The North East Freight Partnership was first established in 2005 (as the Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership) and represents a collaboration between freight operators, local authorities, academics, freight user groups, industry associations and anyone with an interest in freight. In 2015, it extended its remit to include Durham and Northumberland, as well as the five Tyne and Wear authorities, so it now covers the same geographical footprint as the North East Combined Authority.

The aim of the Partnership is to promote safe, efficient and sustainable freight movement in the region. Each year, the Partnership offers a programme of activities to help achieve our goals.

This leaflet outlines the activities of the North East Freight Partnership over the last year in addition to highlighting some of the forthcoming tasks to take place.

The Partnership is now in its 12th year, and as such represents one of the longest running and most successful Freight Quality Partnerships in Europe. It is thanks to the efforts of all those involved that the initiative continues to be a success. In addition, AECOM has been retained to assist delivery of the Partnership.

Quarterly Meetings
As usual, the Partnership quarterly meetings continue to be well attended – thanks to all those who have come along and contributed. We continue to identify interesting venues and speakers for the meetings.

Our next meeting is scheduled for March. Please see the Partnership website for details.

Website and Social Media
We have updated the Partnership website to reflect the new wider remit of the initiative. The website continues to represent the portal by which the activities of the Partnership are showcased. Information on meetings, FORS, Best Practice and mapping can be accessed by visiting the Partnership website (link on back page). Online mapping is also Smartphone compatible.

In addition to our Twitter account, we have also created a Partnership Facebook group. Please take a minute to ‘like’ our page and receive updates on the activities of the Partnership and relevant news and information. A LinkedIn group has also been established.
Lorry Parking

The Partnership has recently undertaken work to understand the nature and utilisation of lorry parking facilities across the region. This has been completed at both a local and regional level. Further to previous work, the Partnership has continued to explore the issue of inappropriate lorry parking in the area around the A69 at Hexham and Corbridge. Whilst the current system and options in place seem to meet demand, there is an opportunity to improve facilities for the benefit of both drivers and the local populace. These issues are now being explored by the Partnership.

In conjunction with this work, a wider study of parking across the region has been completed, assessing strategic level lorry parking on the A1 and the A19. In total, six different lorry parks were identified as falling within the remit of the study, and these were assessed across capacity, facilities, security and price, to see if they met the current and future needs of lorry parking across the wider region. TfN’s freight and logistics report identified the importance of improving lorry parking provision across the north and this work aligns with those aspirations. The Partnership will continue to monitor and actively engage with this issue as it develops.
**Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS)**

The Partnership continues to promote the FORS initiative. FORS is an accredited membership scheme for businesses operating commercial vehicle fleets of all sizes. It offers impartial, independent advice and guidance to motivate them to improve their operation and environmental, social and economic performance.

In 2012 the North East was the first region outside London to adopt FORS, entitling freight and fleet companies operating in the region to join, and enjoy all the same exclusive benefits and discounts available to their counterparts who deliver into London.

At the time of writing there are 164 companies registered with FORS across the seven partner authorities. This includes 20 Silver and three Gold accredited companies and represents almost a doubling of the number of accredited companies in the last twelve months. Over 5,500 vehicles are now covered locally.

The Partnership continues to support FORS in the region, providing advice and support as well as funding FORS Practitioner workshops for locally based operators. Please visit the Eventbrite website for more details, which can be reached via the Partnership website.
See Me Save Me
The Partnership is delighted to announce our support for the Northumberland-based road safety charity See Me Save Me.

See Me Save Me works to improve safety for all vulnerable road users by challenging, engaging and working with industry, policymakers and the justice system to push for faster adoption of measures to reduce HGV danger, focusing on best available vehicles, best available drivers and best available operations.

They will be working with operators and local authorities in the North East to encourage up take of FORS and CLOCS (Construction Logistics and Cyclist Safety). Please visit their website for more information on both schemes and updates on the work of See Me Save Me: www.seemesaveme.org

Safety of Vulnerable Road Users
The ever increasing number of cyclists on our roads brings with it potential for conflict with other road users, particularly freight vehicles. Accidents involving cyclists and goods vehicles have become a major source of concern in London and, as cycling levels rise in this region, it is important to avoid similar problems arising here.

For this reason, the Partnership considers it important to develop a clear understanding of the hazards involved and the solutions to minimise potential accidents.

As a result, the Partnership offers a number of Safe Urban Driving courses, which offer the opportunity for HGV drivers to experience the road from a cyclists’ viewpoint, as well as providing classroom based training.

100 spaces have been provided in 2016 and we have arranged a further set of courses for early 2017. Please book your drivers on by visiting the Partnership website.

Supporting Education
2016 also saw us provide support to students at NewRail, based in the School of Mechanical and Systems Engineering at Newcastle University. We were able to partner students with individuals at Nexus and PD Ports to help students obtain the information they needed to complete and enhance their assignments.

We are liaising with the University regarding support for further students in 2017.
Transport for the North

Improving the efficiency of freight and logistics movement across the North of England is an important element of Transport for the North’s work to rebalance the UK’s economy. In September 2016, TfN published a Northern Freight and Logistics Report that highlighted the potential for the North’s freight and logistics sector to make a significant contribution to the overall economy with a forecast potential £35 billion worth of benefits to the Northern Powerhouse by 2060, as well as making a positive contribution to the sustainability agenda by encouraging more freight on rail.

The Partnership represents an excellent vehicle to share and consult on TfN’s work and this is now a standing item at Partnership meetings. A follow-up study, looking in more detail at growth opportunities and infrastructure constraints in each area across the North is now underway and we will continue to keep the industry informed of progress. TfN’s Northern Freight and Logistics Report can be found at the TfN website or through links on the Partnership’s website.

Rail Partner Group

The Partnership remains committed to promoting the opportunities for rail freight usage and rail freight infrastructure within the North East.

Since 2011, we have held twice-yearly Rail Partner Group meetings with invited stakeholders from the rail freight industry and organisations with an interest in rail freight; these have included Network Rail, Rail Freight Group, FTA, DB Schenker, CILT, local port operators, the University of Newcastle and other interested bodies.

The most recent meeting took place at the Hitachi Plant in Newton Aycliffe and included a fascinating tour of the facilities. If you wish to be included on the mailing list for future meetings please get in touch using the details at the end of this newsletter.
Freight Awards
The freight industry took centre stage at the second North East Freight Partnership awards, held during the quarterly meeting in March 2016.

Recognising talent from across the sector, categories included Freight Driver of the Year and Operator of the Year.

The awards celebrate operators and drivers that were felt to have made a significant contribution to the goals of the Partnership.

Andy Mitchell from Elddis Transport, County Durham, took the title of Freight Driver of the Year. Andy is the Company’s longest serving driver, having joined Elddis Transport in November 1971 only a few weeks after its inception, an association spanning almost 45 years. In 2005 he made the decision to reduce his working week to 3 days having celebrated his 65th birthday the previous year and is still working three shifts to date, showing no signs of slowing down. His disciplinary record remains unblemished to this day and his loyalty, work rate and ethic and his continued enthusiasm for the job are an example to all.

AG Barr took the coveted title of Operator of the Year. The judges commended the company’s commitment to the Partnership and the support they have given including hosting of Safe Urban Driving courses and participation in meetings.

These awards will continue in 2017.

Future Plans
We have a number of exciting plans for the future. Keep an eye on the website and newsletters for updates. If you have any ideas for activities that the Partnership could progress we would like to hear them. Get in touch using the details below.

Contact Us
To find out more information about the Partnership, or if you would like to get involved through attendance at meetings or events or simply receive our quarterly email newsletter, please contact:

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