

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 13th 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.

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 will be held in early June, please see our website for the venue and further information: www.northeastfreightpartnership.info

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, and Best Practice can also be accessed by visiting www.northeastfreightpartnership.info/.

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.

Supporting Education

For a number of years the Partnership has been supporting students associated with the dedicated railway research centre NewRail at Newcastle University. We will continue to work with NewRail and their students to offer support for their projects. The support takes form of advice, seminar sessions, providing information and offering the opportunity to work on "real world" projects. Findings are then presented at Partnership meetings.

This year we were pleased to support students Calvin Yeung and James Kelly in developing their dissertations relating to introducing a baggage handling facility on national rail services and exploring if the Tyne and Wear Metro could be used to carry freight.



Freight Awards

At the Partnership's quarterly meeting in March 2017, the second annual North East Freight Partnership awards were given out.

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.

The Driver of the Year award highlights the work of outstanding drivers and operators. Previous reasons for nominations include efforts to reduce fuel consumption, a proactive approach to road safety, going the extra mile for the organisation, long and distinguished service or anything an operator feels deserves acknowledgement.

In March the driver of the year was awarded to Chris Airey from Greggs. Chris is very experienced, having held many roles prior to working with Greggs. His competence was demonstrated by his clean record and lack of any tachograph infringements in 2016.

The title of Operator of the Year was awarded to County Durham-based Hargreaves Logistics. The company is a significant employer in the region and operates over 400 HGVs. The company have offered significant support to the Partnership in the past, contributing to quarterly meetings and showing a commitment to road safety by placing drivers on Safe Urban Driving courses.

These awards will continue this year. Please get in touch if you wish to nominate a driver for an award.

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 at the end of this update



Chris Airey receives the Driver of the Year Award from Paul Davison, Project Manager for the Partnership

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 Newcastle Central station in May 2017, with a return to the Newcastle College Rail Academy in Gateshead scheduled for February 27th.

If you wish to be included on the mailing list for future meetings please get in touch on the details at the end of this update.



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 180 depots registered with FORS across the seven partner authorities. This includes 26 Silver and 12 Gold accredited companies. This represents almost a quadrupling of the number of gold accredited companies in the last twelve months. Over 6,000 vehicles are now associated with FORS.

FORS Silver and Gold Members have an impressive record of improving fuel consumption and thereby reducing the environmental impact of their operations. Promoting FORS take-up will therefore help to improve air quality, an important priority for the North East.

The Partnership continues to support FORS in the region, providing advice and support as well as funding FORS Practitioner workshops for operators that deliver into or are based in the region. For more information, or if you would like to sign up to FORS, please visit the FORS website or contact any of the individuals listed on page 4 of this leaflet.



Water Freight Group

The natural waterways, port infrastructure and long coastline of the region mean that water freight is a key employer and vital to our economic prosperity. Following the success of the Rail Partner Group, the North East Freight Partnership, supported by the North East and Tees Valley Combined Authorities, is piloting a new Water Freight Group.

The aim of the Group is to

- Enhance the knowledge of water freight opportunities in the North East
- Increase the use of ports and waterways
- Contribute to an overall reduction in carbon emissions

The inaugural meeting of the group was held at the National Museum of the Royal Navy Hartlepool and welcomed speakers from Tees Valley Combined Authority, Containerships, Port of Sunderland, Transport for the North and PD Ports. It provided an excellent opportunity to network and hear updates on the latest issues and developments associated with water freight in the North East.



The inaugural meeting of the Partnership's Water Freight Group, was held in Hartlepool

Safety of Vulnerable Road Users and Van Smart

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 provide the opportunity for HGV drivers to experience the road from a cyclists' viewpoint, as well as receiving classroom based training.

Van Smart is a one-day course developed specifically for drivers of commercial vans to raise professional standards and improve van safety. The course is for anyone who drives a van – whether as a professional driver or driving a van for any part of the working day. The course focuses on the skills needed to improve driver behaviour to operate safely, reducing the risk of vans being involved in collisions and enabling van drivers to share the road safety with other road users.

Over 100 places on these courses were provided in 2017-18, in Partnership with training providers Fleet Source.

Skills and Recruitment

Skills and recruitment is a key issue facing the freight sector and region. Recruiting and retaining staff is a growing challenge and an ageing demographic in some areas (such as HGV drivers) means that there is a requirement to bring in new entrants to the sector.

In November the Partnership brought together key stakeholders at Durham Town Hall from across the sector to help address the issue.



John Bourn (NECA) welcomes attendees to the Workshop

Following presentations from key speakers representing organisations such as Career Ready, Women in Logistics and the Road Haulage Association, an action plan was developed by the group to address some of the issues identified.

We are now looking to develop a skills working group to take forward some of the actions. Please get in touch if you're interested.

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 twice yearly email newsletter, please contact:

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