

Bus Deal



Background

Buses continue to provide the backbone for sustainable travel across the city.

They make a significant contribution to tackling congestion, reducing carbon and improving air quality. They provide essential access to education, jobs and other facilities, and they play an important role in increasing social cohesion by connecting people and communities.

Developing and improving bus services is a priority for Bristol and the West of England authorities. The Joint Local Transport Plan 4 identifies the need to 'improve passenger experience by providing better bus services, targeted bus priority measures (and better enforcement), traffic signal upgrades, interchange upgrades, enhanced passenger information and integrated ticketing'.

The bus is also essential to support sustainable development in the area. The Joint Spatial Plan recommends strategic development locations and transport mitigation proposals to address their impacts, including schemes to reduce car dependency and promote bus use.

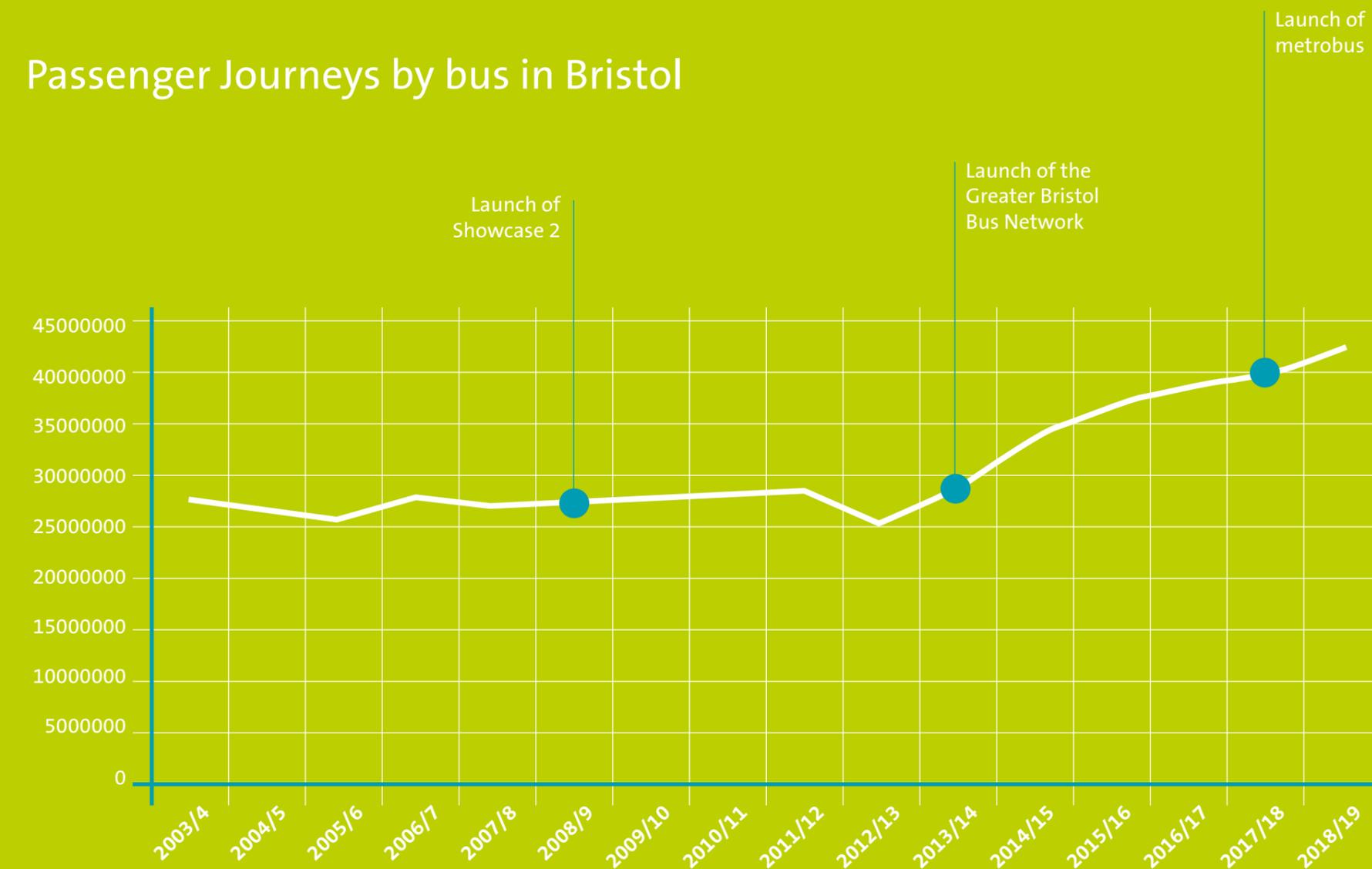
The emerging WECA Bus Strategy will highlight the importance of significant additional bus priority measures and other measures to reallocate road space to improve bus service reliability and journey times. In partnership with First West of England, Bristol City Council and the West of England local authorities have already delivered significant improvements in our bus network:

- The Greater Bristol Bus Network, which delivered a 17.6% increase in passengers from 2008/09 and 2013/14
- metrobus, which has carried more than 3 million passengers since launch
- A cleaner bus fleet, with investment of more than £30 million since 2015 delivering 142 buses in Bristol – and 179 across the wider West of England network – that meet the highest, Euro VI emission standards

The result of these and other interventions is increasing bus use in Bristol, with 54% passenger growth since 2012/13. This bucks the national decline, but bus's modal share in Bristol still lags behind many other UK cities at 9.6% (2011 Census), so there is still a real opportunity – and a real need – to achieve further significant growth. This can only happen by making the buses more frequent and more reliable, which requires significant investment to expand the bus fleet, but also the complementary, enabling investment in road infrastructure, bus priority and other measures that will allow the expanded bus network to deliver.

To that end, working in partnership and with joint commitment, Bristol City Council and First West of England will work to this Memorandum of Understanding as the basis for delivering an ambitious programme of work to deliver significant improvements in Bristol's buses.

Passenger Journeys by bus in Bristol



Objectives

The objectives of the partnership agreement are to:

- Increase the modal share of bus to 20% of all journeys in Bristol by 2031 (subject to Bus Strategy target confirmation).
- Double the peak frequency of bus services on core corridors.
- Use new technology to inform the partnership where services are most delayed.
- Deliver further substantial investment in a greener and more modern bus fleet for Bristol.

Supported through a more sustainable transport future for Bristol and the region by:

- Reduction of parking in the City Centre, and the prioritisation of public transport over private vehicles, particularly at junctions, to encourage behaviour change.
- Promote and deliver infrastructure schemes and service levels which make the bus a more attractive option for travel across the city.
- Development of further Park & Ride facilities.



Key features of this partnership

- A joint commitment to the identification and delivery of measures aimed at improving the bus passenger experience in the city.
- A commitment to delivering to double the peak frequency of buses on key radial corridors into the city.
- Investment in more buses and cleaner buses, including a major investment in bio-methane gas fuelled buses, in support of Clean Air and Carbon plans.
- A commitment to review and enhance the Code of Conduct on Bus Service Stability for the West of England Partnership Area, to minimise network and timetable changes.
- Investment in significant bus priority schemes, to improve bus service punctuality, speed up bus journeys and reduce the variability in journey times.
- Improve passenger information, ticketing technology and customer service.
- Deliver contactless price-capped, daily and weekly tickets by 2022, so passengers know that no matter how much they travel, they won't be charged more than a fixed amount. Options for moving this to a multi operator scheme will also be explored.
- Follow the key principles of the emerging West of England Bus Strategy around network options, infrastructure, interchanges, minimum service provision and technology.
- Use of technology to identify and address pinch-points.
- Respond to increased demand with higher frequencies and will seek to address gaps in the bus network with innovative digital and service solutions.
- Support the search for new bus depot sites to enable expansion of services, including the possibility of operation of Park & Ride sites as multi use bus depots
- Promote employment and training in local communities, for example for increasing the availability of drivers and mechanics.
- Integrate with other investment in sustainable transport initiatives, such as rail stations, car clubs and cycle facilities.
- Commit to achieving improved bus service reliability through increased enforcement and extended operating hours of existing bus lanes.
- Commit BCC to a review of parking and loading facilities, particularly in Bristol City Centre.
- Commit to the optimisation of traffic signals to provide high levels of bus priority at junctions.
- Form an early and integral part of the Joint Local Transport Plan and the emerging mass transit vision for the city region.



Method

The delivery of the infrastructure improvements would be undertaken using the following summary process, based on a corridor or route level approach:

Step 1: Intelligence gathering

- Using new technology to identify sections of route suffering longest delays.
- Driver and inspector feedback and comprehensive route riding.
- Scrutiny of real time information reports to identify overall punctuality issues and trends.
- Passenger engagement on areas for improvement.
- Using all available information to identify areas of increasing need for bus provision.

Step 2: Public engagement

- Communities and passengers on affected routes and corridors will be engaged in the early consideration of the appropriate intervention required to deliver the objectives

Step 3: Develop schemes

- Based on intelligence and community feedback, develop the engineering interventions and bus network changes aimed at journey time reductions and improved punctuality.
- Secure wider public realm/cycling benefits as part of design.

Step 4: Consultation

- Scheme proposals will be subject to consultation of local residents and bus users before being finalised.

Step 5: Finalise scheme design with delivery board approval

- Complete scheme design and coordinate proposed delivery timescales with operators vehicle investment.
- Final business case approved for funding.

Step 6: Statutory consultation

- Where applicable, progress the legal consultation requirements for the scheme(s).

Step 7: Formal agreement signed by both parties on route/corridor investment

Step 8: Construction/delivery of agreed package

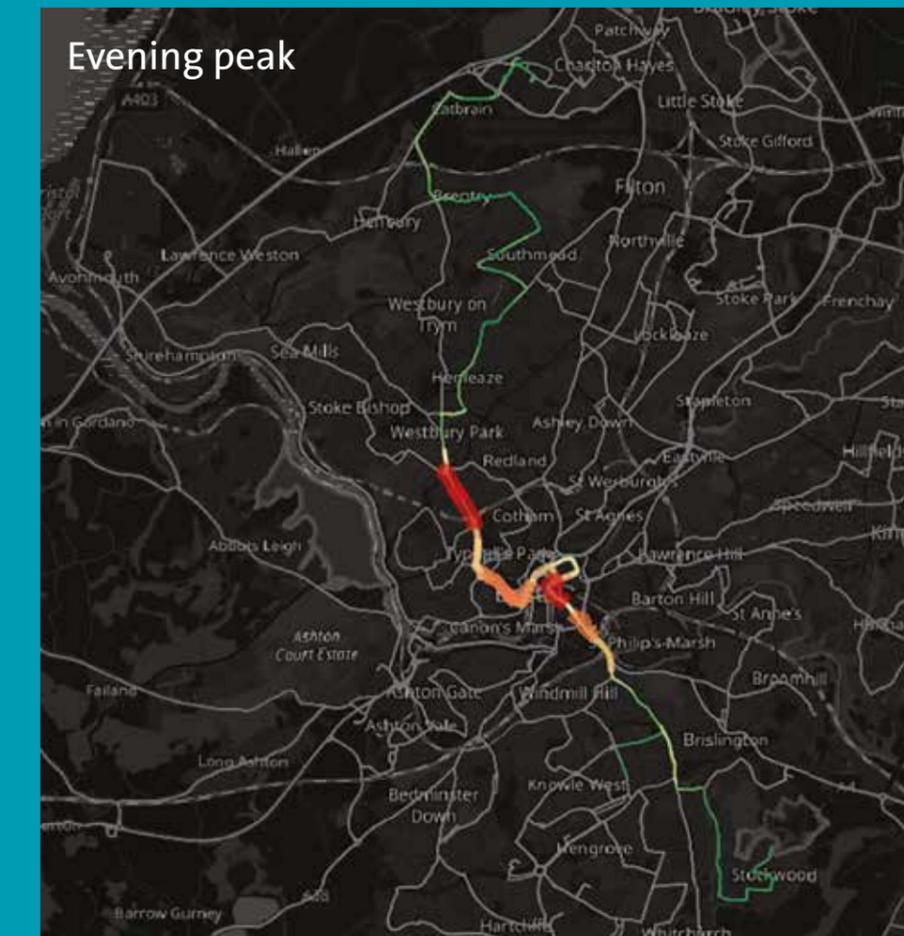
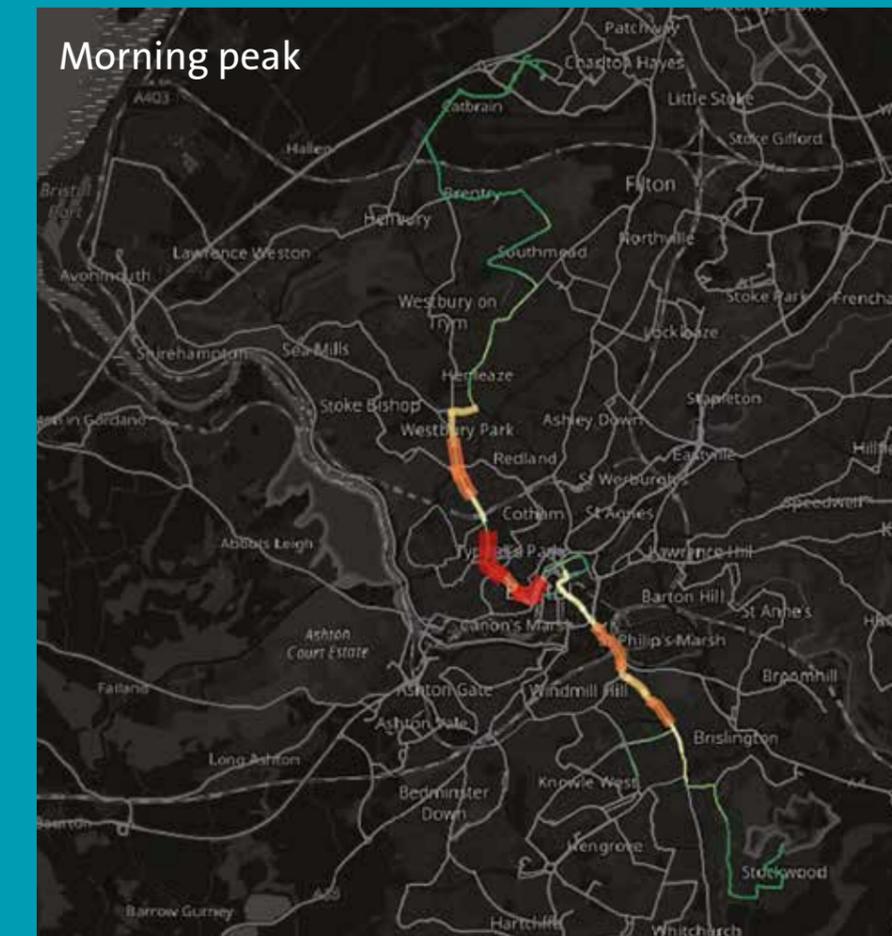
Step 9: Service level enhancement commences

- Re-engage with local communities and businesses to promote use of the new, improved services.

Step 10: Review



Congestion generated vehicle delay – heatmap of Route 2 in Bristol



Governance

A Bus Deal Delivery Board will be established to steer the development and delivery of the partnership, comprising senior representatives from WECA, its constituent authorities and Bus Operators. The Board will be inclusive of all operators and will govern all aspects of the delivery of the partnership.

Bristol City Council, WECA and *First West of England* will jointly develop these heads of terms into a formal partnership document(s) for delivery of routes/corridors.

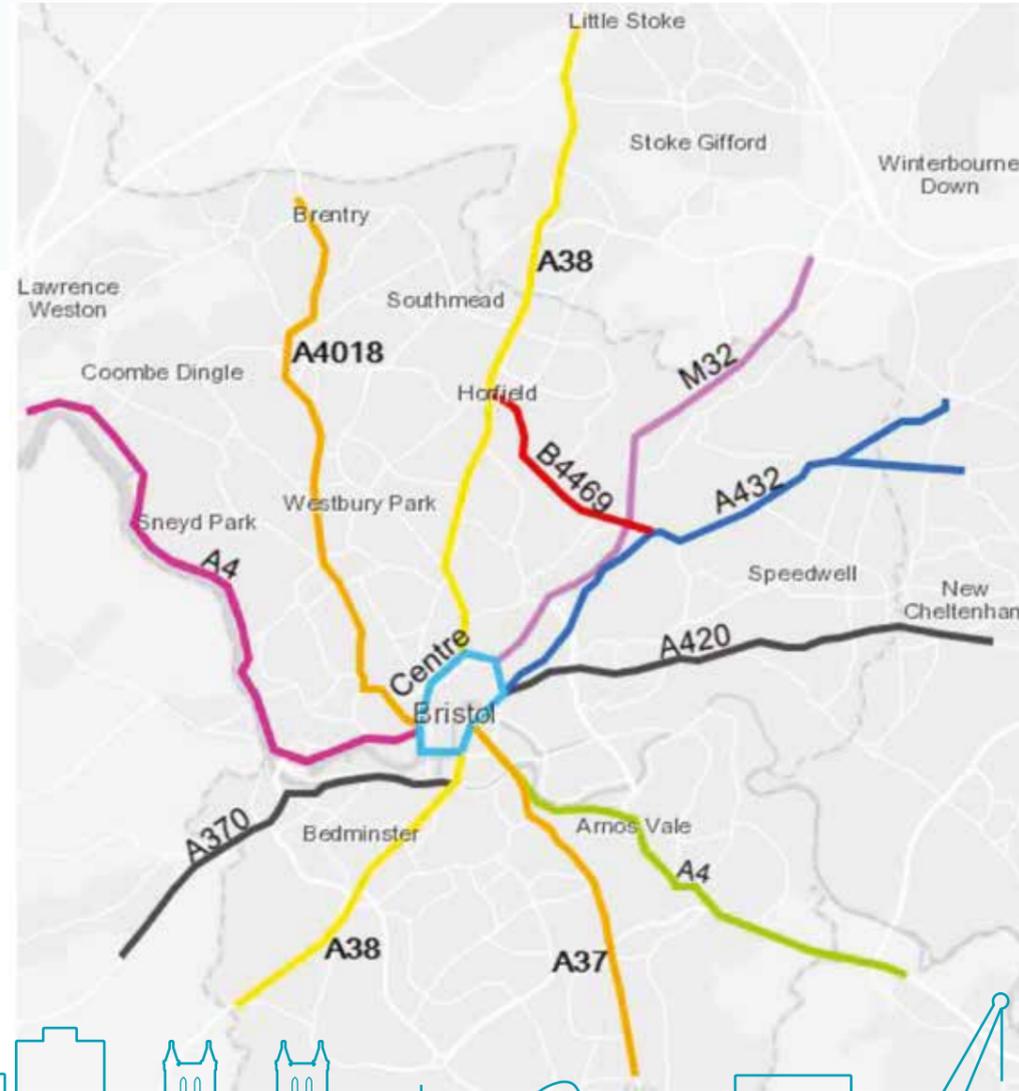
Arrangements will be agreed for open book monitoring and evaluating of the performance of the Bus Delivery Partnership in terms of:

- bus service performance and patronage
- route reviews
- improved bus journey punctuality and journey time performance
- customer satisfaction.



Bus deal programme

- Key**
- 1st Priority
 - 2nd Priority
 - 3rd Priority
 - 4th Priority
 - 5th Priority
 - 6th Priority
 - 7th Priority
 - 8th Priority



Strategic scheme development

This diagram illustrates the proposed priority for application of the process described above. These priorities have been developed based on the scale of impact utilising punctuality of bus services and passenger numbers.

These priorities have been developed using passenger and punctuality data to determine where investment can yield the maximum customer benefit.

Priorities will be reviewed throughout the bus deal programme. This will ensure investment is targeted correctly in accordance with any changes in demand patterns, traffic conditions and any other factors.

Further information will be provided on each scheme as it is developed.



Marvin Rees
Mayor of Bristol



James Freeman
Managing Director of First West of England

