

Smarter Travel Forum Manifesto: Keeping intelligent travel high on the agenda

The Smarter Travel Forum exists to give a united voice for the industry in bringing the benefits of intelligent travel to government and other decision-makers. The Forum aims to keep intelligent travel high on the agenda, by showing how applying technology can help solve problems of congestion, over-crowding and resource limitation and can make cities and towns smarter and greener.

There is a consensus that investing in infrastructure, including transport, is vital to help the economy. The Government is currently planning to invest billions in both road and rail projects. Alongside this essential investment into the physical infrastructure there is also a push to give our cities world class transport systems, through City Deals and local growth funds.

Political and media attention inevitably is drawn to big projects, such as HS2, Crossrail, new runways and major roads. This manifesto argues that equal attention and funding should be given to investing in technology for intelligent transport.

The use of technology continues to transform travel and transport, with benefits for the travelling public, for businesses and for the Government. While autonomous / driverless vehicles are getting the headlines, technology is also being applied to make today's transport work better in giving transport users and operators much better information, door-to-door seamless travel and more, increased capacity and efficient operations. In this way, investing in intelligent transport can make better use of the transport infrastructure we already have. The potential of using the data being gathered about all forms of transport use will enable government and operators to manage the entire range of modes much more effectively for the benefit of all.

Investing in technology for our transport systems can deliver huge gains for the economy:

- It can make transport more reliable and economical
- It can make travel more attractive and easier to use and operate
- It can support competitiveness by creating badly needed jobs in the engineering sector

Investment in intelligent transport systems is already delivering:

- Predictive and personalised intelligence on how transport networks across an entire city or region are operating, empowering travellers and operators to manage demand, fares and fees in real time
- New approaches to easy payment for all transport services
- Better management leading to more efficient transport networks with increased capacity
- Better planning of journeys with clear insights into people's travel patterns and trends

Smart technology can make travel easier for passengers, and in particular can make public transport more attractive to use, more reliable and more efficient.

Applied on a large scale, intelligent transport technology has bigger benefits. It can make cities work better by joining up transport with other services and urban elements, such as housing, and support growth and jobs by making whole areas more attractive to investors and tourists and easier to navigate for residents. It can also reduce pollution and improve air quality by making alternatives to single occupancy car use more viable.

Government and transport policy makers have a critical role to play if the UK is going to take full advantage of the technology.

They can encourage and promote smarter travel in a number of ways:

- Through better regulation, giving incentives and where appropriate requiring transport industries to adopt smart technology
- Through contracts, for example bringing technology to road maintenance, rail and bus franchises and existing infrastructure
- Through investment, ensuring that smart technology is embedded in all investment projects on all modes

Access to and transparency of transport data will enable technology providers to work in partnership with network operators. Opening up data can improve transport planning, giving insights on actual use and trends rather than relying on surveys and models. In turn, real time information will be enhanced by predictive intelligence based on experience and deep analytics.

In particular, the Government can help promote intelligent transport systems by:

- Including open data requirements in the forthcoming Buses Bill, allowing for universal real time information on operations and fares
- Developing over this Parliament long term investment programmes for intelligent transport technology in all modes of transport and making them integral elements of the National Infrastructure Plan
- Ensuring that the new National Infrastructure Commission, gives priority to using technology to make efficient use of existing transport systems as well as recommending new infrastructure
- Including transport technology in devolution deals. This means combining roads, railways and buses into a coherent city or regional offer, including simple and comprehensive door-to-door ticketing in every city
- Building on the Highways England innovation fund to make intelligent transport systems core to the motorway and trunk road network in the next Road Investment Strategy

The UK can already claim to have some of the world leaders in smarter travel. By continued, long term investment in technology on rail and road and in our cities and local transport networks, the UK can retain its leading role in this technology industry; can deliver more sustainable, cost effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure; and also create places that people will want to live, work and invest in.