



**Thames Valley- Buckinghamshire-
Milton Keynes- Northampton
Connectivity Study**

Call for Evidence



Introduction

Welcome to the call for evidence for England's Economic Heartland's connectivity study for Thames Valley-Buckinghamshire-Milton Keynes-Northampton.

This connectivity study is the fourth connectivity study being undertaken by England's Economic Heartland and covers an area from Buckinghamshire in the south to Northampton in the north.

This is not a 'traditional' transport study. Instead, we are working with partners and stakeholders to set the desired outcomes for the defined study area from which we can collectively identify the investment requirements that are needed.

Taking this approach ensures that, as we plan connectivity in the future, we are doing so in a way that can achieve the region's long-term ambitions. The output from the study will be taken forward as part of the investment pipeline associated with the [EEH Transport Strategy](#).

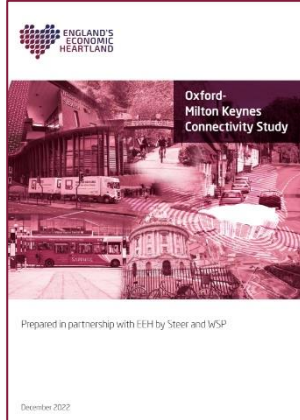
During the development of EEH's Transport Strategy we worked with partners to identify a programme of connectivity studies based on an independent assessment of a long list of transport and growth corridors, within the EEH region.

The first 2 studies, [Oxford to Milton Keynes](#) and [Peterborough-Northampton-Oxford](#), are now published on the EEH website, with the third Swindon-Didcot-Oxford study nearing completion. The Thames Valley – Buckinghamshire – Milton Keynes – Northampton study is now being progressed alongside the Southern East West Movements study .

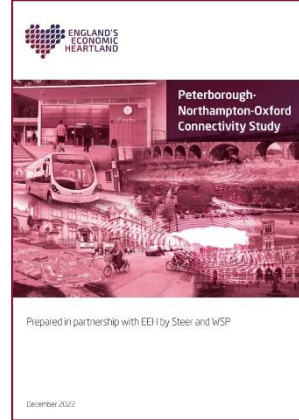
Transport Strategy



Connectivity Study Programme



Study 1
Oxford – Milton Keynes



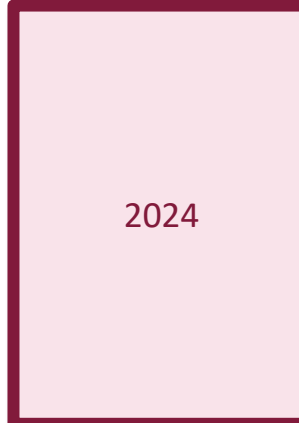
Study 2
Peterborough –
Northampton – Oxford



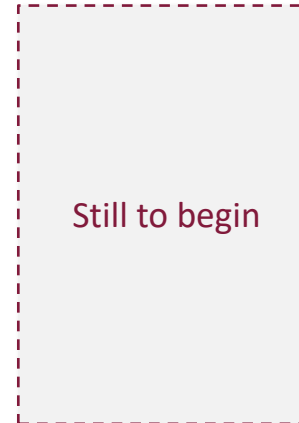
Study 3
Swindon – Didcot – Oxford



Study 4
Thames Valley –
Buckinghamshire – Milton
Keynes- Northampton



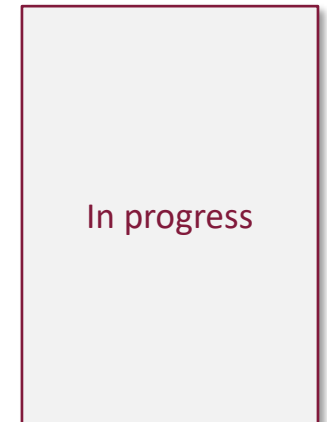
Study 5
Southern East West
Movements



Study 6
Luton – Bedford – Corby
(TBC)



Investment Pipeline



The call for evidence

We are seeking to develop a comprehensive evidence base for the connectivity study and develop a clear position on the opportunities and challenges that need to be addressed.

We are holding an online survey in spring 2023 (9 May to 11 June inclusive) to help inform the study.

The survey is open to all interested parties and residents. The outputs of the call for evidence will feed into the study evidence base and will be published alongside a final study report (currently scheduled for late 2023/early 2024).



Purpose of connectivity studies

The overall purpose of our programme of connectivity studies is to :

- identify opportunities and solutions to maximise current and future connectivity in defined corridors or areas
- build on the policy framework in the EEH Transport Strategy – in effect providing a strategy for the area/ corridor to help achieve the Transport Strategy’s ambition to:

“Support sustainable growth and improve quality of life and wellbeing through a world-class, decarbonised transport system which harnesses the region’s global expertise in technology and innovation to unlock new opportunities for residents and businesses, in a way that benefits the UK as a whole.”

Each study scope has been developed with our partners: the local transport authorities, local planning authorities and local enterprise partnerships along the corridor. It is anticipated that each study will identify interventions and solutions to improve connectivity within the corridor or area. These will be fed into the EEH Investment Pipeline.

The studies are multi-modal and therefore it is anticipated that the measures identified are likely to be a package of interventions (including digital).

Our Transport Strategy

The connectivity studies will build on the policy framework in our Transport Strategy, published in February 2021.

The strategy, *Connecting People, Transforming Journeys*, was developed in collaboration with partners and government, informed by technical studies and an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), and shaped by feedback from two public consultations.

It sets out the step-change required to decarbonise the transport system while supporting economic growth. It includes an ambition for net zero transport emissions by 2040.

The outputs of the connectivity studies will inform the iterative development of the strategy's Investment Pipeline.

The strategy's five-point plan of action is on the following page.



The Transport Strategy's five-point action plan

ONE: Focus on **decarbonisation** of the transport system by harnessing innovation and supporting solutions which create green economic opportunities

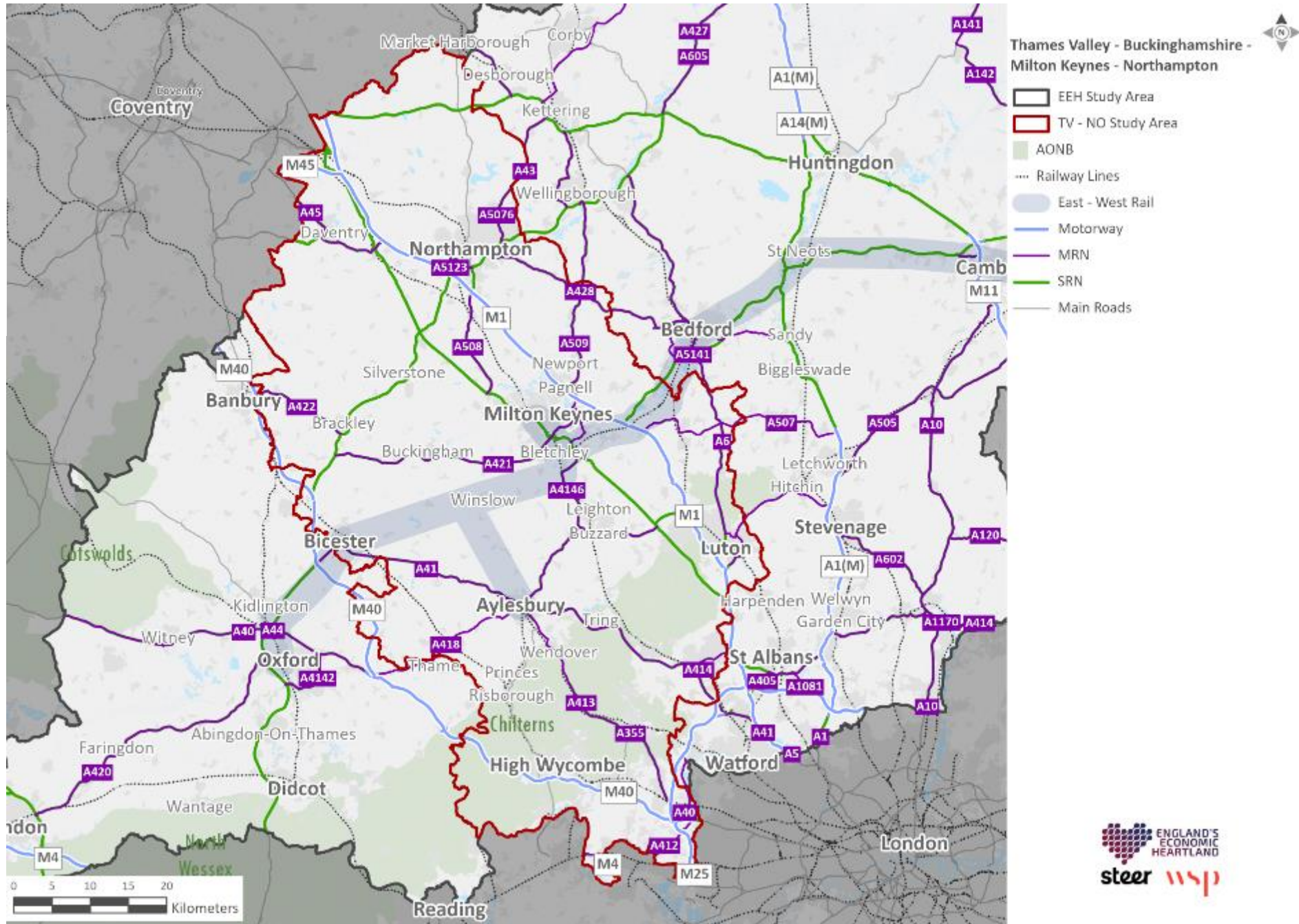
TWO: Promote investment in **digital** infrastructure as a means of improving connectivity

THREE: Use delivery of East West Rail and mass rapid transit systems as the catalyst for the transformation of our strategic **public transport** networks

FOUR: Champion increased investment in active travel and shared transport solutions to improve **local connectivity** to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential

FIVE: Ensure that our **freight and logistics** needs continue to be met whilst lowering the environmental impact of their delivery

Study 4 area



Study approaches

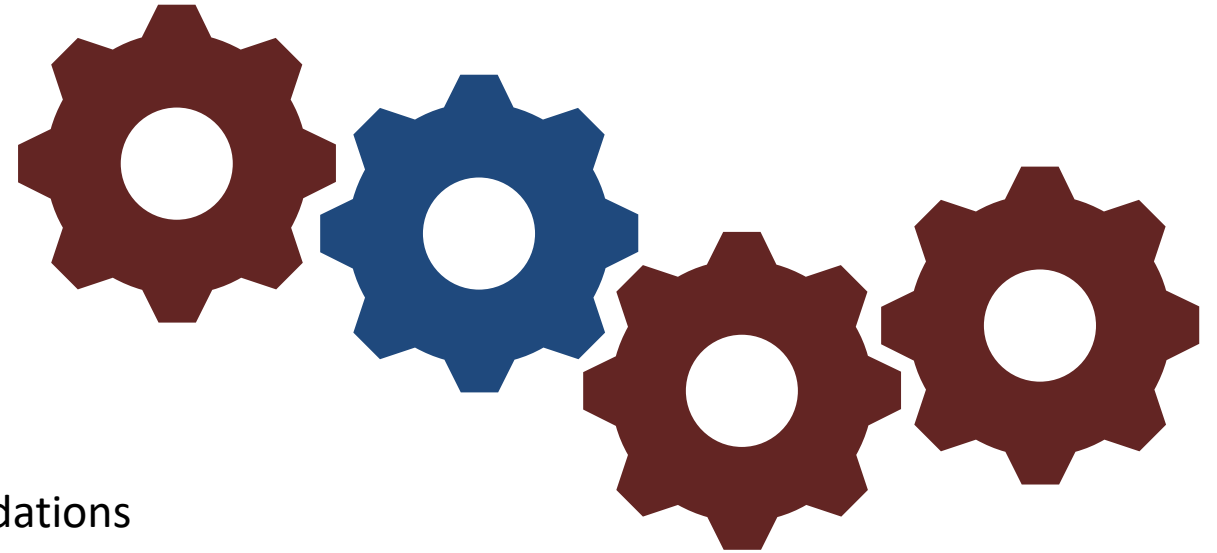
The connectivity study will run in four stages:

Phase 1: Methodology development

Phase 2: 'Setting the scene'

Phase 3: Delivery of the study and producing recommendations

Phase 4: Final report



We are moving into Phase 2 of our study development. During this phase we are developing our evidence base for the study and would like your input to identify opportunities, challenges, themes and potential interventions for each of the study areas.

The outputs from the survey will be presented to the study steering group and form part of the evidence base outputs, to be published alongside the conclusion of the study in late 2023/ early 2024.

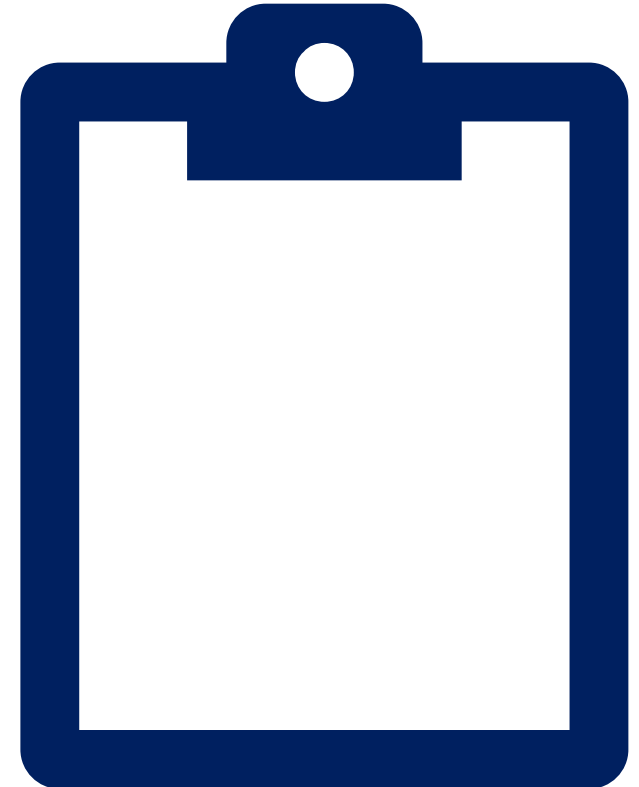
About the survey

We are seeking your input into the studies. We want to know your views on the challenges and opportunities for improving connectivity in each corridor. The study covers a large geography and is therefore strategic in nature.

The following pages explain the questions being asked in the online survey.

[The Thames Valley to Northampton Survey can be found here.](#)

The survey will run until midnight on 11 June 2023.



Question One:

What are the key themes for the study area?

What are the over-arching themes that the connectivity study should look to consider when developing a package of potential measures? Please identify three themes you consider to be the most important.

These could include:

- Decarbonisation
- Accessibility
- Safety
- Levelling up
- Access to public transport or walking and cycling provision
- Digital connectivity
- Environment



Question Two:

What do you consider to be the key movements in the area?

For example:

- Based on your experience, what are the key journeys being made in the study area?
- How are these journeys being made? Could they be made by a different mode of travel in the future (including virtually)?
- Why are these journeys being made (employment, leisure etc)?
- Are there gaps in connectivity which means that people cannot easily connect between key places?



Question Three:

What interventions do you think the study should consider?

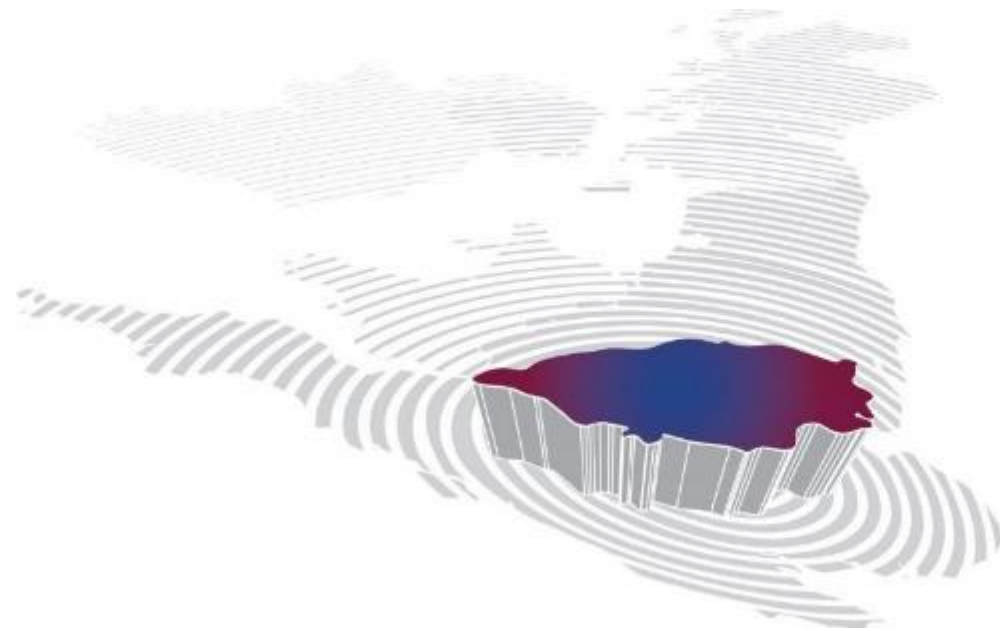
The outcomes of the study will be a package of interventions to improve connectivity in the region.

Are there any interventions you think should be considered during the development of the study?

These could include:

- Bus priority
- Walking and cycling routes
- Bicycle hire schemes
- Direct bus or rail connections
- Electric vehicle hire clubs
- Targeted road improvements





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