

Solent Transport appoints Trafi, Unicard and Behavioural Insights Team to deliver the UK's first multi-city MaaS scheme

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The pioneering £2.4m Mobility-as-a-Service scheme launches later this year

London, October 26th, 2021, Solent Transport continues to make rapid progress with its Future Transport Zone (FTZ) programme for the Solent region, most recently awarding a £2.4m contract for the development of a Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) solution. The new MaaS product will make it easier to access transport services in the Solent region, (pop.1.3M) which includes Portsmouth, Southampton, South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The successful consortium, led by Trafi in partnership with Unicard and the Behavioural Insights Team, has already started work on developing the app which will make travel in the Solent region easier, more accessible, more efficient and more customer focused. The first version of the product will be launched before the end of the year..

MaaS provides journey planning and payment across every mode of transport in a convenient and compelling way. By integrating the various modes of transport in the region into the app, as well as the systems behind them, Solent Transport hopes to maximise the positive impact of more sustainable travel choices on outcomes such as car dependency, access to employment opportunities and emissions.

Transport Minister Trudy Harrison said, *"From making it easier for local residents to access transport to easing congestion and improving air quality, innovation in transport is vital, which is why Solent Transport's Future Transport Zone has the backing of this Government. I'm excited to see how this app could change the way people in the local area travel, making our journeys easier, cleaner and more efficient."*

Cllr Lynne Stagg, the Acting Chair of the Joint Committee for Solent Transport added: *"With the innovative development of a MaaS product, Solent Transport and its partner authorities are pioneering technology that will improve the Solent region as a place to live, work and visit. Convenient and comprehensive, the MaaS mobile app will not only be a useful tool for people on the move, but will also give us important insights for improving existing services and offering new ones to make travel easier, smarter and greener."*

Solent MaaS sets new template for FTZ

The MaaS project is part of the £28.8m of funding allocated to Solent Transport from the Department for Transport's FTZ programme. The regional MaaS app will be the first multi-city product in the UK and will set a new standard for how to provide future transport services. Building on recent DfT projects, including the Bus Open Data Service, it will align with the vision for all rail and bus services outlined this year in the recent Bus Back Better and Great British Railway strategies..

The app, powered by Trafi, will consist of a journey planner, smart ticketing, payment system and will experiment with incentives to encourage travellers to use more sustainable modes. It will also include a carbon footprint calculation to help people make choices that benefit their environment. Rail, Ferry and Bus connections, as well as bikes, e-scooters and car rental services will all be available from the MaaS app.

Damian Bown, Commercial Director, Trafi, explained: *"We're delighted to be powering the UK's first multi-city Mobility-as-a-Service scheme with Trafi technology. Everybody who lives or travels through the Solent region will benefit from the variety of transport services being integrated. The Solent Transport MaaS project is unique for its focus on researching how to encourage behaviour change, and ushers in a new era for mobility in the UK; one that is fully aligned with the DfT's goal of creating convenient and sustainable transport alternatives to the private car."*

The Solent Go smart travel system, provided by Unicard, will be essential to ensure that the new scheme successfully integrates with existing travel and ticketing options and regional transport operators. The easy use of smart card ticketing within MaaS that Unicard enables, will help to promote Solent Transport's mission of transport equality, by providing viable options for users without smartphones.

Sean Dickinson, CEO of Unicard, said: *"Unicard is a long-term partner of Solent Transport going back*

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to 2003 and we are extremely proud to be playing an integral role in this ground-breaking transport initiative. Solent will act as the blueprint for other regions looking to roll out their own mobility services. Through our partnership we are able to deliver a sustainable, inclusive, accessible and integrated transport solution where Unicard will bring key capabilities that suit the needs and aspirations of communities, businesses and visitors in the Solent region."

Measuring the impact of MaaS

Solent Transport and the winning consortium will work with the Universities of Portsmouth and Southampton to carry out research into how MaaS changes travellers' behaviour. Unicard are assisting with the research goals of the project by providing data on existing travel patterns in the region. This will enable the positive impacts of the new MaaS scheme to be quantified and potentially applied to other regions of the UK.

The Behavioural Insights Team's role will be testing how the MaaS product changes travel behaviour relative to a 'control' group of non-users and assist in developing the product to make it easier and more helpful for customers to use.

David Halpern, CEO of BIT, said: *"We are really excited to be part of this truly innovative and groundbreaking project, a first for the UK. To achieve the government's environmental targets it's imperative that transport systems are built around a deep understanding of the behaviours and needs of their customers – making it easy and attractive to travel in more sustainable ways. MaaS platforms put this centre stage, and so hats off to Solent Transport for blazing this trail, and for committing to rigorous research, evaluation and improvement as they go, which will ultimately benefit everyone."*

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