

# Corporate Plan

## 2023 to 2026



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# 1. Remit and structure of the Commission

The National Infrastructure Commission was established as an executive agency of the Treasury to provide impartial, expert advice and make independent recommendations to the government on economic infrastructure. The Commission operates independently, at arm's length from government.

The Commission's purpose, and its principal outputs, accountabilities and duties are set out in its **Charter** and accompanying **Framework Document**. The inaugural Framework Document published in 2016 committed government to reviewing the Commission's performance of its core objectives and responsibilities within five years. This review was conducted during 2021 and is reflected in a revised and enhanced set of objectives and fiscal remit for the Commission, set out below. The date of the next such review will be no later than 2026.

The Commission's remit covers all sectors of economic infrastructure: energy, transport, water and wastewater (drainage and sewerage), waste, flood risk management and digital communications. The Commission also considers potential interactions between its infrastructure recommendations and housing supply; and between its recommendations and the government's legal target to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 and implementing biodiversity net gain. This explicit biodiversity consideration was added in 2021. Housing supply itself, other social infrastructure such as schools, hospitals or prisons, and agriculture and land use are all outside the remit of the Commission.

The Commission's objectives are to: 1) support sustainable economic growth across all regions of the UK, 2) improve competitiveness, 3) improve quality of life, and 4) support climate resilience and the transition to net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The latter objective was added in 2021.

In fulfilling its purpose and objectives, the Commission seeks to:

- set a long term agenda – identifying the UK's major economic infrastructure needs, and the pathways to address them
- develop fresh approaches and ideas – basing our independent policy recommendations on rigorous analysis, and
- focus on driving change – building consensus on our policy recommendations, and monitoring government progress on their delivery.

The Commission delivers the following products and services:

- a *National Infrastructure Assessment* once in every Parliament, setting out the Commission's assessment of long term infrastructure needs with recommendations to the Government on how to meet them, covering funding, policy and regulation
- specific studies on pressing infrastructure challenges as set by the government, including recommendations to government

- an Annual Monitoring Report (styled as an *Infrastructure Progress Review*), taking stock of the government's progress in areas where it has committed to taking forward recommendations of the Commission.

The Commission's binding 'fiscal remit' requires it to demonstrate that all its recommendations for economic infrastructure are consistent with, and set out how they can be accommodated within, gross public investment in economic infrastructure of between 1.1 per cent and 1.3 per cent of GDP each year between 2025 and 2055. The fiscal remit was previously between 1.0 per cent and 1.2 per cent of GDP and was changed to 1.1 to 1.3 per cent of GDP at the Autumn Budget in 2021. The Commission's reports must also include a transparent assessment of the impact on costs to businesses, consumers, government, public bodies and other end users of infrastructure that would arise from implementing its recommendations (the 'economic remit').

When making its recommendations, the Commission is required to take account of both the role of the economic regulators in regulating infrastructure providers and the government's legal obligations, such as carbon reduction targets. The Commission's **remit letter** also requires the Commission to ensure that its recommendations do not reopen decision making processes where programmes and work have been decided by the government or will be decided in the immediate future.

## The Commission's members

The National Infrastructure Commission comprises a Chair and between four and 12 additional non-executive Commissioners.

The current members of the Commission are:



**Sir John Armitt CBE (Chair)** published an independent review on long term infrastructure planning in the UK in September 2013, which resulted in the National Infrastructure Commission. Previously Chief Executive of Costain and Railtrack (later Network Rail), Sir John sits on the board of the Berkeley Group.



**Julia Prescott (Deputy Chair)** holds several board and advisory roles. She is a co-founder and Chief Strategy Officer of Meridiam and sits on the Executive Committee of Meridiam SAS. She has been involved in long term infrastructure development and investment in the UK, Europe, North America and Africa. She is an Honorary Professor at the Bartlett School of Construction and Project Management, University College London. Since 2019 she has sat on the board of the Port of Tyne.



**Professor Sir Tim Besley CBE** is School Professor of Economics and Political Science and W. Arthur Lewis Professor of Development Economics at the LSE. From September 2006 to August 2009, he served as an external member of the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee.



**Neale Coleman CBE** is a co-founder of Blackstock Partnership. He worked at the Greater London Authority from 2000-2015 leading the Mayor's work on London's Olympic bid, the delivery of the games, and their regeneration legacy. Neale has also served as Policy Director for the Labour Party.



**Andy Green CBE** holds several Chairman, Non-Executive Director and advisory roles, linked by his passion for how technology transforms business and our daily lives. He chairs Lowell, a major European credit management company and has served as Chair for the Digital Catapult, an initiative to help grow the UK digital economy.



**Professor Jim Hall FrEng** is Professor of Climate and Environmental Risks in the University of Oxford and Director of the University's Environmental Change Institute. He is internationally recognised for his research on risk analysis and decision making under uncertainty for water resource systems, flood and coastal risk management, infrastructure systems and adaptation to climate change.



**Professor Sadie Morgan OBE** is a founding director of the Stirling Prize winning architectural practice drmm. She is also Chair of the Independent Panel for High Speed Two and is a Mayor's design advocate for the Greater London Authority. She sits on the boards of the Major Projects Association and Homes England.



**Kate Willard OBE** is the Thames Estuary Envoy and chairs the Thames Estuary Growth Board. Since 2017 she has served as Chair for the Arts Council England's Area Council North. In addition, she is an independent consultant working on a diverse portfolio of infrastructure and growth projects. In March 2022 she was appointed Chair of Teesside International Airport.



**Nick Winser CBE** has had a 30-year career in the energy sector, including serving as UK and European CEO of the Board of National Grid and President of the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity. He currently serves as Chair of the Energy Systems Catapult.

## Commissioner appointments

Bridget Rosewell stood down from the Commission in January 2023 and acts as an adviser to the Commission on a temporary basis. To replace Bridget's expertise in the transport sector, the Chancellor will appoint one new Commissioner. The process is expected to conclude in Summer 2023.

## The National Infrastructure Design Group and the Young Professionals Panel

The National Infrastructure Commission's Design Group was established in 2019 to inspire renewed ambition for the quality of the UK's infrastructure by championing design excellence in all national significant infrastructure projects. The Design Group is chaired by Professor Sadie Morgan OBE and its membership is published on the Commission's [website](#).

The Young Professionals Panel (YPP) was established in 2018 to support and inform the Commission's work and ensure a strong voice for the next generation of infrastructure leaders in the Commission's programme. Each cohort is appointed for two years, and the latest cohort was appointed in July 2020. The current cohort will continue in post until July 2023 to advise the Commission ahead of the second *National Infrastructure Assessment*, which will be published in autumn 2023. After the conclusion of the assessment, the Commission will review its external advisory bodies to ensure a fit with future strategic priorities. The YPP's current membership is published on the Commission's [website](#).

## 2. Strategic priorities

The Commission's formal objectives listed in section one set out the economic and environmental goals around which its policy work is orientated. The Commission's reports and studies usually have a close thematic link to these objectives, and these documents typically define explicitly how their policy contents relate to these goals. However, some studies or other corporate activity may not be readily categorised purely in relation to these objectives. Therefore, to help guide the organisation's strategic planning, a broader set of strategic priorities have been adopted that together enable the delivery of the core objectives.

These priorities were developed during 2019, when the Commission undertook its first multi-year strategic priority planning exercise. This led to the creation of an organisational strategy covering the period up to 2023 and the publication of the second *National Infrastructure Assessment*. In 2024–25 the Commission will publish a new strategy with revised strategic priorities, and the steps required to achieve them.

The four strategic priorities outlined in this strategy are shown below, alongside a summary of the action the Commission will take to meet them:

### Strategic priority 1: Set the agenda for economic infrastructure

To achieve this, we will:

- develop our understanding of the performance of the UK's infrastructure and an updated analysis of long term priorities for policy and investment
- actively think beyond current debates, explore different starting points for undertaking policy and analysis, understand a wide range of perspectives, and develop alternative tools and methodologies for analysing infrastructure challenges
- on this basis, and building on the first *National Infrastructure Assessment*, generate a clear long term vision for the UK's infrastructure and a cross-cutting plan to achieve it
- share our developing analysis with the public and build consensus for our emerging conclusions, including our understanding of the key challenges and our vision for the future.



## Strategic priority 2: Promote and enable better infrastructure decisions

To achieve this, we will:

- identify key decisions within our remit which need to be made, and provide advice to government, including tackling specific decisions not made in the first *National Infrastructure Assessment*
- identify and resolve problems in the infrastructure decision making architecture, including developing our expertise in this area and considering ways to incorporate the public's views into decision making processes
- identify and fill evidence gaps which prevent important decisions being taken well
- support other organisations to build their capacity to take good decisions.

## Strategic priority 3: Secure positive responses to our recommendations and support their delivery

To achieve this, we will:

- build a broad consensus in support of the Commission's approach, analysis and recommendations across public, private and third sectors, and government at every level from local to international
- track the government's direct responses to our recommendations and, where they are endorsed, hold the government to account for delivering them
- develop, implement and continuously refine a monitoring methodology to measure progress in delivering the infrastructure outcomes that the Commission's recommendations seek to achieve.

## Strategic priority 4: Create an organisation built on collaboration, professionalism, and a high-performance culture

To achieve this, we will:

- deliver our world class policy and analytical work through an enhanced project management framework and a rigorous, evidence-based methodology, underpinned by robust quality standards
- support our strategy through sound financial planning and management, driving efficiency across the organisation grounded in a sound and open governance framework
- embed a high-performance culture delivered by a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- support the organisation through a mature, integrated corporate services offering that promotes transparent and informed decision making.

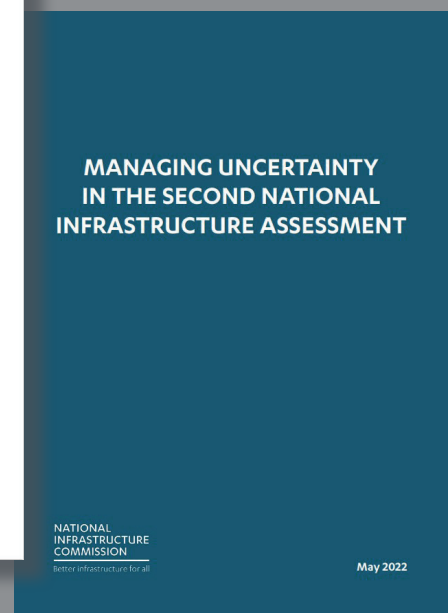
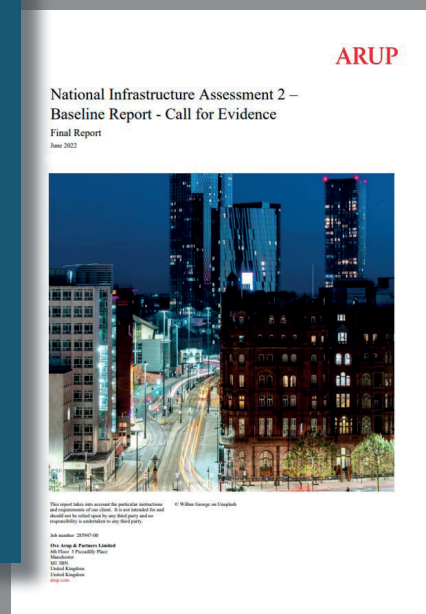
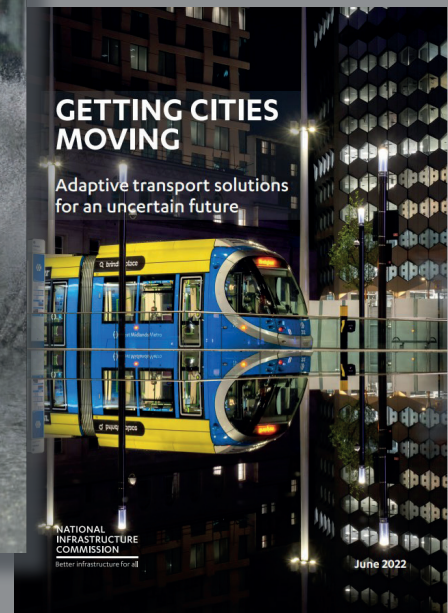
# 3. Progress against strategic priorities from April 2022 to March 2023

## Milestones

Date	Milestone
26 April 2022	<b>Three new Commissioners were announced:</b> Jim Hall, Kate Willard and Nick Winser were all appointed by the Chancellor for five-year terms.
9 June 2022	Publication of a <b>discussion paper on Quality of Life</b> , setting out the Commission's interpretation of this objective and how the organisation will measure its contribution towards these goals.
13 June 2022	First in a series of <b>regional engagement visits to inform the second <i>National Infrastructure Assessment</i></b> , with a visit to Manchester to meet with Mayor Andy Burnham and regional business leaders. Over the course of the year visits were also organised to the West Midlands, Bristol, Cambridge and Peterborough, and West Yorkshire.
30 June 2022	Publication of an <b>interim report on urban transport</b> , setting out the Commission's approach to strategic questions on encouraging valuable journeys while decarbonising transport.
5 July 2022	Government <b>publishes its formal response to the Commission's 2021 study, <i>Engineered greenhouse gas removals</i></b> . This study recommended that government commit to the wide scale deployment of such technologies by 2030 in order to meet its climate change obligations.
26 August 2022	Government publishes <b>its formal response to the Commission's 2021 report on how infrastructure can support economic growth and quality of life in English towns</b> . The response acknowledged the importance of devolution and repeated commitments made in the Levelling Up white paper to extend the number of areas with devolved powers.
7 September 2022	The Commission <b>writes a joint letter alongside the Climate Change Committee to the incoming Prime Minister</b> , setting out the positive case for action on energy efficiency, low carbon heat and renewables in the face of the cost of living crisis and need for greater energy security.

<b>29 November 2022</b>	Publication of the final report of the Commission's study into <b>Surface Water Flooding</b> .
<b>5 December 2022</b>	The Commission publishes a letter to the Minister of State for Housing and Planning at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities setting out the <b>value of including clear guidance on the value of design in National Policy Statements</b> .
<b>20 December 2022</b>	Government publishes a Resilience Framework that commits to <b>taking forward the Commission's recommendations on resilience standards</b> for key infrastructure sectors and stress testing to help assure them.
<b>10 January 2023</b>	The Commission welcomes government's announcement that it intends to <b>implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act</b> in England, one of the key recommendations of the Surface Water Flooding study.
<b>10 January 2023</b>	<b>Sir John Armitt is reappointed as Chair of the Commission</b> for a further two years, while <b>Julia Prescott is appointed Deputy Chair</b> .
<b>24 January 2023</b>	<b>The Commission opens a second office</b> , situated in Leeds, in the same building as the new UK Infrastructure Bank.
<b>10 February 2023</b>	Government asks the Commission to <b>review the current approach to National Policy Statements and the wider planning regime for nationally significant infrastructure projects</b> , commissioning a report for Spring 2023.
<b>21 March 2023</b>	The Commission's Young Professionals Panel <b>hosts a discussion evening for fellow young professionals to help inform NIA2's net zero work</b> .
<b>27 March 2023</b>	Publication of the <b>Infrastructure Progress Review 2023</b> which sets out the Commission's assessment of recent government progress towards implementing key infrastructure priorities and recommendations of near time priorities for action. In addition to an online launch event, the publication was marked by a meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Infrastructure in Parliament to discuss the Commission's findings.

# The Commission published six infrastructure reports and papers between April 2022 and March 2023



## Achievements from April 2022 to March 2023

Below is a summary of our performance against each of the Commission's four strategic priorities during 2022 to 2023:

### Strategic priority 1: Set the agenda for economic infrastructure

As the Commission has continued work towards the second *National Infrastructure Assessment* (NIA2), the strategic challenges outlined in the baseline report published in November 2021 have continued to hold saliency and the specific workstreams identified have received extensive support from stakeholders, including expert panels convened to challenge emerging thinking. A summary report of feedback received from more than 100 stakeholders through a Call for Evidence exercise on NIA2 was produced by Arup and published in June 2022. This indicated the priorities identified by the Commission were sensible ones, with three quarters of responses expressing support for the main projects identified. Other feedback and insights gained through the Call for Evidence have fed into policy teams' ongoing work, as the Chief Executive explained in [a blog post published in June 2022](#).

Over the summer of 2022, the Commission played a leading role in the public debate around water supply resilience, as many parts of England faced hosepipe bans and drought conditions. Commissioners appeared regularly in broadcast and print media setting out the key findings of their 2018 report *Preparing for a drier future*. This report made the case for further action on identifying leaks, expanding water metering and reducing consumer demand, and building new supply and transfer infrastructure, to together address a potential capacity gap of up to four billion litres of water per day by 2050.

In November 2022, the Commission published a major study into how surface water flooding should be better managed in England. Over three million properties are currently at risk of suffering surface water flooding, and 325,000 are at high risk with at least a one in 30 chance of flooding every year. The study found that, over the coming decades, the number of properties in areas that are high risk could increase by up to 295,000, due to growing risks from climate change, new developments increasing pressure on drainage systems and the spread of impermeable surfaces from paving over gardens. The report set out the need to better identify the places most at risk and reduce the number of properties at risk. This will mean devolving funding to local areas at the highest risk and supporting them to make long term strategies to meet local targets for risk reduction. The Commission expects government to respond to these recommendations this year.

Parliamentary committees continue to seek expert evidence from the Commission: over the year, the Commission has given oral evidence to the House of Lords Committee on Land Use in England, the BEIS Select Committee (now Business Select Committee) inquiry on decarbonisation of the power sector, and the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry on delivering nuclear power. As a result, evidence from the Commission is routinely cited in parliamentary reports. For instance, in October 2022 the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy highlighted Commission calls to enhance regulatory oversight of resilience, and co-ordination between different regulators, in a report critical of government's current approach to ensuring security of key national infrastructure.

In February 2023, the House of Lords' Built Environment Committee published a letter to government following its inquiry into infrastructure policymaking and implementation, praising the "intellectual calibre" of the Commission and its "focused and rigorous work [alongside the IPA] in improving infrastructure planning and delivery in recent years".

## **Strategic priority 2: Promote and enable better infrastructure decisions**

In 2022-23, the Commission delivered analysis promoting better infrastructure decisions in specific policy areas, principally through reports referred to in the milestones table above) in urban transport planning against a backdrop of post Covid uncertainty, and in addressing the growing risk of surface water flooding.

The Commission has continued to take opportunities to intervene in live debates about infrastructure strategy, while retaining its sights firmly on the long term horizon. The Chair has made public statements on, for example, the need to ensure appropriate resilience in energy storage facilities; while in September, the Chair wrote an extended essay for the Daily Telegraph on the importance of accelerating the development of renewable energy sources, cutting energy waste and boosting the take-up of low carbon heating to together help increase the UK's energy security and reduce costs for consumers over the long term.

The Commission's policy work is informed by input from its Young Professionals Panel, who have continued to offer additional perspectives on infrastructure challenges. Over the course of the year the Panel has also held a number of events, including a discussion on net zero specifically to inform NIA2. Additionally, through its Design Panel, the Commission has continued to actively support the promotion of good design in all major infrastructure projects, including through direct engagement with relevant ministers and through organising a set of roundtable events (to take place in spring 2023).

New data bringing together disparate sources of information about how water supply, metering, bills and investment have changed over the last 50 years was published on the Commission website in August 2022. This release was the latest update to the Commission's online data portal launched in 2020, making available the data sets which underpin the Commission's work for wider public use.

## **Strategic priority 3: Secure positive responses to our recommendations and support their delivery**

The Commission has continued to monitor implementation of commitments made in the National Infrastructure Strategy as well as other formal responses to the Commission's recommendations. During the year, government has responded to Commission studies on infrastructure in towns and engineered greenhouse gas removals, broadly accepting the majority of the Commission's specific recommendations.

In its Infrastructure Progress Review 2023, the Commission noted that government has ambitious goals for infrastructure, but in many areas, it is not delivering fast enough. The Review stressed the crucial role of infrastructure in supporting economic growth and achieving net zero; in its assessment of progress over 2022 it highlighted positive progress towards



nationwide coverage of gigabit broadband and continued growth in renewable electricity. The report however criticised “negligible advances in improving the energy efficiency of UK homes, the installation of low carbon heating solutions or securing a sustainable balance of water supply and demand,” which have been subject to a more short term and changeable approach in recent years.

The Review set out a number of principles the Commission proposes government should adopt to “get back on track”, including developing stronger staying power and focus on fewer, bigger, better targeted initiatives to deliver the infrastructure needed to meet its long term goals for economic growth and a lower carbon economy. The report was well received, with more than 2,000 views on the Commission website within the first week of publication.

The Commission has continued to make an ongoing case for its recommendations not yet accepted by government. The lifting of remaining Covid restrictions during the reporting year led to a welcome increase in the number of public speaking engagements at which the Commission could set out its advice and build support for its recommendations: Commissioners and senior staff spoke at 56 such external events during 2022–23, up from 50 in 2021–22; 36 in 2020–21; and 50 in 2019–20. The Commission has continued to mark the publication of all major reports with online launch events: the stakeholder launch for the surface water flooding study in November 2022 attracted around 150 attendees.

#### **Strategic priority 4: Create an organisation built on collaboration, professionalism, and a high performing culture**

The Commission has continued its work on its People Strategy. Learning and Development (L&D) has been a particular area of focus with many staff members undertaking a structured training programme alongside a number of informal knowledge sharing events throughout the year. The feedback has been positive with increased scores for L&D in the annual staff survey results. We have also worked with staff across the Commission to develop and launch a Diversity and Inclusion action plan with the aim of increasing the diverse mix of staff backgrounds and to help make the culture of the organisation more inclusive. We have continued to make progress with the diversity of the Commission's staff base (see page 18). The gender mix of the organisation is an area we have prioritised this year and are now close to achieving an even mix of male and female staff overall, and have achieved it in the Senior Management Team (SMT).

We opened a new office in Leeds in January 2023 as part of our dual location strategy. The Commission is co-located with the UK Infrastructure Bank, creating opportunities for collaboration between two organisations with complementary remits in infrastructure finance and policy. We will prioritise recruitment of staff to the Leeds office in the coming year and beyond to increase the number of staff working from our Leeds office.

# Highlights of the Commission's programme 2022 to 2023

## Regional visits



West Yorkshire



West Midlands



Gtr Manchester



Bristol



Cambridgeshire

## New office opening



Leeds

## YPP net zero workshop



London



## Success measures

The Commission measures its success, where possible, with specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound key performance indicators. Where this is not possible, it will make a qualitative assessment. The Commission will measure its performance against its strategic priorities in 2023–24 using the metrics below. The performance for 2022–23 will be reported within our 2022–23 Annual Reports and Accounts which will be published in the Autumn.

Strategic priority	Success measure	Key performance indicator or qualitative assessment
<b>Strategic priorities 1–3:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set the agenda for economic infrastructure</li> <li>Promote and enable better infrastructure decisions</li> <li>Secure positive responses to our recommendations and support their delivery.</li> </ul>	Number of reports delivered on time.	<b>KPI:</b> the target will be 100%.
	Stakeholder survey score: The Commission will take an average of key stakeholder survey responses to the following questions, gathering the % that agree or strongly agree with the following statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Performance:</b> “The NIC is successful in its role of advising the government on the UK’s infrastructure needs”</li> <li><b>Impact:</b> “The NIC’s recommendations on infrastructure development are taken seriously”</li> <li><b>Independence and expertise:</b> “The NIC’s recommendations are expert and impartial”.</li> </ul>	<b>KPI:</b> the target for the average across all questions will be 65%.
	<b>% recommendations accepted:</b> The government has committed to responding to the Commission’s recommendations setting out those which it accepts and those which it rejects.	<b>KPI and qualitative:</b> The target is 80% of the NIC’s recommendations from the last five years being accepted by government.

<b>Strategic priority 4:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an organisation built on collaboration, professionalism and a high performing culture.</li> </ul>	<b>Staff engagement:</b> The annual Civil Service People Survey contains a combined metric recording staff engagement.	<b>KPI:</b> the target score is 70%, and for the score to remain above the civil service average.
	<b>Diversity (representation):</b> The Commission will set a target that the Commission's workforce should be representative of the UK population as a whole in terms of % of staff by gender, % diverse ethnic background of staff and % of staff with disabilities.	<b>KPI:</b> The target is that the Commission's staff body will be at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50% female</li> <li>14% diverse ethnic background</li> <li>13% staff with disabilities.</li> </ul>
	<b>Diversity (inclusion):</b> The annual Civil Service People Survey contains a combined metric recording staff inclusion.	<b>KPI:</b> the target score is 85% and for the score to remain above the civil service average.
	<b>Skills:</b> We will continue to review our plans for learning and development and recruitment to provide skills relevant for a high performing organisation.	<b>Qualitative</b>
	<b>Budget forecasting:</b> The commission will set out the accuracy of the Commission's budget forecasting and, by extension, budget planning. The measure will note how close the Commission's actual expenditure is to its forecast.	<b>Qualitative</b>

# 4. Planned progress against strategic priorities 2023-26

## Planned activities 2023-24

### Milestones

Date	Milestone
Spring 2023	A further set of sector and theme based working roundtables for senior stakeholders to discuss the Commission's emerging thinking on identified NIA2 priorities
5 April 2023	Publication of an advice note to ministers on the future of roads strategy for England, as part of the interurban transport strand for NIA2
18 April 2023	Publication of recommendations to government on the review cycle for National Policy Statements and related reforms to the infrastructure planning system
18 October 2023	Publication of the second <i>National Infrastructure Assessment</i>
Spring 2024	Publication of the <i>Infrastructure Progress Review 2024</i> which will assess the government's progress in delivering accepted Commission recommendations

During 2023–24 the Commission will achieve the following in response to its four strategic priorities:

#### Strategic Priority 1: Set the agenda for economic infrastructure

The next *National Infrastructure Assessment* will be a landmark report which seeks to set out the UK's biggest infrastructure priorities over a 30-year period. To inform its conclusions and help build consensus around its adoption, the Commission will continue extensive discussion and consultation with private and public sector stakeholders in the run up to publication on 18 October 2023.

This process will include publication of an interim advice note on the future of strategic roads policy for England, ahead of the main NIA2 publication. (**The note was published in April 2023** and called for ongoing enhancement of road connectivity as pivotal to supporting economic growth across regions, provided government also sets out robust commitments to achieve decarbonisation and environmental improvement so that road travel can become a sustainable choice.)

The Commission will work to ensure the NIA2 launch on 18 October 2023 has impact and will plan a range of follow-up activities and engagements to further build awareness and support for its key recommendations. It is envisaged that NIA2 will set the agenda for a refreshed National Infrastructure Strategy from government.

### Strategic Priority 2: Promote and enable better infrastructure decisions

In addition to the role of NIA2's recommendations in improving decision making, a specific study reviewing the current approach to the infrastructure planning and consenting process will be published in spring 2023. (Now published, **the study makes a number of recommendations** with the aim of ensuring that consenting for major projects would be completed within two and a half years, compared to the current average of more than four years. Proposals include more strategic management of environmental data and mitigations, a menu of direct benefits for communities hosting infrastructure, making the review of National Policy Statements every five years a legal requirement, and ensuring future National Policy Statements include clear tests against which proposed projects will be assessed.)

Meanwhile, the Commission's Design Group and Young Professionals Panel will continue their respective work on encouraging a holistic approach to better design at every stage of project lifecycles, and consideration of a wide range of perspectives and user cases when planning future infrastructure services. Both groups will continue to engage in the development of NIA2.

Commissioners and Commission staff will continue to speak regularly at industry and public events, making the case for a strategic, long term approach to infrastructure planning to meet the needs and opportunities of the future.

### Strategic Priority 3: Secure positive responses to our recommendations and support their delivery

The Commission will continue to make the case for recommendations not yet fully considered by government, principally those made in its report on addressing surface water flooding in November 2022, and its study on the infrastructure planning system published in April 2023.

Through both public and private interventions, and a series of own branded events across the year, the Commission will seek to build broad consensus in support of its analysis and recommendations across industry, the third sector, and government at every level. To both inform NIA2 recommendations and to build support for them, the Commission will undertake a further series of regional visits and roundtables with local leaders across England, to follow up on the initial round during 2022–23 (see page 21).

The Commission will also continue to monitor progress towards its recommendations that have been accepted by government, publishing an Infrastructure Progress Review in spring 2024 and identifying any evident gaps in policy delivery.

#### Strategic Priority 4: Create an organisation built on collaboration, professionalism, and a high performing culture

The Commission will review and update its People Strategy alongside the review of Strategic Priorities 1–3 in the second half of the year following the publication of NIA2 (see page 13). We will continue to measure our performance against success measures as set out in this Corporate Plan.

The Diversity and Inclusion group, led by staff, will continue work to further improve the organisational culture and representation of staff from underrepresented groups through the implementation of the agreed action plan. This has specific goals and delivery targets with the ultimate aim to make the Commission a more inclusive workplace.

Learning and Development has continued to be a priority for the Commission. In the forthcoming year we will refresh the offering to ensure it remains relevant for both the Commission and its staff.

We will launch a new in-year reward model to provide more flexibility to managers to reward staff for exceptional performance throughout the year in a timely manner.

The new office in Leeds, opened in January 2023, already has a small number of staff permanently working from there. Our recruitment strategy has been updated to prioritise recruitment of staff in Leeds. This will help to support our aim to forty percent of our staff based in Leeds by 2025. Our lease on the current London office ended in June 2023 and we relocated into a new office the same month.

## Planned activities for 2024-26

During 2023–24 the Commission will conclude work on the second National Infrastructure Assessment and publish the final report on 18 October. Throughout this period and into 2024–25, the Commission will continue to liaise with key stakeholders to help build consensus around its conclusions and recommendations, with an extensive programme of engagement. A range of communications activity, supported by events and visits, media liaison and materials shared on the Commission’s own digital channels, will support wider awareness of this work.

Beyond publishing and promoting NIA2 and its recommendations, the Commission will undertake studies on pressing infrastructure challenges and formulate policy advice for government.

During 2024, the Commission will undertake a comprehensive review of its strategic priorities and resulting work programme. The Commission will also publish an annual assessment of the government’s progress in delivering its recommendations, where these have been accepted: its *Infrastructure Progress Review 2024*.

The Commission will keep this and subsequent Corporate Plans under review and should there be a significant change to its role or remit the documents will be reviewed and revised accordingly. The next formal review of the Commission’s remit is due to be undertaken by 2026.

# 5. Corporate governance and resources

## Corporate governance

The Oversight Board supervises the Commission's financial management and administrative functions. It ensures the Commission has the staff and support it needs to enable it to provide high-quality advice to the government and to provide assurance that effective internal control and risk management systems are in place.

The Oversight Board consists of the Chair of the Commission, a representative of the Treasury, appropriate executive members including the Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer, and non-executive members who may either be Commissioners nominated by the chair, or external members appointed by the chair. The current members of the Oversight Board are:

- Sir John Armitt (Chair)
- James Heath (CEO, Executive Member)
- Mark Ardron (COO, Executive Member)
- Linda Timson (Treasury Representative)
- David Finlay (Non-Executive Member)
- Dennis Skinner (Non-Executive Member)
- Katherine Easter (Non-Executive Member).

The Oversight Board's functions relate to the corporate management of the Commission and it has no role in agreeing or reviewing its policy reports or recommendations. The Oversight Board meets quarterly.

The Oversight Board is presented with the Commission's performance against key performance targets at each meeting to support it in discharging its responsibilities.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) supports the board in discharging its responsibilities in relation to issues of risk, control and governance.

The non-executive members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee are:

- David Finlay (Chair)
- Dennis Skinner
- Katherine Easter.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meets quarterly.

The Commission's Chief Executive is designated as Accounting Officer and is responsible for management of the Commission's day-to-day operations, ensuring it is run on the basis of the standards as set out in HM Treasury's *Managing Public Money*.

The Chief Executive is supported by a Senior Management Team (SMT) comprising the Chief Economist, the Directors of Policy and the Chief Operating Officer.

## Finances

The Commission has a budget of £5.9m for 2023–24 which was agreed as part of the three year Spending Review settlement with HM Treasury.

The Commission has prepared a detailed financial plan as part of its financial management and governance activities for the coming year. Performance against this budget is kept under continual review and is reported to the Oversight Board on a quarterly basis. Alongside this, the Commission provides HM Treasury with monthly financial and non-financial information to satisfy reporting requirements.

The Commission delivers its strategic priorities utilising both research and policy work undertaken in house by its staff, and by commissioning research and analysis from third party organisations. In 2023–24 we have planned to spend circa £950k on commissioned research to support our strategic priorities.

The Commission's total expenditure for 2022–23 was £5.7m (subject to final audit) against a budget of £5.8m. A further £0.3m of capital expenditure was incurred in respect of office accommodation due to a change in the accounting standards in 2022–23 for the recognition of leases. The funding for the impact of this was agreed and held centrally by HM Treasury.

In all its activities, the Commission operates in line with the principles set out in HM Treasury's Managing Public Money and seeks to obtain value for money from its expenditure.

Sharing services is important in reducing costs, and as a small organisation it makes financial sense to pool resource to achieve scale. The Commission has therefore purchased administrative support services, where possible, from HM Treasury.

The remuneration of the Chair and Commissioners is published on our website.

The Commission publishes an Annual Report and Accounts detailing the organisation's financial position and performance, and its main activities. These include the audited accounts and financial statements for the stated period. The Commission's most recent annual report and accounts covers April 2021 to March 2022 and was published on 7 November 2022.

## Staffing

The Commission's staff come from a wide range of backgrounds and have been recruited from the private sector and regulators, as well as the wider public sector and Civil Service. The Commission has also loaned and seconded members of staff from other government departments, public authorities and industry. These measures have granted the Commission access to a wide range of external skills and expertise enabling it to remain credible and influential with its stakeholders, whilst ensuring it is equipped to respond effectively to the needs and priorities of the organisation.

Over 2022–23, the Commission has had an average full time equivalent of approximately 45 staff which has allowed it to recruit the skills and expertise to carry out the studies requested by government, as well as undertake preparation for the second National Infrastructure Assessment. We expect our average headcount to increase to 46 full time equivalent over 2023–24.

All members of the Secretariat are managed, and have their performance appraised, in accordance with Civil Service standards.





**NATIONAL  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
COMMISSION**

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**July 2023**