



Translink

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Your **better on board** journey starts here



Better on Board Charter Overview

The *Better on Board* Charter is a new initiative designed to drive a modal shift in transportation across Northern Ireland. The goal is to encourage more people to choose public transport, reducing congestion, improving air quality and creating a more sustainable future for everyone.

Better on Board Charter: Focus on Derry~Londonderry and Belfast

The *Better on Board* Charter has launched with two initial **Chapters** — **Derry~Londonderry** and **Belfast** — where the need for change is most urgent and where the potential for positive impact is greatest.

Both cities are grappling with severe traffic congestion which affects quality of life, mobility and the environment. As population growth and increased car ownership put further strain on these urban areas, the opportunity to shift towards sustainable, public transport solutions is clearer than ever.

Both cities have significant opportunities to improve mobility and reduce the reliance on cars. Investing in sustainable transport solutions will directly benefit communities by reducing congestion, improving air quality, and contributing to a healthier and greener future.

These Chapters of the *Better on Board* Charter mark the first steps in a broader movement aimed at improving the way we move around our cities.



Why Now?

- **Population Growth & Increased Car Ownership:** Northern Ireland has seen a 16% increase in the number of licensed vehicles over the past decade, putting greater strain on road space. With cities like Belfast becoming more densely populated, traffic congestion is a growing problem.
- **Public Transport Benefits:** More investment in public transport has a tangible impact. In cities like Belfast, where Metro and Glider services transport around 2.4 million passengers each month, improvements such as dedicated bus lanes have cut journey times by over 20% and boosted passenger numbers. These efforts make public transport more reliable and appealing to users.
- **Grand Central Station & Infrastructure Improvements:** The expansion of key transport hubs like **Belfast Grand Central Station** — now ten times larger than its previous facilities — aims to handle 20 million journeys annually, improving local, cross-border and international travel links. This infrastructure upgrade is central to Northern Ireland's efforts to achieve modal shift.

The Movement for Change

- The *Better on Board* Charter is a call to action, encouraging stakeholders from all sectors — government, transport companies and the public — to join forces in endorsing and working toward a more sustainable transportation system. Public and private partners are being asked to pledge their support to help increase the use of public transport, reduce car dependency and achieve Northern Ireland's climate goals.
- **Translink's Role:** As a key player in this initiative, Translink has set ambitious goals to become climate positive by 2050. The company already facilitates almost 80 million passenger journeys each year and plays a central role in driving Northern Ireland's transition to a more sustainable transport future. Translink's vision is not only to reduce emissions but to improve the overall quality of life for all residents and visitors.



Principles of the Better on Board Charter

Stakeholders have committed to supporting the Better on Board Charter by endorsing the following principles, where possible, to help drive modal shift and encourage greater use of public transport:

1

Encouraging Increased Public Transport Use

Actively promote the use of public transport services within their organisations and across their wider networks, helping to make public transport the first choice for travel.

2

Communicating the Need for Change

Clearly communicate to employees, customers and the public why we need to change how we move around our cities. Demonstrate how investing in modal shift will benefit everyone in society, from reducing congestion to improving quality of life.

3

Improving Air Quality and Reducing Congestion

Support the use of zero-emissions or low-emissions vehicles to reduce air pollution, ease road congestion and minimise noise pollution, contributing to a cleaner, healthier environment for all.

4

Making Travel Information Accessible

Highlight the convenience, savings and flexibility of public transport by providing easy access to information such as Translink's journey planners, ticketing tools and travel cards/passes. This ensures that everyone in your organisation can make informed travel decisions.

5

Promoting Health and Lifestyle Benefits

Encourage the health and lifestyle benefits of active travel, such as walking and cycling. By integrating these options with public transport to promote a healthier, more active lifestyle.

6

Incorporating Public Transport into Sustainability Plans

Include public transport as a key component of the organisation's current or future sustainability plans, ensuring that transportation solutions are aligned with long-term environmental goals and so that progress can be measured and benchmarked.

7

Collaborating with Translink on Future Initiatives

Support and collaborate with Translink on future public transport initiatives, working together to improve services, infrastructure and community engagement to drive modal shift.

Conclusion

The *Better on Board* Charter is about more than just reducing car use; it's about fostering a shift in how we think about mobility, connectivity and sustainability. By getting on board with the Charter, we can all contribute to creating a more sustainable and healthier Northern Ireland. Public transport must become the first choice for travel and with the support of stakeholders, their people and networks, we can achieve this transformation together.



Current partners



"The charter is a bold step forward and aligns with our vision for the Linen Quarter to become Northern Ireland's first sustainable district. By encouraging a shift away from car dependency, collectively, we will ease road congestion, enhance social inclusion, promote active travel and healthier lifestyles, and tackle the climate crisis. With the opening of Belfast Grand Central Station right in the heart of our district, we're thrilled to partner with Translink to implement this initiative across our member organisations and drive meaningful change for our city"

Chris McCracken,
Managing Director at Linen Quarter BID



"IoD Northern Ireland is delighted to join the Better on Board Charter and support Translink's vision for a more sustainable and accessible region. As an organisation representing directors across Northern Ireland, we understand the importance of responsible business practices and the role that public transport plays in achieving a greener future. We are committed to encouraging our members to adopt sustainable travel practices and to support initiatives like this that promote modal shift and reduce reliance on private vehicles."

Heather White,
Nations Manager at IoD NI



"The Consumer Council are pleased to support Translink's "Better on Board Charter". Belfast Grand Central Station provides new opportunities for passengers to connect with the integration of rail, bus and active travel all in one place. By addressing consumers' desire for choice, convenience and greater accessibility it will also help many people reduce the environmental impact of their travel. We look forward to continuing our work with Translink on current and future public transport initiatives for travel across Northern Ireland."

Noyona Chundur,
CEO of Consumer Council NI



"Belfast Chamber fully supports the Better on Board Charter, as it directly aligns with our core values of city regeneration, connectivity, social value, and sustainability. By working to ensure that Belfast maximises its potential, this initiative will be instrumental in creating a cleaner, more accessible, and vibrant city. We are helping Belfast evolve into an even better place to live, work, study, visit, and invest, aligning perfectly with our shared vision for the city's continued growth and success."

Clare Guinness,
Chief Executive of Belfast Chamber



"At PwC we are committed to contributing to a more sustainable and equitable future. We welcome Translink's charter and encourage our team of over 3000 people in Northern Ireland to use public transport when they are able to do so."

Cat McCusker,
PwC NI Regional
Market Leader

Current partners



"We are pleased to support Translink's Better on Board campaign by encouraging our Northern Ireland based workforce to utilise our local bus and rail networks. As main contractor on Belfast Grand Central Station alongside our JV partner Sacyr, we have played a significant part in the delivery of the future of sustainable travel in our city. This recent investment by Translink and the Department for Infrastructure has produced a world-class facility which will underpin and facilitate a growth in public transport uptake, making this a healthier region for future generations."

Dominic Lavery,
Managing Director at Farrans



"Businesses across Northern Ireland have an important role to play in driving modal shift by encouraging employees to increase their use of public transport. That, coupled with continued investment in public transport infrastructure, will be key to helping Northern Ireland achieve its net zero ambitions and enabling colleagues in all sectors of our economy to realise the health and wellbeing benefits of more sustainable and active travel. At NI Chamber, we are pleased to support Translink's Better on Board Charter and the roll-out of its strategic aims."

Suzanne Wylie,
Chief Executive at NI Chamber



"Ulster University is deeply committed to sustainability and to making a positive environmental impact across all of our campuses, and so we welcome the opportunity to join Translink's 'Better on Board' Belfast charter. We have worked closely with Translink on enhanced public transport access to our Belfast 'car free' campus which has resulted in over 50 % of staff and students choosing to travel by bus, coach, and rail. Embracing public transport is a key step in reducing road congestion, improving air quality, and making Belfast a greener city. By encouraging our staff and students to choose low-emission, sustainable travel options, we are advancing our mission to lead by example and deliver sustainable futures for all."

UU Vice Chancellor,
Professor
Paul Bartholomew



"We are proud to join forces with other businesses and organisations across Northern Ireland to support Translink's Better on Board Charter. As Northern Ireland's Utility Regulator, we are committed to working collaboratively to achieve the decarbonisation targets set out in the NI Climate Change Act, for the benefit of the people and businesses of our region. The Better on Board Charter is a fantastic opportunity to promote the benefits of sustainable travel, and we are delighted to be pledging our support today."

John French
Chief Executive at
Utility Regulator



"At Queen's University Belfast we are committed to incorporating sustainability into every aspect of campus life. As part of our ambitious Net Zero Plan, we are working towards reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2040, and this includes addressing the emissions associated with our community's travel through a range of plans and policies. We welcome the launch of Translink's Better on Board Charter and are proud to work collaboratively with Translink and partners across the city to support the Charter's important environmental and social aims."

Professor Michael Alcorn, Associate
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Sustainability and
Strategic Projects, Queen's University Belfast



Current partners



"FinTrU has always had a deep commitment to helping create a sustainable future, and we are delighted to welcome Translink's Better On Board charter. As a company with a large workforce in both Belfast and Derry-Londonderry, we will continue to encourage our employees to avail of public transport as we work as part of a collective in the area to help shape a greener environment."

Katrien Roppe,
FinTrU Chief of Staff



"At Allstate, we believe in a future where sustainable travel is accessible for everyone. Supporting Translink's 'Better on Board' charter is a key part in fostering an inclusive public transport system in Belfast, ensuring that our communities thrive while protecting the environment. Together, we can create a greener, more connected city for generations to come."

Stephen McKeown, Vice President,
Managing Director, Allstate NI



"KPMG is delighted to sign up to the Better on Board Charter, which fully aligns with our commitment to reduce our impact on the environment as communicated through our Science-Based Targets across Scopes 1, 2 and 3. As a fully integrated all-island business, we will continue to promote the use of public transport for our staff's local and cross-border travel requirements."

Russell Smyth,
Partner, Head of Sustainable
Futures, KPMG in Ireland



"GRAHAM welcome the launch of Translink's Better on Board Charter and would support its aims for a more sustainable future, and a more sustainable and accessible transportation network. The charter aligns with our Environmental Sustainability Strategy and the SBTi-validated goals within it as we transition to achieving our own net-zero ambition. As Principal Contractor on a number of Translink projects, we are already committed to work with all our stakeholders to embed best practice in sustainability into our operations – including constructing and encouraging the use of sustainable transport options."

**Andrew Cooke, Safety, Health &
Environmental Sustainability
Director, GRAHAM**



"As a key travel gateway for the region, and as an organisation which places sustainability at the heart of its business operations, Belfast Harbour is delighted to support the Better on Board Charter. We know from our own journey towards decarbonisation – through which we are on track to become the first net-zero port operator in the UK and on the island of Ireland – that achieving these goals requires hard work and commitment, and this is only possible through a joined-up approach between partners. We look forward to seeing the positive impact this exciting new initiative will have."

Joe O'Neill, CEO, Belfast Harbour



"As a long-standing partner and main contractor of Translink, we welcome their 'Better on Board' Charter which plays a critical role in achieving Northern Ireland's climate goals by working towards a more sustainable transportation system. This is also aligned with McLaughlin & Harvey's Net Zero Strategy which reinforces our commitment to go beyond current government legislation by focusing on not just reducing our environmental footprint across our projects but also making a positive difference to our clients' projects and supporting the delivery of net zero in the local communities we work in."

**Alastair Lambe, Group
SHEQ Director, McLaughlin
& Harvey**

