



Department
for Transport

Councillor James Mallinder and Jane Healey
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From the Parliamentary
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Dear Councillor Mallinder and Ms Healey,

Thank you for your letter of 10 December to Grant Shapps on behalf of the East Suffolk Greenprint Forum (ESGF) and East Suffolk Council's (ESC's) Environment Task Group (ETG) regarding climate change commitments. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this issue.

I am pleased to hear of the work that ESG and ESGF are doing to meet the challenge of climate change in Suffolk and for the ESC to become carbon neutral by 2030. This government shares many of East Suffolk's climate change ambitions – we are committed to going further and faster to tackle climate change, which is why we are developing a bold and ambitious Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP) to achieve net zero emissions across all modes of transport.

In our March publication "Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge", we presented six strategic priorities to enable us to take a holistic approach and identify the policies and actions for the TDP, including accelerating modal shift to public and active transport; decarbonisation of road vehicles; and place-based solutions for emissions reduction.

Where it is possible, the Government want public and active travel to be the natural first choice for our daily activities. On 9 May, we announced a £2 billion investment to boost greener, active transport – including pop-up bike lanes with protected space for cycling, wider pavements, safer junctions, and cycle and bus-only corridors. Our July publication "Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking" is a 33-point plan setting out our commitments to improve safety, infrastructure, and the quality of our streets and enable people to take up higher levels of cycling and walking.

The plan was accompanied by the publication of new infrastructure design guidelines and a consultation on changes to The Highway Code to improve safety for cycling and walking, which included consultation on introducing a hierarchy of road users. The consultation on changes to The Highway Code is now closed and a Government response will be published in due course.

The Government also recently announced that the UK will phase out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, and that from 2035 all new cars and vans must be zero emissions at the tailpipe. Between 2030 and 2035, any new cars and vans sold that emit from the tailpipe must have significant zero emission capability. The Government and industry have also supported the installation of over 19,000 publicly available charging devices including over 3,500 rapid devices – one of the largest networks in Europe.

Including place-based solutions for emissions reduction as one of our six strategic priorities for transport decarbonisation recognises that different decarbonisation solutions will be required and will work best in different places across the UK. Taking a place-based approach will enable us to engage communities in building their own net zero visions and encourage and enable further progress.

Launched in February 2020, DfT's Rural Mobility Fund – worth £20 million – aims to trial demand-responsive transport solutions in providing transport services which work better for residents of rural and suburban areas than traditional transport services. Solutions would either fill a gap in provision, where there is no current local transport offer, or complement existing timetables bus services, for example by acting as a feed-in service. Successful bids for the fund will receive a share of £20 million to trial new on-demand services or to improve existing services in rural and suburban areas. We received a total of 56 bids – including one for East Suffolk. We expect to be able to announce which local authorities have been shortlisted in January. Finally, the Government's Future of Transport programme aims to secure the UK's position as a world-leading innovator, creating a greener and more inclusive future transport system for us all. The 'Future of transport: rural strategy – call for evidence' was launched in November and closes on 16 February 2021. I encourage your organisations to feed into this consultation.

Yours sincerely,



RACHEL MACLEAN

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT