

# Response to the Transport Select Committee's call for evidence on the Railways Bill



## About CoMoUK

CoMoUK is the national charity for the public benefits (environmental, social and economic) of shared transport. We liaise extensively with public, private and third sector stakeholders as part of our work to further these benefits. We are a founding member of the Sustainable Transport Alliance, a network of organisations working to reduce the UK's transport emissions.

Shared transport covers services that share cars, bikes and e-bikes, rides in cars, and e-scooters. These services are available to multiple users, on demand, for short periods, allowing people to use a range of different transport modes as needed without the costs of private ownership.

Our infrastructure focus is on mobility hubs that bring sustainable transport options together and reduce private car use. There are six core aspects of mobility hubs, some of which are already present or easily realised at railway stations:

- Hubs must be part of a clearly identifiable transport network with services which are easily accessible to all
- Hubs should connect public and shared modes as well as active travel routes
- The design and facilities of hubs should boost safety through active and passive measures
- Hubs should make it easier to switch modes of travel, both in terms of physical infrastructure and digital services to plan and pay for journeys
- Hubs should incorporate other practical facilities depending on context and demand
- Hubs should enhance the area visually, providing a contribution to the social and community fabric

These have the potential to improve passenger experience of rail travel, increase accessibility of rail travel, and reduce carbon emissions of journeys to and from train stations. This document summarises CoMoUK's views on how the Railways Bill could realise this potential.

# Improving and expanding rail travel: how mobility hubs can increase reach and accessibility, convenience and sustainability

The Railways Bill places responsibility for station infrastructure on Great British Railways. This responsibility should include consideration of how stations can be used to support low-emission onward journeys by installing mobility hubs. Mobility hubs bring together shared transport with public transport and active travel, boosting convenience for multi-modal trips and offering a sustainable first or last mile connection.

We also believe that mobility hubs could support several strategic objectives of the Long-Term Rail Strategy, outlined below.

## Maintaining a safe railway as part of a safe transport system and significantly widening accessibility

Improving the availability of shared transport modes increases the options passengers have for transport to and from the station. Shared transport can allow independent, low-emission travel for those who are not able to use public transport. Car clubs enable access to a wider range of destinations for those who would not be able to afford a private car; 50% of car club users surveyed would not have been able to go to their destination without a car.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, shared e-bikes enable a wider range of people to opt for active travel when convenient. In our research, disabled people who cannot walk long distances have found e-bike share schemes an accessible form of active travel:

*"I have a muscular disease. Using normal bikes puts too much strain on me. Using buses can also be difficult if I'm forced to stand for long durations. Bikes give me freedom, because they are powered they never apply strain to my muscles, and my travel is much much quicker. Honestly so fantastic." – Male user from London, 35-44<sup>2</sup>*

Shared transport also increases passengers' feelings of safety in the journey to and from stations:

*"Another comment I'd make is as a female I often use the e-bikes for safety. Walking back from my local station late at night can be dangerous, but on a bike I can get it done quicker and am less vulnerable." – Female user from Norwich, 55-64*

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<sup>1</sup> [CoMoUK Annual Car Club Report 2024](#)

<sup>2</sup> [CoMoUK Annual Shared Micromobility Report UK 2024](#)

“When it's late at night after a work shift/late uni session, it's very difficult to find bikes near a train/tube station, which is when I want them the most for safety” – *Female user from London, 25-34*

“Having allocated e-bike parking areas near to train stations is fantastic! As a woman this is helpful for me coming home late on my own as I don't feel safe near my local tube station at night. I don't want to walk or wait for a bus so being able to jump on an e-bike / bike share that is available just outside the tube station is so incredibly helpful!!” – *Female user from London, 25-34*

## Integration of rail with local and regional multimodal transport systems

Mobility hubs are an effective way of integrating public transport with active and shared transport, creating greater connectivity between national rail services and local sustainable transport systems. Users of shared transport are more likely to also use trains:

- **21%** of active bike share users **combine their most common bike share trip with a train ride**<sup>3</sup>
- **55%** of car club users **also use a train or tram at least one a week**, compared to just 9% of the wider English population<sup>4</sup>

Station infrastructure should be built to support this integration.

Shared micromobility could be an increasingly significant element of local multimodal transport systems with the introduction of shared micromobility licencing in the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, making mobility hubs even more important to ensure safe and convenient parking is available at interchanges. The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill places a duty on traffic authorities to cooperate with licencing authorities on parking; the Railways Bill should similarly place a duty on GBR to cooperate with strategic authorities to provide parking for licenced shared micromobility schemes, allowing integration of rail with local and regional shared micromobility.

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<sup>3</sup> [CoMoUK Annual Shared Micromobility Report UK 2024](#)

<sup>4</sup> [CoMoUK Annual Car Club Report 2024](#)

## **Delivering rail net-zero (traction and infrastructure), protecting biodiversity and addressing air pollution**

Rail net-zero should take into account the emissions and pollution associated with journeys to and from train stations. Using mobility hubs to integrate multimodal transport would support lowering emissions on the end-to-end journey.

Finally, it is important that the accountability mechanisms outlined in the Bill drive GBR to make the most of multimodal integration for passengers. The Bill currently gives the Passengers' Council the power to set standards to be complied with by persons providing station services, including standards on accessibility, information provision, and compensation for disruption. The Bill should also give the Passengers' Council the power to set standards on station infrastructure for onward travel, ensuring that stations have provision for multimodal integration that enable passengers to choose sustainable modes for onward transport. The Network Rail Parking & Mobility at Stations Design Manual contains guidance on hub size and components to suit local needs and mobility objectives,<sup>5</sup> which could be used to set these standards.

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<sup>5</sup> [Network Rail Design Manual: Parking & Mobility at Stations](#) (NR/GN/CIV/200/11)