



Department
for Transport

Evaluation of local transport projects

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Presentation outline



What the team does and current priorities



Key findings from the 2022 meta-evaluation of local major schemes



Ongoing work to improve the quality of evaluations

Who we are and what we do



We commission and manage evaluations of local transport schemes and large investment programmes, across public transport, active travel and roads



Our programme includes process, impact and value-for-money evaluations



We work closely with local authorities to support scheme-level evaluations



We collaborate with other government departments (particularly the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - MHCLG)

Examples of ongoing evaluations

Transforming
Cities Fund

City Region
Sustainable
Transport
Settlements

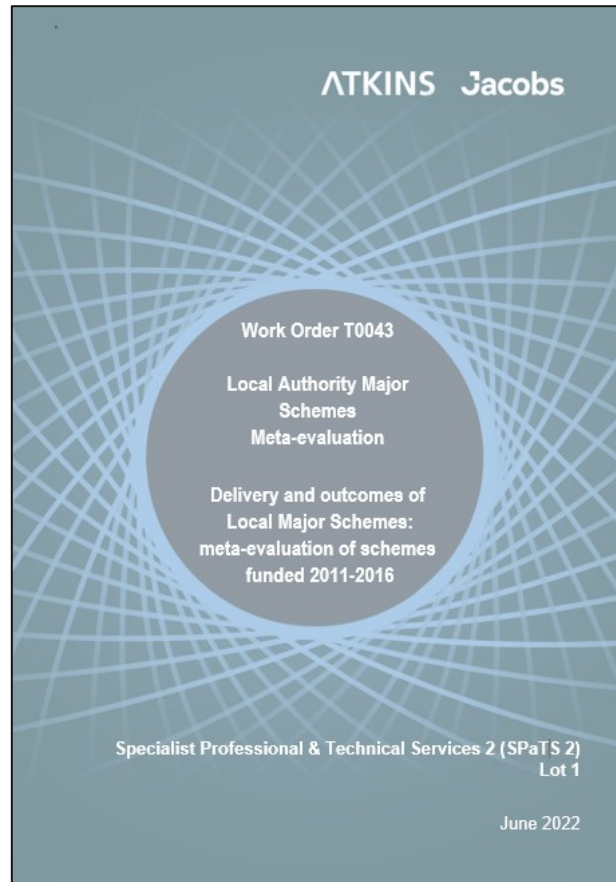
Local Major
Schemes

£2 bus fare cap

Key priorities for our team

- [DfT's evaluation strategy](#) (last updated in June 2022) sets out progress on principal evaluation projects and areas of focus for the department
- Three of these areas are currently particularly relevant for us in local transport:
 1. Prioritisation – we aim to carry out proportionate evaluation to maximise value added
 2. Consistency – we are working towards greater consistency of measurement approaches across our evaluation programme
 3. Dissemination – we synthesise and share evaluation findings and ensure that these inform future policy making

DfT Major schemes meta-evaluation



- Third meta-evaluation published 2022 based on 43 scheme reports
- DfT collate & review report findings
- Assess collective impacts
- Share learnings
- Demonstrate accountability
- Available at: [Local authority major schemes meta-evaluation: 2011 to 2016 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Key findings



On average, scheme construction lasted 5 months longer than forecast, most commonly due to adverse weather and unforeseen ground conditions.



Schemes cost on average 4% more than predicted, most commonly due to unforeseen ground conditions.



11 out of 13 schemes that calculated an outturn Benefit Cost Ratio achieved high or very high value for money.



7 out of 9 schemes with a sustainable transport objective provided evidence of a switch to more sustainable modes (although difficult to determine if this was modal shift or new trips).



4 schemes showed improvements in air quality, 5 schemes showed inconclusive evidence.



Passenger satisfaction surveys showed evidence of improved safety, waiting facilities, cleanliness and journey time reliability.



Data on carbon impacts was commonly missing despite it being a requirement.

Key findings for DfT



Structure / content / detail of evaluation reports varied.
Gaps in evidence around carbon, forecast vs outturn impacts, value for money (Benefit-Cost Ratio)



Inconsistencies in approach for many metrics (e.g. carbon) making comparisons across schemes difficult.



Variation in the quality and availability of data. Few schemes considered using counterfactuals and baseline data was sometimes missing or there were limitations due to the amount of time between baseline data collection and construction (e.g. changing circumstances).



Stakeholder / user / business surveys were a useful tool for understanding the level of attribution that can be applied to a scheme, especially for local economy and user satisfaction impacts.

Key learnings/findings for scheme promoters



Scheme promoter workshop findings



Scheme promoter feedback

- Lack of in-house capacity and capability
- Technical challenges in distinguishing between scheme impacts and external influences
- Key delivery staff no longer in post or available
- Getting corporate buy-in for evaluation
- The length of time taken for DfT to review reports and provide feedback



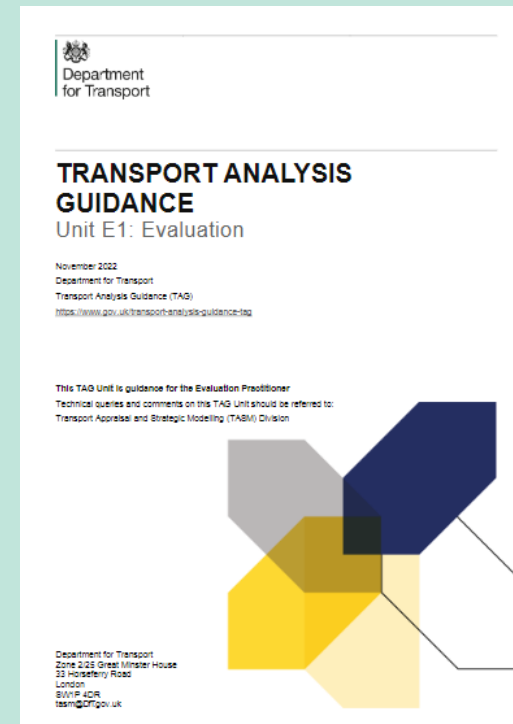
DfT Action

- Guidance on evaluation and measuring impact (TAG Unit)
- Developing guidance on quantifying carbon impacts
- Developing guidance on calculating outturn Benefit Cost Ratios
- Reduced delays
- Reviewing the Evaluation Framework and our internal processes

TAG Unit E1: Evaluation

This unit:

- Provides an overview of good practice in planning the evaluation of transport interventions
- Seeks to identify and complement existing guidance (e.g. the Magenta Book)
- Is intended to support evaluation planning for a range of transport interventions in terms of mode, type of intervention and context
- Includes: evaluation planning & design, **impact & counterfactuals, measures of evaluation quality**, data requirements & reporting.
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tag-forthcoming-changes/addition-of-guidance-on-transport-scheme-evaluation>



Ongoing work

- DfT is developing an updated evaluation framework for the Local Major Schemes programme, building on the existing 2012 M&E framework for local major schemes.
- Learning and training resources will be provided to all local authorities interested in up-skilling in M&E of local transport schemes.
- This could include:
 - Tailored training sessions or workshops (delivered in-person or remotely)
 - Local authority led knowledge exchange sessions
 - Newsletters
 - Reporting templates
 - Best practice case studies
 - A central hub, including a repository of guidance, best practice, and a forum