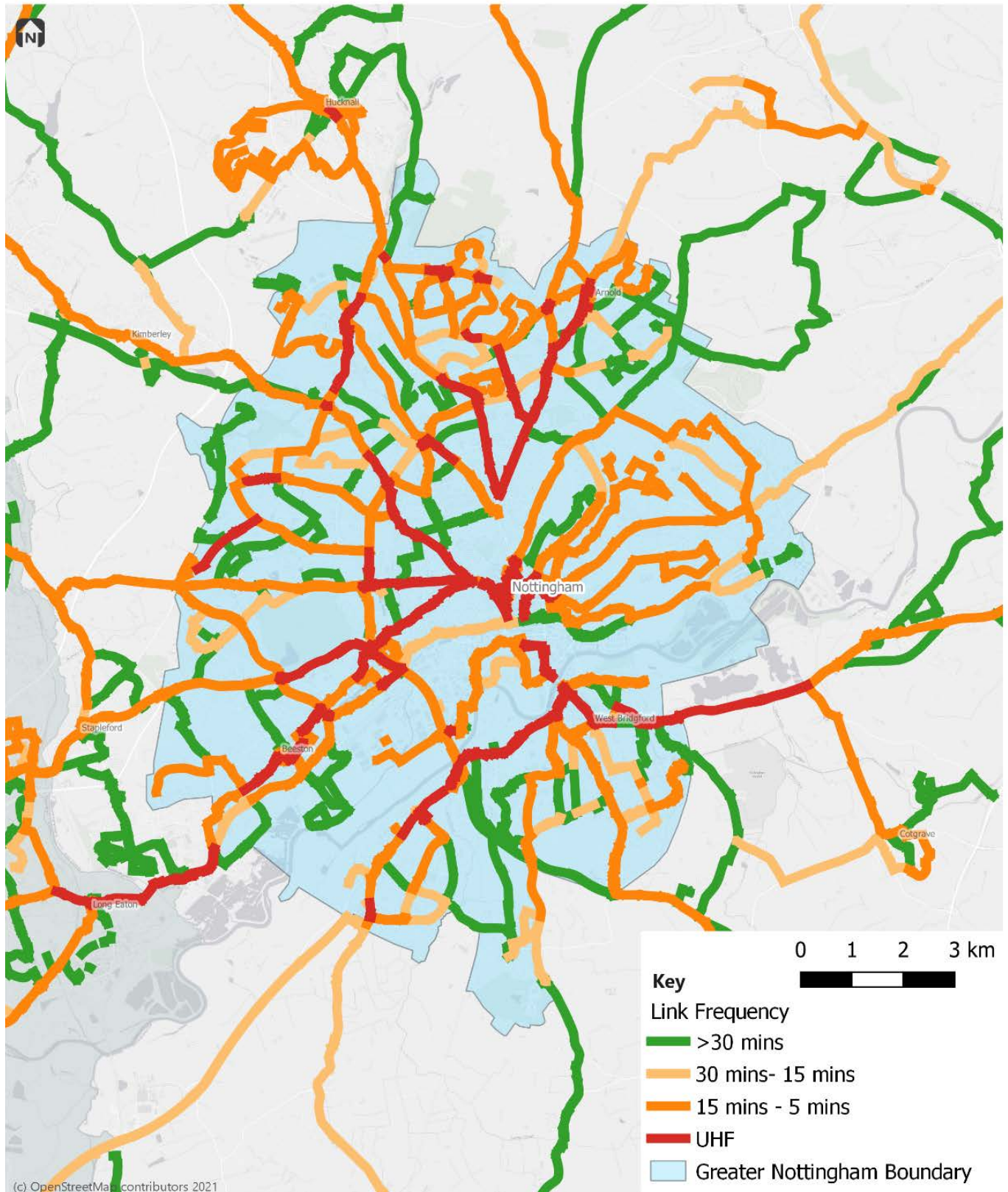
## Bus Network Integration and Bus Priority

Nottingham City Transport (NCT) is the main bus operator in Greater Nottingham, accounting for 85% of the market. Other operators serving the area include trentbarton (12%), with Stagecoach, CT4N, Vectare, Centrebus and Nottingham City & County Council (tendered services) making up the remaining 3% of the market.

There is also an 'Easylink' service operated by CT4N across the city (funded jointly, and open to registered users and Concessionary cardholders) which is a traditional dial-a-ride service and is complementary to the public transport offer but not fully integrated in to the Robin Hood Multi-Operator ticketing offer. There are also a number of Community Transport/Voluntary Car Schemes within the conurbation for registered users. They are Rushcliffe CVS, Gedling Voluntary Travel Scheme and The Helpful Bureau.

# Bus Network Overview

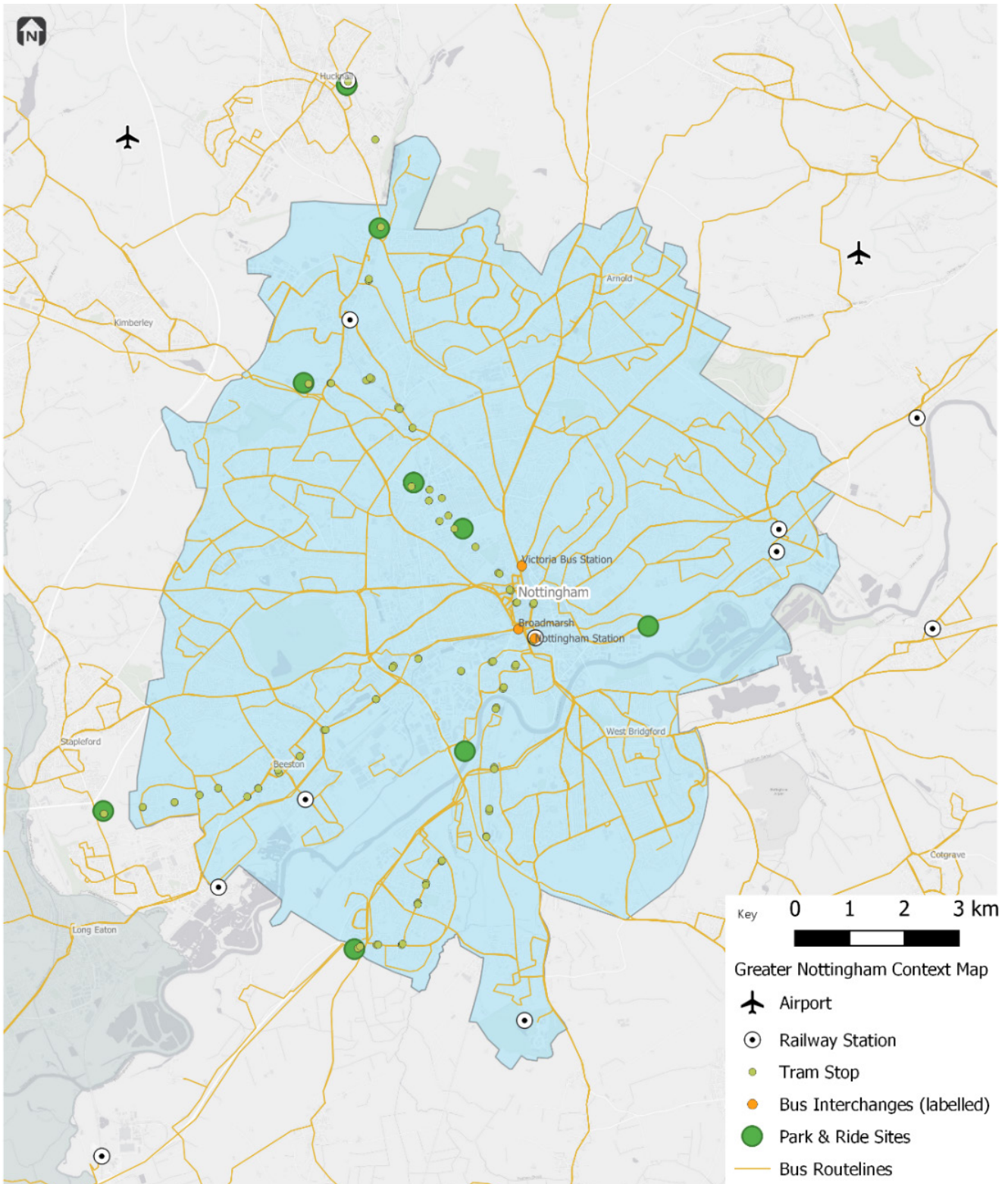
The map below shows the extent of the network, highlighting the hourly link frequency at the AM peak, showing the combined frequency of bus services along each road, regardless of service or operator.





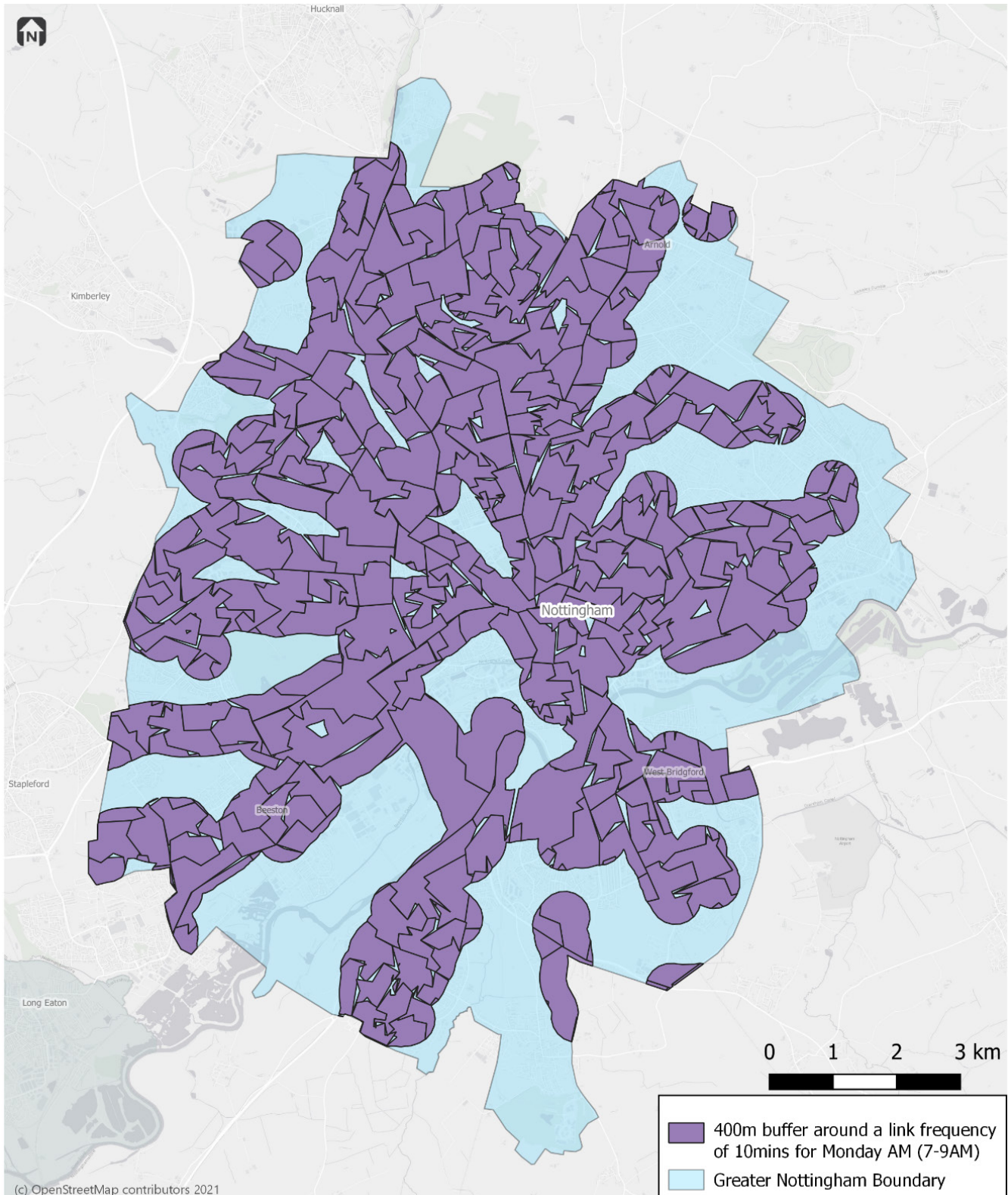
# Bus Network Overview

These services complement the rail and tram network, and there is good coordination of services at key interchange points. The map below shows the key interchange points in the area. map below shows the extent of the network, highlighting the hourly link frequency at the AM peak, showing the combined frequency of bus services along each road, regardless of service or operator.



# Bus Network Overview

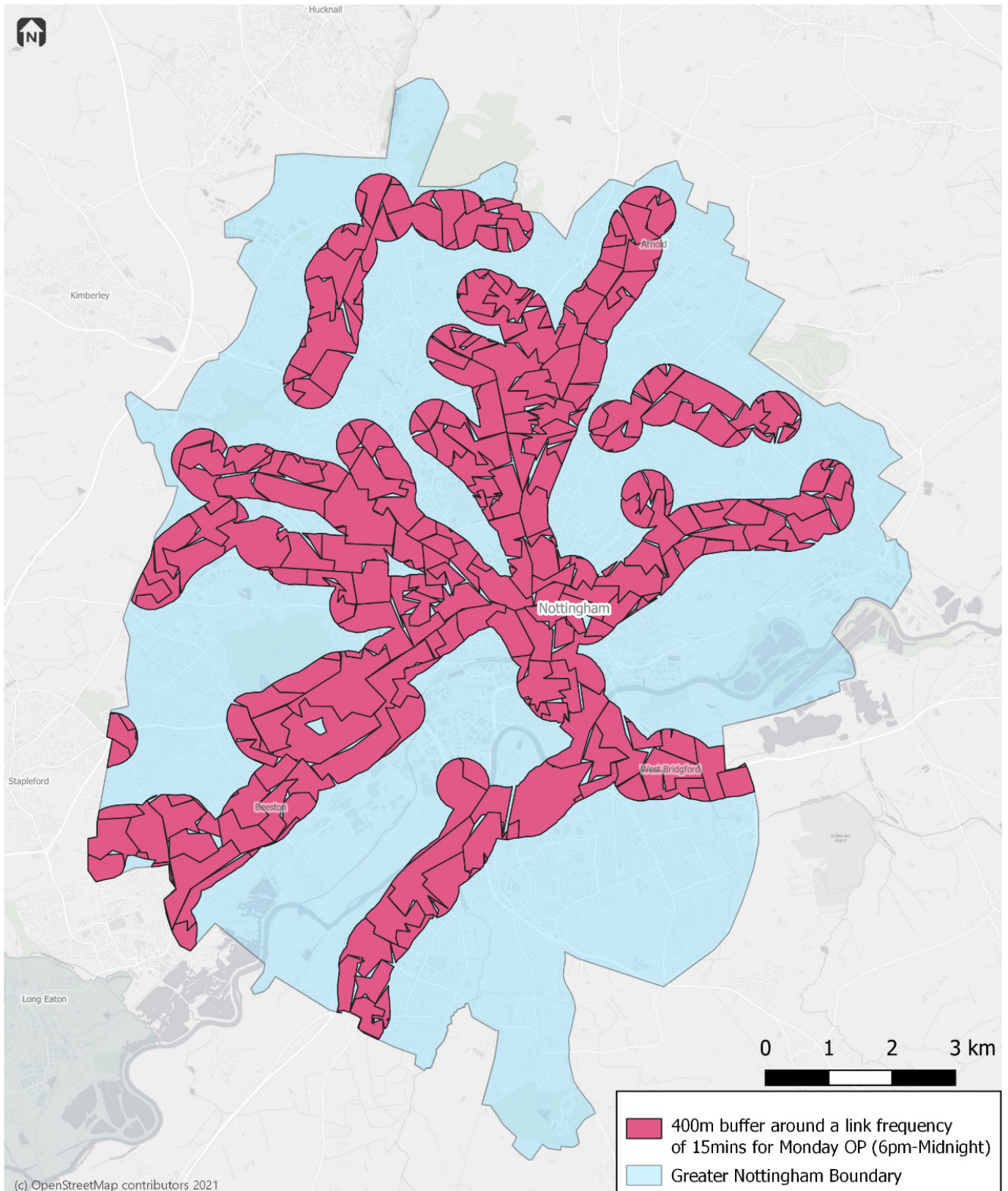
The area is currently well-served by bus, with 77% of the population within 400m of a frequent (10 minutes or more) bus service during the weekday. This is illustrated in the map below.





# Bus Network Overview

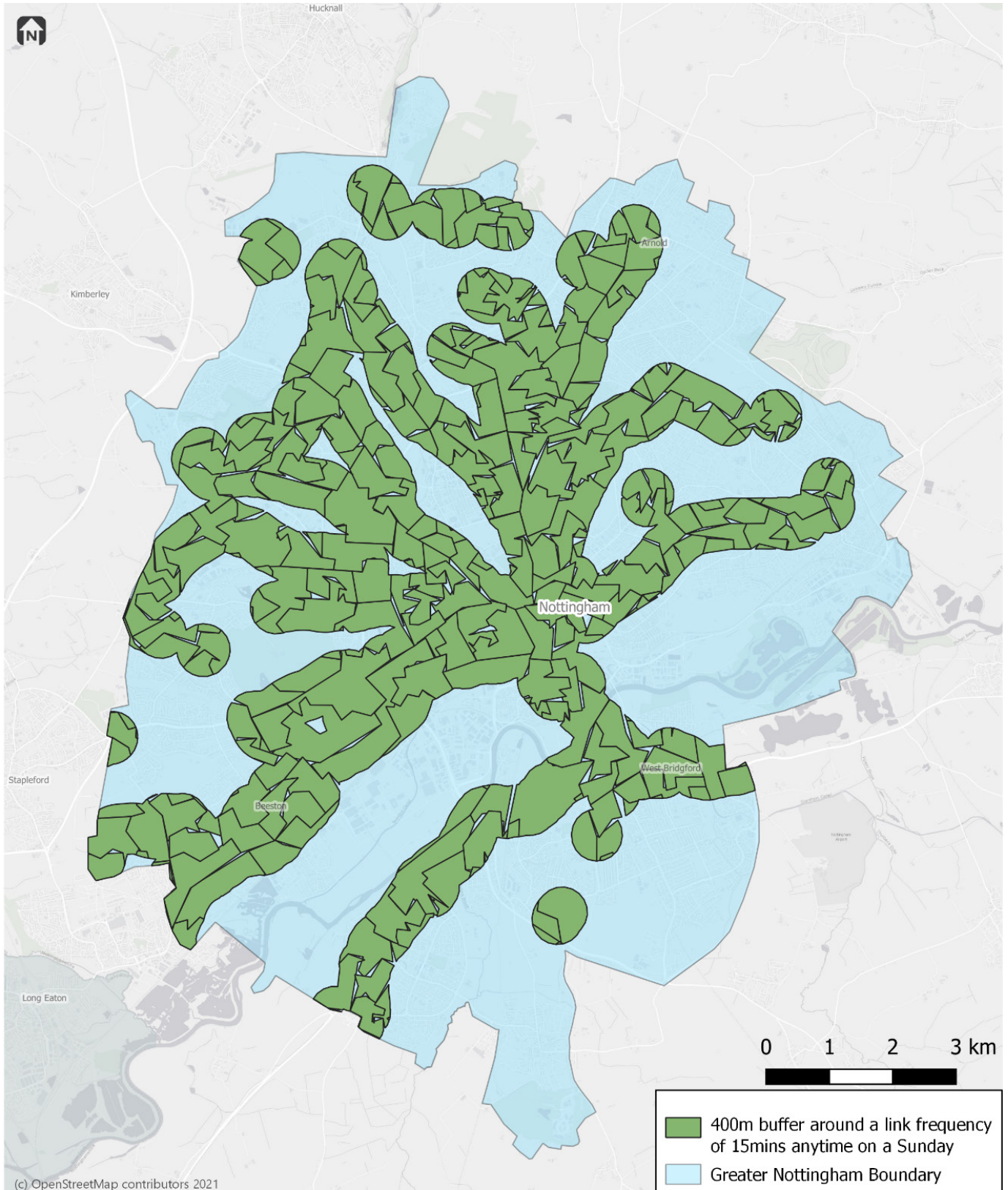
53% of the population live within 400m of a 15-minute frequency service in the weekday evening. This is illustrated in the map below.





# Bus Network Overview

And 63% live within 400m of a 15-minute frequency service on a Sunday. This is illustrated in the map below.





# Bus Network Overview

The percentage of population within 400m access to these services is set out in the table below.

		Population (2019 Estimate)	% of Population with Access
<b>Weekday morning</b>	10 min	367,698	76.7%
<b>Weekday evening</b>	15 min	269,049	53.3%
<b>Sunday</b>	15 min	316,521	62.7%v

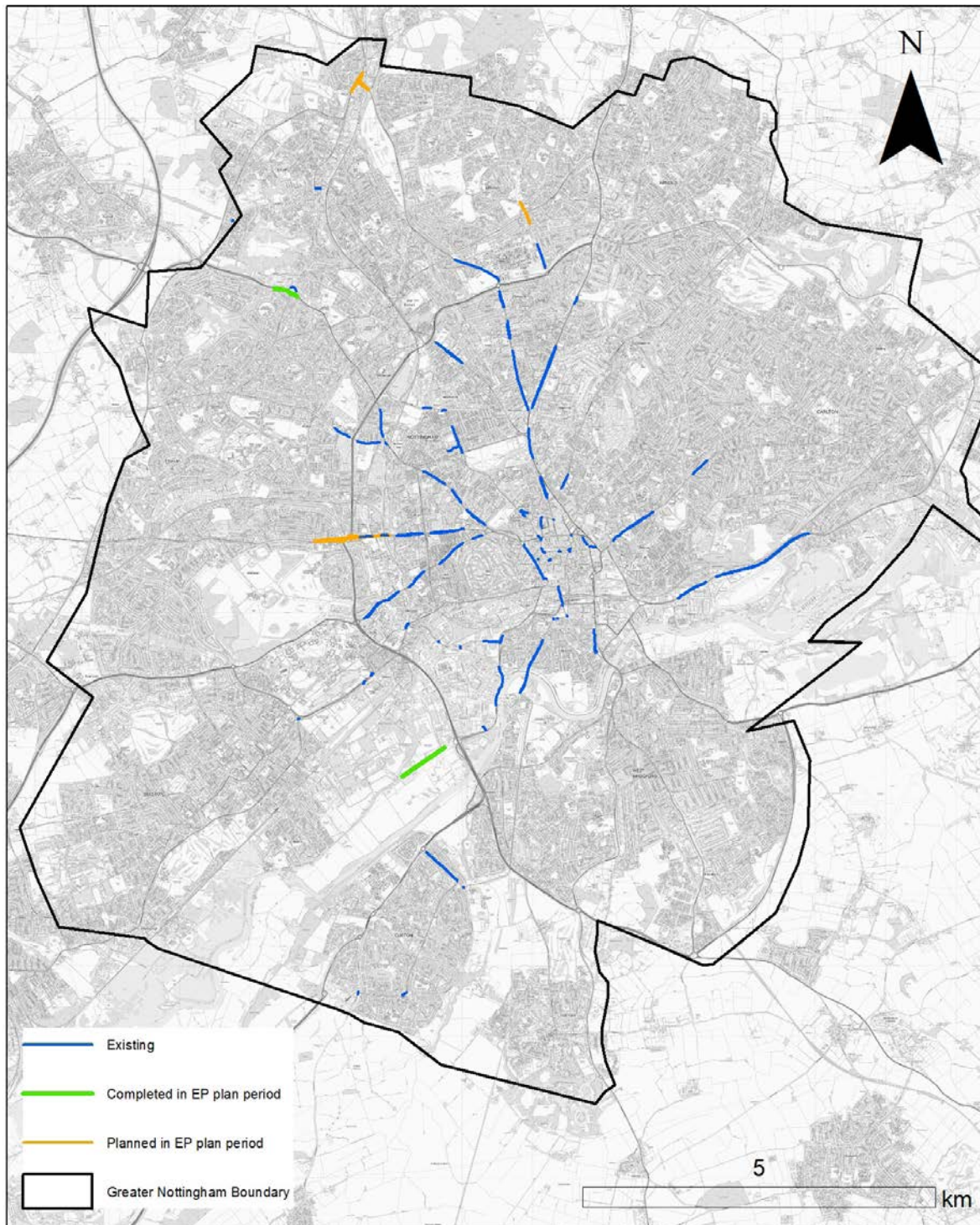




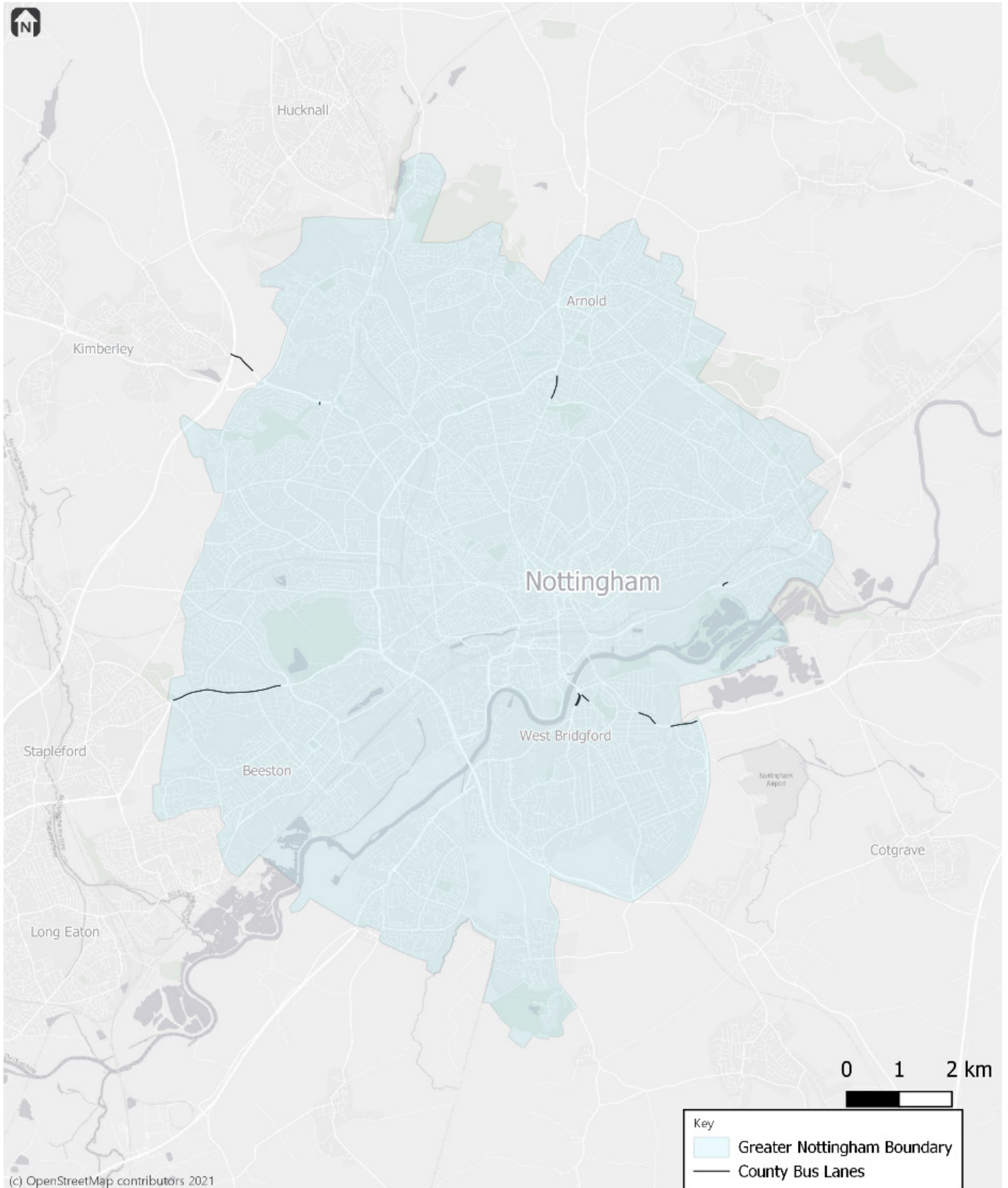
## Bus Lanes

There are 26km of bus lanes in the area, with a further 2km planned as part of the current Bus Service Improvement Plan, illustrated in the map below. Each of these sections of bus lanes has encountered challenges of infringements by private cars, and some are only operating during restricted hours.

### Bus lanes in Greater Nottingham



## Bus lanes in Nottinghamshire County (within the Greater Nottingham BSIP)





## Traffic Light Priority

Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils, in partnership with Nottingham City Transport, were early adopters of Traffic Light Priority (TLP), deploying fixed units at six Scoot junctions in 2011 that communicated with on-board radios and delivered a material improvement in bus reliability. Investment in 71 junctions within Greater Nottingham followed, giving the region one of the largest TLP networks outside of London. Seeking to extend the benefit of TLP to other bus operators, Transforming Cities has delivered a centralised TLP system that will not only roll out TLP to more junctions at lower cost, but also deliver the benefits to buses operating in Derby and Derbyshire as part of a D2N2 regional system.

## Passenger Information

Operators in the Greater Nottingham area provide information through their own websites, social media, and apps including: journey planning; route maps; timetables; real time information; service disruption updates; and journey capacity. Nottingham City Council also provides a consolidated journey planning and travel information service for Greater Nottingham via the Transport Nottingham website, and the Robin Hood network also provides details on services, routes, fares and ticketing. Travel Information Centres are also located within the city to allow face to face customer interaction and access to printed and online materials and tickets.

Timetables and integrated maps are also provided through individual operators and the

Robin Hood marketing group. Nottingham City Council coordinates the printing of information materials for distribution to outlets across the area (e.g. libraries, bus stations, local centres etc.). Operators provide and install information at bus stops for their own individual services.

Although Nottingham is characterised by high quality information for bus passengers, there is always a need to continuously improve, with the ambition to further improve the bus stop and waiting environments in district centres, and the development of mobility hubs to allow better and more seamless transfer between modes.

Marketing of the Robin Hood card is agreed jointly between the Councils and operators, but otherwise the partners approach marketing in different ways and to different degrees. Although there are some good examples of marketing initiatives, such as targeted marketing/promotion campaigns including ticketing offers for specific services or user-groups, there is no Greater Nottingham-wide approach to marketing at present.

There are currently around 1,500 real time displays at stops across the BSIP area – which is roughly 60% of all stops.

The City Council has sought to consider its Local Transport Plan, Nottingham Bus Strategy, Transforming Cities Programme and this accompanying Greater Nottingham Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme, all relevant factors that it and those parties consulted considered will affect, or have the potential to affect, the local



bus market over the life of these plans.

The City Council also considered the bus registration information it manages in its policy development. In summary these factors are:

- Congestion and the impact of significant planned housing growth and travel demand, and its relationship with nationally declining bus usage
- The statutory framework and de-regulated bus market in England outside London, with the involvement of many operators and authorities in commercially operated and contracted bus services
- Nottingham City Council's Local Transport Plan and the existing Nottingham Advanced Quality Partnership Scheme and Bus Partnership
- New mobility services, technology and air quality and the city of Nottingham's Carbon Neutral by 2028 ambition

The City Council and bus operators strive to engage with bus passengers through bus user groups who are represented in the existing bus quality partnership and comprehensive passenger surveys delivered by the individual partnership members and wider transport focus surveys.

Bus passengers and user groups have been consulted during preparation of and throughout implementation of the Enhanced Partnership. Passenger surveys including participation in the national Transport Focus annual bus user survey, and monitoring data associated with the Nottingham Bus Strategy and Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme, will be used to

evaluate the success of the partnership as it is implemented to inform reviews.

It will also be necessary to further consult the public, in line with usual procedures, on specific proposals which are taken forward (for example changes to highway infrastructure) in accordance with these proposals.

## Patronage and Congestion Trends

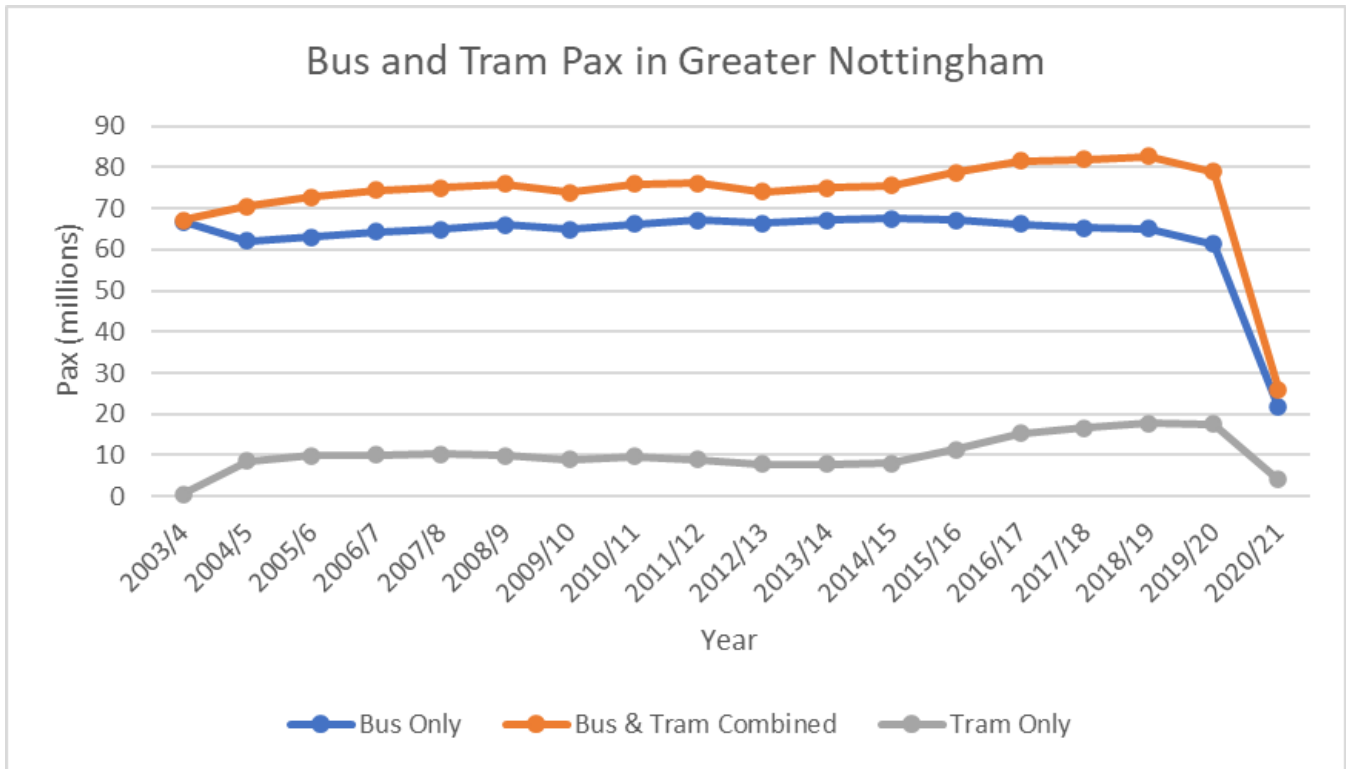
For over 15 years Greater Nottingham has been working towards providing a low emission, high quality, integrated, attractive, and affordable public transport system.

The successful public transport network pre-pandemic carried 83 million passengers a year across Greater Nottingham and 62 million in the city of Nottingham itself (Nottingham City Council, 2019).

Since 2003, the number of passengers has increased significantly and unlike many other UK cities, growth in bus use has been delivered, reflecting the high standards of quality and high levels of passenger satisfaction.

Nottingham's tram network has also been heralded as one of the most successful light rail project in the country, carrying nearly 20 million on three routes. This is of course set in the context of a limited suburban heavy rail network within the Greater Nottingham area, but is still a significant achievement.

## Bus and tram patronage in Greater Nottingham between 2003 and 2021



Whilst England saw a **decrease** in patronage of 12% between 2007/8 and 2018/19, patronage on Nottingham’s bus and tram network saw an **increase** in patronage of 9% (bus patronage alone only decreased 2% during this time, mainly through the introduction of the tram and transference of passengers).

As witnessed across the UK, the Covid pandemic and associated Government guidance and social distancing has had a large impact on bus patronage. On average, services lost 65% of their patronage during 2020/21 compared to 2019/20.

City centres have been impacted more due to changing retail behaviour and the number of office commuters who have been working from home; a blend of home and office working is

likely to continue which is likely to impact on patronage in the future.

In addition, Concessionary cardholders are not travelling as much as they did pre-pandemic (currently at around 50% of pre-pandemic levels), and travel patterns in general will have changed indefinitely.

As such, it is unlikely, that patronage will return to pre-pandemic levels in the near future. As of December 2023, patronage is around 93% of pre-pandemic levels.

## Congestion, traffic levels and average speed

The map on Page 27 shows the average traffic speed, and the traffic levels, on key links in the Greater Nottingham area; and the areas where buses encounter reliability problems.

Particularly congested “hotspot” or unreliable areas where bus priority improvements have been identified include:

- Mansfield Road, junction with Forest Road
- Hucknall Road, junction with Arnold Road
- Edwards Lane, junction with Oxclose Lane (inbound)
- Edwards Lane, junction with Oxclose Lane (outbound)
- Moor Bridge

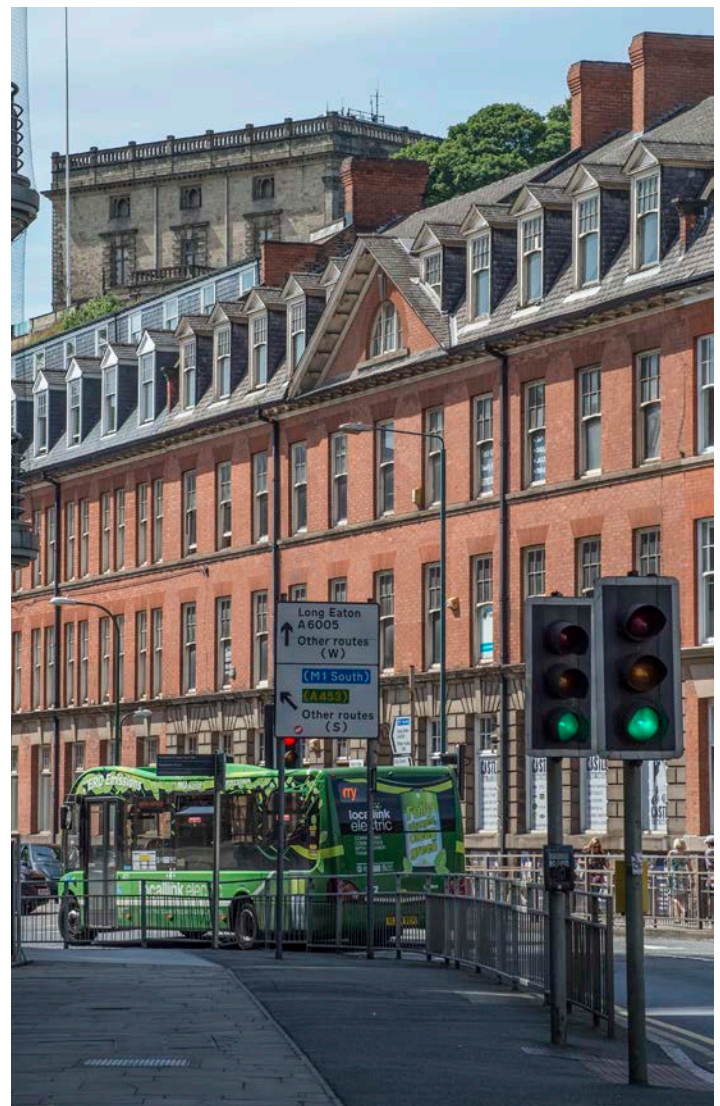
With extended priority also required along the following corridors necessary to address wider network congestion issues:

- A52 – Derby Road (Priory island link)
- A52 West Bridgford
- A60 - Nottingham Railway Station to Central Avenue, West Bridgford
- A60 – Mansfield Road – Front Street Arnold
- Upper Parliament Street to Victoria Centre
- A609 – Ilkeston Road to Wollaton Road
- Edwards Lane
- Hucknall Road

Traffic congestion in Nottingham increased between 2011 and 2014 and has since largely been constrained, while overall traffic flow has,

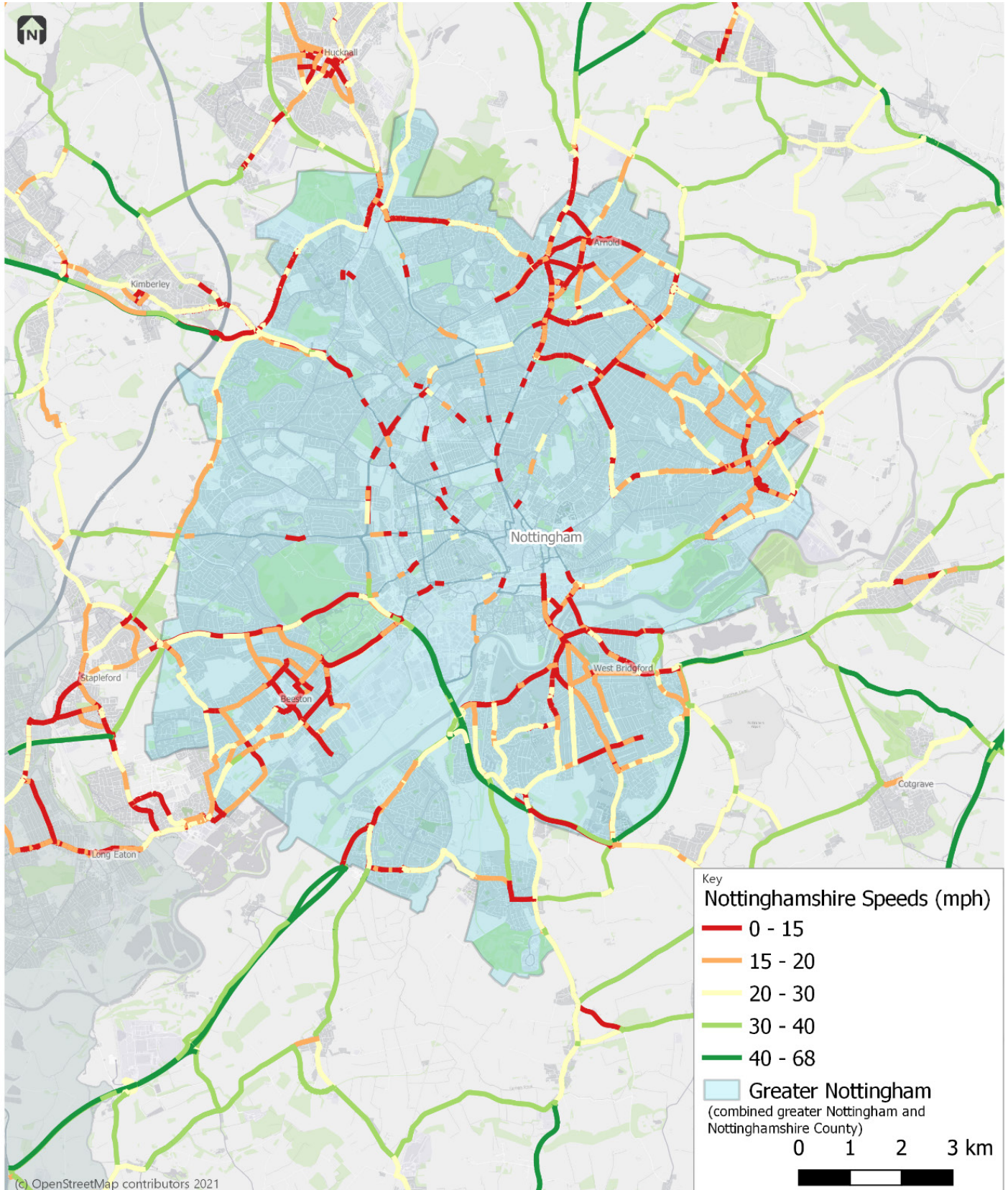
despite annual variations of around +/- 1.75% remained around 916 million vehicle km pa between 2011 and 2019 (due to lockdowns the traffic levels fell considerably during 2020).

Although congestion has in broad terms been kept from growing, it still creates a strain on the road network. Both Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have a street works permit system in place which prevents unplanned works and imposes penalties on contractors who overrun allotted works schedules.





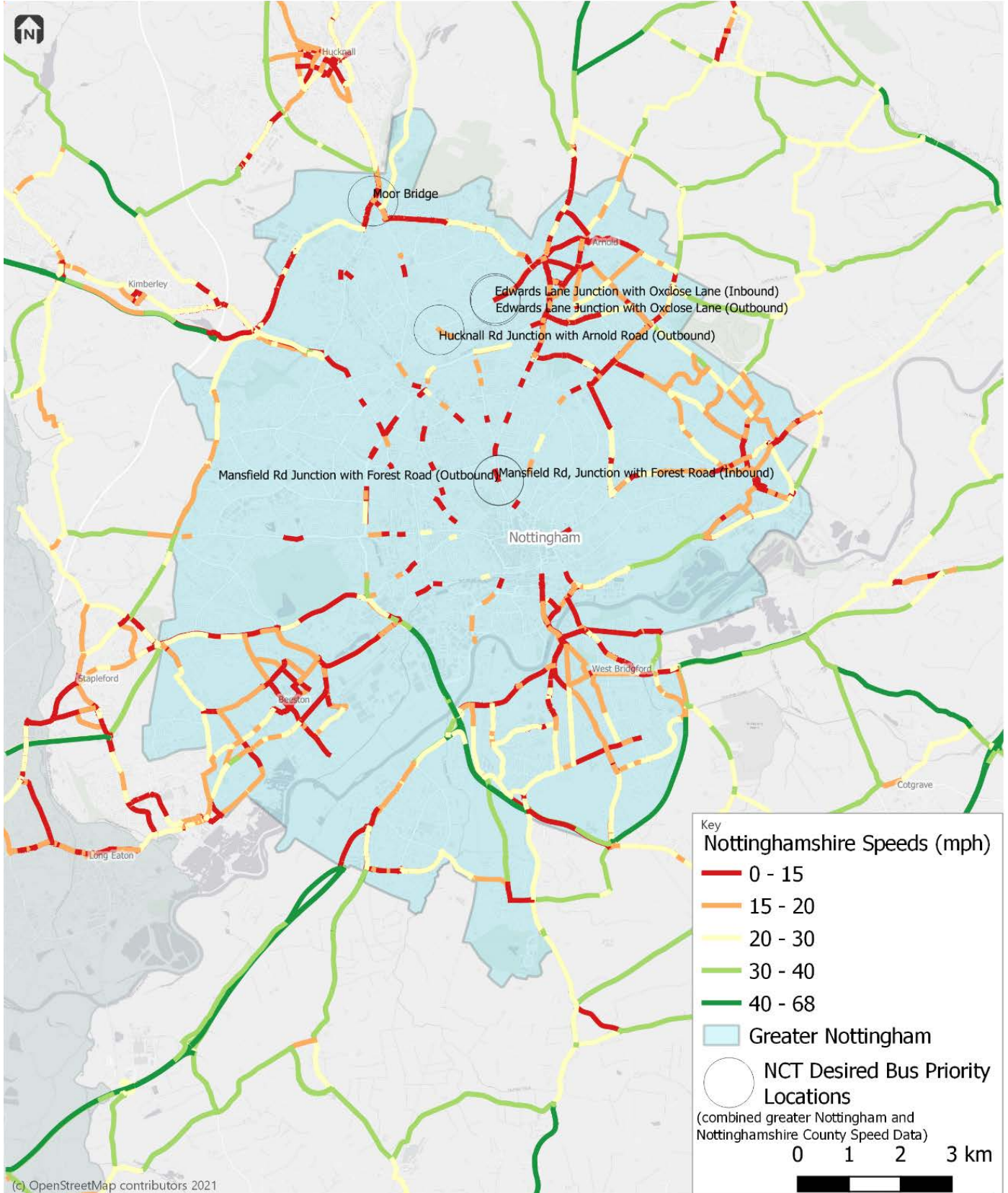
## Nottinghamshire speeds (mph)





# Bus Network Overview

## Main pinch-points for buses within the Greater Nottingham area





Congestion has had a negative impact on the operation of services over the years, leading to increased journey times for passengers and the need for additional vehicles to be utilised, simply to maintain the existing frequency, for example:

- The running time for 'the threes' service along the A60 has increased by 26% since 2009, and requires an additional 1PVR to maintain the timetable
- Journey time has increased by 18% on the 'rainbow one' service, and current punctuality is 61.8%. An additional six vehicles are required to maintain reliability on this service and service 9 combined, costing approximately £900k per year to operate
- NCT has added in additional vehicle resources on services 44, 45, 46, 47 and 58 to accommodate the longer journey times experienced in these areas at peak times, costing an additional £520k per annum

The existing AQPS has provided an effective forum for allowing operators and the authority to share experiences and concerns, and to jointly address identified congestion hotspots with targeted bus priority improvements. This forum will continue under the new Enhanced Partnership arrangements.

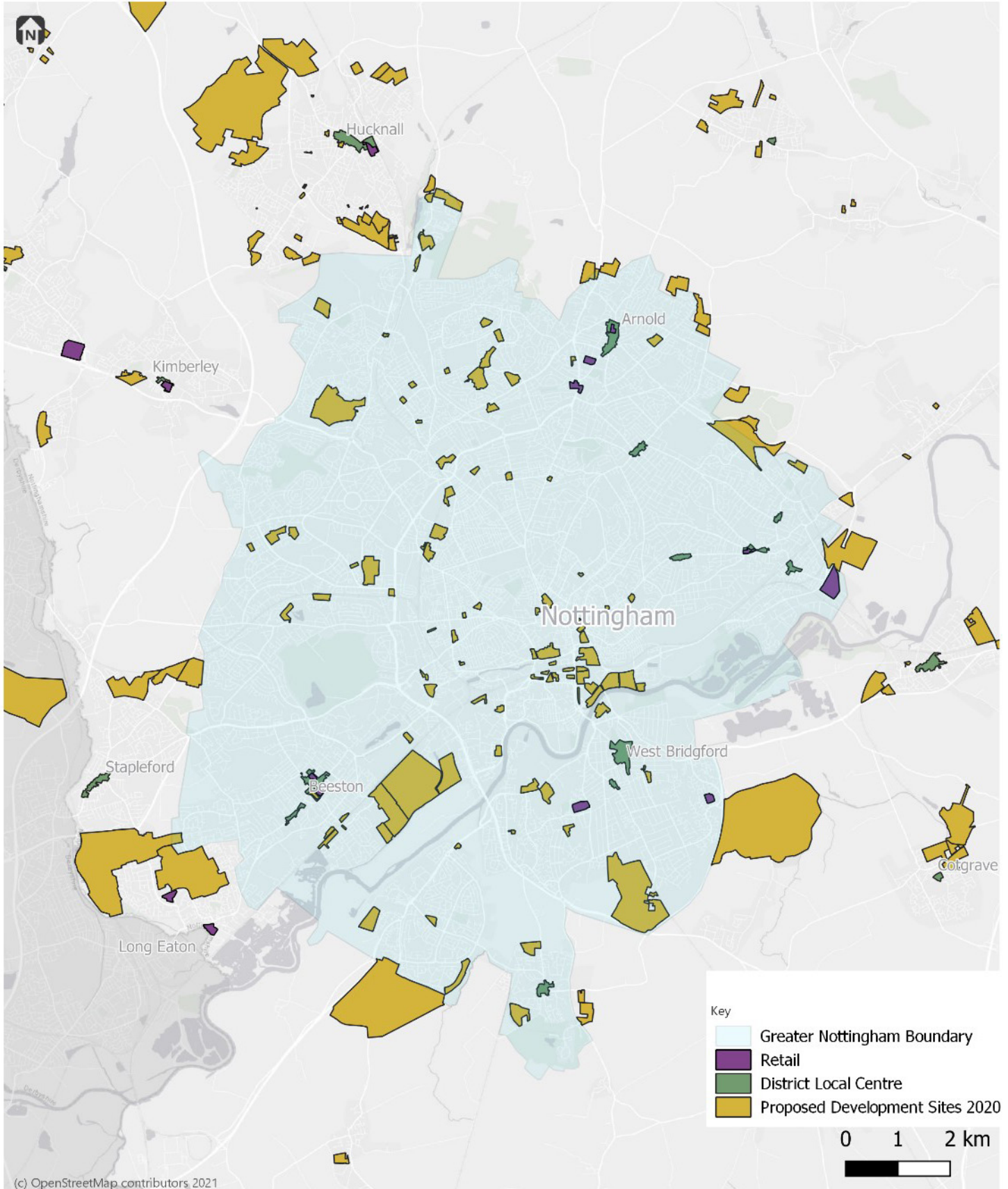
In addition to the traffic currently, more trips will be added to the network in response to the high level of development planned in the area, the location and size of which are illustrated on Page 30.

Although S106 monies will be used to mitigate this impact, wider measures will be required to support bus priority measures across broader corridors, and hence make bus more attractive for new residents.



# Bus Network Overview

## Proposed major developments in the Greater Nottingham area



## Fares and Ticketing Offer

A report by TAS Partnership, setting out the findings of a national fares survey undertaken in 2019 shows that the average single fare in Great Britain is £2.48 (£2.45 in urban East Midlands; £2.62 in rural East Midlands); average day fare is £5.21 (£5.92 in urban East Midlands; £6.93 in rural East Midlands); and average weekly fare is £18.03 (£21.49 in urban East Midlands; £23.48 in rural East Midlands).

Single fares vary within the Greater Nottingham area, given the varying lengths of route, ranging from a flat £2.30 on NCT, to variable singles based on route length on Stagecoach (Nottingham to Arnold is £2.20) and trentbarton services.

Network and day caps vary from a cap of £4.20 on NCT services, to a cap between £6.60 - £10.10 on a trentbarton service, depending on the time of day, and area, as these fares are calculated using a tap on tap off (TOTO) system, and £7.20 for a Stagecoach network ticket.

The Robin Hood multi-operator, multi-modal ticketing scheme enables travel on all operators across Greater Nottingham. A day cap of £4.80 is available for adults. Paper day tickets, ITSO smart Season cards and Pay As You Go (ITSO) with complex single and multi-operator day capping provide a comprehensive range of travel products to cater for most travel needs for adults, under 19s and students.

In addition to this, Nottingham Contactless will offer multi-operator capping from November

2021. The multi-operator offer broadly mirrors the commercial offer, however, there are some areas of inconsistency and elements of the scheme which require improvement:

- Not all operators in Greater Nottingham are involved in all areas of the scheme – most (but not all) bus operators sell and accept paper day tickets and smart season cards, but fewer operators are involved in the Pay As You Go scheme, and fewer still in Nottingham Contactless
- The Robin Hood pricing mechanism leads to wide ranging premium differential across the product range compared to commercial operator prices. Some prices are higher than they should be, while other prices are lower than they should be, including undercutting a very small number of commercial operator prices for the equivalent product

A range of tickets are available by different operators, focused on attracting different markets according to the types of service they operate. Different products cater for different demographics, travelling at different frequencies.

Although there is some consistency in tickets across the main operators, for instance, Robin Hood, NCT, trentbarton and CT4N all offer under 19 tickets, different operators offer different discounts. For instance, under 19 ticket discounts range from 23% - 50% off the cost of an adult equivalent ticket; student ticket discounts range from 10% - 20% off the cost of an adult equivalent ticket. Some day tickets are available for 24 hours from purchase, others available for the day of purchase only.



Tickets are available for purchase on-bus; on-line; and via apps for the main operators (NCT; trentbarton; Stagecoach; CT4N and Robin Hood). Contactless payment is available on all services, although the type of contactless payment differs. Some offer retail transactions (old school Model 1) only, while others offer a tap and cap model (old school Model 2) with single operator

day capping in an Account Based Ticketing (ABT) environment. Multi-operator contactless ticketing across bus and tram is due to go live in November 2021. However, although available, there are some restrictions to the use of contactless, where some operators restrict the type of ticket which can be purchased via contactless, others have a daily spending cap on contactless payments.

## Conclusion

Increased congestion results in reduced reliability and punctuality, and increased journey times require increased resources to maintain a high frequency network. In the view of the City and County Council, the above evidence, taken together with the Bus Service Improvement Plan Objectives, makes a compelling case for strengthening the existing Advanced Quality Partnership Scheme. Using statutory Enhanced Partnership powers, the City Council and the bus operators will work together to identify and implement schemes designed to reduce journey times and increase reliability, as well as undertake other activity to increase the attractiveness of local bus services.

These initiatives are intended to stabilise and grow the market for commercial bus services in Nottingham by encouraging modal shift from the private car. It will not be acceptable in environmental, social or economic terms to sustain the substantial planned population growth in Nottingham through continued car reliance. Increased use of the bus network will contribute significantly to mitigate and reduce this effect as well continued investment in the tram and active travel.





The objectives and approach of the Greater Nottingham Enhanced Partnership Plan have been selected to achieve the following outcomes for passengers:

Objectives	Outcomes
Increases in bus priority, both digital and physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved bus journey times</li> <li>Improved reliability</li> <li>Enable operators to maximise the efficient use of their operational resource</li> </ul>
“Turn-up and go” reliable bus frequencies that keep running into the evenings and weekends on main corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus travel becomes more attractive</li> <li>Bus travel becomes competitive</li> <li>Good connectivity</li> <li>Reduced passenger dwell times at stops at interchanges</li> </ul>
Fully integrated services with simple multi-modal ticketing across bus and tram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The network is simpler to use and understand</li> <li>Extended range of travel options open to passengers</li> </ul>
High quality information for all passengers in more places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The network is more coherent and simpler to use through harnessing the power of modern technology</li> </ul>
Genuine passenger engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased passenger ownership of the network that supports its future development</li> </ul>
Year on year passenger growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the long term sustainability of the network</li> <li>Support operator and local transport authority investment in the network</li> </ul>

These priorities are consistent with those in the BSIP, outlined in the table below:

Bus Service Improvement Plan Objectives	Approach
1. Maintenance of pre-Covid high frequency level of services and accessibility across the bus network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the network as it recovers from the pandemic through revenue support until it reaches full commercial sustainability</li> <li>Introduce bus shelters and/or upgrade bus shelters to common standards at bus stop locations</li> <li>Maintain existing interchange provision and explore potential sites for new interchanges across the Greater Nottingham network</li> </ul>
2. Roll-out of further bus priority across the network ensuring buses have priority over inefficient transport modes and address operator pinch points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop business cases to convert comprehensive bus priority on all arterial corridors into Bus Rapid Transit style routes. With the aim of delivering new bus priority on the following corridors:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A52 – Derby Road (Priory Island link)</li> <li>A52 – West Bridgford</li> <li>A60 – Nottingham Railway Station to Central Avenue, West Bridgford</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Bus Service Improvement Plan Objectives	Approach
	<p>A60 – Mansfield Road – Front Street, Arnold                      Upper Parliament Street to Victoria Centre                      A609 – Ilkeston Road to Wollaton Road                      Edwards Lane                      Hucknall Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend traffic light priority for late running buses</li> <li>• Review of Permit Schemes to minimise network disruption</li> <li>• Identification of pinch points not picked up by existing projects</li> <li>• Roll-out and extension of yellow box enforcement using new powers</li> <li>• Review of Bus Lane operational times to reflect new travel patterns</li> <li>• Camera enforcement of Bus Stop Traffic Regulation Orders and bus stop clearways (in the conurbation) at key locations</li> <li>• Investment in staff resource to improve enforcement of bus stop clearways</li> <li>• Engage with relevant partners to review loading restrictions to minimise impact on buses and investigate the potential to implement red routes</li> <li>• Review on-street parking, particularly in district centres that impacts negatively on efficient bus operations</li> </ul>
<p>3. Upgrades to the existing real time information estate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrade LED Displays to TFTs on key corridors into Nottingham city centre</li> <li>• Provide real time displays at all stops within Greater Nottingham</li> <li>• Formalise digital passenger transport control hub that oversees the provision of AVL- TLP and RTPI services and distribution of bus service data across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire</li> </ul>
<p>4. Improvements to bus stop waiting infrastructure in district centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrade to shelters in district centres to include green roofs, off-grid power and PV glass</li> <li>• Ensure all district centres are well connected and integrate (with mobility hubs comprising: bus, tram, train, cycle, walk, e-mobility)</li> <li>• Improved lighting and CCTV safety measures at stops and review of safety guidelines for stop design included in LTA street design guides</li> </ul>
<p>5. Roll-out of the new smart ticketing and contactless payment products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued development of the Robin Hood App (Journey Planner and Ticketing) to support seamless journeys</li> <li>• Introduction of new fare products</li> <li>• Integration of INIT and Ticketer contactless payment system via new national back-office</li> </ul> <p>(NB. Cash payment options will be retained for the lifetime of this plan)</p>
<p>6. Bus station and interchange improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of world class bus interchange for Bulwell</li> <li>• Improvement to passenger waiting facilities at Victoria Bus Station</li> </ul>

Bus Service Improvement Plan Objectives	Approach
7. Extension of camera enforcement, traffic regulation orders and new red routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deployment of additional and upgrade of camera enforcement along with new TROs and red route at hotspot locations following a full review of the Greater Nottingham network</li> </ul>
8. Delivery of an enhanced Robin Hood Network marketing campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A refresh of the Robin Hood Network Marketing Plan and additional resource to heighten levels of activity as part of the recovery from the pandemic</li> <li>• Standardisation of maps and promotional information at all stops in the Greater Nottingham Area with the Robin Hood brand</li> <li>• Upgrade of the bus stop flags and bus stops in Nottinghamshire to the Robin Hood specification</li> <li>• Greater use of the new TFT bus stop displays to market the Robin Hood Network offer</li> <li>• Inclusion of up to date timetables at every stop alongside fares information and network connection information at all major stops</li> </ul>
9. Help deliver the governments Transport Decarbonisation plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with local operators and Government to deliver 167 electric buses and 60 hydrogen buses</li> <li>• Agree with local bus operators that from 2030, all new bus purchases will be Zero Emission</li> </ul>
10. Deliver “Levelling Up” through better access to jobs and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an enhanced Care Leavers travel scheme across Greater Nottingham and Mobility Card scheme in the City of Nottingham</li> </ul>

## Funding Arrangements

The Enhanced Partnership will draw on multiple funding sources to deliver the desired outcomes of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme:

- City and County Council capital funding
- City and County Council revenue funding
- Developer contributions
- Reinvestment of operator revenue generated by schemes
- Other external funding opportunities i.e. Transforming Cities Programme, Bus Service Improvement Plan fund, Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas



**For more information about the Greater Nottingham (Robin Hood Area) Enhanced Partnership Plan, please contact us:**

**email: [public.transport@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:public.transport@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)**

**Twitter: @Transport\_Nottm**

**Facebook: Transport Nottingham**

