

Transport 2010: meeting the local transport challenge

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Chapter 2

Meeting the local transport challenges

2.1 In addition to delivering the outputs identified in Chapter 1, the LTP settlement will also help to tackle the challenges facing local transport authorities over the 5 years. These are set out in Table 2 below.

2.2 For each of these challenges we have identified the nature of the problem, the outcomes and targets contained in the 10 Year Plan, and the progress that the LTP settlement, and LTPs in general, will make in helping to meet these challenges.

Table 2: Outcomes and targets contained in the 10 Year Plan (all outcomes and targets to be achieved by 2010 unless otherwise indicated)	
Challenges	Outcomes and targets
Better public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A 10% increase in bus passenger journeys ■ More reliable bus services, with a new national survey to monitor progress ■ Better quality, less polluting buses ■ Light rail passenger journeys at least doubled
Better integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Better integration and co-ordination between transport modes through local transport plans and improved interchanges ■ Integrated information, ticketing and booking, including smart card ticketing
Better accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For disabled people, improvements in the accessibility of public transport and the pedestrian environment ■ For people in rural areas, a one-third increase in the proportion of rural households living within around ten minutes walk of an hourly or better bus service ■ Better access to jobs and services, including for deprived and rural areas ■ Growth of innovative and flexible transport services, including voluntary and community transport, with up to 500 new schemes over three years ■ Free bus passes entitling all pensioners and disabled people to at least half-fare discounts
Reducing the environmental impact of traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improvements in air quality, noise pollution and the local environment, and reductions in CO₂ emissions
Easing urban congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To reduce road congestion in large urban areas in England below current levels
Safer roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improvements in local road safety, contributing to the achievement of national targets (to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in Great Britain in road accidents by 40%, and the number of children killed or seriously injured by

	50%, compared with the average for 1994-98)
Properly maintained roads	■ Halt the deterioration in local road condition by 2004 and eliminate the backlog by the end of the Plan period
Encouraging cycling, walking and Home Zones	■ Treble the number of cycling trips

The Challenge - Better Public Transport

Nature of the challenge

"In many towns and cities public transport does not offer an attractive choice"
(*Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan*)

2.3 In both urban and rural areas, people want public transport that is reliable, convenient, accessible, safe and affordable, and which offers an attractive alternative to the car. Whilst there are many examples of good public transport services, the picture across the country is patchy. Although there are signs that the long-term decline in bus patronage is now beginning to be reversed, there remains a need to improve the quality and accessibility of bus services. We also need to develop new and imaginative public transport solutions, including modern rapid transport systems in our larger urban areas, and more flexible local schemes in rural and other less accessible areas.

The outcomes and targets to be achieved

2.4 The following outcomes and targets were set out in the 10 Year Plan:

- A 10% increase in bus passenger journeys;
- More reliable bus services, with a new national survey to monitor progress;
- Better quality, less polluting, buses;
- Light rail passenger journeys at least doubled by 2010.

Progress towards these outcomes and targets

2.5 Within their LTPs authorities have identified a range of proposals for improving public transport, and providing attractive alternatives for people who drive. All authorities produced a bus strategy, which typically focused on measures to improve bus reliability, journey times, and passenger security. Many authorities have indicated that they are also keen to explore opportunities to develop voluntary and community transport schemes.

2.6 Some authorities have also identified ambitious proposals for large-scale modern rapid transit systems. Light rail schemes can play a significant part in improving the quality of public transport in major conurbations. They can move large numbers of passengers quickly and reliably, and must be designed with disabled people in mind. The 5 systems currently in operation outside London have shown that they are effective in providing an attractive alternative to the car. New lines are being introduced in Manchester, Nottingham and Sunderland. We are also working closely with several authorities promoting new light rail schemes. Those schemes which are at the most advanced stage of preparation are in Bristol and South Gloucestershire, Leeds, Portsmouth and South Hampshire, and the West Midlands.

2.7 In addition, we expect the LTP capital allocation will provide funding over the next 5 years for ¹²:

- at least 10 bus-based major public transport schemes, such as guided buses, which involve dedicated 'track' on sections of the route and offer many of the advantages of light rail, at lower capital costs. These will bring benefits to passengers in terms of reliability, accessibility, and quality;

- up to 4,500 km (2,812 miles) of quality bus corridors, bus lanes, busways and bus priority routes (with significant upgrading of the quality and number of planned bus routes);
- up to 1,500 other bus infrastructure measures (eg improvements at bus stops).

2.8 Public transport will be further enhanced by significant revenue funding for bus services, described in more detail in the section on better accessibility.

The Challenge - Better Integration

Nature of the challenge

"For public transport to provide an attractive alternative it must operate as a network"
(*A New Deal for Transport: Better for everyone*)

2.9 Much of the transport network has evolved piecemeal, with relatively little integration between different transport modes. As a result, too often there is insufficient co-ordination between modes and interchange facilities are poor, making the concept of the seamless journey still a remote one for many public transport users. Transport provision needs to be considered as a part of a broader strategy. Transport plans need to take account of land use planning at the regional and local levels to support local priorities and sustainable travel choices. The travelling public needs to be able to transfer quickly and easily between modes (eg bus/rail), with clear information about timetables and ticketing arrangements.

The outcomes and targets to be achieved

2.10 The following outcomes were envisaged in the 10 Year Plan:

- Better integration and co-ordination between transport modes through local transport plans and improved interchanges;
- Integrated information, ticketing and booking, including smartcard ticketing.

Progress towards these outcomes and targets

2.11 Many LTPs demonstrate the importance of closer integration between transport and wider issues, particularly environmental and planning considerations identified in the area's Development or Structure Plan. This will be further enhanced in revised planning policy guidance. More specifically, authorities' LTPs included a number of proposals for better integration between transport modes. Although the precise number and type of schemes will depend on authorities' own decisions, the LTP settlement is expected to fund:

- improved interchange arrangements at bus, railway and light rail stations, including better pedestrian access to stations, as well as better road and junction layouts to enable smoother changes;
- improved waiting facilities for people at bus, railway and light rail stations (with additional contributions from the Rail Passenger Partnership Fund);
- extended and improved bus services which will provide better access at key interchanges.

2.12 There will be further opportunities to achieve more integrated services by harnessing new technology, for example through more widespread use of smart cards, the telephone service *traveline*, and the comprehensive transport information service "Transport Direct".

The Challenge - Better Accessibility

Nature of the challenge

"Lack of accessible and affordable transport contributes to the problems of social exclusion"
(*Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan*)

2.13 For people without a car, access to convenient and affordable public transport services is a major factor in determining quality of life. 55% of people over 70 years of age, and up to 60% of the poorest 20% of households, have no car. Many people with disabilities are also heavily reliant on public transport. Without decent transport services, whole sectors of the population may be cut off from friends or family, or unable to access work, shops, or recreational facilities. Planning guidance (PPG13) emphasises the importance of ensuring that future planning development should provide adequate access to jobs and services.

The outcomes and targets to be achieved

2.14 The following outcomes and targets were set out in the 10 Year Plan:

- For disabled people, improvements in the accessibility of public transport and the pedestrian environment;
- For people in rural areas, a one-third increase in the proportion of rural households living within around ten minutes walk of an hourly or better bus service;
- Better access to jobs and services, including for deprived and rural areas;
- Growth of innovative and flexible transport services, including voluntary and community transport, with up to 500 new schemes over three years;
- Free bus passes entitling all pensioners and disabled people to at least half-fare discounts.

Progress towards these outcomes and targets

2.15 As part of their LTPs, many authorities identified measures to improve accessibility through increased bus travel. For example, a number have proposed new quality bus partnerships and bus corridors that can help to provide reliable, quick and user-friendly services. Other schemes that have been proposed include improvements to the personal security of bus passengers through better lighting, CCTV surveillance, and new bus shelters. The proposed new light rail schemes will provide better integrated public transport links in some of the large urban areas.

2.16 We expect that many authorities will earmark part of their LTP allocation to provide new park and ride facilities. These will relieve traffic pressures while maintaining accessibility to town and city centres. We expect that the LTP settlement could enable authorities to start work on as many as 120 park and ride facilities (ie new park and ride schemes, additional phases to existing schemes and additional car parking facilities at the 70 or so existing sites) ¹³.

2.17 A number of major road schemes funded through the LTP settlement, including bypasses and relief roads, will help to improve accessibility and enhance the regeneration of run down areas.

2.18 Outside the LTP settlement, we expect to see significant improvements in accessibility through the provision of revenue funding to:

- establish a new Urban Bus Challenge Fund to improve transport links for urban deprived areas;
- support more rural bus services by extending the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant to provide more bus services in and around market towns;
- increase support for Rural Transport Partnerships and community based projects in rural areas. This is expected to deliver up to 500 new schemes over the next 3 years;
- continued funding for the Rural Bus Challenge to support flexible and innovative rural transport schemes with new flexibility to use Rural Bus Subsidy Grant for on-going revenue support of projects initially funded by the challenge;
- extend fuel duty rebate to a wider range of community transport services;
- extend the arrangements for providing concessionary fares to elderly and disabled people. Under new provisions, elderly and disabled people will have a free pass entitling them to half price fares or better.

The Challenge - Reducing The Environmental Impact Of Traffic

Nature of the challenge

"More needs to be done in many urban areas where air quality objectives will still not be met"..... "Noise from road transport in particular remains a concern for many people"
(*Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan*)

2.19 Many towns and cities suffer from traffic jams and polluted streets and, as a result, are less attractive places in which to live and do business. Reducing the negative impacts of traffic on the quality of people's lives is a key element of improving the urban environment, as set out in the Government's recent Urban White Paper. Emissions of air pollutants arising from road traffic are set to decline over the period to 2010 as a result of improvements in vehicle technology and fuel quality, but are forecast to begin rising again beyond 2010 due to increased traffic growth. Road transport is also a major source of the greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change, and these emissions are also set to increase over the next few decades, unless action is taken. Our national modelling shows that, without further action, there are also likely to be a number of pollution hotspots where air quality objectives will not be met. Many rural communities are also affected by the safety, noise, and environmental implications of increasing traffic levels.

The outcomes and targets to be achieved

2.20 The following outcome was envisaged in the 10 Year Plan:

- Improvements in air quality, noise pollution and the local environment, and reductions in CO₂ emissions.

Progress towards these outcomes and targets

2.21 Protecting the environment is a high priority, and there will be significant environmental benefits arising from the LTP settlement both at national and local level. Modelling, using the same framework as for the 10 Year Plan, has shown that the local transport settlement has an important part to play in delivering the reductions in congestion and emissions of CO₂ and two important air pollutants (NO_x and PM10) forecast in the 10 Year Plan.

2.22 At the national level, the LTP settlement will make an important contribution towards the CO₂ emission saving identified in the 10 Year Plan. Encouraging more people to use public transport and to cycle and walk will help reduce the levels of greenhouse gas emissions. It is also expected that raising people's awareness of environmental issues, and developing travel plans should also have a positive impact on emission levels.

2.23 At the local level, many of the improvements to the local transport infrastructure that will be delivered through LTPs will contribute directly to improvements in local air quality, and will complement the air quality action plans that many authorities will be required to draw up where they have identified local air pollution problems and designated air quality management areas.

2.24 All major schemes (with gross capital costs over £5m) have been designed to mitigate as far as possible the effects on the environment where these occur. For all environmentally sensitive areas or sites there has been a strong presumption against new or expanded transport infrastructure that would significantly affect such sites or important species, habitats or landscapes. There has also been a presumption that schemes that might significantly affect a sensitive site or important species, habitat or landscape should not go ahead unless it is clear that the net benefits in terms of the other objectives (including other environmental benefits) clearly override the environmental disbenefits, that there is no other better option and that all reasonable steps have been taken to mitigate the impact.

2.25 All the accepted major schemes have gone through the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA). This requires a balanced assessment to be made against the Government's five criteria: safety, environment, accessibility, economy and integration. The environmental effects (air quality, greenhouse gases, biodiversity, historic sites) have been clearly identified and assessed on the basis of local impacts. Details of where NATA assessments can be accessed are contained at paragraph 1.7.

2.26 Measures contained in authorities' LTPs will also help to reduce noise and nuisance caused by traffic. For example, the new bypasses and urban relief roads that were approved or provisionally approved in the settlement will help to take through-traffic out of the worst affected communities, thereby reducing noise levels and improving both the local environment and road safety. We estimate that at least 4,500 houses will benefit from a reduction in noise from the major road schemes that have been approved or provisionally approved. Additionally, we expect that communities will benefit from the resurfacing of some local roads with low noise surfacing materials.

2.27 As part of their LTPs, authorities published road traffic reduction reports, and many have set targets for reducing traffic growth, under the terms of the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997.

2.28 Information technology schemes proposed by some authorities will help to improve the management of the network, reduce emissions, and result in less pollution. Schemes include real-time information for public transport users and drivers, priority measures for public transport at traffic signals, and a better environment for pedestrian and cyclists.

2.29 The LTP settlement will also enable authorities to introduce a number of smaller-scale measures that can help to improve the environment in its widest sense - by encouraging greater use of sustainable transport, such as cycling and walking, improving the condition of local roads, and introducing road safety and traffic calming measures.

2.30 A number of authorities have proposed the establishment of Clear Zones and similar initiatives in urban areas. These will demonstrate how transport related measures using innovative technologies can help reduce the adverse environmental impacts of traffic. Some of the schemes contained in LTPs are being considered as potential Clear Zones pilots or Trailblazers.

The Challenge - Easing Urban Congestion

Nature of the challenge

"Congestion is already high in urban areas and is forecast to grow by 15% across the network as a whole"
(*Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan*)

2.31 Increased traffic congestion is at the heart of many of the problems with the transport system. Many of our towns and cities face significant levels of congestion which place a burden on businesses and can result in poor quality of life for people who live or work there. Congestion is a growing problem on our motorways, and in many rural areas. It is also a major factor in making bus services slower and less reliable than they should be.

The outcomes and targets to be achieved

2.32 The following outcome was envisaged in the 10 Year Plan:

- To reduce road congestion in large urban areas in England below current levels by 2010.

Progress towards these outcomes and targets

2.33 As part of their LTPs, authorities published road traffic reduction reports, and many have set targets for reducing traffic growth, under the terms of the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997. Many authorities have identified the need to introduce measures to ease congestion, and the LTP settlement will enable authorities to introduce measures that will help to do so. Typically these might include changes to road junctions, signalling, car parking improvements, and park and ride schemes to take traffic out of city centres. Information technology schemes for both network management and traveller information are also being planned.

2.34 A number of the major road schemes approved in the LTP settlement will remove traffic from congested areas. In addition, these schemes often have benefits for public transport and improvements for pedestrians.

2.35 In addition, some LTP funds have been specifically earmarked to support the introduction of congestion charging schemes by a number of authorities. Similar funding will be available to other authorities as they reach decisions to implement local charging schemes.

2.36 Good traffic management will help to make the best use of the road network for all road users. Whilst authorities will have discretion about which traffic management schemes to progress, the LTP settlement is expected to provide funding for up to 3,150 traffic management schemes¹⁴, including pedestrian and cycle facilities at signalled junctions, and improved traffic signal operations. Some of these may include schemes for road safety purposes.

2.37 Additionally, measures contained in authorities' LTPs to promote cycling, walking, and greater use of buses and light rail, will help to encourage people to choose alternatives to the car. Bus priority measures will make journey times quicker and more reliable.

The Challenge - Safer Roads

Nature of the challenge

"Each year around 3,500 people are killed in road accidents in Great Britain and many more are seriously injured"
(*Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan*)

2.38 Although our roads are the safest in Europe, improvements in transport safety are a key priority in the 10 Year Plan. Road accidents are the biggest single cause of death and injury in children and young people. The Government is determined to tackle this, and has set a new road safety target to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents by 40% by 2010 and the number of children killed or seriously injured by 50% (compared with the Great Britain average for 1994-98). Achievement of this target will require concerted action by Government, local authorities, the police and car manufacturers.

The outcomes and targets to be achieved

2.39 The 10 Year Plan envisaged improvements in local road safety, contributing to the achievement of the national road safety targets (see above).

Progress towards these outcomes and targets

2.40 As part of their LTPs, all authorities have prepared a road safety strategy for their area, with packages of measures to help reduce the number of road casualties. Typically these include:

- traffic calming measures, including the introduction of 20 mph zones outside schools and in some residential areas;
- development of safer routes to school, school crossing patrols, and school travel plans;
- school education programmes and general safety publicity campaigns;
- partnerships with organisations to promote better driving;
- proposals to create Home Zones to limit traffic in designated residential areas.

2.41 Although the precise number and location of road safety schemes will be for each authority to determine, the LTP settlement is expected to fund up to 8,200 local safety schemes throughout England over the next 5 years¹⁵. Safer roads, particularly if secured by lower speeds, can also bring environmental benefits.

2.42 The LTP settlement also provides increased investment on road maintenance, which will help to improve road safety. A number of major road schemes proposed in LTPs, such as bypasses, have also been designed to improve safety.

The Challenge - Properly Maintained Roads

Nature of the challenge

"As a result of past under-investment local roads are in their worst condition for 30 years, with consequences for traffic flow and safety"
(*Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan*)

2.43 The condition of our roads is a matter for concern not just for motorists, but for cyclists, motorcyclists, pedestrians and bus passengers. The maintenance backlog is estimated at several billion pounds. Substantial sums are being wasted as the condition of roads deteriorates to the point where more extensive, costly and disruptive repairs are required. The 10 Year Plan recognised the need for substantially increased funding to enable local authorities to undertake an extensive programme of work - improving the condition of local roads, footways, bridges and lighting, and help to maintain these assets on a basis that minimises costs over time.

The outcomes and targets to be achieved

2.44 The following targets were set out in the 10 Year Plan:

- Halt the deterioration in local road condition by 2004 and eliminate the backlog by the end of the Plan period.

Progress towards these outcomes and targets

2.45 As part of the LTP settlement, local authorities have received significant allocations of local road maintenance - £535 million in 2001/02 and £555 million in 2002/03. These allocations represent significant increases compared with previous years. For the first time, the settlement has been extended to cover non-principal roads as well as principal roads and bridges. Over the next 5 years these funds should enable authorities to:

- make a good start on restoring the 270,000 km (168,750 miles) of local roads and 223,000 km (139,375 miles) of footways;
- strengthen or carry out major repairs to 9,000 bridges;
- carry out five major maintenance schemes in Portsmouth, Bedfordshire, Devon, Newcastle and Halton.

2.46 Additionally, we shall provide £74m in 2001/02, and a further £22m in 2002/03 through Private Finance Initiative credits, for street lighting replacement schemes. We expect more schemes to come forward for approval under the Private Finance Initiative.

2.47 We expect that the deterioration in the condition of local roads will be halted by 2004 as a result of the capital funding provided through the LTP settlement and the revenue funding being made available through the highway maintenance standard spending assessment. By the end of the period covered by their first LTPs, authorities we also expect that authorities will be on track to eliminate the local road maintenance backlog by 2010/11.

The Challenge - Encouraging Cycling, Walking And Home Zones

Nature of the challenge

"Poor facilities and an unsafe environment continue to inhibit growth in walking and cycling"
(*Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan*)

2.48 Cycling accounted for less than 2% of all trips in 1998. This compares unfavourably with many other European countries that have a similar geography and climate. There has also been a decline in walking, with cars increasingly used for short journeys. The growth in traffic in turn has resulted in a more difficult environment for cyclists and pedestrians.

The outcomes and targets to be achieved

2.49 The Government remains committed to the National Cycling Strategy target of quadrupling cycling by 2012 (based on 1996 figures). The 10 Year Plan also set an interim target to treble the number of cycling trips by 2010.

Progress towards these outcomes and targets

2.50 In drawing up their LTPs all authorities prepared cycling and walking strategies. These strategies recognised that cycling and walking are important modes of travel for the short local trips that make up many of our everyday journeys, and can be significant for longer trips in conjunction with public transport. They also acknowledged that more needs to be done locally to encourage cycling and walking.

2.51 Examples of the measures contained in LTPs to promote cycling include:

- the provision of more cycle routes;
- measures to make cycling safer (eg cycle lanes on existing carriageways, off-carriageway cycle tracks, advance stop lines, and cycle-friendly traffic calming);
- initiatives with transport providers and partners to integrate cycling with other transport modes (eg through the provision of secure cycle parking facilities at stations, and better routes to public transport interchanges).

2.52 Most walking strategies developed by authorities set local targets for increasing walking. They also contain schemes to encourage walking, for example through initiatives such as TravelWise, Employer Travel Plans and Local Agenda 21, along with specific measures such as:

- the provision of pedestrian routes and footway improvements;
- schemes to make walking safer (eg through the introduction of dropped kerbs, safer crossings, and better pavement maintenance);
- measures to improve the personal security of pedestrians (eg through better street lighting and CCTV);
- the introduction of school travel plans.

2.53 Many authorities have expressed an interest in introducing Home Zones. These are areas where the needs of residents, especially as pedestrians, take precedence over those of motor traffic. This is achieved through a combination of design measures and traffic calming. The Transport Act 2000 puts them on a statutory footing.

2.54 Cyclists and pedestrians will also benefit from highway improvements funded through the additional resources for maintenance.

2.55 Although authorities will have discretion about which walking and cycling schemes to progress, over the next 5 years the LTP settlement is expected to provide up to 650 km (406 miles) ¹⁶ of pedestrianisation and footway improvements and up to 4,300 km (2,687 miles) ¹⁶ of new cycle tracks and cycle routes throughout England. This should provide for cycle trips to work, school, leisure facilities or other amenities and services, and may contribute to the completion of the National Cycle Network.

Centres Of Excellence

2.56 Our Centres of Excellence (COE) initiative will play an important part in encouraging and assisting authorities to meet the local transport challenges identified above.

2.57 In recognition of the importance of encouraging good practice in transport, we have extended the original COE initiative from its previous focus on public transport, to cover the full range of integrated transport planning functions. Under the initiative, authorities that have demonstrated exceptionally high quality and innovative approaches to local transport planning have been given the opportunity to apply to be designated as COEs.

2.58 Authorities that attain COE status are expected to spread good practice within local government. Supported with additional revenue funding, COEs will disseminate good practice in respect of a wide range of issues related to integrated transport planning and delivery. The precise dissemination arrangements are still to be determined, but are likely to include activities such as open days, seminars, and the provision of website guidance.

2.59 By encouraging good practice in aspects of transport planning and delivery, Centres of Excellence will play an important part in helping all authorities in the successful delivery of the outcomes and targets contained in LTPs, and to rise to the local transport challenges contained in the 10 Year Plan.

12 Based on information supplied by local authorities in the finance forms which accompanied their LTPs

13 Based on information supplied by local authorities in the finance forms which accompanied their LTPs

14 Based on information supplied by local authorities in the finance forms which accompanied their LTPs

15 Based on information supplied by local authorities in the finance forms which accompanied their LTPs

16 Based on information supplied by local authorities in the finance forms which accompanied their LTPs

Conclusion

The 10 Year Plan set out a long-term commitment to increase investment in our transport system. The funding that will be provided through the LTP settlement represents a major step forward in delivering that commitment. The substantially increased levels of support available to local authorities will enable them to make a real difference to the quality of local transport over the next 5 years, through specific outputs.

The Centres of Excellence initiative will also assist. The dissemination of good practice in transport planning and delivery by designated COEs will help all authorities to deliver their LTPs, and, ultimately, the local transport challenges contained in the 10 Year Plan.

The 10 Year Plan also demonstrates how important transport is in integrating policies such as social inclusion, regeneration, and the environment. Over the next 10 years we should see:

- more choice;
- better integration;
- better access;
- better quality services;
- reduced impacts of traffic on the environment; and
- safer and more reliable journeys.

In short, better local transport systems that can help to improve the quality of life for everyone.

Further Information

Further information about the improvements that will be taken forward in each region, and how the settlement will benefit the broader transport themes such as rural transport, the environment, better local roads, road safety, and bus travel is available from the DETR web site

Copies of authorities' Local Transport Plans should be available from individual authorities direct, or can be consulted at:

DETR Library
Ashdown House
123 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6DE

