
Yorkshire and Humber Assembly Strategic Rural Transport Framework

Final Report



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Yorkshire and Humber Assembly Strategic Rural Transport Framework Final Report

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0 Executive Summary

Context	Delivery	Issues	Need	Range	Evidence	Framework
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- 0.1 The Yorkshire and Humber Assembly, as part of its work to produce a full Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), and Rural Transport Partnerships in Yorkshire and the Humber, have jointly commissioned JMP Consulting to develop a Strategic Rural Transport Framework. The aim of this work is to feed into and inform the Regional Rural Framework with evidence based priorities, and provide improved policies for rural transport matters to the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).
- 0.2 This study has emerged from two sources. Firstly, concerns expressed in successive consultations on Regional Planning Guidance and RSS have indicated that rural transport issues have not, to date, been adequately addressed as part of the strategic spatial planning process. Nor have any approaches to dealing with transport issues in the rural communities of the region addressed the issues in a strategic way. Instead, in common with much of the rest of England, a case-by-case approach has been the basis for ongoing investment aimed at tackling rural transport problems.
- 0.3 Secondly, the future delivery mechanism for one element of rural transport provision, namely that provided through Rural Transport Partnerships (RTPs), is going through a period of change. The funding provided to RTPs was, until March 2005, provided through the Countryside Agency. From 1 April 2005 it is being channelled through Yorkshire Forward. Evidence of the success of RTP projects and delivery will inform the developing Framework.

Context	Delivery	Issues	Need	Range	Evidence	Framework
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- 0.4 The Strategic Rural Transport Framework needs not only to feed into RSS in policy terms, but to be complementary to the Yorkshire and the Humber Rural Framework. The Rural Framework is about getting better results on the ground. In doing this identifying areas of need and appropriate solutions to deliver improvement are both important. The Rural Framework also identifies the need to access sources of funding. Aligning the priority issues with appropriately funded interventions is the key to delivery of both the Rural Framework and this Strategic Rural Transport Framework across the region.
- 0.5 In achieving this, the Framework will be consistent with the principles of Modernising Rural Delivery (MRD). These principles are that delivery should have a customer focus; that there should be a simplification of delivery mechanisms ensuring a greater proportion of resources into the region reaching the customer; that delivery must be locally responsive; that delivery of rural services should be integrated; that delivery should be strategy-led; and finally, transparent.

Context	Delivery	Issues	Need	Range	Evidence	Framework
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- 0.6 Problems identified within rural communities in the region place the main emphasis for this Framework on improving the accessibility of services for people in rural areas, not simply on providing transport for its own sake. Therefore, in developing the Framework, the need to improve access to services for rural communities, especially those socially excluded groups who, for example, do not have access to a car, emerges as the main desired outcome. Improved accessibility for rural communities, especially to basic services and life opportunities such as employment, education, healthcare, basic food shopping, post offices and social and leisure opportunities is vital in delivering the RSS in rural areas.
- 0.7 A number of other key issues emerge from an analysis of the problems and opportunities existing in rural areas. These are principally related to the affects of traffic, in terms of both environmental damage and road safety. A strong linkage emerges here with the desire to improve access to services for all, for if service provision was improved locally the need to travel would be reduced.
- 0.8 The Framework is informed by evidence from the success of Rural Transport Partnerships in the region. It is therefore with regard to the improvement of accessibility, rather than the mitigation of traffic effects that is the focus for the Framework. Direct solutions to these traffic related safety and environmental problems, such as engineering and technological measures, do not therefore feature in this framework.
- 0.9 In contributing to RSS, it is clear that one area of current (2004) RSS policy needs strengthening, namely in identifying the need to improve access to key services for rural communities.

Context	Delivery	Issues	Need	Range	Evidence	Framework
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- 0.10 Strategic improvement of accessibility across the region requires an understanding of levels of accessibility to key services. This understanding of levels of accessibility to services by public transport, and consequent identification of where unmet need is greatest, is being provided through “accessibility planning”.
- 0.11 This tool, now used to a common basis across the region through Local Transport Plans, provides the strategic assessment through which needs can be defined.

Context	Delivery	Issues	Need	Range	Evidence	Framework
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- 0.12 The evidence for the Framework is being provided based on an assessment of transport interventions. These have been examined in terms categorized by spatial location and type of transport intervention.
- 0.13 The four defined spatial areas are:
- accessible rural areas where social and economic indicators are generally positive;

- the more remote rural areas with a high quality environment including the Dales and North York Moors National Parks;
- Pennine West (and South) Yorkshire and the rural coalfield areas that contain some of the worst deprivation levels in the region; and
- coastal areas, including some parts of the Humber sub-region, where the problems of social exclusion in means that the area differs significantly from other “accessible” areas.

0.14 The four categories of transport intervention examined are: are:

- scheduled bus services;
- flexible bus services and demand responsive transport (DRT) services;
- group transport services; and
- personalised transport.

Context	Delivery	Issues	Need	Range	Evidence	Framework
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0.15 The evidence from this research demonstrates that a range of transport interventions can successfully be put forward to help improve rural accessibility. These should be considered alongside non-transport interventions, responding to the identified need to better co-ordinate land use, service provision and transport planning.

0.16 The potential range of transport interventions identified from the evidence provided by the showcase RTP schemes studied within this commission is wide. By identifying four distinct rural sub-areas, broadly consistent with the RSS sub-areas, this Framework recognises that a one size fits all approach will not work across the region when identifying suitable transport interventions to improve accessibility.

0.17 The evidence provided by the RTP showcase projects demonstrates that the full range of interventions examined can be delivered across each sub-area, but that some are more successful than others, and that cost effectiveness of services varies. It is this cost-effectiveness that is perhaps most important in recommending appropriate interventions. The evidence from the showcase projects does suggest that well designed projects of all types, where targeted at local needs, can be delivered successfully across the region.

0.18 The costs of service provision, both from the showcase projects, and from examining the experience of RBSG bring clarity to the definition of appropriate interventions. It is clear from the evidence that in general terms, conventional bus services in the more Accessible Rural areas, and those in Pennine West and South Yorkshire, cost less in subsidy per journey to provide than in the more Remote and Coastal areas. The data suggests that remoter areas could expect subsidies to be up to double those in more accessible areas, which in turn could be expected to have subsidies 50% greater than in the region as a whole (i.e. including urban supported services).

0.19 It is therefore recommended that in broad terms, the more Accessible Rural areas and Pennine West and South Yorkshire can still be well served by scheduled bus services. This is particularly the case in the parts of the Leeds City Region within West Yorkshire, and in South Yorkshire. In the more Remote Rural and Coastal areas, evidence suggests that the costs of such services will be greater and that there becomes a point where different approaches to service provision will need to be examined.

0.20 The showcase projects demonstrate how access needs can also be met through the delivery of demand responsive and group transport services to address very specific needs of the community. Such services can also be applied where spatial issues prevent

more conventional services being cost-effective. RTP showcases in all of the sub-area types demonstrate that well targeted services of this type can be provided effectively.

0.21 The ‘wheels to work’ programme appears to be transferable to all sub-regions. Access to employment opportunities is a major problem for young people living in rural communities. A range and choice of quality employment is not on offer to many young people, and in many parts of the region rural employment has contracted significantly over recent years with the decline in agricultural and related industries. The same contraction of employment opportunities has occurred in Pennine and Coalfield communities with the decline of traditional industries such as coal and textiles.

0.22 There is little evidence on costs to conclude that beyond this general assessment of conventional bus subsidies, firm cost structures could be identified for other interventions. It is clear however that effective interventions can be applied for less than £4 per journey.

Context	Delivery	Issues	Need	Range	Evidence	Framework
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0.23 Three key themes are embraced within this Framework:

- Strategic Policy Fit
- Modernising Rural Delivery
- Rural Evidence Base

0.24 In simplistic terms, these can be translated into **what** (strategic policy fit), **who** (delivery), and **how** (evidence).

0.25 In ensuring that the framework is able to deliver RSS, and that RSS is aligned to deliver the needs of rural communities current RSS transport policy needs strengthening, namely the inclusion of a policy **to improve access to key services for rural communities through the provision of appropriate transport services. These services should be publicly available, and may be provided through a variety of means, including in some circumstances personal modes such as car based schemes.**

0.26 In setting the framework for who delivers the transport interventions to improve rural access to services, the following three tiered structure sets down the important relationship of strategy led, locally delivered services.

Spatial Level	Key Actors	Function	Actions
Regional	Yorkshire and Humber Assembly Yorkshire Forward Government Office Y&H Rural Transport Forum	Strategy	Policy direction RSS / RES / YHRF
Sub Regional	Local Strategic Partnerships YF Sub-regional teams Local Transport Authorities Passenger Transport Executives Rural Community Councils Rural Transport Partnerships	Co-ordination	Definition of need Consultation and communication Commissioning
Local	Commercial Bus Operators Community Transport Sector Other Transport Operators	Delivery	Design and Operation of services

0.27

A broad range of interventions is recommended as the basis for delivery of transport services to improve rural accessibility across the region. This is illustrated below.

	Employment & Education	Health and welfare	Shopping and local services	Culture and leisure
Accessible Rural Areas * * note – conditions in some areas defined as accessible, especially in the Humber, are closer to remoter and coastal areas in their (in)ability to support new scheduled bus services as a response to defined needs	Scheduled bus services			
	Wheels to work		(Car clubs) DRT Group transport	
Remote Rural Areas	Wheels to work		Car schemes DRT Group transport	
Pennine West Yorkshire and the rural Coalfield areas	Scheduled bus services			
	Wheels to work		(Car clubs) DRT Group transport	
Coastal Areas (and parts of the Humber *) * see note above	Wheels to work		Car schemes DRT Group transport	

0.28 Cost-effectiveness of services is perhaps most important in recommending appropriate interventions. The evidence from the showcase projects does suggest that well designed projects of all types, where targeted at local needs, can be delivered successfully across the region to meet objectives. However, the same cost structure cannot be applied uniformly across the whole region, and some interventions will cost more in some areas than others. The costs of service provision, both from the showcase projects, and from examining the experience of RBSG bring clarity to the definition of appropriate interventions. A recommended cost structure, in terms of subsidy per passenger journey is illustrated below.

Accessible Rural & Pennine scheduled bus services	Remoter Rural & Coastal scheduled bus services	Wheels to work	Group transport, DRT, other
			Up to £8
	Up to £6		
		Up to £5	
Up to £4	Up to £4		Up to £4
		Up to £3	
Up to £2			

0.29 The 'traffic lights' within the figure represent the recommended thresholds beyond which services should be questioned in terms of value for money, and transport providers and funders should start to question whether alternative forms of transport are appropriate. Within the green range, interventions should be regarded as representing good value for money. In the amber range, practitioners should identify that the intervention is costing more per passenger than similar interventions, and should be examined in terms of the efficiency and structure of the service, and whether alterations could be made to better serve need to attract more use, or to reduce costs. In the red range, it is likely that alternative solutions may provide better value for money than the intervention being delivered.

0.30 The structure and definitions of cost ranges are necessarily broad, and represent a guide, not firm rules, to costs and premiums that should be applied to rural transport interventions in the region.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Yorkshire and Humber Assembly, as part of its work to produce a full Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), and Rural Transport Partnerships in Yorkshire and the Humber, have jointly commissioned JMP Consulting to develop a Strategic Rural Transport Framework to feed into and inform the Regional Rural Framework with an evidence based set of priorities, and provide improved policies for rural transport matters to the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).
- 1.2 This study has emerged from two sources. Firstly, concerns expressed in successive consultations on Regional Planning Guidance and RSS have indicated that rural transport issues have not, to date, been adequately addressed as part of the strategic spatial planning process. Nor have any approaches to dealing with transport issues in the rural communities of the region addressed the issues in a strategic way. Instead, in common with much of the rest of England, a case-by-case approach has been the basis for ongoing investment aimed at tackling rural transport problems.
- 1.3 Secondly, the future delivery mechanism for one element of rural transport provision, namely that provided through Rural Transport Partnerships (RTPs), is going through a period of change. The funding provided to RTPs was, until March 2005, provided through the Countryside Agency. From 1 April 2005 it is being channelled through Yorkshire Forward. Evidence of the success of RTP projects and delivery will inform the developing Framework.

Regional Spatial Strategy

- 1.4 Following new planning legislation in 2004, RSS replaced Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) and is now the statutory planning framework for the region. It is, as such, the spatial expression of the region's vision Advancing Together and is the key to the delivery of that vision. It is also important to the delivery of all of the key strategies in the region, the Regional Economic Strategy, the Regional Housing Strategy, and the Regional Cultural Strategy. At the present time, the latest version of RPG for the region has been adopted as statutory RSS, pending the completion and adoption of a full RSS.
- 1.5 PLANet YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER, an RSS Spatial Vision and Strategic Approach consultation document was published in August 2004. More recently, a pre-draft RSS has been the subject of consultation, which ended in March this year, and a draft RSS is to be submitted to government in December 2005. This emerging RSS for the Yorkshire and Humber region incorporates an updated Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), which will set the transport framework and priorities required to deliver the vision for the region.
- 1.6 The Rural Strategy for England introduces a streamlining of rural policy making and **delivery mechanisms**. A further building block is the Yorkshire and Humber Rural Framework. Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber is working with Yorkshire Forward, the Regional Assembly, the Integrated Agency bodies and other key local and sub-regional partners to develop this Regional Rural Framework, the latest report being presented to DEFRA in May 2005. The Regional Rural Framework is not a statutory plan in its own right, but provides a **delivery framework for the region's rural priorities**. It is about getting better results on the ground. The Regional Rural Framework will develop a robust evidence base, identify issues, resources and activity to ensure delivery is effective as possible.
- 1.7 Rural transport is one of the priority issues for the Regional Rural Framework to tackle. This priority is to "**understand and address transport needs in rural areas** through private, public and voluntary sector provision, **to promote rural regeneration and tackle social exclusion**". This places transport firmly in the context of **improving the accessibility of services for people in rural areas**, not simply transport for its own sake. This priority helps us to understand that a Strategic Rural Transport Framework (SRTF)

for Yorkshire and Humber needs to look closely at “accessibility” or “access to services” rather than simply at transport.

- 1.8 However, the scope of the SRTF requires a focus on the transport interventions and solutions available to improve accessibility, rather than a wider look at interventions to improve access to services. This is not to say that the context of improved service provision and the spatial location of services is not important, or not acknowledged and understood, but that this work should focus on transport services, acknowledging that all rural communities will not always have direct access to all of the services that they require.

Rural Transport Partnerships

- 1.9 Rural Transport Partnerships (RTPs) support a wide range of transport initiatives which can secure a long term improvement in rural people's access to jobs, services and social activities, and which enhance visitors' access to the countryside. Implementing programmes of interventions, formerly funded by the Countryside Agency, and now funded by, in the case of Yorkshire and Humber region, Yorkshire Forward, RTPs have played a significant role in improving transport provision in some rural areas. RTPs have in many cases driven innovation in rural transport provision, and been instrumental in developing local partnerships to help develop and deliver rural transport services.
- 1.10 Following the re-organisation of the Countryside Agency, and the transfer of responsibility for funding of measures to deliver economic and social change in rural areas to Yorkshire Forward, funding streams have been agreed until March 2007. Yorkshire Forward has an allocation of £6 million to spend on rural service delivery in 2005/06 and 2006/07. This sum is to deliver the entire access to services and rural productivity agenda across the region, and will not just be used to fund rural transport.
- 1.11 Of this, £1 million is ring fenced to legacy projects that are ongoing. A significant proportion, in the region of 90%, of these legacy projects relate to improving transport and accessibility in rural parts of the region. The remaining £5 million is to be allocated to deliver rural services (in their widest sense, not just transport) through investment planning over the period to the end of March 2007.
- 1.12 The Rural Transport Partnership (RTP) programme was established in April 2001. It was formed through an amalgamation of two funding programmes: the Rural Transport Development Fund (RTDF) and the Rural Transport Partnership Scheme (RTPS). Partnerships can take many forms and there is no definitive or prescribed model for a partnership, thus applications to form a local partnership have come from a range of groups. Partnerships have seen representatives from the community and voluntary transport sector, as well as relevant statutory organisations and local authorities. They have also included transport users and representatives from the private sector. Partnerships have not only been successful in helping local communities start their own transport projects, but have also, on occasions, been successful in influencing rural transport policy on a local and national scale.
- 1.13 RTPs generally employ a Rural Transport Partnership Officer (RTPO) to provide advice and assistance about setting up and running a transport service to any local group in their area that wishes to provide a transport service for their local community. The officers' roles are wide ranging and encompass identifying the need for transport; project development and management; influencing and lobbying policy and decision makers on rural transport issues and raising awareness; and helping to develop and provide support to a wide range of local partnerships, organisations and individuals.
- 1.14 Whilst in Yorkshire and the Humber RTPs have in the main been successful and delivered significant improvements in accessibility, across England as a whole RTPs have had mixed success. There are many factors in influencing this, including the fact that interventions have often been innovative, and not all innovation – though it was encouraged – will inevitably lead to success. However, future delivery mechanisms need

to build on the strengths of many RTPs, namely in developing local and community partnerships, building capacity in organisations to help operate services, and the professionalism and knowledge of partnership officers, in a way that helps provide focussed delivery of transport solutions in areas of need. It is this last aspect, targeting need, where RTPs in some areas failed to deliver.

Improving accessibility

- 1.15 With the RSS and the Regional Rural Framework focussed on improving accessibility it follows that strategic improvement of accessibility across the region requires an understanding of levels of accessibility to key services. This is being provided through “accessibility planning”, the tool through which a strategic assessment of needs can be defined.

A strategic rural transport framework for the region

- 1.16 Thus, the Strategic Rural Transport Framework for the region aims to bring these factors together to provide the basis for, at a strategic level, a needs based delivery framework to improve accessibility, and therefore access to services, in rural communities across the region. The Assembly wishes to use the outputs of the study in informing how RSS will address rural transport issues in future and to help inform policies within the emerging RSS and RTS, and therefore to inform future delivery of transport interventions across the region to implement the RSS.
- 1.17 There is, through the work of a range of organisations across the region, including RTPs, local transport authorities and PTEs, a considerable body of experience and evidence available to demonstrate how transport interventions can deliver improved access to vital services for rural communities. This includes innovative schemes that have been developed in recent years through the use of Countryside Agency funding, Rural Bus Service Grant, and a variety of Challenge funding programmes, in addition to the contribution made by established transport services.
- 1.18 The SRTF will build on the successes of past delivery mechanisms, including RTPs across the region, in providing **evidence to inform this framework**. In particular reference will be made to some of the more recent innovative projects developed through the Countryside Agency and local Rural Transport Partnerships in informing future needs based delivery. A number of projects and initiatives developed through RTPs have been studied as showcases of successful innovation and delivery.

2 Rural Delivery

- 2.1 In developing a framework of future interventions to help meet the needs of rural communities, a key aspect will be how such interventions are delivered. The SRTF will need to be appropriate to enable the delivery of the outcomes of the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 2.2 In this regard the SRTF will need to be complementary to the Yorkshire and the Humber Rural Framework. The Rural Framework is about getting better results on the ground. In doing this **identifying areas of need** and **appropriate solutions to deliver improvement** are both important. The Rural Framework also identifies the need to access sources of funding. Aligning the priority issues with appropriately funded interventions is the key to delivery of both the Rural Framework and this Strategic Rural Transport Framework across the region.
- 2.3 In addition to considering which problems to tackle, where the funding for such interventions comes from and how it is allocated, the final piece of the jigsaw is who actually delivers services on the ground.

Making best use of existing delivery mechanisms

- 2.4 There are a number of sectors (public, private, voluntary) and many organisations currently engaged in delivering transport services across the rural communities of the region. These include the local transport authorities, comprising Unitary Councils, Metropolitan District Councils and the one County Council in the region (North Yorkshire), the two passenger transport executives in West and South Yorkshire, district authorities in North Yorkshire, local authority social services departments, Primary Care Trusts, Yorkshire Forward, national government agencies, commercial transport operators, and voluntary and community transport providers. The list is not exhaustive, but merely to demonstrate the wide range of organisations, and possible mechanisms, currently employed in delivering transport across the rural parts of Yorkshire and the Humber.
- 2.5 The principal funding streams for transport services come from local authority resources, including those for home to school transport, social services transport, and funding of publicly available socially necessary services. It is impossible to easily quantify the level of funding applied to improve rural accessibility from these sources, as data sources are widespread, and do not often differentiate between resources spent in urban and rural areas. However, to give an indication of scale of resources spent on transport provision in predominantly rural parts of the region, North Yorkshire County Council alone procures around £25m worth of transport provision (including home to school and social services transport) each year. Much of this is spent in providing services in rural communities.
- 2.6 In addition to spending directly from their own resources, local transport authorities in the region also receive Rural Bus Subsidy Grant.

Rural Bus Subsidy Grant

- 2.7 The Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) was introduced in 1998/99 and provided for additional local bus services to rural communities previously not well served. It was intended to provide for new or enhanced local bus services in England for rural communities, of up to 10,000 residents. In January 2001 the population limit for qualifying communities was increased to 25,000, and up to 20% of the funding from 2001/02 onwards can be used to safeguard services that existed prior to 1st May 2001. The grant can also be used to support the continuation of services initially set up under the Rural Bus Challenge Scheme.
- 2.8 The grant is distributed to English local authorities and allocations are based on population living in rural areas. Total RBSG allocated to English authorities in 2004/05

was £51m. In the Yorkshire and Humber region £5.04m was received in 2004/05, this figure rising in 2005/06 by over 3%.

2.9 This was distributed amongst the following local authorities (of the local transport authorities in the region only Hull does not receive any):

- City of York Council
- North Yorkshire County Council
- South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
- Metro (West Yorkshire PTE)
- North Lincolnshire Council
- North East Lincolnshire Council
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council

2.10 RBSG funds a great diversity of services, with over 200 different services receiving funding from this source across the region. More detail and consideration of the costs or providing services using RBSG is provided in chapter 6.

2.11 Decisions on which services to support are essentially at the local authority's discretion. Expected changes to the way in which RBSG is delivered are likely to result in local autonomy being increased, with resources being distributed in future to support general local authority service provision.

2.12 Local discretion has resulted in a wide range of approaches to delivering RBSG. A number of examples are described in turn below.

2.13 The City of York Council uses its RSBG mainly to continue support for registered local bus services supported in previous years. Some changes have taken place during 2004/5, however, as a result of the need to address the expiry of Rural Bus Challenge funding for certain services and changes made to other services arising from a network review.

2.14 In contrast South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE) has funded a variety of services, from taxibus services to conventional scheduled bus services. Consequently a wide range of subsidy levels are applied dependent upon the service type to a great degree. At the time of introduction of RBSG, SYPTTE undertook extensive consultation with a wide range of potential stakeholders and users in order to determine how to allocate the grant. RBSG has also been used to complement major Rural Bus Challenge projects where additional revenue was required; and to match other funding sources such as Rural Transport Partnership, Parish Transport Grant and Objective 1. Little use has been made of the facility to replace withdrawn services.

2.15 As a further example of the variety of approaches North Lincolnshire Council has used significant portions of its grant to fund education journeys. South Yorkshire has used RBSG in assisting the development of promotional products and service evaluating processes. This has led directly to the introduction of the recognisable Rural Links identity with the public which can be found on vehicles, maps, guides and posters and a range of other literature.

Rural Bus Challenge

2.16 Rural Bus Challenge was introduced in 1998, and ran annually as a competition. It has, along with Urban Bus Challenge, been replaced by the "Kickstart" programme, which has no specific rural dimension, though rural based schemes are still eligible. It had as its main objective the encouragement of cost-effective innovation in the provision or promotion, by local authorities, of rural bus transport. It took the form of an annual competition among all authorities that encompass rural communities.

2.17 A total of almost £110 million was awarded between 1998/9 and 2003/04. Unlike RBSG, RBC funding is awarded for schemes scheduled to cover more than one financial year, with no stipulations as to the precise spending schedule.

Other sources

- 2.18 The 34 current Primary Care Trusts across the region also contribute significantly in providing transport for healthcare.
- 2.19 Additionally, local transport authorities, through Local Transport Plans (LTPs) invest substantially in improving transport infrastructure and through other capital investment. Again, it is impossible to quantify how much of this investment is targeted in rural areas.
- 2.20 However, this range of funding sources emphasises the importance of partnerships, co-ordination of activities, and making best use of existing resources in delivering transport and accessibility improvements across the rural parts of the region.
- 2.21 Finally, central government funding is applied to improving social and economic conditions in rural areas. More detail is provided below about this funding stream.

Modernising Rural Delivery

- 2.22 Until recently the Countryside Agency was responsible for the allocation of central government funding to projects that tackled socio-economic issues in the countryside, including providing transport services to help improve rural accessibility and access to services. Through the Countryside Agency funding programmes and the work of Rural Transport Partnerships a significant number of projects have been introduced to help improve transport and accessibility in rural communities. However, from April 2005, the funding of socio-economic service improvements in rural areas became the responsibility of the Regional Development Agencies, which in this region is Yorkshire Forward.
- 2.23 In future, the way in which rural services are delivered, and the approach used to funding rural services through central funding sources will consequently change, with the emphasis being on an approach founded in the principles of Modernising Rural Delivery (MRD). The principles of MRD are that delivery should have a **customer focus**; that there should be a **simplification of delivery mechanisms** ensuring a greater proportion of resources into the region reaching the customer; that delivery must be **locally responsive**; that delivery of rural services should be **integrated**; that delivery should be **strategy-led**; and finally, **transparent**.
- 2.24 The “investment planning” process through which Yorkshire Forward will provide funding to deliver services is based on targeting needs. In Yorkshire and the Humber, this will involve the strategic allocation of resources to the four sub-regions, which will allocate resources to tackle distinctive issues across the region. The remaining £5 million available to Yorkshire Forward for improving rural services is to be allocated through investment planning over the period to the end of March 2007. This is not a funding led process.
- 2.25 However, whilst none of the remaining funding is ring-fenced to transport, Yorkshire Forward is required to contribute to “access to services”, and it is therefore inconceivable that this can be done without transport. In practice some future funding of transport services will therefore be provided. After this date, the delivery mechanism for these programmes of rural transport interventions is unconfirmed, and from April 2007 there will be no ring fencing of funding to rural projects. All funding for socio-economic service improvements controlled by Yorkshire Forward from that date will be allocated entirely on the basis of need identified through investment planning.
- 2.26 Another important aspect of the strategic approach to delivery through investment planning is the need to align a range of public sector funding on agreed priorities to secure the greatest benefit. These funding sources could come from transport, education, healthcare, economic regeneration or cultural sectors, and could come from regional, sub-regional or local funders. The ability to view these sources and the priorities that they are tackling in a strategic manner is vital to ensure that the funds are used effectively and efficiently for maximum benefit across Yorkshire and the Humber.

- 2.27 Aligning funds to support priorities does not mean fair shares for all. An evidence based and strategic approach to the allocation of resources will inevitably mean that some parts of the region will receive more funding than others. However, if the strategy led approach works towards tackling those areas of most need, then the delivery of the desired, and agreed, outcomes across the region will be achieved more quickly and efficiently than if resources are spent in an unstructured ad hoc manner or on the basis of equal shares for everyone.
- 2.28 Whilst the control of funding at a strategic level is the responsibility of Yorkshire Forward, it is quite clear that Yorkshire Forward itself will not be the delivery agency. Nor should any other strategic body take on this role. The Rural Strategy is clear on the need to separate policy and delivery. There is therefore a clear need to identify suitable delivery agencies to take this role on across the region. These third parties have a clear role in linking the strategy-led investment planning process to actual delivery on the ground. This framework can play a useful role in identifying these links.

3 Problems and opportunities

- 3.1 A key aspect of improving the delivery of rural services in line with the RSS and the Rural Framework for the Region is that the delivery must be needs based. That is, it must tackle the key issues and problems in rural communities within the region today, and it must make best use of the opportunities available for improving the quality of life of rural people.
- 3.2 In defining the problems and opportunities facing rural communities in the Yorkshire and Humber region, reference has been made to a number of key sources. These include:
- Transport in Tomorrow's Countryside, The Countryside Agency, April 2003
 - Local Transport Plans: A Better Deal for Rural Areas – Good Practice Guidance, The Countryside Agency, June 2003
 - Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber based on Selective Review of RPG12, GOYH, December 2004
 - Report of Rural Funding Review, Defra, July 2004
 - Yorkshire and Humber Rural Framework report, GOYH, May 2005
 - Rural Matters, Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber, February 2005
 - Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans: Second Edition, December 2004
 - The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030, DfT, July 2004
 - Transport Solutions: The Benefits of Providing Transport to Address Social Exclusion in Rural Areas, Paul Beecham and Associates in conjunction with Sheffield Hallam University, January 2005
 - Our Countryside: The Future—A Fair Deal for Rural England, Defra, 2000
 - Rural Strategy 2004, Defra, 2004
 - Evaluation of National Demonstration Rural Transport Partnership Projects, SDG, 2004
- 3.3 The May 2005 Yorkshire and the Humber Rural Framework for the region identifies a number of priorities. These fall into three main groups, namely economic and social regeneration, social justice for all, and enhancing the value of our countryside. Each of these three main areas has a number of priorities within them, and is underpinned by a number of cross-cutting themes. These include the principles of Modernising Rural Delivery, the establishment of a Rural Evidence Base, Stakeholder Engagement, and Strategic Policy Fit.
- 3.4 Rural transport is one of the priority issues for the Regional Rural Framework, though a number of the other priorities are affected by, or have an impact on transport, such as rural business development; employment, education and skills training; market towns; sustainable tourism; access to services; and the natural environment.
- 3.5 A number of issues therefore emerge as key to improving the quality of life for rural communities in Yorkshire and the Humber. These include many that have links to or solutions in improved accessibility, including halting the decline of local services and employment, overcoming issues of social exclusion for those living in relatively deprived rural communities, including those in hidden pockets of deprivation. Other transport related issues include tackling growing car dependency and traffic growth and the problems of environmental damage and road safety that these bring.
- 3.6 Tackling these issues is vital to the Yorkshire and Humber region. Over 22% of the region's population live in rural districts, over three-quarters of the land area is rural, and about two-thirds of the region's area is in agricultural use. Countryside issues and the quality of life for rural communities are therefore prominent in taking forward the development of the region.

- 3.7 One aspect that affects the way that these issues relating to access to services and transport problems in rural areas generally is that urban traffic and transport problems have traditionally dominated the policy debate, to the exclusion of rural specific problems. The solutions and mechanisms for providing those solutions brought forward have as a consequence often had little relevance for rural communities.

Declining local services

- 3.8 A significant problem in many rural communities, both nationally and specific to the Yorkshire and Humber region is the decline in local service provision. The unit cost of provision of services in rural areas is significantly higher than in more populous areas. There are now already fewer viable service outlets in rural areas compared with a few years ago, and this exclusion is being compounded by the continuing loss of local services, the centralisation of these in the main towns and the distance and difficulties of travel this can create.
- 3.9 This decline affects even the most basic of services, such as the availability of food shopping opportunities and post offices, in addition to other retail and leisure opportunities that help to provide the basic social fabric and infrastructure of rural communities. This is in addition to declining employment opportunities, the provision of healthcare, and the availability of educational and training opportunities. This all has an affect on the accessibility of services to rural people.
- 3.10 Current levels of access across the region to a number of key facilities have been identified by the Government Office for the Yorkshire and Humber in “A Rural Evidence Base for Yorkshire and the Humber 2005”. The findings used data collected by the Countryside Agency from rural households across the region.
- 3.11 The following table indicates the percentage of rural households under 2km from a range of services in 2004.

T3.1 Percentage of rural households under 2km from other local services, 2004

	ATM	Bank	Job centre	Library	Petrol station	Post Office	Secondary school	Super-market
Barnsley	74.5	46.9	18.6	56.2	76.4	96.6	41.5	78.2
Bradford	97.4	36.9	2.4	64.4	58.1	98.0	18.9	67.4
Calderdale	88.2	44.5	7.6	85.0	65.6	95.2	36.3	51.5
Craven	50.1	40.2	0.1	56.6	55.7	80.9	30.7	38.4
Doncaster	88.4	58.8	3.3	55.1	75.6	90.5	26.3	46.8
East Riding of Yorkshire	73.3	46.4	0.3	50.8	68.3	84.6	33.3	37.3
Hambleton	53.6	43.8	0.8	42.5	64.6	78.6	37.4	45.4
Harrogate	45.2	22.4	0.1	21.0	41.0	74.5	17.7	19.7
Kirklees	91.3	58.5	0.4	77.3	85.6	81.2	40.9	70.6
Leeds	70.6	23.6	3.2	52.4	54.0	97.0	31.0	12.8
North East Lincolnshire	46.9	36.2	0.0	39.3	21.6	85.9	38.7	8.1
North Lincolnshire	47.0	34.8	12.4	45.2	61.1	87.9	39.7	40.7
Richmondshire	63.6	42.5	19.7	46.5	68.5	87.9	44.0	32.2
Rotherham	82.9	55.1	3.4	52.9	85.3	97.1	37.4	63.0
Ryedale	46.7	34.0	0.1	33.8	44.2	77.4	23.5	33.6
Scarborough	57.0	35.8	0.0	48.1	73.9	69.5	26.1	46.0
Selby	49.7	32.0	0.7	34.1	46.4	91.1	26.6	27.9
Sheffield	74.0	13.4	8.9	11.9	16.6	90.6	60.9	16.1
Wakefield	92.1	52.8	25.3	88.6	81.8	99.1	51.0	44.3
York	78.9	16.6	0.0	61.0	76.9	96.3	4.1	35.5

Source:(Countryside Agency 2005)

- 3.12 The table indicates that of the services, job centres are the most difficult to get to, whilst in terms of banks these are accessible under 2km by up to 50% of rural households in only 3 of the areas surveyed and in the case of secondary schools, only 5 areas demonstrate that 40% of their rural households have access under 2km.

- 3.13 Whilst the table above indicates that access for rural households under 2km to post offices is high, there is still an alarming trend, as displayed in table 3.2, showing annual post office closures.

T3.2 Number of post office closures in Yorkshire and the Humber

	2000–01		2001–02		2002–03		2003–04	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Yorkshire and the Humber	10	40	4	17	14	12	94	12

Source: Hansard, June 2004

- 3.14 Added to this, services, facilities and jobs continue to be relocated from their traditional locations in market towns or city centres and towards even less accessible out-of-town, car-based locations.
- 3.15 Consequently, due to the scarcity and dispersed nature of rural services, and the shift of central services to locations with poor public transport access, the significant minority of people without access to a car may face real hardship and social exclusion. Accessibility, and access to services, is therefore a problem for some rural residents.

Social inclusion

- 3.16 There is worsening isolation and social exclusion for rural people who do not have access to private transport. This is a significant proportion of the rural community. For example, nationally 20% of adults in rural areas do not have a driving license, and in 2004 14% of rural households did not have a car.
- 3.17 These broad area-wide statistics can also mask areas where social exclusion prevails in rural areas, and it can be hard to target socially excluded individuals. Problems can be hidden in areas of apparent affluence or limited to small, local communities.
- 3.18 Another aspect of rural communities is their ageing population structure compared with urban areas, which concentrates problems of accessibility. In Yorkshire and Humber 18.5% of the rural population are aged 65 or over. Over 45% are aged over 45.
- 3.19 Within the region there is a high (unfavourable) Index of Multiple Deprivation in some rural communities, especially those along the East Coast and in former coal mining villages of West and South Yorkshire. This supports the assertion in chapter 5 that the coastal areas of north and east Yorkshire have distinctive problems, and reinforces the need for them to be considered separately.

Car dependency and traffic levels

- 3.20 Rural residents rely greatly on cars for work and leisure, a dependency that is growing. They travel longer distances for work and leisure than their urban counterparts.
- 3.21 The rate of traffic growth is higher in rural areas. Between 1980 and 1999 traffic on major roads in rural areas rose by 98% while on major urban roads it rose by only 23% and on average rural dwellers travel 40% further each week than their opposite numbers in towns and cities. 60% of motorised traffic is found in rural areas, the impact of this being damaging to the countryside's physical environment, tranquillity and character and it also raises safety issues. These matters are discussed further below.
- 3.22 Traffic levels should be appropriate to the location, and means of managing travel demand should be placed at the heart of rural transport policy so that the forecast rate of traffic growth in the countryside is reduced.
- 3.23 In the relatively accessible rural areas, the definition of which is discussed in more detail in chapter 5 of this report, growing affluence associated with the influence of access to the

urban areas of the region, affects car dependency. Those with access to the employment and other opportunities available in the conurbations often use the private car. The changes to social structure and the range of local services available to those without access to a car are significant, and influence social exclusion. This influence of the car, and the ability to access employment and other services has even more marked consequences for exclusion in the remoter rural areas.

Environmental quality

- 3.24 This growth in dependence on the car, and consequent growing traffic levels in rural areas has had, and continues to have, a significant affect on the environment. Pressure has been exerted on rural land to accommodate even more cars travelling to and from work, office, shops and other destinations, with a corresponding loss of countryside character and local diversity.
- 3.25 'Rat running' on country lanes has become a problem, and the design and maintenance of roads to cater for increased traffic damages the fabric of the lanes themselves as hedges and verges are damaged. High standards of network maintenance and improvements that respect countryside character and biodiversity are needed. Increasing traffic levels and the accommodation of traffic on rural roads have effectively broken many of the networks that existed for travel by foot, cycle or horse.
- 3.26 There is also a trend towards road freight with more and more goods being transported over longer distances. This affects the environment, and more and more large lorries are using unsuitable rural roads.
- 3.27 Reducing the impacts of traffic on the rural environment is vital. Transport infrastructure must be planned, designed and maintained in a way that respects countryside character and contributes to the environment. The use of technological advances that minimise impacts should be encouraged, and all measures possible should be taken to minimise noise, visual intrusion, pollution and physical damage from traffic effects. Preference should be given to modes that have the lowest environmental impacts.
- 3.28 Tourism is particularly important to the rural economy. Areas that receive high volumes of tourist visitors may often require specific transport solutions to help provide the desired access, but within the constraints dictated by the often high quality environments that the visitors are seeking to access. Support for tourism that includes protecting sensitive areas from the adverse affects of traffic and facilitating public transport use, walking, horse riding and cycling can help the environment. The aim should be to ensure that everyone is able to access the countryside by sustainable means.
- 3.29 Initially, the provision of public transport based access solutions where possible should be encouraged. Other solutions may include traffic management and calming measures, and effective supply and management of car parking will also be required. More innovative forms of demand management may need to be applied in the future. By making minor rural roads places for walkers, cyclists, riders, public transport users as well as motorists, through schemes such as Quiet Lanes, and by effective traffic management, the quality of life in rural areas can be greatly improved.
- 3.30 High-quality infrastructure design and maintenance are particularly important in historic urban and village environments, and in rural areas of high landscape value.

Safety

- 3.31 People should feel safe and secure when traveling by any mode in the countryside. Improving road safety is a key outcome for rural areas.
- 3.32 A number of traffic issues affect safety on rural roads. Speeding and increased traffic are contributing to higher accident rates. This is compounded by the fact that road accident

severity is generally higher in rural areas. Safety problems revolve more around vehicle occupant casualties, with higher severities associated with higher traffic speeds.

- 3.33 The other main aspect of safety on rural roads is the problem associated with pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders having to share road space with vehicles. Many people in rural areas fear for their safety when walking or cycling. According to a CPRE study survey, 65% feel threatened on country lanes by traffic and 91% feel that the 60mph speed limit on country lanes should be reduced. This traffic 'intimidation' is diminishing the safety and enjoyment of walking and cycling in rural areas.

Desired outcomes for the framework

- 3.34 In developing this framework, the need to improve access to services for rural communities, especially those socially excluded groups who, for example, do not have access to a car, emerges as the main desired outcome. Improved accessibility for rural communities, especially to basic services and life opportunities such as employment, education, healthcare, basic food shopping, post offices and social and leisure opportunities is vital in delivering the RSS in rural areas.
- 3.35 A number of other key issues emerge from an analysis of the problems and opportunities existing in rural areas. These are principally related to the affects of traffic, in terms of both environmental damage and road safety. A strong linkage emerges here with the desire to improve access to services for all, for if service provision was improved locally the need to travel would be reduced. Also if alternative transport to the private car improved in rural areas, to the level of being an attractive option for car drivers, then this too would reduce the levels of traffic on rural roads in the region.
- 3.36 A further issue relating to the affects of traffic is that relating to tourist access. This is related to the environmental damage and safety issues identified above, but is a specific issue in that the very attractiveness of the region's high quality countryside is in some locations leading to damage caused by the transport being used to access it.
- 3.37 Direct solutions to these traffic related safety and environmental problems, such as engineering and technological measures, do not feature in this framework. Many of these solutions would be specific to the location in question and not transferable. Unique physical and other facets of a particular problem, at a particular location, will lead to unique solutions. The indirect benefits of the measures described in this framework will help tackle traffic problems, through improved alternatives to the car and management of transport activities.

4 The role of accessibility planning

- 4.1 The Strategic Rural Transport Framework for the region will, at a strategic level, provide a “needs based” delivery framework to improve accessibility, and therefore access to services, in rural communities across the region. In this way, it can help to deliver RSS across the region.
- 4.2 In order to do this with a degree of consistency and equity, a method of assessing need, at strategic level is required. Data to inform this assessment can be provided through utilising accessibility planning.

What is accessibility planning?

- 4.3 The government’s Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) report ‘Making the Connections’ (2003) demonstrated the importance of transport and accessibility to social inclusion and set out a cross-Government strategy for improving access to the services with the greatest impact on life opportunities - jobs, health care, learning and food shops.
- 4.4 Accessibility planning encourages local authorities and other agencies, including voluntary and community sectors, to focus on promoting social inclusion by tackling the accessibility problems experienced by those in disadvantaged groups and areas. It provides the framework to work together to develop and deliver solutions to accessibility problems depending on the particular needs and priorities of local areas.
- 4.5 Local transport authorities have a pivotal role to play in improving accessibility through their transport strategies, policies and programmes. In addition they are able to influence the authority’s wider policy areas and the corporate centre, the location of new facilities and the retention of existing ones and the decisions of external bodies on location and delivery of services and opportunities.

Local accessibility strategies

- 4.6 Each local transport authority, or partnership of such authorities, has recently produced a provisional second Local Transport Plan (LTP). Each new LTP includes an accessibility strategy, which will be developed in final LTPs in March 2006.
- 4.7 Accessibility strategies should be set in the context of the wider vision and objectives for the area and aim to improve accessibility for all, but particularly for disadvantaged groups and areas. The focus should be on accessibility to employment, learning, health care and food shops together with other services and opportunities of local importance and be based on an assessment of the accessibility needs and problems of the area. In addition accessibility strategies should set out accessibility priorities within the five year period and demonstrate how they result from the assessment. They should provide targets for improving accessibility and include a series of more detailed local accessibility action plans. The strategies must also show how accessibility considerations are to be incorporated into wider policy and scheme development and delivery in transport, land-use planning and non-transport sectors.
- 4.8 A five-stage process for accessibility planning is recommended by the DfT, comprising:
- Strategic (LTP wide) accessibility assessment;
 - Local accessibility assessments, focussed on priority areas, groups and issues;
 - Option appraisal (including the identification of resources);
 - Accessibility action plan development; and
 - Monitoring and evaluation.

- 4.9 The purpose of accessibility assessments is to improve the evidence base for taking decisions to tackle accessibility problems. Modernising rural delivery in line with the government's Rural Strategy is founded upon improved evidence and strategy-led decisions, leading to local implementation.
- 4.10 Accessibility assessments are made up of two principal components, namely:
- mapping audits using data on the local transport network, and the location of services, disadvantaged areas and people groups, to identify particular accessibility problems; and
 - a review of evidence held by the local transport authority and other relevant bodies
- 4.11 A two-stage, or 'hierarchical' approach to the assessment is recommended with a strategic area-wide accessibility assessment being followed by more detailed, local assessments focussing on the identified priority areas, groups or issues, to assist in the development of more detailed local action plans.

Using accessibility planning in this framework

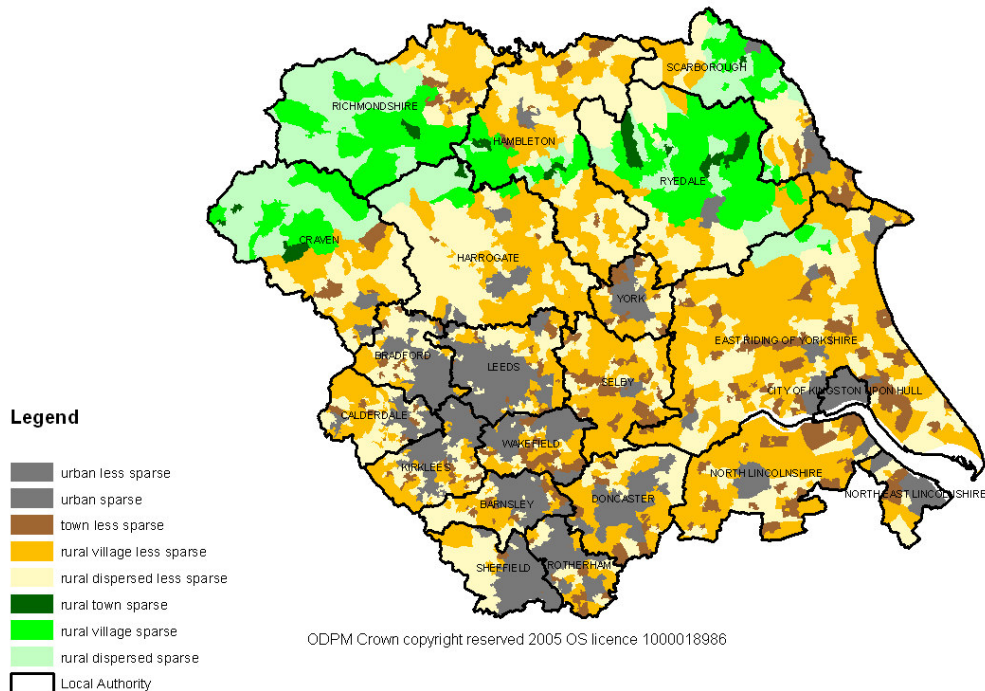
- 4.12 At present, local authorities across the region have completed their initial assessment at a strategic level, and are developing local action plans for their final LTPs. This means that in the short term, priorities for investment in improving rural accessibility are difficult to identify across the region. The data being assembled will however form the basis for identifying priorities in the medium to long term.
- 4.13 This accessibility planning work that is ongoing across the region is being conducted using common guidance and software, and therefore will, in time, provide a common evidence base for targeting delivery. The accessibility planning process provides data on key services, and therefore, whilst not serving all rural communities' needs, provides the basis for delivering improvements that will provide improved quality of life.
- 4.14 This accessibility planning data being developed, in partnership with key stakeholders, such as Local Strategic Partnerships and their constituent members, local public transport operators and local communities, together with other organisations who may have a role in delivering subsequent actions, will be vital in leading a strategic needs based approach to rural transport delivery.

5 Shaping the framework

- 5.1 Given that this Framework will help deliver improved accessibility across the rural areas of the region, it is clear from RSS that a one size fits all approach will not be appropriate. The region is diverse, and a range of interventions are likely to be necessary to meet access needs to the range of key services and facilities identified in chapter 3.

Definition of rural sub-areas within Yorkshire and the Humber

- 5.2 Current DEFRA definitions help in defining rural area types for inclusion in the Framework. The new rural-urban definition, published by the government in July 2004, identifies 6 rural and 2 urban type areas. These are shown in **Figure F5.1**.



F5.1 Rural Definition at Output Area Level

- 5.3 The Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber (GOYH) identifies broadly three types of rural area within the Yorkshire and Humber region. These are based on the definition above, and these simplified GOYH classifications, and whilst only draft until adoption of the region's Rural Framework, are used as the basis for developing a practical framework for rural transport in the region. The three area types are described below, and, in terms of commonality of problem identification, and compatibility with the areas defined in the emerging RSS, the three broad areas are more practicable than very detailed government definitions above.
- 5.4 Essentially, the three categories are based on combining the six grades of rural area into two broad categories, accessible and remote, and then sub-dividing the accessible areas to separately identify those parts of the region that suffer from particularly acute deprivation.
- 5.5 Firstly, **accessible rural areas**, shown in orange/brown on the map, where social and economic indicators are generally positive. These areas have a high quality environment

and are seen as, and benefit from, a good quality of life. The population is rapidly expanding, mostly through in migration of skilled workers from urban parts of the Region and outside the Region. Many of the residents of these areas commute into York and West Yorkshire for employment. However business survival rates within the accessible rural areas are lower than in adjacent urban areas. Affordable housing problems are widespread.

- 5.6 The more **remote rural areas**, shown in green, again have a high quality environment including the Dales and North York Moors National Parks. The economy of these areas is more reliant than elsewhere on declining primary industry including agriculture. A poor infrastructure leaves many residents in these areas struggling to access a wide range of services. Remoteness also means these residents are unable to benefit from many of the new jobs being created in the Leeds City Region. Mental health problems are worse than in any other part of the Region and affordable housing is also an acute issue. Many of these issues are also repeated in coastal areas classed as accessible rural.
- 5.7 Finally, **Pennine West (and South) Yorkshire** and the rural coalfield areas contain some of the worst deprivation levels in the Region, and at the same time have few environmental assets common to other rural areas in the Region. These areas are unique, the settlement patterns being influenced entirely by the local geology and the location of coal. The characteristic small towns and villages are scattered, and do not support a wide range facilities and services, in addition to the loss of most employment in the communities with the decline of the coal and textile industries. The size of settlements, and their location and history have left an absence of good public transport links to the main urban centres.
- 5.8 However, in order that the Framework is compatible with, and feeds into the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the region, it is also important to consider how the region is defined within that document.
- 5.9 RSS defines the sub-regions of Yorkshire and the Humber in an entirely different way to the urban-rural split defined above. There is no attempt to separately define rural sub-areas, but nevertheless the sub-areas defined in the emerging RSS do share common ground with those in the GOYH definitions. Taking each sub-region in turn, one can identify the common ground.
- 5.10 The *Vales and Tees* links sub-area runs north–south through the region linking the Leeds city region to the south with the Tees Valley to the north. The emerging RSS describes this sub-area as reflecting the key north – south transport routes of the East Coast Mainline, A1 and A19 as well as the strong links that there are in the north-eastern parts of the region to the Tees area. The reason for identifying this area as a separate sub-area for RSS reflects the importance and impact of the key transport links that run through this part of the region and the difference in environmental character that there is in this sub-area compared to the areas to its west, east and south. This area is relatively less remote than other parts of North Yorkshire. Thus there is clearly common ground with the placing of this area within the accessible rural areas category, and identifying transport interventions that within this context as part of the developing framework.
- 5.11 The *Remoter Rural Area* identified for the purposes of developing RSS covers a band of the northern and eastern part of the region, bisected by the Vales and Tees links area running north to south through this part of the region. This sub-area encompasses the Yorkshire Dales National Park to the west and the North York Moors National Park to the east. The AONBs of Nidderdale and the Howardian Hills and part of the Forest of Bowland fall within this area, meaning that much of its land area is covered by a landscape designation. The reason given for identifying this area as a separate sub-area for the purposes of developing RSS is due to its environmental, social and economic characteristics, all of which clearly interrelate. This area has more dispersed settlement patterns and a weaker communications infrastructure (both physical and virtual) than most other parts of the region. These have clearly arisen historically due to the environment and landscape of the area and the area's economic and social characteristics cannot be

divorced from its environmental ones. Again, there is clear common ground with the area described as remoter rural in the emerging RSS, with that given a similar description in the government definition.

- 5.12 In developing the RSS it has been noted that, whilst the Coast sub-area of the region has been identified as a separate sub-area for the purposes of developing RSS, it shares many of the characteristics of remoter rural areas. The relative peripherality of the coast brings particular challenges. East–west transport links are stronger in the north of the sub-area than in the East Riding section of the sub-area, where isolation from principal centres is much greater. Nevertheless, in the north of this sub-area, local communities see poor transport links as a barrier to economic development. Also north–south links are not well developed along the coast. The area includes high quality environments, attracting significant tourism, and a working community with the ports and coastal resorts. However, the government definition at 2.1 places coastal areas in the accessible category. As noted later, in chapter 3, the problems of social exclusion in coastal areas means that this area does differ significantly from other “accessible” areas, and therefore **the Coast** is identified as a separate sub-area for the development of this framework.
- 5.13 Parts of those sub-areas defined as the *Leeds City Region* and *South Yorkshire* sub areas in developing the RSS are rural in nature. The government definition places all of these within the accessible category, but the rural evidence base defines Pennine West Yorkshire and the rural coalfield areas as noted above. The emerging RSS definitions of rural sub-areas diverge significantly from these broad definitions, and bring forward a range of defined sub-areas. In the *Leeds City Region*, these are upland, lowland and high commuter pressure. The upland areas are those predominantly to the west of the city region, in the Pennines. The lowland areas are to the east towards Selby, and southwards towards South Yorkshire. The commuter pressured sub-areas are in the north of the city region, towards Harrogate.
- 5.14 The need for the sub division of the rural parts of the *Leeds City Region* in the emerging RSS hints at the use of a one size fits all definition for the accessible rural parts of the region being too broad in scope to be meaningful. However, within the scope of this framework, significant sub-division into five, six or more sub-regions is impractical, and the Accessible and Pennine sub-areas will be used to cover the city region.
- 5.15 The emerging RSS sub-region of *South Yorkshire* has significant rural areas, many of which are similar in nature to those in the upland and lowland parts of *the Leeds City Region*. The historic development of the coalfields with a relatively dispersed settlement pattern, coupled with the decline of the traditional industries has left, in the words of the RSS consultative document “a significant dilemma for the spatial management of the smaller settlements”. These issues are adequately covered by the *Pennine and Coalfields* sub-area.
- 5.16 The *Humber Estuary* sub-area as defined in developing the RSS falls within the accessible element of the rural-urban definition. Parts of this sub-area are within easy commuting distance of West and South Yorkshire and York. However, the relative peripherality of this sub-area within the context of the region and the UK as a whole suggests that multi-modal east-west links need to be improved. It is recommended that this **Humber** area in RSS terms will therefore **be covered by both the Accessible and Coastal sub-areas** in this Framework.

Range of possible interventions

- 5.17 The range of potential interventions to improve accessibility is wide, from scheduled public transport services through to non-transport actions. Indeed, the existing RSS outlines a range of possible interventions available in the short term to tackle the issues outlined in the previous chapter. These include:
- Provision of bus and dial-a-ride type services for areas with identified transport needs
 - Development of quality bus corridors
 - Co-ordination of transport services, including community transport and health services transport
 - Improved waiting and interchange facilities for bus passengers
 - Cycling measures, and measures to improve conditions for horse riders
 - The introduction of a limited number of pilot rural telecentres, to allow access to services and facilities without necessarily travelling long distances
 - Local safety and environmental schemes

Identifying potential interventions

- 5.18 There is a significant body of experience across the UK in delivering solutions to rural transport problems. In developing a framework for Yorkshire and Humber appropriate interventions have been identified that will deliver desired outcomes in each sub-area. Some interventions, such as those to help deliver better access for visitors into the countryside may be appropriate only to one or two sub-areas, others may be appropriate to the whole region.
- 5.19 Before looking at the selection of projects for detailed study to provide evidence to inform the framework, as exemplars of rural transport interventions and delivery mechanisms in the region, this section looks at the full range of interventions that may be available, and covers experience from across the UK.

Rail based services

- 5.20 Interventions in the rail sector in rural areas could, in theory, range from investment in new rail passenger services or new stations to local initiatives to make better use of rail property.
- 5.21 There are examples of rail line re-openings and new stations in rural areas. For example, in 1994, passenger services were restored on the Ribble Valley Line between Blackburn and Clitheroe and a new station was opened at Cam and Dursley between Gloucester and Bristol. Recently, Local Authorities and the Countryside Agency have funded a number of studies to investigate the feasibility of rail re-openings. Examples in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region include Harrogate – Ripon – Northallerton / Thirsk, Malton – Pickering, and York – Beverley. However, the financial climate in the rail industry is currently unfavourable for such projects and it is challenging to develop the necessary compelling business case to support funding bids.
- 5.22 More than 50 community rail partnerships with the objective of improving services and facilities on individual railway lines are now established in the UK. Two of the best known examples are in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region, namely the Penistone Line Partnership and the Esk Valley Railway Development Company. These partnerships have sought to encourage investment in individual railway lines through lobbying and to promote use through community-based activities such as guided walks from stations and events on trains.
- 5.23 New impetus was given by the publication of a Community Rail Development Strategy by the Strategic Rail Authority in 2004. The Strategy proposed the designation of 56 routes as Community Rail lines with scope for development with the support of stakeholders

including Local Authorities, users and community groups. The objectives are to increase patronage, manage costs downwards, reduce subsidy and thereby improve financial sustainability. Seven lines have been designated as pilot projects including the Penistone and Esk Valley Lines. Typical measures to be considered are innovative signalling to increase capacity on single line sections, increased frequency, timetable revisions to better meet local needs and realising the commercial and community benefits of railway property by finding new uses for station buildings (e.g. a travel agency selling rail tickets at Gobowen, a café at Hellifield).

5.24 Stations function as “gateways” to communities and as “gateways” to the wider world. This function can be developed in a number of ways to make rail use more attractive, for example through CCTV and improved lighting to enhance safety and personal security, investment in car and cycle parking, and community or retail use of redundant buildings. The regeneration of Carnforth Station by Lancashire County Council is an example where renovated buildings accommodate a visitor centre, a café and retail units.

5.25 There may also be scope for improving integration between rail and road passenger transport through investment in improving interchange, scheduling bus services to better connect with trains and the provision of through ticketing. Examples include Clitheroe Interchange where the town’s bus terminal is adjacent to the rail station and the Plus Bus scheme that provides a bus add-on to the rail fare to the destination station.

Scheduled bus services

5.26 Scheduled bus services in rural areas can be improved in a variety of ways to improve access to services and facilities. A number of examples are outlined below to illustrate the range of possibilities:

- Improvements to commercial and supported local bus networks in partnership with bus operators to improve accessibility: Lincolnshire Interconnect is the prime example where seven core inter-urban routes and 16 feeder services have been established.
- Provision of new local bus services or additional journeys on existing services: Examples include new evening journeys on Service 675 Ledbury – Malvern to enable recreational travel and additional journeys on a bus service in the Much Wenlock area to cater for travel to work and attendance at after school activities.
- The establishment of fixed route minibus or midibus networks to meet local travel needs and act as feeders to the mainstream bus network: Examples include the 49 Link connecting the market town of Craven Arms with its hinterland and the Holme Valley Hopper network of services.
- New scheduled road passenger transport services established to cater for particular journey purposes – particularly travel to healthcare destinations: Examples include the Denton Surgery Bus in Northamptonshire where a minibus connects rural communities with a health centre and delivers prescriptions to local shops for collection; and the Border Courier focused on the Borders general Hospital near Melrose which carries passengers and freight for the hospital (e.g. medical supplies, samples, office supplies).
- Post buses: There are situations where it has been possible to use Royal Mail vehicles in rural areas to carry passengers – however, routes are usually circuitous and opportunities for implementation are limited.

5.27 There are several well-established bus networks developed to provide access to visitor destinations in the countryside for those without access to a car and to encourage mode shift by providing an alternative to the car. Examples include Dalesbus, Moorsbus and Breeze up the Downs – networks operated exclusively or primarily in summer months for use by visitors. There are also individual bus services targeted at visitors such as the Hadrian’s Wall Bus, Bowland Transit, Spurn Ranger Heritage Bus, and the Shropshire Hills and Malvern Hills Shuttles. This type of service can also be of use to rural communities as they may improve accessibility to nearby market towns or urban destinations when they are operational.

Flexible bus services

5.28 There is a variety of ways in which road passenger transport can be delivered outside mainstream local bus services:

- Flexible bus services calling at a number of fixed timing points with route flexibility between the timing points and combining pre-booking with “turn up and go”;
- Fully demand responsive transport (DRT) providing a “door-to-door” service with all journeys pre-booked and routes determined by demand;
- Transport services provided by Local Authority Education and Social Services departments or by the Community Transport sector.

5.29 Flexible bus services are normally not financially self-sustaining and require support. They can take two distinct forms – a fully flexible route between fixed timing points or deviation from route within defined limits to set down passengers in response to requests made to the driver. In the former case they usually require provision and funding of a central control point to take bookings and allocate pre-booked passengers to journeys. Examples of both types are given below:

- Deviation from route to set down passengers at driver discretion: A MetroConnect midibus service deviates from route to set passengers down on a section of route in the market town of Otley.
- Flexible route between fixed timing points catering for both pre-booked and casual passengers: Examples include the Wiltshire Wigglybus, Gloucestershire Village Link and the Garstang Super 8 network of routes in Lancashire.

Demand responsive services

5.30 Fully demand responsive services cater only for pre-booked passengers. This category of road passenger transport includes taxibuses and shared taxis as well as demand responsive minibus and midibus services. Examples include the Keilder Taxibus where a minibus is used to provide a demand responsive service and to operate some contracted journeys; the Little Red Bus in the Harrogate area; the East Riding MiBus project; the Polegate Taxi Rider focused on healthcare and shopping trips; the Holderness “MediBus” linking villages around Hornsea with a wide range of healthcare destinations in Hull and East Yorkshire; the Honley Surgery Bus; and the Wymondham Flexibus connecting eight villages with the market town of Wymondham and providing interchange with rail and inter-urban bus services. A number of these services feed into wider public transport networks.

5.31 The capital cost of establishing a DRT service includes provision of a control centre with communications, booking and routeing software. If the service is provided by a taxi company, there may be scope for making use of the taxi company’s booking system as with the GMPTE Local Link service in the rural parts of Uppermill and Mossley.

5.32 Some services operate on fixed routes at some times of the day and week and cover a similar area in fully demand responsive mode at other times. The Stocksbridge and Penistone Taxibus utilises two minibuses to operate on fixed routes in daytime on Mondays to Saturdays and to provide a demand responsive service in evenings and on Sundays.

Group transport projects

5.33 There is some overlap between group transport projects, often delivered through the Community Transport sector and some of the flexible or fully demand responsive passenger transport solutions. The Fellrunner Community Bus linking villages with Carlisle and Penrith functions in much the same way as fixed route minibus services supported by Local Authorities. The main focus of group transport projects is the provision of “door-to-door” transport services for particular groups in the community (e.g. elderly people, people with impaired mobility) for a variety of journey purposes. Where a dial-a-ride service is provided on behalf of a Local Authority or Passenger Transport

Executive, operation may be via a service level agreement or under a contract secured through competitive tendering. Community Transport operators also engage in group hire activities to provide transport for groups in the local community. In some cases (e.g. Todmorden Community Minibus) this is their dominant or sole activity.

5.34 Key issues in the Community Transport sector are recruiting and retaining volunteer drivers and funding day-to-day operations, new or replacement vehicles, project managers and co-ordinators and, in the case of larger schemes, paid drivers.

5.35 Some examples are given below to illustrate the range of services provided by the community and voluntary transport sectors:

- Dial-a-ride services: Many group transport operators provide door-to-door dial-a-ride services for registered members satisfying their eligibility criteria.
- Access to day centres: group transport operators often complement transport services provided by Local Authority social services and education departments.
- Access to healthcare: There are numerous schemes designed to provide access to healthcare destinations (hospitals, health centres, clinics, GP surgeries, dental practices, opticians, chiropodists) for people without access to car transport or mainstream public transport. Examples include the Dial-a-MediRide and Hospital Bus schemes in North Walsham, The Linc in North Lincolnshire, the Moorlands Community Minibus in the Leek / Ashbourne area of Staffordshire, the Wylde Fyre (Fylde and Wyre in Lancashire) and a voluntary car scheme operated by Ilkley CVS.
- Access to shopping, banks, post offices: A number of group transport operators provide transport to shopping and non-shopping destinations (e.g. theatre, historic houses) for elderly people. Often core patronage for these services is provided by residents of sheltered housing complexes. An example of such a service is a weekly bus from Addingham to a supermarket in Ilkley operated by Ilkley CVS.
- Assisted shopping: Age Concern operates an “assisted shopping” scheme in Northumberland to provide access to shops and, at the same time, maintain the self-confidence and personal independence of isolated people.
- Voluntary car schemes: Examples include the Thirsk social car scheme for any journey purpose for people unable to use public transport and a scheme to provide access to healthcare in Newark and Sherwood funded under a service level agreement with the local PCT.

5.36 Brokerage is a potentially important intervention intended to make more effective use of resources (i.e. vehicles, drivers) in the Local Authority, group transport and voluntary sectors. A broker can connect potential users with the most appropriate service provider, co-ordinate arrangements for replacement vehicles in the event of a breakdown, and plan to make maximum use of limited driver resource and the minimum necessary number of vehicles. Co-ordination to make best use of resources can also take place by agreement without the involvement of a broker. Examples are provided by the Selby Minibus Brokerage scheme; the RYECAT social car, demand responsive minibus and wheels 2 work scheme; Roundabout Transport servicing 170 user organisations in urban and rural areas around Watford; and Link-a-Ride in the Ampthill area of Bedfordshire where operations are under-pinned by the ability to use Social Services vehicles as part of the common pool.

5.37 The group transport sector has a substantial involvement in providing access to recreational destinations for people with impaired mobility through group hire or projects such as Harrogate Excursions for Older People.

Personalised modes

- 5.38 This heading covers a variety of potential transport interventions based on the “wheels to work” concept as well as car sharing and investment in new safe walking or cycling routes.
- 5.39 “Wheels to Work” is the generic name covering a number of different initiatives designed to increase personal mobility in order to enable people to participate in further education or training or to take jobs that cannot be accessed using public transport. Projects such as the Bridport Scooter Scheme and Wheels 2 Work 2 in Oswestry include the hiring or loan of mopeds or bicycles with the necessary safety equipment, the provision of driving lessons or small cash grants to put an old car into working order.
- 5.40 Some Local Authorities and a few private sector companies promote car sharing schemes for their employees. A few car clubs are also in existence, often supported by the charity Car Plus which provides information, advice on developing schemes, accreditation and an insurance service. The principle is that a small pool of cars is available to car club members who can book vehicles in advance for their own use. A local example is the small Hour Car scheme in Hebden Bridge.
- 5.41 Interventions to encourage sustainable tourism and countryside access are often in the form of personalised solutions. The Coniston and Grizedale B4 (Boot, Bike, Boat, Bus) Network uses footways, cycleways, ferries and bus services to provide links between a number of villages and service hubs whilst the Easington Cycle Project makes bicycles available for group recreational use as part of a Healthy Living project. Several bike bus projects have been established using bike trailers, bike racks or cycle pens inside buses to enable cyclists to use public transport to access the countryside. Examples include the Dales Bike Bus and SYPTE Rural Links bike bus services to the Derwent and Rivelin areas of South Yorkshire.

Non-transport interventions

- 5.42 Non-transport interventions can cover a wide range of approaches, from those that aim at the heart of the issue of local provision of services, thereby directly tackling the need to travel, through mobile services, to the provision of help and aid in travelling rather than a transport service itself. This latter category can be in the form of financial assistance, or through marketing or the provision of information.
- 5.43 Alternative provision of services, either through better public sector planning, private sector investment or community involvement is an important aspect of tackling local access to services. There are a number of schemes and associations working to help with the provision of local services. Best practice is available from a number of sources, such as the Countryside Agency’s “The Pub is the Hub” guide, which helps communities and publicans to extend the range of services available in public houses. There are also a number of schemes providing access to financial services, such as through the Co-operative bank providing cash machines in Co-op stores around the country, and measures to help retain and reinforce the role of Post Offices.
- 5.44 In terms of local shopping, help and advice can range from locally organised community shops, to help from the Rural Shops Alliance, a national organisation that offers a coordinated and proactive approach to maintaining a healthy network of village shops, to help from major corporations such as in the Sainsbury’s Assisting Village Enterprises Scheme.
- 5.45 The provision of outreach services to rural areas to avoid or reduce the need to travel is a significant non-transport intervention. Mobile libraries are the commonest form of outreach service, but other mobile services are also available. In West Berkshire a mobile community centre operated by the library service provides information and learning for rural communities. The Canterbury Rural Streetworker and Youth Vans in Hambleton and Richmondshire carry equipment to community halls for use in activities under the

supervision of youth workers. The Youth Vans also act as mobile advice and information centres for young people. The Food Bank Rural Initiative delivers food parcels to families in crisis whilst the Mid Devon Shopmobility Scheme uses a truck to deliver shopmobility services in different small towns on different days of the week.

- 5.46 There are financial forms of non-transport intervention ranging from the provision of taxi vouchers to the Rural Wheels scheme in Cumbria where members use a stored value smartcard to pay for pre-booked services provided by small bus operators, taxi companies, Community Transport operators, voluntary car schemes and Local Authority social services and education departments.
- 5.47 Provision of information and publicity can be important. Recent experience in West Yorkshire (the Wharfe Valley Study) has shown a lack of public awareness of the range of passenger transport services available and confusion about the eligibility criteria for particular services. This could be tackled in a variety of ways, either through local leaflets detailing services available and eligibility, web sites containing similar information or telephone help lines to provide people with the most appropriate contacts for their needs, for example the helpline provided by Transport Action Patients Cornwall.
- 5.48 Rural telecentres and other similar initiatives provide public with access to modern information and communications technologies, helping to provide services and reducing the need to travel in rural areas. This can be very important in rural communities. For example there is a network of telecentres in Powys, which has the lowest density of population in England and Wales. This network has been part-funded by the EU, and relies heavily on voluntary help to maintain its operations.

Chosen range of interventions

- 5.49 Having outlined this wide range of potential interventions for improving access to services in rural areas, it is clear that within the scope of this study, a number do not demand further study at this time.
- 5.50 Detailed study of rail based services has been excluded. This is not to say that rail services cannot play a role in improving accessibility in rural areas within the region. Indeed there are a number of examples of where existing rail services already play a vital role in serving rural communities in Yorkshire and the Humber, as noted above. However, the framework is designed to help shape future improvements in accessibility across the whole of the region. It is clear that under current rail infrastructure investment programmes in the UK, there will be little scope for new rail services outside those already in existence, and as such detailed study of rail services for inclusion in the framework as a guide to future service provision would be of limited value. Rail also sits outside the third tier of the Strategic Public Transport Framework being developed for the region (see below), which is the tier where the interventions identified below best fit.
- 5.51 At the other end of the range, it has also been agreed with the project steering group that detailed study of non-transport interventions will also not form part of this framework. The importance of direct service provision in rural communities cannot however be underestimated. Indeed, as noted earlier, non-transport interventions need to be considered to help improve access to services, responding to the identified need to better co-ordinate land use, service provision and transport planning. The role of online solutions for improving service provision and access to services in rural communities would also be considered alongside local provision as a possible intervention.
- 5.52 The basis for, and processes in place to deliver these improvements in rural service provision are however completely different, and therefore not directly comparable to those for delivering transport improvements, and these too are consequently omitted from this transport framework.
- 5.53 Ongoing work in the region as part of Modernising Rural Delivery is looking directly at improving access to services through non transport interventions. There are close ties to

the improvement of transport services in rural areas, but this framework will not attempt to report on the very different measures required to deliver services closer to rural communities. Interventions that do not directly relate to transport service provision must be considered alongside the framework. However, the scope of the commission suggests that the main emphasis should be on identifying appropriate approaches to transport service provision.

- 5.54 This leaves four categories of transport intervention within this framework, namely scheduled bus services; flexible bus services and demand responsive transport (DRT) services; group transport services; and personalised transport.

Yorkshire and Humber Strategic Public Transport Framework

- 5.55 This range of rural interventions fits within the emerging Strategic Public Transport Framework for the region. The Strategic Public Transport Framework, like this framework, feeds into the delivery of RSS; looks at needs based provision that is feasible, affordable and flexible; and seeks to inform future investment in regional transport provision. Significant differences include a clear objective to promote public transport and achieve a modal shift from private car use, which is not as directly applicable to this Framework, which concentrates on helping to improve rural accessibility by a wide range of travel modes. There is also an element of the Strategic Public Transport Framework that looks specifically at infrastructure investment as well as service provision, which again does not feature extensively in this framework.

- 5.56 The emerging Strategic Public Transport Framework identifies a hierarchy with three levels of networks within the region. The Rural Transport Framework clearly sits in the third tier, "Tier C". This is described as **local bus, demand responsive transport, feeders to secondary interchanges, access to health/education**. This tier is consistent with the approach to local accessibility adopted in this framework, and does not include strategic national and regional service links, such as local rail and inter-urban bus, between the main urban centres, which fall into Tiers A and B.

Evidence to inform the framework

- 5.57 Based on the identified problems and issues within each sub-area, a number of exemplar projects, to be known as showcase projects, were selected by JMP in consultation with the framework steering group. Selecting showcase schemes as a guide to best practice is an important stage in the development of the framework. These projects provide clear evidence to demonstrate the contribution that rural transport interventions developed through a wide range of channels including Rural Transport Partnerships can make to improving accessibility in rural areas within the region.

- 5.58 In identifying the short list, the following criteria were considered:

- Ability of project to meet identified objectives
- Preliminary value for money assessment
- Maturity of project
- Quality and quantity of information known to be available
- Transferability of experience
- Adequate coverage of projects across the range of selected sub-areas (geographic spread) and project type (range of interventions)
- Ability of a project to demonstrate flexibility to meet a number of objectives in a number of sub-areas

- 5.59 From this process, and further discussion with the project steering group, the following choice of showcase projects was made to provide evidence to inform the framework.

T5.1 Showcase projects

	Key issues for sub-area	Scheduled bus services	Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services	Group Transport	Personalised transport
Accessible Rural Areas	Equality of transport opportunity for those without cars			Selby District Minibus Brokerage Scheme	
		Otley Transport for All Service 923	Mi Bus Harrogate Little Red Bus		
	Commuter pressure	Otley Transport for All Service 923	Mi Bus Harrogate Little Red Bus	Selby District Minibus Brokerage Scheme	
		Service 923	Harrogate Little Red Bus	Selby District Minibus Brokerage Scheme	
Remote Rural Areas	Poor access to a range of basic services and facilities Protection of high quality environment	Dales to Darlington Connection			Hambleton & Richmondshire Wheels 2 Work RYECAT Transport Solutions
		Dales to Darlington Connection			
	Equality of transport opportunity for those without cars		Harrogate Little Red Bus	RYECAT Transport Solutions	
			Harrogate Little Red Bus	RYECAT Transport Solutions	
			Harrogate Little Red Bus		
Pennine West Yorkshire and the rural Coalfield areas	Economic and social deprivation	Hebden Bridger			Wheels 2 Work Barnsley
	Poor access to employment opportunities	Hebden Bridger	Meltham's minibus Honley Surgery Bus		
	Poor access to a range of basic services and facilities	Hebden Bridger	Meltham's minibus		Our Car, Your Car
		Hebden Bridger			Our Car, Your Car
Coastal Areas (and Humber)	Poor access to a range of basic services and facilities Protection of high quality environment		Isle and Wolds Villager		
			Isle and Wolds Villager	HART	
			Isle and Wolds Villager		
	Equality of transport opportunity for those without cars	Spurn Ranger Heritage Bus			

Key
Employment
Education
Healthcare & welfare
Shopping & local services
Culture & leisure

6 Lessons from the showcase projects

- 6.1 The showcase projects examined provide a framework for analysis and provide evidence on potential means for future delivery of rural transport services.

Scheduled bus services

- 6.2 The experience of scheduled services examined clearly demonstrates that scheduled bus services continue to have an important role in providing transport in rural areas.
- 6.3 In terms of the value for money of such services, it is clear that those services in the more accessible rural areas, namely the Accessible Rural and Pennine and Coalfields sub-areas, can represent excellent value for money. Indeed, the Hebden Bridger services cost substantially less than £1 in subsidy for each passenger journey undertaken.
- 6.4 In terms of delivering improved access in remoter rural areas, the use of scheduled bus services is more costly. Indeed, the lessons of the Dales to Darlington Connection suggest that whilst this service meets specific educational needs, and the concept of improved scheduled services is applicable in remoter rural areas where communities are arranged in a linear pattern, the cost per passenger would be prohibitive for large scale implementation. This type of service would certainly be difficult to provide at a reasonable level of subsidy in remoter rural areas where communities are scattered rather than in linear form, as when located along valleys.
- 6.5 What is also clear from the showcase studies is that scheduled bus services can take a number of forms, and designed in response to the community's needs, and well marketed, can provide satisfactory transport solutions to the needs of each community involved. These services can meet a number of journey purposes, and serving multiple purposes, such as health and social care as well as shopping. Serving a number of markets has helped sustain services financially. A targeted leisure market as served by both Spurn Ranger and 923 can contribute to the services' viability. The Hebden Bridger also serves a significant informal leisure market in the Pennine Hills.
- 6.6 There are therefore four aspects of the showcase schemes studied that provide good lessons in transferring success to other new or revised rural services. Firstly, that good customer research is undertaken to understand local needs. A service can then be provided to meet those needs. This was the case in both Otley and Hebden Bridge.
- 6.7 Strong pro-active marketing has made a substantial contribution to the success of the services. Again, the Otley and Hebden Bridge services, together with the Spurn Ranger and 923, demonstrate the success of this approach.
- 6.8 Finally, the approach to building demand gradually in response to the market and needs of the community, by improvements implemented as a series of small steps is applicable elsewhere. Regular review and continuous improvement to ensure the continuing usefulness of services has been important on 923, and in Hebden Bridge.

Demand responsive transport

- 6.9 A number of demand responsive services have been studied as showcases. Some, such as the Honley Surgery Bus are specifically targeted at a particular market. Others have more wide reaching aims.
- 6.10 The experience with the Honley Surgery Bus, MiBUS in the East Riding, Meltham's Minibus, some of the Harrogate Little Red Bus services and the Wolds Villager suggest that demand responsive services do have a long term future as financially viable rural services. The subsidy per passenger required for these services does however vary

substantially. This reflects both the cost of service provision, and the variation in the markets served by different services.

- 6.11 Control of costs of provision through the delivery of the service using existing resources, such as existing vehicles and booking and control systems, rather than by purchasing new vehicles and expensive scheduling systems seems to influence this. Some services within MiBUS, for example, used new vehicles and software, but in neither case did this seem to be a particular attraction for users, nor did the use of existing resources seem to hinder success.
- 6.12 In going forward, it seems clear that in terms of whole service costing, making the best use of existing resources and capability, such as scheduling resources already in place for other organisations within other sectors, such as the health services, is likely to be more sustainable than investment in expensive new systems. Strong cross-sectoral partnerships as exemplified in the Meltham example are important in maximising benefits.
- 6.13 Of equal significance appears to be the identification of viable services to serve unmet needs and demands. The examples of the Honley Surgery Bus and some of the more effective MiBUS services suggest that when effectively targeted, demand responsive services can provide viable services with very good financial and wider benefit cases, especially when not financially hindered by extensive capital costs.
- 6.14 Of interest is the MiBUS service in Pocklington. This service didn't work as well as others because it replaced a failing bus service in an area of high car ownership. The demand was not present in the area for a bus service of any sort. This is an object lesson in providing services only where need, and therefore demand exists. The bus service has now been replaced by shared taxis.

Group transport

- 6.15 The three brokerage schemes within the showcase schemes appear to be reasonably successful. Subsidy needed per single passenger trip is not high. Although brokerage needs subsidy, this can be offset in part by the additional income generated on behalf of participating minibus operators.
- 6.16 The main difficulty is often in securing participation of minibus operators. This arises from concern about the potential risk posed by allowing vehicles to be driven by members of disparate hiring groups is likely to be the main factor inhibiting participation, particularly from smaller organisations who seem particularly reluctant to share their valuable resources with larger groups.
- 6.17 The brokerage concept is transferable to other areas. The key requirements are that there is a "host" organisation willing and able to take responsibility for developing and managing the brokerage function, that there is a pool of minibuses available in the area and that minibus operators are willing to participate in the scheme.

Personalised transport

- 6.18 Three wheels to work projects fall within the showcase projects. The concept is one that clearly works, and the three projects provide evidence of this being a successful approach to providing access to employment, training and education.
- 6.19 The cost of subsidy per work journey is quite high, but it is clear that the availability of transport to access quality employment cannot be simply judged on the basis of cost per journey of the actual transport to work. Indeed, when all journeys, including those that help the young people involved build social networks and provide mobility in the whole of their lives, the cost per journey reduces substantially. Benefits are not confined to travel to work or training. The overall increase in the level of personal mobility for other journey purposes greatly improves quality of life and therefore contributes to the achievement of increased inclusion. The wider benefits to the community in allowing young people to stay

within rural areas, and to the individual's quality of life outweigh the cost of transport provision.

- 6.20 The concept is applicable in different types of rural area where mainstream public transport does not connect potential employees or students with workplaces or colleges. If account is taken of the increase in overall personal mobility of customers, the subsidy need per trip compares favourably with most demand responsive services.
- 6.21 With regard to the one car club project examined by the study, the principle aspect in advising on future delivery of rural car clubs, and the transferability of any experience, is that a car club is unlikely to be suited to being the principle mode of travel for the user. In that sense, it is more likely to be used by non-car owners that wish to make exceptional or occasional trips where personal non-motorised or public transport is not suited to the journey length, or carriage of goods such as shopping, and by people in replacement of a second or subsequent car, when the household's principal vehicle is not available.
- 6.22 A good framework of existing transport services in the area was important. Car clubs are not suited to being someone's only means of travel. Good public transport to nearby urban centres as an alternative to a car, good access to the "car station", and good access to a range of other local services that can be reached on foot are important.
- 6.23 The success of Our Car Your Car has been influenced strongly by its location in an urban fringe type location. More accessible rural areas found in both the Accessible, and Pennine and Coalfields sub-areas within this study are likely to be suited to rural car clubs. There is, to date, insufficient evidence to conclude if car clubs in remoter rural communities, where reliance on personal transport is likely to be higher, can be equally effective.

Building capacity for delivery

- 6.24 The showcase projects have demonstrated two particular organisations that deliver a wide range of transport services to their local communities, namely Harrogate Little Red Bus and RYECAT Transport Solutions. Both operate a number of different services to meet different needs, having grown up from a much smaller organisation. Both demonstrate professionalism in the operation of their services from within the voluntary sector, and have the independence to be flexible and grow to meet the needs of their local communities and target financially viable markets. Both have significant experience of drawing in funding from a number of sources, and are becoming ever more commercial in the way that they tackle socially necessary services that have traditionally been delivered through the voluntary sector, often with significant subsidy.
- 6.25 The development of capacity within these organisations is an important aspect with relevance to defining future delivery models. Both organisations are currently part of a joint bid, supported by North Yorkshire County Council, for additional funding through HM Treasury's *futurebuilders* programme. This programme of investment in the voluntary and community sector (VCS), including social enterprises, is intended to showcase the best of VCS service delivery and to transform the capacity of some individual organisations, or groups of organisations working together, to engage in service delivery.
- 6.26 The North Yorkshire supported bid will help Little Red Bus, RYECAT and another partner in Bentham (in Craven District) to build their capacity to deliver community transport across the county. If successful, the investment which will be part grant and part loan, will fund new vehicles, new IT systems, and allow the community transport sector to grow in the county. The project will help Little Red Bus and RYECAT to help other community transport organisations, and grow capacity across the county by developing resource centres accessible to a wide range of organisations.
- 6.27 The bid will help in a number of ways, not least in tackling the lack of capital investment and development funding in the sector where uncertainty of capital funding is always an

issue. It will help further develop a commercial approach to community transport delivery in the county, with the project partners taking on County Council contracted services to help finance the investment in infrastructure.

6.28 These organisations provide models that demand further study as examples of focussed local deliverers of rural transport services, operating flexibly to meet a wide range of needs. Such organisations, bringing professionalism and growing capacity to delivery, could be part of the way forward in providing the locally responsive delivery identified by the government’s Rural Strategy.

6.29 There are a number of other projects that have benefited from the input of professional Rural Transport Partnership and Local Authority officers. It is clear that the knowledge, enthusiasm and perseverance of these officers have been vital in delivering some of the services described.

Costs comparisons from showcase projects

6.30 Evidence from the showcase projects demonstrates a wide variation of cost effectiveness across the range of projects selected. The showcase projects were selected as being identified as broadly successful in meeting objectives.

6.31 There is also a significant range of types of service covered. These range from scheduled services and other forms of mass, or perhaps more accurately, publicly available transport, which should deliver a lower subsidy rate per passenger than more individual modes. The table below summarises the data available on the showcase projects.

T6.1 Subsidies applied to showcase projects

Case study	Subsidy per passenger journey (£)
Accessible Rural Areas	
Otley Transport for All	2.27
Rural Bus Service 923	3.43
MiBUS overall	5.80
Pocklington – MiBUS	13.37
Beverley – MiBUS	7.44
Howdenshire – MiBUS	3.44
Driffield – MiBUS	6.57
Selby and District Minibus Brokerage scheme	3.33
Remoter Rural Areas	
Dales to Darlington Connection	6.04
Harrogate Little Red Bus – Ripon Roweller	8.89
Harrogate Little Red Bus – South Harrogate	23.63
Harrogate Little Red Bus – Hawes	36.48
RYECAT Transport Solutions Car Scheme	3.81
Hambleton and Richmondshire and Ripon Wheels 2 Work	2.07
Pennine West and South Yorkshire and the Rural Coalfields	
Hebden Bridger	0.75
Meltham’s Minibus	1.36
Honley Surgery Transport Scheme	n/a
Barnsley Wheels 2 Work	4.41
Our Car Your Car	n/a
Coastal Rural Area	
Spurn Ranger	3.06
Isle and Wolds Village Bus Service	3.13
Holderness Rural Area Transport (HART) Medibus	5.93

6.32 Placing these costs into the framework for assessment, the following table can be produced.

T6.2 Comparison of subsidies applied to showcase projects

	Scheduled bus services	Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services	Group Transport	Personalised transport
Accessible Rural Areas	2.27 to 3.43	3.44 to 23.63	3.33	
Remote Rural Areas	6.04	36.48		2.07 to 3.81
Pennine West Yorkshire and the rural Coalfield areas	0.74			4.41
Coastal Areas (and Humber)	3.06	3.13	5.93	

6.33 This data demonstrates that conventional scheduled bus services can be provided in appropriate accessible rural communities for around £2 per passenger journey or less. This can be broadly applied to the Accessible Rural and the Pennine and Coalfields sub-areas defined in the framework. This subsidy will inevitably rise in more remote communities, such as those in the Remoter Rural and Coastal sub-areas. The more sparsely populated areas and those where the catchment is limited by virtue of the fact that half of the hinterland for most of the centres or destinations is the sea, cannot always be expected to support services at this level of subsidy.

6.34 The level of the premium that could be deemed reasonable will vary dependent upon how remote the area is, and the type of service being provided, and whether that service is providing a necessary service that helps to meet the region's objectives. Taking for example the Dales to Darlington Connection, providing links to educational opportunities from a remote rural area, and costs around £6 per passenger journey in subsidy. Is the additional cost worth the delivery of the outcome? This is where future delivery will need to be strongly aligned to achievement of objectives and outcomes within the region.

6.35 Cost effective services of most other types can be provided for less than £4 per passenger journey. There is evidence of DRT services, car schemes, wheels to work and group transport schemes that deliver their journeys at less than £4 subsidy per passenger trip. The wide range of subsidies per passenger journey that exist demonstrates the experimental nature of some of the schemes. A broader view of effectiveness in meeting objectives of the scheme may need to be taken, but clearly some schemes and projects will require close scrutiny as to the cost effectiveness of provision, and to whether alternative provision would better serve the customers' needs.

6.36 In terms of the more personalised modes, such as wheels to work, there did not appear to be the same distinction between the more accessible and remoter areas in terms of rising costs of subsidy that are evident from conventional bus services. The variation in costs per passenger journey between the wheels to work schemes studied cannot be attributed with any certainty to factors relating to the area, or market served. It is clear however that such services can represent good value for money, and provide much wider, non-quantifiable benefits in respect of providing independence to young people engaged in the schemes. Similarly, the RYECAT car scheme and Selby Brokerage appear to be able to deliver appropriate transport for well under £4 subsidy per trip.

6.37 How costs and benefits of the improved accessibility provided to the community are evaluated will also be important in assessing a scheme's financial effectiveness. Access

to some services is more beneficial than others, e.g. to work, and wider benefits of some services, such as the total savings accrued to the health service of providing the Honley bus are difficult to quantify. It is difficult from the evidence within this broad study to make firm conclusions on the quantification of these wider benefits.

Costs of rural transport – identifying a rural premium

6.38 These cost comparisons are important in identifying sustainable long term transport services to meet the needs of rural communities, as such services must be financially sustainable, and represent value for money,.

6.39 There are a great variety of possible ways in which value for money, and the establishment of a cost base for rural transport interventions in the region, could be established. It is, however, very difficult to establish fully comparable costs for different types of services that account for the whole cost of provision, and to establish what would be a reasonable cost for the types of intervention within the framework.

6.40 For this reason, a cost-benefit approach over the “whole life” of a service, inclusive of capital and ongoing operational costs has not been used in this case. Consultation with practitioners has suggested that the key issue in taking forward financially sustainable services is the day-to-day operational costs, and the amount of subsidy required to meet running costs. The provision of capital items, such as new vehicles, remains an issue to some service providers, despite a range of sources of grant, government investment and procurement available for such purchases.

6.41 Therefore, subsidy per passenger journey is used as a comparator for the cost of provision of services, and for the identification of a rural cost-base and premium. This data is reasonably easy to obtain, has a degree of comparability between widely contrasting types of service provision, and is easily understood. In virtually all cases the provision of rural transport services will require some subsidy, so this figure is likely to be relevant to future delivery.

6.42 As a service planning tool, these subsidy per passenger figures have limitations, as they would have to be based on estimates of patronage. Their usefulness is therefore more as a monitoring and evaluation tool, and as a guide to long term sustainability, and the appropriateness of the solution being delivered. Planning of services, as identified elsewhere in the study, should generally in future be needs based, and these subsidy figures will provide a basis for establishing value for money once operating.

Other sources of cost evidence

6.43 In using the cost data from the showcase projects to establish a rural cost base, there is a need to verify the evidence, as it is drawn from a small sample. Examining the much wider source of data that evidence from Rural Bus Subsidy Grant across the region and the UK gives some reinforcement to the data from the showcase projects.

6.44 Research undertaken for the DfT into the effects of rural bus subsidy grant and rural bus challenge, published in October 2003, demonstrated a wide range of subsidies that resulted from the funding of services. The overall average subsidy per passenger of all services funded over the two years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 was £1.75. However, this single figure masks a wide variation in cost between different types of service in different parts of the UK.

6.45 For instance, for services that continued to be operated throughout the entire year in question (thus removing the often disproportionate effect of those that were poor performers and were withdrawn before the year was complete) this average subsidy per passenger was as low as £1.59. This compares with an average subsidy per passenger of £4.57 for services that were subsequently withdrawn. Other ways of calculating cost show that the median subsidy of such withdrawn services was as high as £15 per passenger, and for one authority, over £20 per passenger.

- 6.46 At today's prices, this "good value" lower estimate of providing rural bus services through RBSG gives a figure of around £1.75 subsidy per passenger. (This is based on rpi being 10% higher now than in March 2003). This removes the effects of poor value, often experimental services.
- 6.47 The evidence from the DfT study for the Yorkshire and Humber region suggests that the costs of providing rural transport services in the region are on average slightly higher than for the UK as a whole. Data for four authorities suggests that the average subsidy per passenger for continued services in 2001-02 was over £2 per passenger journey, compared with the UK average of £1.59. The data ranged from £1.91 to £2.90 per passenger journey. Accounting for 2005 prices, this equates to a subsidy of somewhere from £2 to just over £3 per passenger journey.
- 6.48 More recent data from the region provides further evidence. The diversity within the Yorkshire and Humber is illustrated in the data provided by each authority illustrating their range of services. The following table summarises the average subsidy per journey, the highest and lowest subsidy and the number of services both wholly and partly subsidised by the RBSG operated per region.

T6.3 Summary of RBSG Subsidy by Local Authority

	Average Subsidy per journey (£)	Highest (£)	Lowest (£)	Number of Services
East Riding of Yorkshire	3.06	14.40	0.06	68
North Yorkshire County Council	2.36	13.14	0.47	35
SYPT	2.07	47.20	0.78	18
North Lincolnshire*	2.05	8.97	0.54	27
City of York	1.91	5.75	0.22	7
Metro	1.43	13.57	0.43	48

(*North Lincolnshire data is estimated 2005/2006 subsidy expenditure)

- 6.49 It is clear from this data that in general terms, services in the more Accessible Rural areas, and those in Pennine West and South Yorkshire, cost less in subsidy per journey to provide than in the more Remote and Coastal areas.
- 6.50 Further examination of data from Metro, relating to West Yorkshire, shows that the average subsidy per journey of all supported services in £0.95. The RBSG figure of £1.43 almost exactly 50% higher than for all supported services in the sub-region. The data above suggests that remoter areas could expect subsidies to be up to double those in more accessible areas.
- 6.51 Clearly, there cannot be a hard and fast rule about costs, but in general terms this broad rule of thumb could be applied based on this data.
- 6.52 A number of caveats must be applied to any broad conclusions made from such data on RBSG. Firstly, the services were those added over and above existing services, and are thus likely to be more expensive than existing services, if only because it is to be expected that the more cost effective services exist already. Local Authorities were not allowed to duplicate existing services under RBSG. The degree of skewing of data is very large with a few very inefficient services raising the average costs. Very costly services tend to be the ones that are withdrawn (although some became commercial services and others were withdrawn for other reasons). It thus seems that Local Authorities, tasked with designing and contracting new services very quickly, made some decisions that resulted in some very costly services, but that most of these were withdrawn, and, on the whole, were replaced by more cost-effective services.

- 6.53 In simple terms, conclusions simply relating to cost do not tell the entire story. This analysis says nothing about the value of services, and some of the costly services may have been very effective at meeting their objectives. Conversely, cheap services (with low unit costs) may have been less than effective in meeting the needs of the people who used them.
- 6.54 There must also be some degree of caution applied to data collected from a wide range of sources, and therefore subject to different approaches to manipulation and the treatment of data.
- 6.55 When using this evidence from RBSG to verify, or otherwise, the data collected from the showcase studies, a number of observations can be made. Evidence from the scheduled bus services studied within the showcase projects aligns with that from RBSG on scheduled bus services, in that costs of subsidy per journey are broadly double in remoter areas (£6.04 for Dales to Darlington) than those in more accessible areas (£2.27 for Otley Transport for All and £3.43 for service 923), and that services in Pennine West Yorkshire can require less subsidy still (Hebden Bridger).
- 6.56 It is difficult to make similar conclusions with the more personalised or group modes that have been studied in the showcases, as the RBSG evidence available does not readily allow direct comparison.

The costs of Demand Responsive Transport

- 6.57 It is recognised that in the UK the subsidy rate for Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) is much higher than that of a conventional subsidised bus service. The 'Intermode: Innovations in Demand Responsive Transport' report produced for the Department for Transport (DfT) and Greater Manchester PTE identifies that the passenger subsidy of DRT schemes in the UK range from less than £1 to £10, with some being closer to £30 per passenger trip. Most of these schemes involve expensive call centre equipment, modern vehicles and expensive equipment for scheduling the vehicles.
- 6.58 The technology associated with public policy DRT schemes (typically those introduced with social inclusion objectives in mind) tends to be far more complex than that used for schemes which are commercially driven.
- 6.59 For DRT services which provide an interchange with other existing services, a subsidy level of £1.80 to £4 per trip is still above the maximum figure of around £2 for conventional tendered bus services. However, some UK examples provide evidence that with initial funding a DRT scheme providing an interchange, or one at the lower end of the technology market in terms of scheduling and operation can operate at a level of subsidy no higher than conventional bus services.
- 6.60 A subsidy cost of £3-£4 per passenger trip may be a reasonable estimate for DRT bus services, based on passengers paying a fare that is comparable with that of a conventional bus service.

7 A strategic rural transport framework for the region

7.1 This Strategic Rural Transport Framework has been developed to help ensure that rural transport issues are addressed through the statutory regional spatial planning processes and to establish transport priorities for interventions to improve rural accessibility.

7.2 The emerging Yorkshire and Humber Rural Framework is being developed around a number of cross cutting themes. Rural transport is one of the priorities that the Regional Rural Framework seeks to tackle. In informing the development of that Framework, and in contributing to the delivery of RSS, the key elements of the Strategic Rural Transport Framework for the region are based on three of these cross cutting themes.

7.3 The three key themes embraced within this Framework are:

- Strategic Policy Fit
- Modernising Rural Delivery
- Rural Evidence Base

7.4 In simplistic terms, these can be translated into **what** (strategic policy fit), **who** (delivery), and **how** (evidence).

Strategic Policy Fit

7.5 In developing this framework, improved access to key services such as employment, education, food shopping and healthcare in rural communities, especially those socially excluded groups who, for example, do not have access to a car, emerges as the most important outcome. Improved accessibility to these services is vital in delivering the RSS in rural areas.

7.6 The existing adopted RSS has a clear gap in its rural transport policy in this area. The inclusion of a policy on improving access to services in rural areas in the emerging RSS will help in the achievement of this outcome.

7.7 The emerging RSS “high level” policies support this outcome, specifically for example:

- YH3 (iv) support towns as hubs for the rural economy and as service centres;
- YH6 (B) (iii) ensure that towns provide the main focus for employment development in rural areas;
- YH7 (iv) support innovative means of accessing and delivering services (in rural and coastal areas)

7.8 Both YH3 (iv) and YH6 (B) (iii) will require good access to these centres from wider rural communities to be provided, and whilst innovation is not the only route to providing good access to services in rural and coastal communities, the point is well made that good access to services is vital to ensuring the vibrancy of those communities.

7.9 One of the themes from the emerging RSS transport policy areas is the support of sustainable, non-car modes in providing for the transport needs of the region. However, with regard to rural communities, it is clear that whilst it is desirable that this access to services is improved by means other than the car, and for people without access to a car, an issue that makes rural accessibility distinct from urban is that it is access to services per se that is important, regardless of mode.

7.10 In contributing to RSS, it is clear that this area of current RSS transport policy needs strengthening, namely the inclusion of a policy **to improve access to key services for**

rural communities through the provision of appropriate transport services. These services should be publicly available, and may be provided through a variety of means, including in some circumstances personal modes such as car based schemes.

Fit with the region's Strategic Public Transport Framework

- 7.11 This Framework shares relevant objectives with the emerging Strategic Public Transport Framework, namely:
- Providing support and help to deliver the wider RSS;
 - Delivering desired outcomes for accessibility;
 - Providing a needs-based framework, as identified by accessibility planning and other data;
 - Identifying interventions within a clear range of spatial and service groups;
 - Providing interventions that are feasible and practical;
 - Delivering affordable solutions that provide value for money and effective use of resources
- 7.12 The Strategic Rural Transport Framework sits within the structure provided by the Strategic Public Transport Framework, namely in the third tier described as **local bus, demand responsive transport, feeders to secondary interchanges, access to health/education**. This tier is consistent with delivering improved accessibility, and does not include strategic national and regional service links, such as local rail and inter-urban bus, between the main urban centres, which fall into Tiers A and B.

Modernising Rural Delivery in transport in the Yorkshire and Humber region

- 7.13 In setting the framework for who delivers the transport interventions to improve rural access to services, the following three tiered structure sets down the important relationship of strategy led, locally delivered services.
- 7.14 Figure 7.1 overleaf demonstrates the important relationships required to ensure that delivery is effective.

Strategy led

- 7.15 A strategic approach to improving rural access to services will be led at the regional level, through key policies contained in the Regional Spatial Strategy, the Regional Economic Strategy, the Yorkshire and Humber Rural Framework and other key policy drivers for the rural communities of the region.
- 7.16 The importance of a strategic approach to delivery is the need to align a range of public sector funding on agreed priorities to secure the greatest benefit. These funding sources could come from education, healthcare, economic regeneration or cultural sectors, and could come from regional, sub-regional or local funders. The ability to view these sources and the priorities that they are tackling in a strategic manner is vital to ensure that the funds are used effectively and efficiently for maximum benefit across Yorkshire and the Humber.
- 7.17 Aligning funds to support priorities does not mean fair shares for all. A strategic approach to the allocation of resources will inevitably mean that some parts of the region will receive more funding than others. However, if the strategy led approach works towards tackling those areas of most need, then the delivery of the desired, and agreed, outcomes across the region will be achieved more quickly and efficiently than if resources are spent in an unstructured ad hoc manner or on the basis of equal shares for everyone.

F7.1 Framework for delivery

Spatial Level	Key Actors	Function	Actions
Regional	Yorkshire and Humber Assembly Yorkshire Forward Government Office Y&H Rural Transport Forum	Strategy	Policy direction RSS / RES / YHRF
Sub Regional	Local Strategic Partnerships YF Sub-regional teams Local Transport Authorities Passenger Transport Executives Rural Community Councils Rural Transport Partnerships	Co-ordination	Definition of need Consultation and communication Commissioning
Local	Commercial Bus Operators Community Transport Sector Other Transport Operators	Delivery	Design and Operation of services

Sub-regionally co-ordinated

- 7.18 Having defined the strategic approach at regional level through regional policy, sub-regionally co-ordinated identification of need and commissioning of interventions can be provided through a range of partners at sub-regional level.
- 7.19 This co-ordination tier presents the greatest challenge. Each sub-region has a range of existing formal structures for funding and co-ordinating transport delivery, with local transport authorities, Primary Care Trusts, Passenger Transport Executives, Yorkshire Forward's sub-regional teams, Rural Transport Partnerships and others having roles to play. Local Strategic Partnerships will also have a role in ensuring that the range and scope of engagement required in each sub-region is achieved. The alignment of funds to deliver rural service improvements through these sub-regional partners as part of mainstream transport funding, rather than as an add-on, is crucial to effective delivery.
- 7.20 There are also significant opportunities within this tier, not least the co-ordination and alignment of public funding. An immediate opportunity is that afforded by the re-organisation of administrative structures in both the health and education sectors, with the merging of Primary Care Trusts to form larger bodies, and a similar process affecting Learning and Skills Councils. Rationalisation of sub-regional co-ordination mechanisms to maximise this alignment of funds may also be beneficial in other sectors.
- 7.21 The roles of the various sub-regional bodies in this tier will differ, as some will commission and fund transport interventions, whereas others may simply co-ordinate, build partnerships and foster engagement in the process. For example, this tier could involve a local authority led community transport strategy bringing together various bodies to develop capacity for co-ordination of activity, as in North Yorkshire, or the Rural Community Council as in the Humber area, or a PTE in the metropolitan areas.

- 7.22 It is in a co-ordinating role that effective Rural Transport Partnerships may operate. For example North Yorkshire has identified through their CT Strategy the need for ongoing co-ordination officers to support community transport development in the county. It is particularly in building effective partnerships with local communities and operators to deliver targeted services where need is greatest that this intermediate co-ordinating tier will be most useful, and required to ensure the link between strategy and delivery is made.
- 7.23 It seems wasteful of resources to propose that new organisational structures be put in place to co-ordinate delivery. Each sub-region would appear, to have sufficient expertise and resource to develop its own co-ordination model within this three tier structure. The evidence from around the region suggests that each sub-region may be different. Partners will be encouraged and empowered to make necessary changes to organisational structures within their sub-region to make delivery effective.
- 7.24 A key aspect of this central tier is ensuring that the commissioning of interventions is undertaken in a way that demonstrates strategic fit, and that is targeting areas of need. This need can be defined using accessibility planning backed up by appropriate local engagement. There are already emerging examples of sub-regional definition of need using accessibility planning data or similar processes being used to influence the commissioning of interventions.
- 7.25 In South Yorkshire, to inform future decision making on which services to support financially SYPTTE has developed a Bus Service Tender Criteria Model. This approach combines accessibility planning with base service provision to establish 'need' for a service against which a value for money test is applied. It is intended that all SYPTTE contracts, irrespective of funding source, will be assessed by the model and prioritised accordingly. Similarly, in West Yorkshire, Metro are considering a move towards outcome based prioritisation of investment in service provision, incorporating accessibility planning, and are commissioning a study to test this approach to evaluate its potential for influencing future transport provision in the sub-region. In North Yorkshire, the bus strategy within the new provisional LTP identifies that its tendering process for transport services will commence with the identification of needs "through accessibility planning, research and consultation".

Local delivery

- 7.26 Local delivery can be achieved through a combination of commercial, public and voluntary sector operations, the latter being strengthened by increasing capacity as both public and voluntary sector organisations themselves seek to build operational capacity.
- 7.27 An important aspect of future delivery at a local level is to ensure that successful projects and existing customers with identified needs are protected, and continuity of service is maintained. The existing services are often those that are already targeting areas of identified need, and delivering improved accessibility to the communities that they serve. Best use of existing structures and knowledge must be made.

Evidence Base

- 7.28 In addition to establishing that evidence of need for transport interventions to ensure targeted delivery should be established through accessibility planning, the final element of the framework is the establishment of appropriate interventions for delivering improved services. The range of transport interventions that can be put forward to help improve rural accessibility has been defined earlier, as have the spatial differences within the region that may influence the approach to be implemented. By identifying four distinct rural sub-areas, broadly consistent with the RSS sub-areas, this Framework recognises that a one size fits all approach will not work across the region when identifying suitable transport interventions to improve accessibility.
- 7.29 The evidence to identify the potential range of suitable transport interventions identified has been provided by the showcase RTP schemes studied within this commission,

together with other research. The evidence provided by the RTP showcase projects demonstrates that the full range of interventions examined can be delivered across each sub-area, but that some are more successful in meeting objectives than others, and that cost effectiveness of services varies.

Recommended interventions

- 7.30 In broad terms, the more Accessible Rural areas and Pennine West and South Yorkshire can still be well served by scheduled bus services, especially where a number of trip purposes can be served by one service, such as shown by service 923. This is particularly the case in the parts of the Leeds City Region within West Yorkshire, and in South Yorkshire where cheaper fares are available. This and other issues such as information provision and integrated ticketing make scheduled buses an important type of service for these areas. In the more Remoter Rural and Coastal areas, evidence suggests that the costs of such services will be greater, and the evidence suggests that there does become a point where different, more appropriate, approaches to service provision will need to be examined.
- 7.31 The showcase projects demonstrate how access needs can also be met through the delivery of demand responsive and group transport services to meet very specific needs of the community. Conventional scheduled services can be inaccessible to some users wherever they live, either because of the type of vehicle, or an inability to walk even a small distance to reach the main service routes. Such services can also be applied where spatial issues prevent more conventional services being cost-effective. RTP showcases in all of the sub-area types demonstrate that well targeted services of this type can be provided effectively. These services not only provide door to door access for many users, but also provide links into other networks of public transport on offer in the area. This latter point is particularly the case in the more Accessible and Pennine areas where conventional networks are stronger.
- 7.32 An example of responding to specific needs is the need for people to access healthcare provision. The inability of some patients to reach their local GP surgery brings about inequalities in healthcare provision, as some people simply do not get the healthcare they require. Group and demand responsive services can be effective in meeting this need where well identified.
- 7.33 The 'wheels to work' programme appears to be transferable to all sub-regions. This not only applies to Remoter rural areas but also the more Accessible and Pennine areas. Access to employment opportunities is a major problem for young people living in rural communities. A range and choice of quality employment is not on offer to many young people, and in many parts of the region rural employment has contracted significantly over recent years with the decline in agricultural and related industries. The same contraction of employment opportunities has occurred in Pennine and Coalfield communities with the decline of traditional industries such as coal and textiles. 'Wheels to work' clearly has a role to play in providing cost effective transport to help tackle this issue.
- 7.34 In providing access to employment however, 'wheels to work' must be acknowledged as serving a limited market, being a service that predominantly appeals to young people, though not exclusively. Whilst it was originally a concept targeted on young people, and in some areas has age restrictions, in this region it has wider applicability. For example, in North Yorkshire it is open to all people over 16. Nevertheless, it should be regarded as being only part, albeit a valuable part to those who use it, of the solution in accessing employment.

F7.2 Recommended range of interventions

	Employment & Education	Health and welfare	Shopping and local services	Culture and leisure
Accessible Rural Areas * * note – conditions in some areas defined as accessible, especially in the Humber, are closer to remoter and coastal areas in their (in)ability to support new scheduled bus services as a response to defined needs	Scheduled bus services			
	Wheels to work		(Car clubs) DRT Group transport	
Remote Rural Areas	Wheels to work		Car schemes DRT Group transport	
Pennine West Yorkshire and the rural Coalfield areas	Scheduled bus services			
	Wheels to work		(Car clubs) DRT Group transport	
Coastal Areas (and parts of the Humber*) * see note above	Wheels to work		Car schemes DRT Group transport	

Rural cost premium

- 7.35 It is the cost-effectiveness of services that is perhaps most important in recommending appropriate interventions. The evidence from the showcase projects does suggest that well designed projects of all types, where targeted at local needs, can be delivered successfully across the region to meet objectives. Poorly targeted or badly conceived projects of all types are prone to failure. However, the same cost structure cannot be applied uniformly across the whole region, and some interventions will cost more in some areas than others. For example, scheduled bus services will cost more in Remoter Rural Areas than those in Accessible Rural and Pennine areas, for example in the Leeds City Region.
- 7.36 The costs of service provision, both from the showcase projects, and from examining the experience of RBSG bring clarity to the definition of appropriate interventions. A recommended cost structure is illustrated below.

F7.3 Recommended rural cost base for interventions (subsidy per passenger journey)

Accessible Rural & Pennine scheduled bus services	Remoter Rural & Coastal scheduled bus services	Wheels to work	Group transport, DRT, other
			Up to £8
	Up to £6		
		Up to £5	
Up to £4	Up to £4		Up to £4
		Up to £3	
Up to £2			

7.37 This structure is based on the findings described in chapter 6, and is expressed in terms of subsidy per single passenger journey. The structure and definitions of cost ranges are necessarily broad, and represent a guide, not firm rules, to costs and premiums that should be applied to rural transport interventions in the region.

7.38 The 'traffic lights' within the figure represent the recommended thresholds beyond which services should be questioned in terms of value for money, and transport providers and funders should start to question whether alternative forms of transport are appropriate. Within the green range, interventions should be regarded as representing good value for money. In the amber range, practitioners should identify that the intervention is costing more per passenger than similar interventions, and should be examined in terms of the efficiency and structure of the service, and whether alterations could be made to better serve need to attract more use, or to reduce costs. In the red range, it is likely that alternative solutions may provide better value for money than the intervention being delivered.

8 Sustainability appraisal

8.1 The completion of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a mandatory part of developing a Regional Spatial Strategy. As this Strategic Rural Transport Framework is intended to feed into the RSS for Yorkshire and the Humber, as well as the updated Regional Transport Strategy, consideration should be given as to how a Sustainability Appraisal of the Framework could be carried out.

8.2 Good practice on carrying out Sustainability Appraisals is given in the document 'Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks: Consultation Paper'. This document provides several stages to completing a Sustainability Appraisal which could be used to appraise the Framework and the process is described here.

Stage 1: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope

8.3 This first stage involves identifying other relevant plans and their sustainability objectives as a starting point. With regards to the Strategic Rural Transport Framework, reference should be made to the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy and its sustainability objectives to ensure that the two are compatible. The East Midlands Regional Assembly recommends the use of a compatibility matrix here to ensure that the objectives of the Framework are compatible with the sustainability objectives of other relevant plans.

8.4 Baseline information on the sustainability issues should be obtained and a framework for carrying out the Sustainability Appraisal established. Consultation with statutory bodies is also recommended here to ensure that the appraisal is covering all key sustainability issues.

Stage 2: Developing and refining options

8.5 This stage would identify the potential sustainability effects of the Framework and the options contained within it to achieve the objectives set. At this stage consultation with public and statutory bodies is needed to make sure that the Sustainability Appraisal being carried out covers all the main sustainability issues involved.

Stage 3: Appraising the effects of the plan

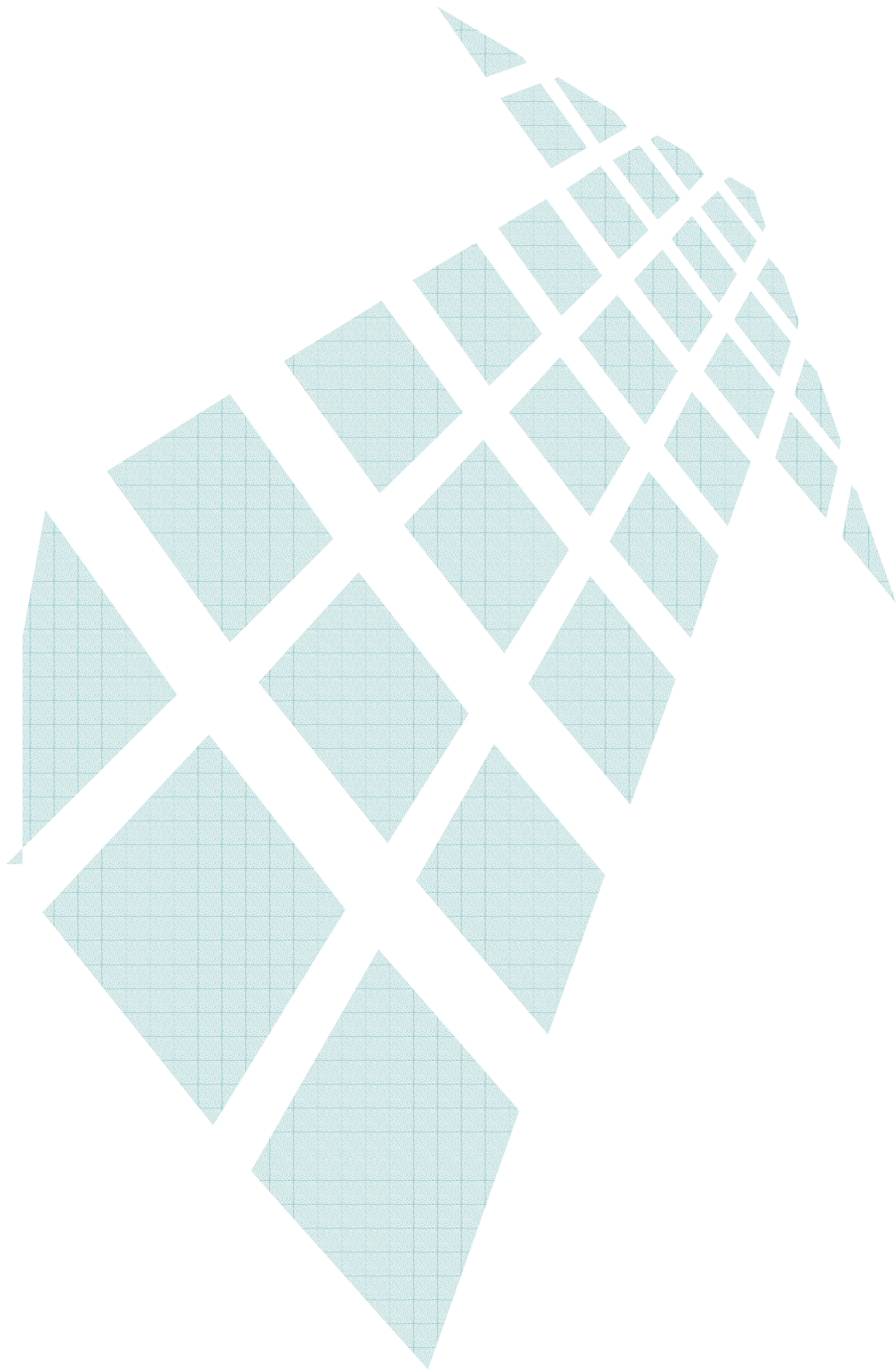
8.6 Appraising the effects of the Framework will identify the predicted effects it will have and give chance for mitigation against any adverse impacts in terms of sustainability. Proposals for the monitoring of the Framework should be set and a Sustainability Report prepared to detail the findings of the appraisal and how the Framework has been altered as a result.

Stage 4: Consulting on the plan and SA report

8.7 Consultation on the Appraisal is important alongside consultation on the Framework as it gives the chance for public and statutory bodies to give their opinions on both documents. The stage also allows for any changes made to the Framework to be assessed in terms of their possible sustainability implications and information should be provided on how this has been taken into account in the Framework.

Stage 5: Monitoring implementation of the plan

8.8 Monitoring of the Framework should be carried out to ascertain whether the plan is performing well against sustainability objectives. This gives the opportunity for corrective action to be taken if the Framework is failing to meet sustainability objectives.



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