

The benefits of shared transport for mass transit systems

Response to the Urban Transport Group call for evidence on the
Mass Transit Taskforce

Policy development, strategic fit and options assessment

CoMoUK (“Collaborative Mobility UK”) is the UK’s charity for shared transport, dedicated to the social, economic and environmental benefits of shared transport. Shared transport, including car clubs, shared bikes and shared e-scooters, allows an individual to access a mode of transport without being tied to ownership. The latest CoMoUK Annual Reports into Shared Micromobility¹ and Car Clubs² continue to show that not only do shared transport options offer a number of similar benefits to mass transit solutions, but they are regularly used in multimodal journeys alongside rail, bus, tram and tube services. The behavioural patterns of users discussed in this response present a huge opportunity to extend the catchment of mass transit system by offering first-and-last-mile connections, in turn driving increased patronage.

Shared micromobility has become a frequent and flexible choice for millions, with 60% of bike share users and 47% of shared e-scooter users making at least weekly trips. The most common trip purpose for both mode is commuting to work or school (54% for shared bikes, 46% for shared e-scooters) and trips are often made alongside mass transit modes in multimodal journeys. 17% of users combine their most combine bike share trip with underground, light rail or tram use, (9% for shared e-scooter users). (These figures rise to 57% and 47% respectively when accounting for train and bus use as well). Shared micromobility users also report both physical and mental health benefits: 53% of bike share users confirm that their use provides them with exercise and 27% of shared e-scooter users report mental health benefits. Thus, the use of shared micromobility incentivises broader health policy goals as well as a reduction in carbon emissions from the transport sector.

Car club users also reap similar lifestyle benefits and more regularly use public transport than the average population. User live more active lives, with 32% cycling at least once per week compared to just 13% of the active population. Public transport services also benefits in places where car clubs are supported. 32% of active users take the train at least once a week (compared to 10% of the average population) and 48% make at least weekly bus journeys (23% for the average population). While data is not collected specifically for mass transit modes, it is safe to assume that similar behavioural patterns exist.

¹ [CoMoUK Annual Shared Micromobility Report 2025](#)

² [CoMoUK Annual Car Club Report 2025](#)

Given this evidence, and though car clubs and shared micromobility shouldn't be viewed as a direct alternative to mass transit, these modes should nonetheless be seen as complementary options that can increase the efficiency and patronage of mass transit systems for the reasons set out previously. Mass transit planning should feature as standard a consideration of shared transport modes as first-and-last mile solutions. The historic underestimation of the benefits of shared transport during options appraisal is discussed further in our response on the topic of business case development, where we argue that there is at present a capability gap in quantifying the costs and benefits of shared modes.

The multimodal behaviour of shared transport users present a significant opportunity for greater integration with mass transit. In the CoMoUK 2025 Shared Micromobility Report linked previously, 54% of users who made multimodal journeys said that it was "easy" or "very easy" to switch between modes, showing that there is room for improvement. Through policy development, research and consultancy projects, integration of shared transport is a core focus for CoMoUK. Specifically, we have been working in depth on mobility hubs since 2019, defined as locations that bring together public transport with shared transport and active travel in places that improve the public realm for all. The CoMoUK accreditation standard helps designers and decision makers to deliver high quality hubs, and each hub type in the typology requires at least one high quality public transport connection.

Currently, there are multiple barriers to ensuring effective integration between mass transit, shared transport and other modes:

- **Historically low levels of political ambition for integration.** The Better Connected strategy, published early this year, signals that transport integration is a greater priority for Government than ever before, and includes a commitment to "scale up" shared mobility and highlights the potential contribution of mobility hubs to better integration. It is important that this commitment remains under the leadership of Prime Minister Burnham.
- **Lack of practical supporting guidance.** Despite the signal of intent, the lack of delivery detail in Better Connected leaves a gap in practical guidance as to how those intentions will be met. This gap will need to be filled where possible in further transport policy and guidance, and the Mass Transit Taskforce represents a key opportunity to support local authorities to understand and deliver the Government's expectations on integration and shared transport.
- **Lack of joining up.** For those wanting to make multimodal journeys, barriers remain regarding the joining up of journey information and ticketing.

- **Land ownership.** Obstacles relating to land ownership around train stations are raised by stakeholders at CoMoUK forum meetings, held monthly for local authority officers. It is important that similar obstacles are mitigated against at an early stage when considering future mass transit systems.

These limitations on integration means that the full scale of potential benefits for mass transport systems are unrealised, and a flexible option for connecting to mass transit is in some cases not available for many people. In conclusion, policy development and options assessment relating to mass transit should be done in a holistic way that considers shared transport (and other sustainable modes) as both first-and-last mile options and enablers of successful mass transit schemes. Shared transport users are frequent users of mass transit systems, but face challenges at present when looking to switch between modes. Decision makers should be incentivised to consider the role of shared modes when developing plans for mass transit systems.

Business case development, appraisal and approval

Research into the costs and benefits of shared transport, accounting for economic, social and environment benefits, has historically been limited. Shared transport also does not feature within the HM Treasury Green Book. This has meant that the full value of shared transport as an option has been underestimated, and therefore it has been difficult for stakeholders to reflect the value of shared modes in business cases. Given the complementary nature of shared transport for mass transit systems (detailed in the previous response), this guidance gap has an impact on mass transit business cases with respect to wider benefits and strategic fit.

CoMoUK is developing a tool to help local authority transport officers (and other stakeholders) to appraise the full range of social, economic and environmental benefits of shared transport. The cost-benefit analysis that the tool enables will support a greater visibility of the contribution of shared transport to a range of goals, including decarbonisation and active travel rates. The net economic benefits of shared transport use for public transport networks is one of the elements within the calculation. As covered previously, shared transport users are more regular users of mass transit than the average population, and therefore support the economic viability of mass transit schemes. Once published, we ask that the shared transport cost-benefit calculator is used to build stronger business cases for the integration of mass transit and shared transport. While the tool is still under development, it is currently calculated that a combined shared micromobility scheme in a city of 200,000 inhabitants returns £2.62 for every £1 spent.

We have previously responded to consultations relating to existing Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) and the Department for Transport's draft Appraisal Modelling and Evaluation Strategy (AMES). The existing Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) workbook provides a systematic approach to transport appraisal that consistently applies the principles of HMT's Green Book and sets out an auditable structure which is important when spending public money. In theory it provides a good foundation for option generation, development and appraisal. Despite this, the usability of the framework, recognised as an issue in the 2019 AMES document, continues to be hindered by a potential overload of information which limits the ease of use for less frequent users. TAG also fails, in its current iteration, to fully capture the benefits of integration of different modes and undervalues the place making function of transport. Furthermore, TAG continues to prioritise fixed-route and scheduled public transport that doesn't reflect the reality of travel behaviours across the UK, which are often multimodal and have a preference for flexible routes. Integration itself should feature within appraisal guidance, given that the ease of making multimodal journeys supports transport connectivity and therefore the ability of individuals to reach employment opportunities, health appointments and more.

The Appraisal, Modelling and Evaluation Strategy, published in May 2026, does focus on the principle of integration and states that "modelling should enable different types of transport to be considered as options...avoiding premature commitment to specific options that may not maximise value for taxpayers' money". As the government develops specific tools and guidance for transport appraisal, it is important that the value of integrating mass transit with shared transport and other sustainable modes is fully captured. There is a benefit of the Mass Transit Taskforce focusing on this area, given that doing so would result in a greater capability to capture the holistic benefits of mass transit when combined with shared transport and other sustainable modes, thus strengthening future business cases.