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April 2010



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High Speed plans revealed p16



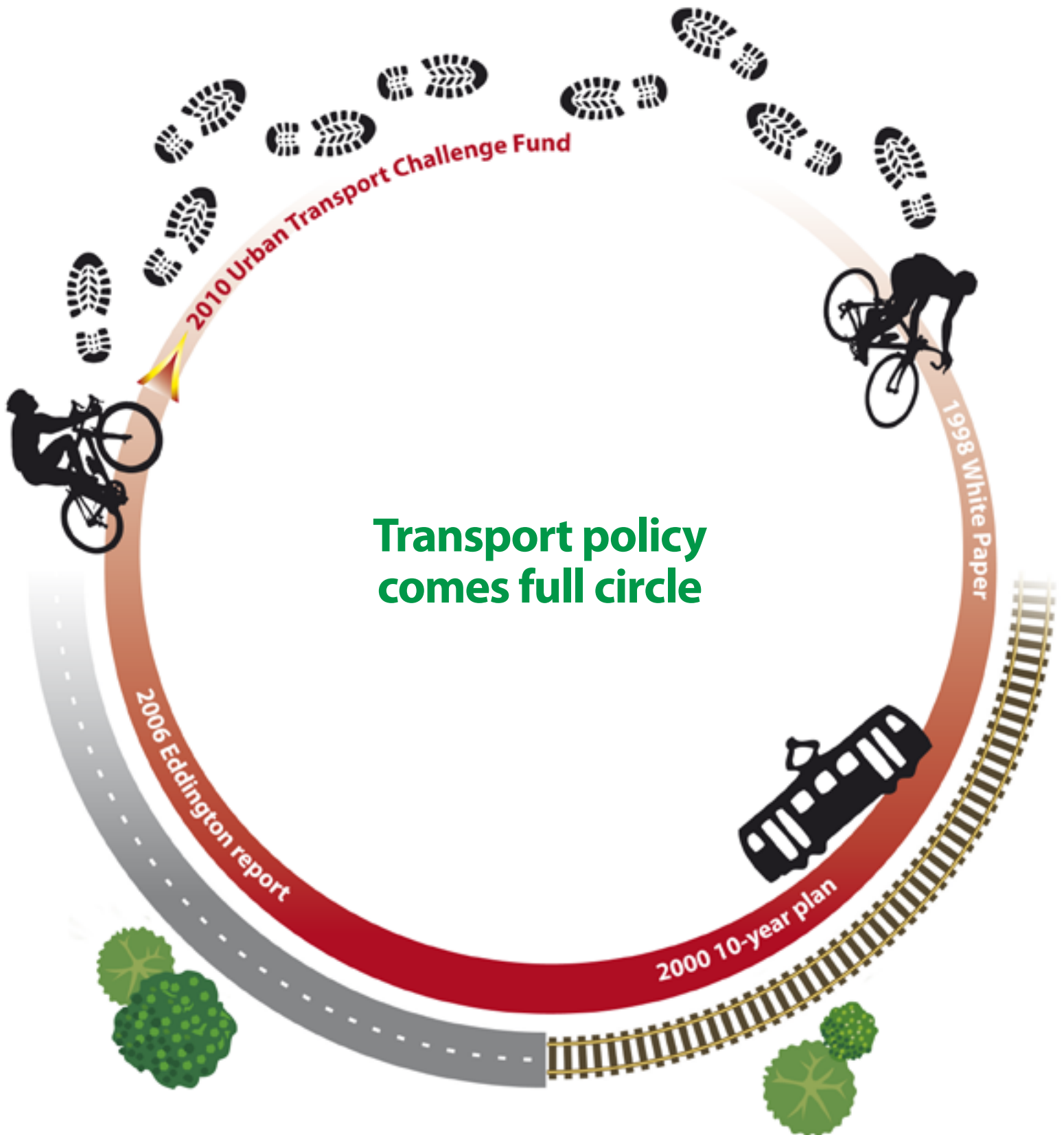
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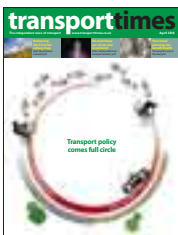
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SYSTRA UK, 1st Floor, Dukes Court, Duke Street
Woking, Surrey, GU21 5BH, United Kingdom
Tel: 01483 742 937
E-mail: eosullivan@systra.com





Cover illustration:
Kate Isles

Portrait photography:
Simon Battensby

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Publisher David Begg
Email david.begg@transporttimes.co.uk

Editorial

Transport Times welcomes editorial contributions – news, features and opinions – which should be emailed to the address below. The editor reserves the right to edit all contributions for reasons of length and style.

Tel 020 7828 3804
Fax 020 7828 3803
Email editorial@transporttimes.co.uk

Editor David Fowler
Email david.fowler@transporttimes.co.uk
Associate Editor Adam Raphael
Email adam.rafael@transporttimes.co.uk
Contributing Editor, Policy Katie Allister
Email katie.allister@transporttimes.co.uk
Production Editor Rob Buckley
Email rob@robbuckley.co.uk
Office assistant Chelsea Robinson
Email chelsea.robinson@transporttimes.co.uk

Advertising

Senior Account Director Michael Delaney

Cabbell
Woodman Works
204 Durnsford Road
London SW19 8DR

Tel 020 8971 8458
Email michael@cabbell.co.uk

Jobs

Commercial director Bill Sheehan

Tel 020 8971 8467
Email bill@cabbell.co.uk

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Policymakers seek value for money in an age of austerity

The Government's launch of the Urban Transport Challenge Fund this month is significant in that it means that UK Transport Policy has gone full circle since Labour came to power in 1997.

It started with the 1998 White Paper; public expenditure was tight as the Government was constrained by its decision to abide strictly by the previous Conservative Government's spending controls. It adopted a radical strategy to reduce car use with little promise of new infrastructure, but lots of demand management and integrated land use policies to constrain the demand for travel.

It was followed by the 10-Year Transport Plan in 2000. This was laudable in that for the first time we had a long term commitment to transport funding. It was the Government's attempt to "rival best practice in Europe". If the 1998 White Paper was focused on reducing demand for car use, the 10-Year Transport Plan was geared towards increasing the supply of road and light and heavy rail infrastructure, with the crucial congestion charging measures in our major conurbations relegated to the appendix by Gus Macdonald, transport minister at the time.

But it was the congestion charging measures much more than the new infrastructure which allowed the Government to predict that the plan would cut congestion by 5%! Without the pricing element the plan would have resulted in growing congestion.

All this meant that the 10-Year Transport Plan was not a seamless transition from the 1998 White Paper. What had changed in between were the fuel duty protests in September 2000, which made the Government apprehensive about doing anything which could be viewed as anti-car.

Politics – as is usually the case – was dictating policy.

We then moved on to the National Road Pricing and Transport Innovation Fund era. This was a commendable attempt by DfT officials to get transport policy back on track. It was derailed by the politics of the petition against road pricing on the Number 10 website and the



Politics – as is usually the case – was dictating policy

overwhelming rejection of congestion charging in the referendums in Edinburgh and Manchester.

While there are still a few TIF bidders left the truth is that there is no pot of money to fund them. Likewise with the Sustainable Transport Cities fund. They have both been absorbed to go a small way to bridging a burgeoning DfT financial deficit. Before the DfT finds its 20% cuts it must first cover a rail budget which is grossly overspent as a result of the franchise pain-share arrangements on revenue with train operating companies.

The Urban Transport Challenge Fund builds on the excellent *Analysis of Urban Transport* report from the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit. While there is still a focus on tackling congestion to achieve economic outcomes, there is an honest recognition that we have been too myopic in pursuing this objective to the exclusion of others such as health and environment. In its assessment of the external costs of urban transport the report rightly attaches as much weight to reducing the negative health effects of transport (road accidents and obesity) and reducing both local pollution and climate change gases as it does to congestion.

This has profound implications for policy. Measures which can achieve triple wins on economy, environment and health will score highly when

it comes to assessing bids for urban challenge funding.

The good news is that modal shift is firmly back on the policy agenda as a priority and the misguided era of "modal agnosticism" is behind us. We have travelled full circle in this respect and returned to the key objective of the 1998 Transport White Paper. However, policy has evolved in that walking, cycling and smarter choices initiatives will compare very favourably with proposals for new infrastructure.

Emphasis is already shifting in favour of smaller, local initiatives which achieve behavioural change. While shifting people out of their cars and on to public transport will score well, getting motorists cycling and walking will be given a higher ranking as it is better for both the environment and health. It opens the door to the prospect of attracting money from health trusts into transport. The new policy direction will put even more pressure on public transport to reduce its carbon footprint.

As is usually the case in transport it is financial expediency – along with politics – which drives policy direction. As we leave the decade of prosperity behind we welcome in the smaller, more cost-effective initiatives which are less onerous on the public purse and offer excellent value for money in a decade of austerity.

With benefit-cost ratios ranging from 5 to 1 to as high as 15 to 1 for smarter choices, cycle improvements and local safety schemes, they will be given priority over infrastructure schemes which have an average BCR of around 2 to 1. On the rail front the Northern Hub (formerly Manchester Hub) with a BCR of 4 to 1 is likely to be the only big scheme in the next rail High Level Output statement announced in 2012.

It's back to the future!

David Begg

David Begg is publisher of Transport Times.



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High speed line 'would allow the rail map to be redrawn'

A UK a high speed rail network would transform connections between cities in the Midlands, the North of England and Scotland, said transport secretary Lord Adonis.

Unveiling the report on a high-speed route to Birmingham and beyond by High Speed 2 alongside the government's response, the Transport Secretary said the plans offered a unique opportunity to break free of the confines of the Victorian railway map.

Based on High Speed 2's analysis of options, the Government proposed a Y-shaped network which would split at Birmingham to run either side of the Pennines, one branch serving Manchester and the other the East Midlands, Sheffield and Leeds.

The branches would then connect to the existing east and west coast main lines, allowing through services to continue to Newcastle, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Journeys to the west Midlands would take around half an hour, and Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester would be 75 minutes from the capital.

The proposals were broadly welcomed by the Liberal Democrats. The Conservatives reserved their position on the route, and disagreed over plans on how to serve Heathrow.

Lord Adonis stressed the fact that the new network would bring significant journey time savings between major cities outside London, not just between them and the capital. He said the choice was not between building new high-speed lines and nothing, because additional inter-city capacity would be needed in any case.

He said the high speed route would provide three times the capacity of the West Coast main line. To double that line's capacity by a conventional upgrade would cause tremendous disruption and would cost more than building High Speed 2, he said.

"Do we adopt new technology with much greater connectivity and time savings benefits or do we do a classic patch and mend job with fewer benefits and more disruption?" Lord Adonis asked.

Estimated cost of the route is £30bn, but the annual rate of spending would be around £2bn, comparable with Crossrail. As with Crossrail,



An artist's impression of the remodelled Eurostar station

Lord Adonis said there were substantial opportunities for private sector involvement. He said: "It's affordable if we make it a national priority."

The proposed Y-route would be 335 miles long with a London terminus at a remodelled and expanded Euston. It would run in tunnel to west London, from where it would follow the route of the Chiltern Line. It would run mainly in tunnel from the M25 to Amersham and continue to the west of Wendover and Aylesbury, partly in tunnel and partly following the A413 and Chiltern Line corridor.

The next section would use the trackbed of the former Great Central Railway, continuing to enter Birmingham near Water Orton. It would terminate at a new city centre station at Fazeley Street/Curzon Street in the city's Eastside regeneration area.

There would be an interchange with Crossrail and other lines at Old Oak Common, just west of Paddington, providing a 10-minute connection to Heathrow airport via Heathrow Express, and another outside Birmingham serving Birmingham International airport, from where the line would continue north. About 10% of the line would be in tunnel.

There will be controversy over the route through the Chilterns, an area

of outstanding natural beauty. A six-month consultation period starting in the autumn will provide an opportunity for this, and other aspects of the route, to be considered.

Shadow transport secretary Theresa Villiers criticised the lack of a direct connection to Heathrow, and said High Speed 2 had not given sufficient consideration to consultant Arup's proposal for a Heathrow Hub, north of the airport at Iver.

Further policy confusion was sown when a judicial review in the High Court backed opponents of a third runway who contended the Government had not adequately consulted.

There was also criticism of the lack of a proposal to connect to High Speed 1 and through to destinations in continental Europe.

Lord Adonis has commissioned former Conservative transport secretary Lord Mawhinney to undertake a further study of options for Heathrow prior to the consultation period. But he pointed out that, though the Conservatives criticised Old Oak Common for not being at Heathrow, neither is the Arup hub. He added that Heathrow is such a large area that it is not clear that there is a suitable single location for a station.

High Speed 2 has been asked to

look again at a connection between High Speed 1 and High Speed 2. For full high speed operation it proposed a tunnel from Old Oak Common to Barking in east London, near the HS1 tunnel portal, at a cost of £3.5bn. This was considered too expensive.

A link at conventional speeds could be created from Old Oak Common by upgrading a section of the North London Line, for £0.5bn.

Some sort of "people mover" such as a light rail connection is also proposed to improve the interchange between Euston and the High Speed 1 terminal at St Pancras.

High Speed 2 will now go on to develop detailed proposals for the arms of the Y-route to Leeds and Manchester, including making recommendations for siting an East Midlands station intended to serve Derby, Nottingham and Leicester. There will then be a period of consultation over this part of the route.

A single hybrid bill will then be deposited for the entire network, allowing construction to begin in 2017. The Transport Secretary said he believed it was "not possible to move any faster". If after the general election a new government reopens the question of route planning this would cause "a substantial delay".

New direction for urban transport marks the end of the TIF era

Transport minister Sadiq Khan announced a successor to the Transport Innovation Fund and urged local authorities to be bold in developing bids for funding.

Towns and cities will be eligible for money from the Urban Transport Challenge Fund if they develop plans to improve transport at the same time as contributing to a range of other objectives. These include improving journey choice; tackling congestion; improving safety; reducing carbon dioxide emissions; and promoting healthier lifestyles through encouraging walking and cycling.

The fund replaces congestion TIF and will also subsume the objectives of the Sustainable Cities initiative, for which funding is no longer available because of the state of the economy. It draws on last year's report by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, *An Analysis of Urban Transport* (see *Transport Times* last month and December 2009)

Mr Khan said: "Given the environmental and financial challenges we face, it is more important than ever that urban transport planning is embedded in broader economic and spatial planning. That sounds obvi-

The Urban Challenge Fund is designed to support cities prepared to take bold decisions

ous, but the extent to which urban authorities have been successful in doing this varies tremendously. The Urban Challenge Fund is designed to support cities that want to deliver economic, health and environmental improvements at the same time, and are prepared to take the bold decisions needed to make that happen."

The announcement marks the end of an infrastructure-led approach that began with the 10-year transport plan in 2000, and of the emphasis on demand management through congestion charging introduced with TIF in 2005.

Cities including Manchester, the West Midlands, Cambridge, Shrewsbury and Reading had developed proposals for packages of improvements under TIF, but Mr Khan acknowledged that the requirement of including congestion charging had failed to win public approval.

Under the new scheme the emphasis will be on low cost but potentially highly cost-effective smarter choice measures.

Funding will be "top-sliced" from the Department for Transport's budget, but how much money will be available will not be known until after the next Comprehensive Spending Review, sometime after



Sadiq Khan: addressing economic, health and environmental improvements at the same time

the general election. In the meantime the Government has launched a consultation process over the details of the fund.

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Cycling body offers advice service to councils

Cycling England, the agency set up by the Department for Transport to increase short urban trips by bike, is urging local authorities to integrate cycling into their third generation Local Transport Plans.

It has produced a summary of data from three years' experience in Cycling Demonstration Towns, and the organisation's other main programme, Bikeability training for schools, to show that the policies have had a significant effect on behaviour. It wants to encourage other towns and cities to adopt similar strategies where possible.

Cycling England has set up a free LTP3 support service to provide practical advice to councils on how to achieve this.

Data gathered from the initial six demonstration towns (Aylesbury,

The results show that specific and targeted measures can have a significant impact in increasing cycling levels

Brighton, Darlington, Derby, Exeter and Lancaster/Morecambe) showed a marked increase in cycling levels. The programme has since been extended to another 12 cities and towns.

In the demonstration towns, on average cycling trips have risen by 27%. Importantly, the number of people cycling has increased, rather than the same people cycling more. There has been a significant increase in measures of physical activity, especially a decrease in the number of people classed as "inactive", who are most at risk of premature death.

In schools where Bikeability training has taken place, the proportion of pupils cycling to school at least once a week has more than doubled.

The results were not found in comparable local authorities that were not demonstration towns. The

programme has provided a good return on investment, with a benefit-cost ratio of three to one.

Cycling England says that to be effective in changing behaviour and increasing the numbers cycling, "a comprehensive and well integrated plan" is required. It should focus on three things: people – who can be persuaded to take up cycling; place – where they want to travel; and purpose – why they make these journeys.

Cycling England chairman Phillip Darnton said: "The results of the six Cycling Demonstration Towns show that specific and targeted measures can have a significant impact in increasing cycling levels. This gives us great confidence that the specific cycling strategies implemented by the towns can make a real difference to the travel culture of the UK."

DfT approves innovative city transport schemes

Leeds gained initial approval for its trolleybus scheme; £10m more is available for low carbon buses



New transport schemes in Leeds and the Bristol area moved closer to reality with the granting of initial approval by the Department for Transport. Improvements to bus services in Teesside and further extensions to Manchester Metrolink gained the final go-ahead.

Leeds's £254m trolleybus scheme, the successor to its cancelled tram plans, gained programme entry status allowing detailed planning to go ahead. The scheme would use single deck articulated trolleybuses powered by overhead electric wires on two routes from the city centre to Holt Park north of the city and to Stourton to the south. Both routes would include park and rides, on the outer ring road and A621 respectively.

Leeds plans to seek a Transport and Works Act order this autumn, followed by a public inquiry in 2011. Construction could then begin in 2013 with the first trolleybuses operating by 2016. If the scheme progresses to full approval the DfT will provide a £235m contribution.

Bristol's bus rapid transit route also gained programme entry status. The route would run from Long Ashton park and ride to Bristol Temple Meads station and city centre shopping areas. A significant part of the route would be on dedicated roads and bus lanes. The scheme is expected to reduce congestion and journey times for commuters and is one of a series of bus improvements

planned for the West Country. The proposals include parallel cycling lanes and pedestrian routes between the Museum of Bristol and Long Ashton, additional bus services to provide faster journey times and improved reliability for services to Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon and Nailsea, plus ticket machines and real-time information at bus stops.

If the scheme gains full approval the government will contribute £43m.

A £57.6m scheme to improve bus services in the Tees Valley area was given the final go-ahead. The DfT will contribute £37.5m to the project, which will improve bus reliability and make journeys faster on key routes across Darlington, Hartlepool, Stockton, Middlesbrough and Redcar.

The Tees Valley Bus Network will provide bus lanes, road junction realignments, and bus priority at traffic lights. Passenger facilities will be improved with new bus shelters and real time information screens.

The local authorities will also work with the bus operators to secure a range of improvements including new vehicles and improved frequencies and ticketing through a Quality Partnership agreement.

Construction work can begin on new extensions to the Manchester Metrolink tram network after proposals gained final approval. The new line already under construction to Droylsden will be extended a further 3.9km to Ashton-under-Lyne and the new route under construc-

tion to Chorlton will be extended a further 4.5km to East Didsbury.

A further eight new trams will be ordered in addition to 40 already being built by Bombardier and Vossloh-Kiepe to serve the existing line and extensions already under way.

The two extensions will together cost £170m, and are part of the £1.5bn Greater Manchester Transport Fund programme, the successor to the area's TIF bid.

Detailed design of the latest extensions will now get under way, allowing construction to start early next year. Funding has also been provided for new park and ride sites at Ashton Moss and Ashton West.

• Separately the DfT announced that 31 areas of England would share £15m to improve bus services under the Kickstart grant scheme. This offers backing to help launch new or improved services.

Among the beneficiaries is Hertfordshire County Council, which will receive £935,000 for the pioneering St Albans Quality Network Partnership project, which uses new powers to allow local authorities to remodel networks under the Local Transport Act (*Transport Times* November 2009).

And the DfT is making a further £10m available to help bus operators and local authorities buy low carbon buses, in a second round of the successful Low Carbon Bus fund, which is contributing to the provision of around 350 low carbon buses in England.

Metrolink will be extended to Ashton-under-Lyne and East Didsbury



Transport executives support motorway hard shoulder running

Active Traffic Management is seen as an appropriate alternative to widening motorways, according to a majority of respondents to the latest Accent/Transport Times Executive Panel Survey. 88% of executives agreed that it “should always be used in preference to widening” or “in certain areas/cases”. This supports the Government’s recent announcement giving the green light to open up six sections of hard shoulders on motorways.

Respondents to the wide-ranging survey on motorways supported the Government’s positive stance on Active Transport Management with comments including: “it maximises the existing capacity”, that there is “no embedded carbon in this alternative” and that “it is potentially a cheaper way of achieving the required increase in capacity”. Another said it would be appropriate “in areas where motorway widening is uneconomic or would be severely detrimental to the local environment; also as an interim measure before a widening scheme can be approved”. It could be particularly beneficial “where motorways have restricted

space at their margins and in areas of high density population.”

The respondents who thought ATM was not an appropriate alternative said that the hard shoulder “is essential for safety reasons”. One noted: “Considerations for safety are a priority.”

Elsewhere in the survey, just 12% of respondents considered that motorways should be funded entirely from general public funds. 60% of respondents said motorways should be funded by tolls on motorways, and 68% supported more general road pricing. 32% agreed that a fixed proportion of vehicle excise duty (road tax) should be allocated. Also, 44% supported funding through public/private partnerships (like the 30-year concession to operate and improve the M25 awarded to the ConnectPlus consortium). Some commented further by saying that a combination of the approaches could be used.

Staying with funding, 84% agreed with the statement that the government should set out medium-term funding plans for the motorway network (in a white paper/statement of funds available in the same way

as for the railways). One respondent noted: “Forward planning is vital, and again should link to the big picture” and “motorways are too important not to”.

A majority of respondents (72%) rejected the RAC Foundation’s suggestion that the Highways Agency should be turned into an independent body and assigning it an income stream. However, those that did support the suggestion thought that the Highways Agency should be turned into a not for dividend company (57%) and public corporation (43%). Separately, 56% of respondents disagreed with an RAC suggestion that there should be an independent roads regulator along the lines of those for rail and the energy utilities.

When it came to the circumstances on when the UK motorway capacity should be expanded, just 8% agreed this should be wherever congestion occurs; 4% supported the view that all three-lane carriageway sections should be widened to four lanes; 68% supported the view for specific junctions or other “pinch points” where serious congestion occurs; 52% said “to fill in missing

links or to create bypasses where there is no suitable high-quality route”.

Rob Sheldon, Accent MD and co-sponsor of the research programme, commented: “Given the recent announcement, the Government will be particularly pleased to see the high level of support from transport executives for Active Traffic Management. The views carry added weight because the respondents to our panel are involved in high-level decision making on a day-to-day basis. Overall, this research supports the view that executives believe that planners need to explore creative ways to increase capacity. The Government will want to continue to build this into their plans for the motorway network over the next few years.”

If you are a senior executive working in the transport industry and would like to be part of this bi-monthly poll on “hot topics” in transportation please contact Veronica Mujica (Veronica.Mujica@accent-mr.com). Each bi-monthly survey will take no more than five minutes to complete and all answers will be treated in complete confidence unless you give your permission for us to quote you.

Wales national transport plan aims for sustainability, includes integrated ticketing

The Welsh Assembly Government has published the final version of its National Transport Plan, setting out how it will achieve a modern and sustainable transport system for Wales.

The aim of the plan was to ensure a system of transport fit for the 21st century based on three principles: to meet the demand for enhanced mobility to encourage economic growth and improve the quality of life; to put transport on a more sustainable and less carbon-intensive footing; and to use transport funding more effectively in the light of increased pressures on public finances.

Deputy First Minister Ieuan Wyn Jones said: “I am committed to developing a decarbonised transport system, where people are able to

choose healthier and more sustainable modes of travel. I am therefore extremely pleased to be publishing our National Transport Plan today.

“We are working to improve bus and rail services. We are also aiming to increase the number of people walking or cycling, and through our programme of Sustainable Travel Centres we will invest in new, and link existing, walking and cycling routes. Across the wider network we have plans to increase the provision of bicycle facilities on trains, at stations and in towns and cities.”

The National Transport Plan, which was announced by the Deputy First Minister in July last year, is set out in a way that reflects the four main movement corridors in Wales – east-west in the north, mid and south, and north-south – as well as

proposals that are relevant across all of Wales.

The proposals for the main corridors share two aims – to improve the reliability, quality and speed of rail, and to improve journey times and safety on the main trunk roads.

National priorities include: developing a number of sustainable travel centres, building on the experience of the Cardiff sustainable travel initiative; ensuring better integration at interchanges, for example between local bus services and railway stations; and making it easier for people to be less reliant on the private car and to use public transport, walking and cycling more frequently.

A Welsh Transport Entitlement Card for bus and rail services, which would include integrated ticketing, to allow seamless transfer between

services and operators, will be introduced by 2014. The WAG says it will work with its partners to increase the take-up of Bus Quality Partnerships and Quality Contracts, to enhance the quality, reliability, punctuality and safety of local bus service provision, by the same date.

It will publish plans to expand and improve the quality of the Traws-Cambria long-distance bus network, and will produce Route Management Strategies for the operation, improvement and maintenance of the trunk road and motorway network, for each corridor, by 2011.

The plan will be funded mainly from the WAG’s transport budget. Some schemes may receive support from the Strategic Capital Investment Fund and the EU Structural Funds Convergence Programme.

Stagecoach unveils its blueprint to transform Sheffield buses

Stagecoach last week announced proposals to revitalise the bus network in Sheffield, calling for a public-private partnership covering service frequency, fares, bus priority and new park and ride sites.

The bus operator, which runs just over 100 of Sheffield's buses, says its "dynamic approach" has transformed the city's Supertram network and boosted rail services on the East Midlands Trains franchise which serves Sheffield.

The plan, outlined at a meeting of politicians, transport experts, residents, and business leaders, proposes index-linked fares and inter-available ticketing; minimum and maximum service levels on key routes; bus priority measures on key routes; and enhanced standards for vehicle cleanliness and for bus stops.

It also proposes seven new park at ride sites across the conurbation and would introduce a state-of-the-art optically guided vehicle able to run both on roads and the tram network.

Stagecoach said this would provide high quality and good value services, protect key social bus services and reduce traffic congestion by promoting intelligent car use.

Group chief executive Brian Souter said: "Our plan will deliver what customers want – guarantees on fares and network levels, and improvements to make it easier to access services. It will improve the speed and quality of bus services on the road. And it will be better for the local environment in Sheffield."



Optically guided buses could run on the road and the tram network, under Stagecoach's plans

South Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority called on bus operators to enter discussions about how to improve services. It is considering its next step in progressing with a redesign of bus services in Doncaster. It is due to decide in April how to put the plan into practice, whether through voluntary agreements, a Statutory Quality Partnership or a Quality Contract. The ITA said that before it goes ahead it wants to hear ideas from the bus companies about how they feel they can improve services.

Bus companies, including First South Yorkshire, the dominant operator of services in Sheffield, are

generally opposed to quality contracts – effectively franchising on the London model.

South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive director general David Brown said: "We are pleased to see that Stagecoach has come forward with ideas about how to improve bus services in Sheffield. Many of these ideas are contained in our bus strategy and we have been talking about them for some time.

"We will be happy to examine in greater detail what they are proposing. In the meantime we will be interested to hear if other operators have their own proposals."

Logica wins funding for travel assistant project

Intelligent transport system specialist Logica has secured grant funding from the Technology Strategy Board as part of its Informed Personal Travel competition.

Over the next 18 months with partner Acis it will design, develop and demonstrate an "empowered personal travel" virtual travel assistant to provide travellers with information on multiple transport modes before and throughout their journey.

The company says it will work closely with Greater Manchester

Passenger Transport Executive and will focus on information that the traveller can easily understand and trust.

The virtual assistant will be accessed via a simple web registration as part of Logica's Navici journey planner, configured for use in Greater Manchester. Real-time service updates will then be provided via a mobile application, downloaded at the initial registration stage, using Google's Android operating system. Users will be able to re-plan their journeys when there is service

Users will be able to re-plan journeys when there is service disruption

disruption or a connection is likely to be missed, and the technology will also automatically notify the traveller when the stop at which they need to alight is approaching.

The Technology Strategy Board is an executive body established by the Government in 2007 and sponsored by the Department for Business, Industry and Skills, dedicated to promoting technology-based innovation. A total of £8m will be made available for its competition for providing reliable information to help people manage their journeys.

Now I know how excluded the disabled feel

A sporting injury has given me a better appreciation of what faces wheelchair users on the transport system, and what the disabled lobby is getting exercised about



I had passed the same small blue sign a dozen times before and never given it a moment's thought. Yet last month, it stopped me in my tracks and sent me into a spluttering rage in which I cursed the uncaring b*****s who had installed it.

The sign, on a path in Exbury Gardens, Hampshire, displayed a wheelchair symbol with a red line across it. The clear message was "wheelchair users not welcome: turn around and go somewhere else".

On the previous dozen occasions, I had been on foot, strolling among the breathtaking collection of rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias in the Rothschild family's back garden.

This time I was in a wheelchair, having ruptured my Achilles tendon.

For the first 200 metres of our visit to Exbury, my partner had been pushing me along smooth paths suitable for wheelchairs. But the Tarmac soon gave way to a rough stony surface that threw me around and at one point pitched the wheelchair forward, almost toppling me out.

We could visit only a fraction of the garden. Some of my favourite spots, such as the daffodil meadow overlooking the Beaulieu River, were inaccessible to wheelchair users.

I must admit that, in my decade writing about transport issues, I have never shown much sympathy for the disabled access lobby. I have written several critical stories about the absurdity of regulations designed to benefit the disabled.

I have accused the disabled lobby of many things: hastening the demise of the Routemaster bus; forcing people to stand on trains because 10 seats have been sacrificed for each disabled toilet; and requiring an expensive refit of a train fleet because the lettering on digital displays was 3mm too small.

My own experience has fuelled my intolerance: I detest disabled toilets on trains because design weaknesses

mean they are more often locked out of use than the conventional kind.

Yet thanks to a tennis injury, I have gained a temporary glimpse of what life is like for Britain's 750,000 wheelchair users.

Some of our public spaces and transport systems cater very well for wheelchair users, but others pay only lip service to their needs. I must now think carefully about every journey before setting out. I cannot assume I will be able to go wherever I want.

While it's true that the Disability Discrimination Act has made most places wheelchair accessible, the absence of universal standards mean

Some of our public spaces and transport systems cater very well for wheelchair users, but others pay only lip service to their needs

large chunks of my neighbourhood are closed to me.

I visited a furniture store in Southampton and the manager told me I was fortunate because he had just installed a disabled lift. It annoyed me that the simple matter of gaining access to the first floor was seen as some kind of bonus rather than a basic human right.

I have not even attempted to use the rail network. Southampton Central has lifts but neither of my local stations – Beaulieu Road and Ashurst New Forest – is step-free.

The Government's ten-year Access for All strategy is meant to provide step-free access for about 150 more stations by 2016. But that will still leave almost a thousand stations closed to wheelchair users.

I used to view the rail map as an open invitation: every dot on every branch was an opportunity for ex-

ploration. Now vast chunks of it have been rubbed out.

The tube map is even more irrelevant to me. Last year, Transport for London quietly shelved its target of making a quarter of the capital's 270 tube stations step-free.

Despite London hosting the Paralympics in 2012, work on providing access has been halted at some stations and contractors ordered to fill in the holes cut for lifts.

Ironically, before my injury I had been toying with the idea of writing a column calling for a new kind of black cab for London. I have always found it absurd that the 23,000 cabs are so bulky and inefficient. A London taxi typically spews out 225g of carbon dioxide per kilometre, more than twice as much as the Toyota Prius hybrid used by a growing number of private hire firms.

But I now realise it is a huge consolation to wheelchair users to be able to hail any black cab and not to have to pre-book some specially-adapted vehicle.

I have even begun to feel a flicker of sympathy for Guide Dogs' bitter campaign against Kensington & Chelsea council's visionary shared space plan for London's Exhibition Road. Guide Dogs argues that blind people will be endangered by the removal of the kerbs and the creation of a surface shared by vehicles and pedestrians.

When you already feel so disadvantaged, it makes you less inclined to compromise and accept a small additional sacrifice for the greater good of the majority.

In a few weeks, I will be back on my feet and will return the wheelchair to the Red Cross. My present attitude towards disabled access will probably fade as my leg heals, but I hope the occasional twinge on cold mornings always reminds me of how it feels to be limping along on in this hypermobile world.

Ben Webster is environment editor of The Times.

Debunking the myth of suburban transport

A new book demolishes the myth that dwellers in low-density areas will inevitably migrate to the car

I have always been rather stumped by the suburban question. When I have been on phone-ins about transport policy, the inevitable point comes up that it is all very well to advocate better public transport. But it is impossible to provide it to low-density suburbs without requiring massive subsidy and therefore it is inevitable that people will jump in their cars.

I have always suspected that there is a good rebuttal to this bit of conventional wisdom, but I have never managed to put my finger on it. Now thanks to a book which ought to become as celebrated and influential as Jane Jacobs' work on cities or the famous San Francisco study by Appleyard, I have the answer. And, to paraphrase, Tony Blair, it's policy, policy, policy and not density.

The book, *Transport For Suburbia: Beyond The Automobile Age* (Earthscan) by Paul Mees, should be the essential primer for all transport planners. It debunks a lot of myths, not least the notion that it was General Motors which accounted for the decline of suburban rail and tram travel in US cities. The company may have helped the process along, by buying up tram companies, but it was the mistakes and the automobile-focused vision of the policymakers which were crucial in shifting people out of public transport and into cars.

And that is the crucial lesson. Mees takes us on a world tour from A to Z, the contrasting policies of Auckland in New Zealand and Zurich in Switzerland. In Auckland, public transport worked well until the planners decided on a policy of building freeways rather than investing in rail and bus, creating an 'autopia' from which the city is still suffering today. Zurich, in contrast, has public transport services that are the envy of the world. Even people living in outlying villages can easily access the network through regular bus services that interconnect with train services, which themselves

are coordinated in such a way that interchange becomes hassle-free. The conventional notion that interchanges are a deterrent to public transport use is debunked, as changing trains or buses or modes is fine as long as the transfer does not cause undue delay.

The Zurich situation did not happen by accident. Back in the 1980s services were deteriorating as a result of lack of coordination between different bodies, but in 1990, following a referendum, the whole travel-to-work area was brought under one public transport administration with the powers to standardise and integrate services.

Naysayers will argue it is all down

I have the answer. And, to paraphrase, Tony Blair, it's policy, policy, policy and not density

to density. Public transport is unsustainable in low density areas. Not so. Zurich is not particularly densely populated. Density, Mees argues, has often been misrepresented because figures which have been used relate purely to an administrative area and not the overall built-up parts of a conurbation. Therefore in many cases density has been wrongly calculated. Los Angeles, that public transport hell where 91% of journeys are by car, for example, is broadly as densely populated as Copenhagen or Oslo, cities which have mode shares that are almost the mirror opposite.

The solution by many politicians, notably Boris Johnson, is to adopt a balanced approach, investing in both public transport and highways, and arguing that both modes are equally valid. In fact, this never works. Balanced approaches are a sham because ultimately unless public transport is

actively favoured, it goes into a self-perpetuating decline.

As well as adopting actively pro-public transport solutions, local authorities must have the powers to control transport undertakings in their area. Integration, that oft misused term, is key. Mees cites Leeds as a key example where local bus services compete with rail rather than integrating with it. He quotes the local bus company saying that it would not "condone integration with rail" as that would mean losing lucrative services. Similarly, in Brisbane, millions have been spent on getting people out of the trains and on buses run by different agencies, a pointless exercise.

Mees suggests that Britain is out on a limb by sticking to the notion that public transport can be provided through competition and deregulation: "Now that New Zealand, the World Bank and the European Commission have abandoned free-market public transport, the notion remains the sole preserve of a small cell of British fundamentalists holed up in Whitehall and free market think-tanks. Unfortunately, the British government still takes its advice on transport policy from within this ideological bunker".

Mees is no ideologue. He criticises the famous Curitiba network in Brazil which is lauded by transport planners across the world. But he is adamant that for effective public transport, there needs to be integration, public control – not necessarily delivery – and a clear policy framework.

None of his findings are rocket science but, instead, reinforce the message that it is all about policy and not density or other structural factors. Is anyone listening out there?

Christian Wolmar is a writer and broadcaster who writes a regular column for Rail magazine. His new book, *Blood, Iron and Gold: How The Railways Transformed The World*, has just been published by Atlantic Books.



Is Boris angling for a return to Westminster?

With unconvincing policies and, by the next mayoral election, the possibility of an unpopular Conservative government affecting voters' decisions, Boris Johnson could be a short-term tenant as London mayor



For London's traffic to be grinding to a halt in the midst of one of the deepest recessions for more than 50 years is an achievement. With much of the capital dug up to install new water mains, and other infrastructure projects such as Crossrail, it is hardly surprising that there are delays. But unfortunately, London's mayor appears to have no clue how to deal with current traffic problems, let alone provide a vision of how the capital can be kept moving in the future. Boris Johnson's unwillingness to tackle such difficult issues as pedestrianisation and traffic restraint suggests that he could be a one-term mayor.

With a mayoral election two years away, there are three bits of evidence, admittedly tenuous, in support of my view that Boris's relationship with London will be short term. The first is that he never really wanted the job in the first place. He had to be cajoled into running. A day before he was elected as mayor, he told a close friend in a tone more of dismay than triumph: "Crikey, it looks as if I am going to win."

If a Conservative government is elected this summer, the mayor's eyes will be firmly set on Westminster where his real political ambitions are. Relations with David Cameron are not warm; they regard each other with suspicion, but the mayor sees that as an opportunity rather than an obstacle. If a Cameron government runs into trouble, there is room for manoeuvre and mischief on the right of the party.

Another piece of evidence is that Boris Johnson appears to be unwilling or incapable of coming up with a coherent transport plan for the capital. The RAC Foundation, an independent transport think-tank,

has published a damning critique of the Mayor's transport strategy, labelling it as "inadequate... unrealistic... not credible".

The critical problem highlighted by the foundation's report is that the mayor has not faced up to the need to control demand for use of London's scarce road space. Instead his strategy, if it can be dignified with such a term, relies on improving traffic flow by rephrasing traffic signals, new rail services, and encouraging modal shift with more cycling and walking. Despite this, the mayor acknowledges that growing demands on London's roads will lead to an increase in congestion by 14% by 2031.

I would not be surprised if Ken Livingstone staged a political comeback

In fact, the real position is much worse. The mayor's decision to scrap the western extension zone of the congestion charge, on the basis of a flawed consultation, will add at least another 30,000 cars a day in one of the most heavily trafficked and polluted areas of London. Boris Johnson has described this increase as "marginal", and the resulting rise in pollution as "trivial". But even he is likely to regret the loss of £70m in annual revenue, in the light of Transport for London's current funding crisis.

One victim of the mayor's failing to come up with plans to curb London's traffic growth will be carbon reduction targets. The target is for a 60% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2025 compared to 1990. But this will be unachievable if traffic is unrestrained.

What is so odd about the draft transport document is that it admits that the only feasible long-term way of reducing congestion is by introduc-

ing London-wide road-user charging. But it totally fails to explore how this could be achieved and what needs to be done to make it acceptable. The poverty of thought behind the document is alarming.

Worse, the mayor and his acolytes appear to believe that finessing such issues is the safest, short-term political option. "There is absolutely no scheme in the mayor's transport strategy to introduce road user charging in London," boasted the mayor's transport adviser, Kulveer Ranger, shortly after the document was published.

The final reason why Boris is looking beyond London for his political future is that he knows his chance of re-election in two years' time is at best doubtful. On the assumption that the Conservatives will soon be in government, they will have to force through tough decisions on public expenditure and increased taxation to reduce public borrowing as soon as possible, not least because of the five-year electoral cycle. However much ministers try to blame their Labour predecessors for the economic mess they inherited, the government will soon be very unpopular, causing trouble for a Conservative mayor seeking re-election in two years' time.

Though my heart or my vote doesn't exactly race at the prospect, I would not be surprised if Ken Livingstone staged a political comeback, and won a third term in 2012. It is what he spends his days plotting, something of which Boris is well aware.

What would the mayor do if he was defeated? Almost certainly he would cash in the chip he was promised by the Conservative leadership of a safe Westminster seat.

Adam Raphael, a former executive editor of *The Observer* and transport correspondent of *The Economist*, is the associate editor of *Transport Times*. He is a former presenter of BBC's *Newsnight* and an award-winning investigative journalist.

Dales buses find a third way for subsidised services

A charity-owned business run by professional volunteers has secured funds to rejuvenate local authority supported services in Yorkshire in the face of declining budgets. **John Disney** reports

Many transport authorities will be faced with a dilemma over the coming months as they try to maintain vital but lightly used rural bus services with a diminishing budget. Once essential journeys for access to educational, health, employment and shopping facilities have been provided, there is likely to be very little funding remaining for weekend leisure journeys.

Reducing the journeys operated increases the proportionate fixed costs per trip (for both operator and authority) and makes the operation less attractive and economic for many potential operators. This often results in only one (and sometimes no) tender bids being received, accompanied by reduced service quality and increased subsidy levels per passenger.

This situation prevailed in the Yorkshire Dales for many years with reductions in the budgets of North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) leading to the loss of many Sunday bus services which brought visitors (and their spending power) to the Dales from the West Yorkshire conurbation. In 2008 funding from YDNPA threatened to dry up completely and the NYCC budget was only sufficient to provide a skeletal service which few passengers would find attractive.

At this point the Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company (D&BCIC) stepped in to stage a unique rescue which has rejuvenated the DalesBus network. The company has secured funding of over £75,000 from numerous providers, enabling new services and initiatives to be introduced within existing budgets, and facilitating a growth in passenger numbers of over 45% in 2009.

D&BCIC has achieved this by using knowledgeable and enthusiastic professional volunteers to manage the network. D&BCIC is a not for profit organisation owned by the Yorkshire Dales Society, a registered charity,

and established in 2007 in conjunction with the Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Users Group to restore the Ilkley to Skipton Sunday bus service. Directors of the D&BCIC include transport professionals, academics and a former CPT President.

Services are operated by conventional bus operators, ranging from AS Coaches (owned by a Dales farming family seeking to diversify) to multinational Arriva. New funding has been secured from a diverse range of bodies including Metro; Nidderdale AONB; train operator Northern; Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line (FoSCL) and some visitor attractions.

Guided walks and events such as

The D&BCIC in contrast has turned around the fortunes of DalesBus

peregrine watching, children's trails, kite-making and stream-dipping have been organised to attract new passengers and visitors to the Dales. Week-day buses in school holidays from Bradford improved social inclusion, giving some people their first opportunity to visit the Dales although they are only 30 miles away.

A Sunday bus-train interchange has been established at Ribbleshead on the Settle-Carlisle line with connecting buses supported by Northern and the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle line and promoted as a branch line extension.

The Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Users Group has supported the D&BCIC with a range of activities, including promotional events at bus and rail stations, and maintenance of the www.dalesbus.org website.

D&BCIC is very keen to address social inclusion with services and promotions targeted at residents of socially deprived areas, and students

and other young people. Metrocard commuter season tickets are valid on DalesBus services from West Yorkshire, giving commuters the opportunity to recharge their batteries in the countryside. Most fares for 2010 are at or below 2008 levels.

In 2008-9 D&BCIC carried over 13,000 passengers with a budget over £50,000. In 2010 it hopes to carry well over 20,000 passengers, with new services from York increasing its catchment area. It also provides essential journeys to work for Dales residents in the tourism and health-care sectors.

In 2009 it was awarded a Stimulating Innovation for Success grant from Nottingham Business School, for whom the author devised a marketing strategy for D&BCIC and trialled some innovative marketing techniques. We identified the "4 P's of Rural Buses": Parking, Place, Price and Pollution. DalesBus services reduce pollution and congestion in the Dales; facilitate linear walks along and across the Dales; access destinations lacking adequate parking facilities; and are price competitive, especially given the ONS's calculation that the cost of motoring increased by 20% in 2009.

Colin Speakman, managing director of D&BCIC, has received expressions of interest from other rural areas, especially National Parks and AONBs, and says that the Dales model could be replicated if there was sufficient voluntary expertise available. In many cases rural bus networks, especially at weekends, are simply not promoted because there is no budget for this activity. This deprives them of valuable income from leisure users and a perpetual cycle of declining services and passengers ensues.

The D&BCIC in contrast has turned around the fortunes of DalesBus and is now setting a new standard for rural public transport.

Dr John Disney is senior lecturer and transport consultant at Nottingham Business School.



Top: AS Coaches loading on Nidderdale Rambler in Upper Nidderdale in June 2008.

Bottom: Cravenlink at Bolton Abbey in 2009



Urban transport's new challenge

A return to low cost demand management measures rather than big infrastructure projects lies ahead under the successor to the Transport Innovation Fund

Policies at Reading (main picture and top right) and Nottingham (bottom right) exemplify what the DfT wants to encourage.

The era of TIF drew to a formal close early this month with transport minister Sadiq Khan's announcement of a new Urban Transport Challenge Fund.

And with it came to an end an era of an infrastructure-led approach to solving urban transport problems such as congestion. The funds are no longer there; and where the 2000 Transport White Paper put its faith in light rail schemes, the Urban Transport Challenge ushers in once more a low-budget approach rooted in demand management, more reminiscent of policy in the straitened times of 1997. Its budget will not even be known until after the next comprehensive spending review, due some time after the election, but it takes its cue from the Sustainable Travel Towns, where, as Mr Khan said, positive impacts had been achieved "inexpensively and efficiently" through measures such as travel planning, car sharing, walking and cycling, improved pub-

DfT funds will be expected to unlock further sources of investment in recognition of the benefits that will be secured

lic transport and better marketing.

Mr Khan spoke of "a decade of genuine achievement" with transport playing a part in the regeneration and transformation of cities such as Manchester, Birmingham and Newcastle, and innovative thinking underpinning growth and development at places such as Reading and York. But over the country as a whole development had been patchy: "Many urban areas still suffer from congested roads, unreliable public transport and unpleasant street environments."

He set out two guiding principles for the future. First, it is critical that urban transport planning is embedded within broader economic, environmental and social planning as part of a long-term vision for cities; and second, there is a need for clear leadership.

"Transport has the power to make or break the success of our cities and towns," said Mr Khan. "We want every local authority to recognise that their goals on jobs,

prosperity, health and the environment cannot be achieved without a clear understanding of transport's contribution."

Cities need to offer leadership in tackling issues such as congestion, safety, health and climate change by developing innovative solutions and by bringing together "the diverse partners needed to transform urban transport".

The Transport Innovation Fund years, said the minister, had been "illuminating", and had encouraged a number of authorities to be creative in tackling transport challenges. It had brought different Greater Manchester authorities together to work on transport strategy with a broad package of proposals across the city-region. Reading was praised for its "incremental" approach to demand management, from the rebalancing of parking controls to environmentally-based traffic controls, through to defining a future level of congestion that could trigger the need for local road pricing.

But he acknowledged TIF's weaknesses – "in particular its failure to win public acceptance". In their referendum, "the people of Manchester sent out a clear message that a narrow focus on one solution – congestion charging – was not what they wanted".

Not only did TIF "teach us to build acceptance around wider economic, social and environmental objectives"; it also taught lessons about conditions under which charging was feasible. Tyne and Wear struggled to come up with a workable solution "because of its complex road network and economic and social geography" while Shrewsbury also failed to develop a viable scheme for its compact, historic centre.

For these reasons – and the current economic climate – there is a need for a new fund. The Urban Challenge Fund will encourage urban authorities "to be more ambitious and innovative". It will offer "extra resources and opportunities" as well as requiring city authorities to address some of their most intractable problems.

Based on last year's analysis by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit – which *Transport Times* considers so important it has been running a series of reports on different aspects over recent issues – it notes that the cost of congestion is estimated to be around £12bn annually. Transport choices, notably increased car use, have contributed to a reduction in physical activity and growing levels of obesity, while just "the measurable costs" of poor air quality and road accidents in urban areas "are similar to those of congestion".

The fund, said Mr Khan, will reward policies that bring about a wide range of benefits, such as enhanced mobility through a wider choice of journey; reduced congestion and more reliable journeys; better health through improved safety and greater levels of walking and cycling. Other objectives will be to create streets and public spaces "which are enjoyable places to be, where exposure to harmful emissions is reduced" and a reduced level of carbon emissions from transport. Authorities will be expected to show they are working with a wide range of partners on their plans.

Funding will be provided by "top-slicing" the DfT's budget in the next spending review and will allow resources to be focused "where they can help achieve genuine transformation" rather than being allocated by formula. But the DfT funds "will be expected to unlock further

sources of investment in recognition of the benefits that will be secured."

Proposals will be invited and will be judged against criteria to be published after the spending review. "Sustainable travel measures will be key to success," said Mr Khan. The minister acknowledged that "some very good bids" had been received to become sustainable travel cities – the budget for which has disappeared due to the state of the economy, to the disappointment of cities such as Nottingham. As a consolation, the objectives of the sustainable cities programme will be integrated into the new fund.

A discussion paper designed to elicit comments on how the fund should work suggested that packages the fund would support would include a combination of demand management measures, better traffic management and street design, sustainable travel measures and investment to encourage modal shift and better bus services. Cities and authorities would also "need to show how their transport and land use planning policies are fully integrated" and "how the scope for reducing the need to travel... will be optimised" through decisions on where housing and employment sites will be located.

Proposals will be considered against criteria such as: how challenging the proposed are; whether the package represents a reasonable balance of measures and offers value for money; whether there is "a realistic delivery plan", possibly an incremental approach linked to intermediate outcomes and targets; the prospects for leveraging in funds from external sources such as developers and primary care trusts; and how credible the proposed decision-making arrangements are.

This last point links to an intention that the fund should encourage new forms of transport governance, or at a minimum close partnership working, citing Leeds and Manchester, which have been chosen to be pilot city-regions and have identified "substantial reforms of their transport governance to ensure effective delivery."

Mr Khan said: "We particularly want to support those who are ready to seize the challenge of transformational change", "who want to work in close partnerships with their neighbours regardless of political differences" and "who have the conviction to make change happen".

Stakeholders and local authorities are invited to submit their views on the principles set out in the discussion paper by 4 June this year.

The DfT discussion document

A discussion document published alongside the Urban Transport Challenge Fund announcement gave an insight into areas that local authorities and other stakeholders will want to consider during the consultation between now and June.

DfT officials sought views in particular on how much of the DfT's budget should be devoted to the new fund; how an urban area should be defined; how to make effective use of space; what future funding sources should be investigated; how to increase bus use in the context of overall funding falling; and how to champion walking and cycling.

The level of funding will be crucial. Local authorities will want there to be enough to give them an incentive to bid, and to make an impact. A suggestion, unlikely to be taken up, is that there should be at least as much as for TIF – £200m a year.

There will be questions about the impact of "top-slicing" on maintenance funding and whether this aspect should be immune, and whether all DfT funds will be top-sliced or just local and regional funding. There is likely to be support for the fund to be drawn from a mix of capital and revenue sources, with some perhaps taken from the current major schemes budget to allow available funds to be spread widely.

On the question of bringing in wider funding sources, the holistic approach of the challenge will lead to pressure for other government departments to contribute to funding. Possible candidates include the Department of Health, primary care trusts, and the Departments for Communities and Local Government and Children, Schools and Families. But the DfT may struggle to get support from other departments.

Housing and regeneration funds, the Community Infrastructure Fund and the HCA are also candidates. Spreading the net wider, funds could be sought from big retailers, the RDA, and universities and colleges.

For the definition of an urban area, one view is that it should be equivalent to the travel to work area. An alternative approach would include multiple centres in order to focus on suburban hubs. A further question is whether an urban area would need to be a certain minimum size, equivalent to a free-standing town, or whether market towns or any area experiencing growth should qualify.

Making effective use of space will be tricky to pin down and may vary

from one place to another. One possibility is to focus on 20mph zones, which in places such as Hull have had a significant impact on community interaction.

On increasing bus use, better quality of service is likely to be seen as key, with high frequency, high quality vehicles, routes across cities, smart ticketing and lower fares as the ideal. Using bus service operators' grant to encourage multi-operator smart ticketing is likely to be supported by local authorities.

Quality bus partnerships, bus lanes and bus priority will have a role in attracting passengers, as will high quality park and ride facilities and parking policies.

Another question is likely to be how far bus infrastructure and networks need to be tied into the planning and development process.

Reactions from wider organisations included the view of the Campaign for Better Transport which said that without new money on offer cities would struggle to achieve any improvements to transport.

Director Stephen Joseph said: "The new emphasis on improving health and public spaces sounds great, but the proposed Urban Challenge Fund has no numbers or timescale attached. The truth is we expect transport funding cuts, not expansion.

"Whether the Fund becomes a reality after the election will be the key test."

Campaign group Greener Journeys called for buses to be at the heart of local authority policies. Campaign director Claire Haigh said: "The new Urban Challenge Fund offers a chance for renewed focus and investment in pro-bus measures and stronger leadership from local authorities in facing up to the tough decisions needed to deliver modal shift from car to bus. Travel by bus is a natural partner for healthier choices such as walking and cycling and buses must be at the heart of new Urban Challenge Fund projects."

Cambridgeshire, which had submitted a TIF bid but said it would only introduce congestion charging as a last resort, said it would invite Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council to work with it on a bid for the Urban Challenge Fund. This would build on the work already done for the original Cambridgeshire bid and subsequently through the Joint Transport Forum.



From top to left: Lord Adonis, Norman Baker, a UK domestic high speed train, Alstom's latest AGV, Theresa Villiers and Stewart Stevenson

When Lord Adonis first started to advance the idea of a high speed rail network in the UK, people lined up to tell him it would never happen. Giving the keynote address to last week's *Transport Times* conference, *High Speed Rail: the Next Steps*, the transport secretary explained that no-one objected to the principle; instead, he was told, "it just can't be done in this country"; "you can't get it through the planning system"; "you can't get commitment from the Treasury"; "the current rail system is in such a mess".

Ignoring their advice he pressed ahead, with the result that the Government published plans for an initial high-speed rail network last month. Lord Adonis decided that now was a propitious time to make a move because "we have largely sorted out the problems we inherited from rail privatisation"; and the completion of High Speed 1 in 2007 demonstrated that it was possible in the UK to build a high speed line to the same levels of performance and specification as those in mainland Europe, and if it could be done in Kent, the garden of England, "we could do it anywhere". In addition he rejected "British exceptionalism" on the grounds that of all the countries that had built high speed

The benefits are not just running faster but a fundamental redesign of the railway map

– Lord Adonis

lines, starting 30 years ago in the case of France and in the 1960s in Japan, "not one has regretted it": on the contrary every country had gone on from building an initial line to developing a network.

Moreover there was no other credible way to add inter-city transport capacity to meet an inevitable rise in demand: "Nobody is suggesting a new generation of motorways."

Three pillars supported the case for high speed rail, he said: capacity, connectivity and sustainability.

The proposed Y-route would run from Euston to Birmingham, then divide to pass either side of the Pennines to reach Leeds and Manchester. The high-speed lines would connect to the existing West and East Coast main lines at Preston and just south of York respectively to continue to Liverpool, Newcastle, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

This would provide a threefold increase in inter-city capacity, said Lord Adonis, relieving pressure on both the East Coast, West Coast and Midland main lines and providing more space on them for local and regional services and freight.

"There is not the alternative of doing nothing," he said. Rather, there would need to be a series of disruptive upgrades such as four-tracking the Chiltern line and the West Coast

line wherever it had not already been done; at most these would only double capacity, without providing higher speeds, and would in all likelihood end up costing more.

Regarding connectivity he said: "The benefits are not just running faster but a fundamental redesign of the railway map. We are imprisoned by the Victorian route map built by separate companies trying to connect their networks to London, each with their own separate lines and separate termini. The effect has been very poor connectivity between conurbations outside London."

A rail journey between Birmingham and Manchester, 82 miles, takes an hour and a half, for example; the 116 track miles between Birmingham and Manchester take two hours to cover.

"Connectivity between cities outside London is far worse than between them and London. We have a once in a century chance to reinvent the rail map," Lord Adonis said. "Routing the line to our second city then routing west and east transforms connectivity."

The proposed Crossrail interchange at Old Oak Common adds "another layer of connectivity benefits". Apart from the main aim of being only 10 minutes from Heathrow via Heathrow Express, from here the West End would be 10 min-

moment



High speed rail plans offer a chance to break out of the confines of the Victorian rail system. Politicians and rail experts lined up to offer their views at a *Transport Times* conference. **David Fowler** was there



utes, the City 15 and Canary Wharf 20. Connections would be better than from the terminus at Euston and modelling suggested a third of passengers would change here.

From the point of view of sustainability, there would be no net addition to carbon emissions from the capacity provided by the new line, in contrast to attempting to provide it by any other means. Land take would be half that of a motorway.

The transport secretary has commissioned further work from former Conservative transport minister Lord Mawhinney on the options for a high-speed connection all the way to Heathrow, and he has also asked High Speed 2 to look again at ways of connecting to High Speed 1.

Following this work, a formal consultation process will begin in October. Detailed design of the Y-route beyond Birmingham is starting and is expected to take 18 months, after which there will be consultation over the detail of this.

A hybrid bill to gain planning and legislative approval for the whole project is expected to take three years to get through Parliament. This would allow construction to start in 2017 or 2018, roughly when Crossrail should be complete and allowing the project teams assembled for Crossrail to transfer to the new project. The annual outlay would be

similar to that of Crossrail. On this timetable, services could then begin around 2026.

"What we need to do now is get on with it," Lord Adonis concluded.

Asked whether the estimated seven years to get through the planning phase was too pessimistic, he said that aiming to be a successor project to Crossrail was a sensible way forward. "I don't think it's possible to short-circuit this further," he said. Part of the reason for the timescale is that the line has to go through the Chilterns area of outstanding natural beauty. "There will be an exhaustive and iterative process of consultation and engagement." A bigger risk was that the timing could slip. "It will be a challenge to keep to that timetable," Lord Adonis said. Any slips "could lose a whole Parliament" if the result was that the hybrid bill missed its slot.

Shadow transport secretary Theresa Villiers claimed credit on behalf of the Conservatives for getting the Government to take high speed rail seriously but said that though the parties agreed on the principle there remained differences in detail.

High speed rail would be "a top priority" in a Cameron government, she said. "It's clear that high speed rail could deliver huge benefits for growth, rejuvenation and jobs, far

High speed rail would be a top priority in a Cameron government

– Theresa Villiers

more widely than the destinations directly served by the new lines," she said. "It could also help to address the prosperity gap between the south east and the rest of the country."

In a speech that many thought struck too partisan a note, she attacked Lord Adonis's proposals as "flawed" and "not ambitious enough".

She said: "The transformation won't come about with a line that doesn't get north of Birmingham. When High Speed 2 was established we regretted that its remit focused only on the West Midlands as stage one. We had already promised to take high speed rail to Manchester and Leeds. The second step must include a line to Scotland."

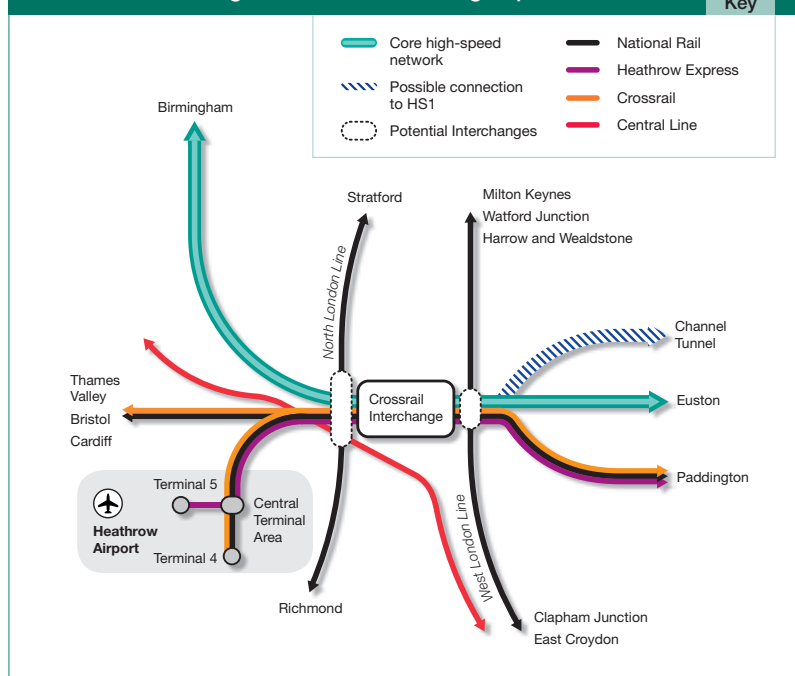
She also called for faster progress. Apparently unaware that Lord Adonis's planned hybrid bill would include the entire route to Manchester and Leeds as a single project she said: "I don't believe Labour's proposal to complete a line to Birmingham by 2026 is demanding enough." The Conservatives proposed to start construction by 2015 "with a line between London, Manchester and Leeds completed by 2027".

On Heathrow she said "We are

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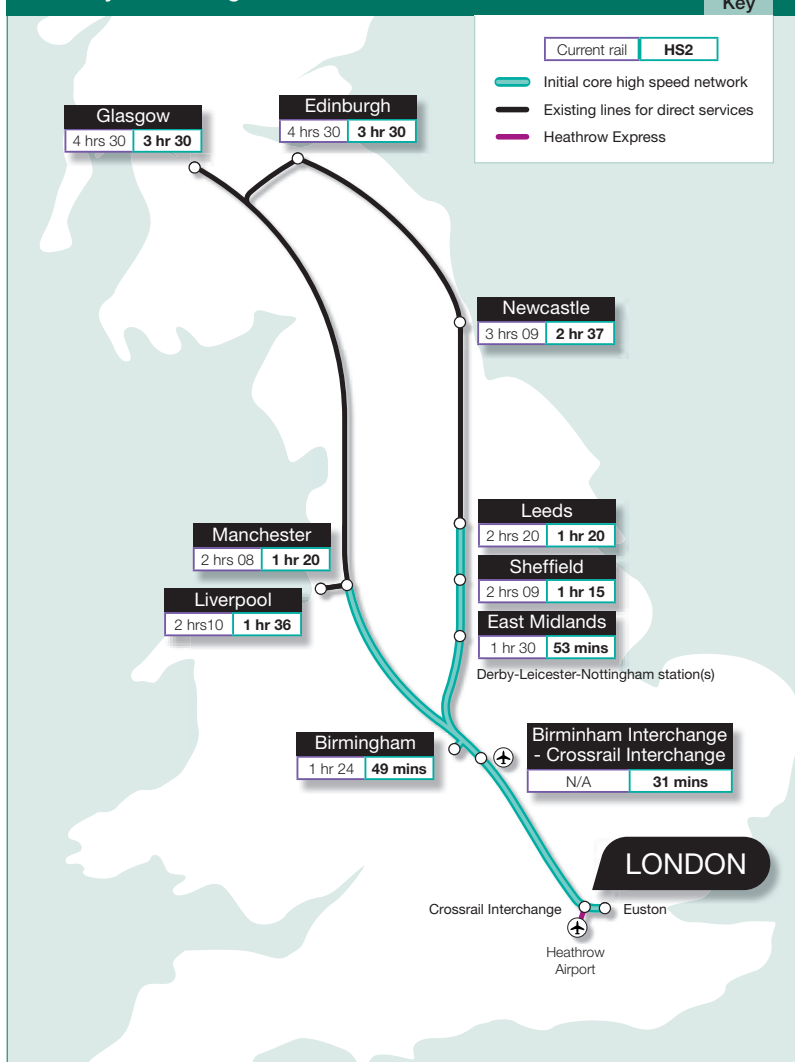
high speed rail

Crossrail Interchange connections from High Speed Two



Journey times between cities outside London would be greatly reduced (below) while the Crossrail interchange would provide fast lines to central London and the City

Journey time savings to and from London



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concerned they already could be getting it wrong. A failure to integrate our most important airport directly into the high speed network would be a major missed opportunity." Labour support for a third runway had "blighted" its vision: "They don't seem to have sufficiently considered the Arup proposals." Arup's Heathrow Hub would be a multi-platform interchange north of the M4 near Iwer, connecting high speed services and the Great Western main line, with a rapid transit system to the main terminal area.

Labour had failed to grasp that "high speed rail should be an alternative to air, not additional".

She added: "It's essential we connect High Speed 1 to High Speed 2. Any proposal that doesn't lacks basic common sense."

On the route to Birmingham the Conservatives reserved their position. "We're not allowing the High Speed 2 report to close down options. We will be actively considering and reviewing alternatives."

Liberal Democrat shadow transport secretary Norman Baker said it was "good news" that all the parties agreed on the basic elements of policy. The differences were "nuances".

However he reiterated that the LibDems were committed to connecting to Scotland.

The LibDems supported high speed rail for three reasons. First, its economic impact, particularly in areas of the UK where economic growth has been less than elsewhere. Second, its potential to reduce the UK's carbon footprint. Until now, he said, the DfT had behaved as if in a silo and the job of tackling climate change was someone else's responsibility. The LibDems estimated that 34 million air journeys to the UK and near European destinations could be changed to rail.

Third, the necessity to free capacity on the existing network.

He added that in due course high speed should be extended to Wales and the south-west of England: "It would be helpful if the DfT would set out a strategy for high-speed rail looking 30-40 years ahead," he said.

He added that the LibDems had some concerns about the preferred route. First, the connection between High Speeds 1 and 2: "It seems absolutely crucial to be able to get from Manchester or Scotland to Europe without having to change. The idea of having to get off the train, catch a tube and get on a train again is discredited. A traveler

[between Euston and St Pancras] is no substitute."

On Heathrow he said: "Having started from the premise that Heathrow should be part of the network I have come to the view it shouldn't be." This was because of the time penalty, which could add up to 15 minutes to a 45-minute journey to Birmingham, and the question of how many people would be prepared to travel to Heathrow by rail if there was a direct connection but wouldn't be prepared to go via Old Oak Common.

He criticised "candyfloss objections" from the Conservatives. "What Theresa Villiers has said looks like posturing for the election, when there is genuine cross-party agreement on the concept. The Conservatives are saying they want to go further and faster when they are potentially slowing things down."

He added that it was important to identify secure funding to avoid the sort of stop/go progress that had dogged Crossrail and Thameslink – such as the Liberal Democrats' proposed infrastructure bank or lorry road user charging, or efficiency savings from Network Rail. He added that it was important to continue to invest in the conventional network. The LibDems would "cancel the major roads policy and transfer the funds to rail", he said.

Scottish minister for transport, infrastructure and climate change Stewart Stevenson described the announcement of plans for the Y-shaped route as "very exciting – a pivotal moment".

Expressing disappointment that



Scotland was “not part of phase one” he said that it was “vital” that the lines go beyond Manchester and Leeds. “There is no alternative,” he said in an impassioned speech, if Scotland were not to be diminished as a place to do business. There would be significant benefits from faster connections to cities such as Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester.

“Our objective is to close down domestic aviation routes by having a more attractive service. We are determined not to be left on the sidelines. The commitment within Scotland to promote the high speed rail case is absolute.”

Scotland’s economy could gain by as much as £20bn, he said. “Our preference is for one railway that comes close to Edinburgh and Glasgow before splitting.” London to Edinburgh and Glasgow, he pointed out, were the ideal distance apart to abstract passengers from aviation. But “only a full line will give the full journey times and modal shift benefits.”

At present there are 7.3 million journeys to Scotland annually, but only a million are by rail. “I believe this could switch to 80% by high speed rail”.

He committed the Scottish government to working with the DfT and its partners on taking the project northwards

Scotland doesn’t have the ability to borrow to help fund the line, but it would build on its existing engagement with the Department. “Our engagement is considerable and we generally have similar objectives,” he said. “Long term robust

Lessons from Europe

Christine Dejean, head of the northern European market for SNCF, set out some of the lessons France had learned from 30 years of high speed rail, since the original line between Paris and Lyon was built.

A dedicated passenger line had created “a great market” and was 60% cheaper than a mixed passenger and freight line would have been.

However a loop is now being built around Lyon for freight (the high speed line avoids the city centre but freight still goes through). “Had we thought of this at the beginning we would have saved a lot of money.”

The Paris-Lyon route is now struggling to meet demand, and a new project is being developed to double the route. Again, if this had been

foreseen, the original line could have been designed for four tracks from the outset.

The French network is still growing – there are projects which could double it in size by 2020 – but as the number of route-kilometres increases, passenger numbers do not grow at a proportionate rate, so the rate of return on investment is not as good as initially, she said.

As the success of the high speed line grew there was a clamour for more extensions. “It was so successful everyone wanted a high speed train stop,” said Ms Dejean. But when that happens the profitability declines, she said.

Between three and four hours is the psychological point at which

passengers transfer to rail from air. “At four hours you can attract 40% of the air-rail market; at three hours’ travel time you get 66-70%. Between three and four hours is OK, but the closer to three hours the better.”

France is quite a large country, she pointed out, “but we don’t have many low-cost airlines.” Instead, high speed rail represents low cost travel.

She added that “complementarity with airports is key”. Some 3.5 million passengers use Paris Charles de Gaulle TGV station, because it connects to 58 cities in France. There are plans to add two more platforms. So at airports there should be “through running or nothing” to maximise the potential market.

partnership working is the way to take the project forward.”

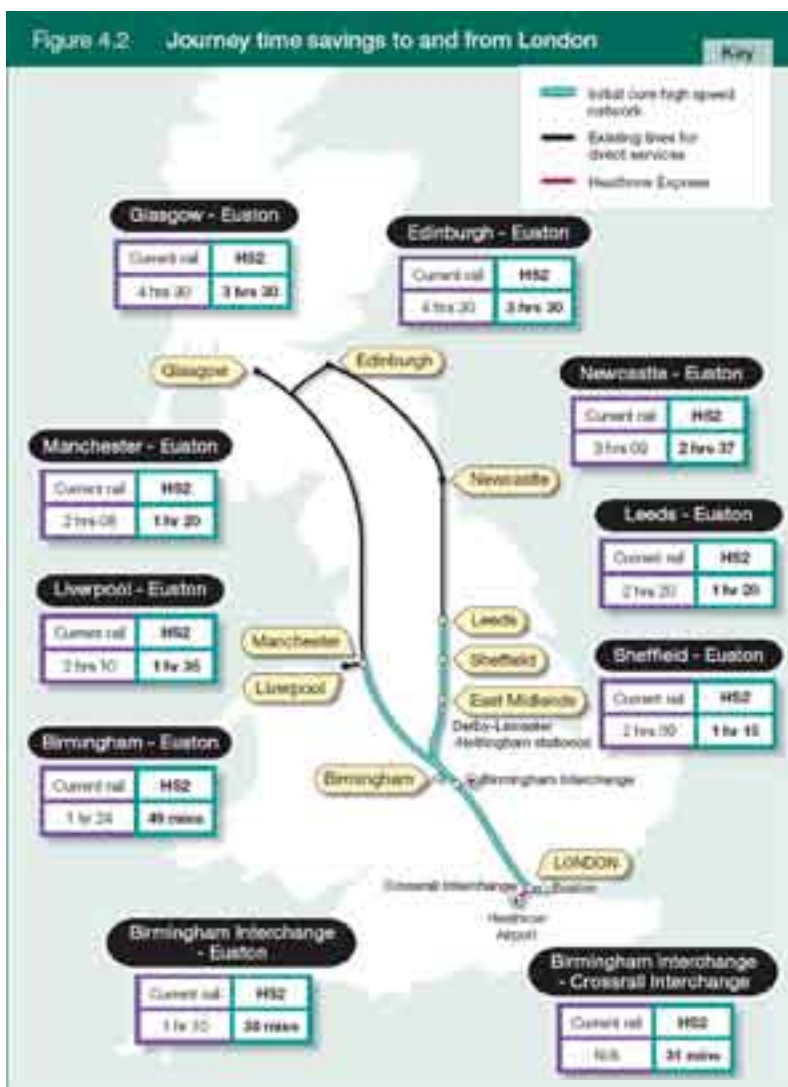
John Shipley, leader of Newcastle City Council and representative for regional development agency One North East on the Northern Way Transport Compact, said that in his view high speed rail “was about the integrity of the UK – not just the bottom third”. It should also provide better connectivity, which he viewed as more important than speed for its own sake, and bring environment benefits by transferring passengers from air to rail.

Considering the government announcement against these criteria, he supported Norman Baker’s call for the DfT to announce a 30-40 year strategy. Connectivity he rated “good” but there were questions over links to Europe and Heathrow. On speed there was a welcome improvement, especially between the north of England and the Midlands. However he questioned how much impact there would be on demand for air travel.

Declaring himself happy overall with the proposals, he said: “We believe it’s fundamentally important to have this kind of transport infrastructure,” adding that the North East region would be doing further studies, looking at evidence from sources such as Greengauge 21’s reports.

He also stressed that any continuation of the high speed network northwards should go by the east coast rather than the west because of the east’s higher concentration of industry and population. He underlined the importance also of the proposed electrification of the trans-Pennine route going ahead. “If the only connection is by the west coast, the North East will suffer,” he said.

Having started from the premise that Heathrow should be part of the network I have come to the view it shouldn’t be – Norman Baker



Preparing for a rail revolution

In the past five years the prospects of a domestic high-speed railway in the UK have undergone a remarkable transformation. From a position where high-speed rail was regarded as too expensive, too limited and above all, too difficult to expand beyond the Channel Tunnel-St Pancras route, there is now a solid consensus between political parties and business that the country needs a north-south route soon.

The term “high-speed rail” has changed over the years to reflect advances in technology. In the early 1970s high speed was generally taken to mean anything over 200km/h (125mph). As train speeds have increased the benchmark is now widely considered to be at least 250km/h (155mph) and the bulk of the world’s high-speed railways now operate at around 300km/h (186mph). Some already operate faster than this, at 350km/h (217mph), and trains running at 400km/h – 250mph – will not be long in coming.

There are few practical arguments against a north-south high-speed line: it will be the most efficient and sustainable way of increasing transport capacity between our largest cities; it will boost the economies of the cities it serves; and as an additional bonus it will release capacity on conventional railways for freight and more local passenger services.

Opponents of such a scheme cannot use the state of the economy as a stick to beat it with. As with any major infrastructure project a high-speed railway is bound to be expensive, but even if a decision were taken to build it tomorrow it would be some years before the big costs – construction and commissioning – were incurred, by which time the economy should have improved substantially.

None of this means that construction of High Speed 2 is a given but it is more likely now than ever.

Driving HS2 north from London to Birmingham and beyond will be a straightforward, if demanding, affair in civil engineering terms, but key operational decisions will need to be taken very quickly once approval is given if the railway is to maximise its potential. Though trains will be most visible aspect of HS2, it is the system that keeps the trains running smoothly and safely – the train control system (which will be far beyond conventional signalling) – which is going to take most thought.



With general agreement emerging on the need for a north-south high-speed rail link, one UK company is already preparing to play a major part in transforming rail travel

The basic train control system is already decided, thanks to European Union legislation which mandates the installation of European Railway Traffic Management System (ERTMS) on all future high-speed railways. In its most advanced incarnations it is probably the most capable system of its type anywhere in the world.

One man whose company is well prepared to meet the challenge of installing the complex and safety critical signalling systems on Britain’s first domestic high-speed railway is the chief executive officer of Invensys Rail, James Drummond. Under his leadership Invensys Rail, part of process automation and control systems provider Invensys plc, has established a dominant position in Europe’s biggest high-speed rail market, Spain, and has more experience and knowledge of the UK’s signalling than any other company, with a track record that goes back for decades.

Drummond says Invensys Rail has long been preparing for a UK high-speed railway: “For some years we have been developing a range of signalling equipment that is designed to work as part of ERTMS as well as alongside existing systems because very few high-speed rail networks exist in isolation.

“We believe that it is now a matter of when the UK builds its first high-speed railway rather than if, and – as a UK company with global operations – that we have a blend of local knowl-

edge and high-speed rail expertise that can make a real difference to the smooth and trouble-free train control system installation and commissioning that is going to be crucial to any such project.”

This range of capability might give Invensys Rail the edge over its foreign competitors. If HS2 is built and operated as an entirely separate railway from the conventional UK network then any of a number of suppliers can offer capable solutions. But if, as planned, HS2 is connected with existing routes in order to maximise the number of towns and cities with a high-speed service, from a train control system point of view that makes installing and commissioning the new railway vastly more complicated.

In coldly operational terms, through running makes little sense as trains which operate on conventional routes as well as HS2 will have to be smaller than their HS2 dedicated counterparts. Capacity will also be diluted if trains join HS2 from other routes and have to accelerate to a top speed which ought to be at the upper end of the high-speed spectrum.

Politically, however, there will be votes in providing connections to HS2 (as the French have found with their TGV network) so it is unlikely to be long before connections are made and it may also be that connecting more towns and cities to the route can spread the economic benefits far beyond its main destinations. The

difficulty is that where HS2 meets the conventional network, integrating the very different signalling systems will not be easy.

Again, though, Drummond believes Invensys Rail is prepared: “For some time now much of the signalling equipment we have supplied to the UK has been compatible with ERTMS as well as the existing systems. It is pointless for a company such as Network Rail to renew life-expired signalling equipment now, only to have to replace it in a few years when it extends ERTMS to the wider network, so we have made a point of ensuring this migration will be as straightforward and economic as possible – and if a future high-speed railway connects to the conventional network at locations where our compatible equipment is already installed it will be much easier to link the two. We are as ready as we can possibly be to play our part in High Speed 2,” he concludes.

There will be much debate over the coming months about the precise form a high-speed railway will take, both in terms of its route and whether its remit will include trains running to and from the conventional network. But it’s encouraging to see that a UK company which can genuinely describe itself as a world leader is already preparing to play a key role in what promises to be a fundamental change in the UK’s transport network.

national transport awards

Awards dinner 2010

The Awards will be presented on the
15th July 2010 at the
Palace Hotel, Manchester

The Awards ceremony is an excellent
opportunity to showcase new initiatives and
provides an environment which brings the
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London leads the way

Despite uncertain economic times there was still much to celebrate at this year's London Transport awards

Transport commissioner Peter Hendy made an eloquent defence of transport investment at this year's London Transport Awards. He called on politicians at national level to keep their nerve and maintain their commitment to investment in London's transport (page 27). As in past recessions, he said, this will help the capital lead the country to recovery.

The awards themselves, he argued, were testament to what had been achieved under the mayoral system. And in many cases they prefigured what could be expected nationally under the new Urban Challenge Fund and the "Total Place" philosophy, with local authorities working with a range of partners to address a wide set of objectives including health and sustainability.

Transport Borough of the Year

Camden, which won the prestigious, TfL-sponsored, Transport Borough Of The Year accolade, is a case in point. It has shown excellent increases in cycling with a 134% rise since 2001 and is already 2% ahead of its 2012 target to achieve a 10% cycling modal

share. It is also ahead of its target to reduce motor traffic by 15% by 2011, having achieved a 15.3% fall by 2008. Camden heavily promotes the use of car clubs, increasing members by 60% and launching the first plug-in electric car club in the UK last year. The borough has an impressive programme of high quality public realm improvements, and is a key partner in the Route 38 Corridor which has delivered impressive bus and general traffic journey times. Camden's involvement in undertaking trials and encouraging the use of sustainable technologies and fuels is exceptional, said the judges.

Public Transport Operator of the Year

London Underground took the award for Public Transport Operator of the Year, sponsored by Serco, for the third year running. It achieved its highest-ever customer satisfaction scores in 2008/09 and carried more passengers than ever before. Following the collapse of Metronet, two of the major upgrade programmes are now being managed directly by London Underground and are progressing well. It also delivered a new tube

station at Wood Lane on the Hammersmith & City line and a completely rebuilt station at Shepherds Bush on the Central Line in 2008.

Thames Clippers was highly commended in this category. **First Great Western** was named Most Improved Public Transport Operator of the Year.

Most Improved Transport Borough

Most Improved Transport Borough Enfield was recognised for progress across a number of areas. It now has the lowest casualty figures for over 40 years and is on track to meet or exceed all casualty reduction targets by end of 2010. Enfield has reduced car journeys to school by almost 12% since 2005 – one of the largest modal shifts away from the car in London. It has reduced CO₂ emissions from its own fleet of vehicles by a range of initiatives.

Improvements to Bus Services

The City of London & Atkins picked up the award for Improvements to Bus Services for their Route 38 Corridor Management project. The

project was impressive in its scale and in the strong results it has achieved through partnership with Camden, Islington, Hackney and Westminster. So far it has made a 28% improvement in bus journey times and a 30% improvement in general traffic journey time.

Road Safety, Traffic Management and Enforcement

The award for Road Safety, Traffic Management and Enforcement, sponsored by First Group, went to **Islington's Child Casualty Reduction Scheme**, a dramatic demonstration of the effect a combined approach to road safety can have. This was the work of a team of road safety officers and traffic engineering specialists assembled in 2004 to pioneer a school safety programme. It was targeted on high-risk areas where there were concentrations of accidents, and on children travelling to schools in areas with higher traffic speeds, where data showed that they suffered a greater risk of serious injuries.

The initiative has produced dramatic results in Islington's accident reduction statistics, with the total number of child casualties halved.

Highly commended were **Brent**, for its partnership working for School Road Safety Awareness, and **Bromley** for its "Your Streets" initiative.

Travel Information and Marketing

Bromley's school travel planning team, just three strong, was the winner in the Travel Information And Marketing category for its school travel plans. The team has an excellent working relationship with schools, with all of them completing the necessary documentation for a school travel plan on a yearly basis.

It runs a number of promotions, such as Walk of Art, a project which sponsors local artists to work with schools, Poetry in Motion in which pupils are asked to write poems based on their walk to school during Walk to School Week.

Car use for school journeys across the borough has been reduced by over 12% – 5000 car journeys saved, corresponding to 6.5 tons of CO₂ every day.



Frontline Employee award winners Winston Dottin and Kay Shatford, flanked by Grant Stott (left) and Peter Hendy

Cycling Improvements

Bike It Tower Hamlets, launched in September 2008, won the Cycling Improvements category, sponsored by TfL. It is a cycle to school initiative whose aim is to create a lasting pro-cycling culture in schools.

It is a UK first for being funded by an NHS Trust. It brings together NHS Tower Hamlets, the Borough of Tower Hamlets, cycling charity Sustrans, voluntary and community groups, the private sector and local people. It has achieved dramatic results in participating schools with a more than fivefold increase in number of children cycling to school every day.

Lambeth was highly commended for its Cyclist and HGV Awareness initiative.

Walking and Public Realm

Redbridge came out top in the Walking and Public Realm category with two-year programme of improvements for pedestrians at Wanstead.

The objectives were to increase walking for shorter trips to the high street, the two Underground Stations, the bus terminus and school. A holistic approach was adopted to improving the area around the High Street to focus on commuter walking routes. Lighting was improved, crossing points were upgraded to meet Disability Discrimination Act standards, two historic water fountains were renovated, signs were rationalised and street clutter reduced. Cycle parking was added and the Underground stations renovated.

Transport for London was highly commended for the £6m renovation of Woolwich Town Centre, undertaken with Greenwich council.

Technology

Southern took the accolade in the Technology section for its pioneering use of real-time information in its Selhurst maintenance depot.

Like most depots, the Selhurst site was managed using faxes, phone calls and handwritten notes, all of which were prone to errors. Southern's partner Dailys UK (an expert in wireless machine-to-machine technology) designed a bespoke system for the depot from scratch. Since its introduction in April 2009 productivity has improved by as much as 30% in some areas. Instances of the train crew (or engineering staff) being directed to the wrong train – have been reduced by 30% and late starts have been reduced. There is more effective communication and paper use has been decreased by 125,000 sheets a year.



Shashi Verma (centre) won an outstanding contribution award, presented by Mark Prior of EC Harris

Transport Partnership Project

The award for Transport Partnership Project, sponsored by *GoSkills*, went to **Greenwich Council and AEG** for the O₂ Travel Plan.

Prior to the opening of the O₂ entertainment complex within the former Millennium Dome (with its 20,000 capacity arena) the council made it a condition that a travel plan was developed with the aim of encouraging travel by non-car modes.

With 98 targets and a rigorous 20-year monitoring programme, the O₂ Travel Plan was heralded as an industry leader, binding owner AEG to commitments on a scale never seen before.

AEG's communication strategy includes a dedicated transport section on the O₂ website. Each customer is sent a 'see you soon' email providing transport information to the venue and pre-booking is encouraged to assist demand management.

During Tube closures bespoke travel guides are sent out to all ticket holders and replacement services are included within the TfL journey planner. Within the O₂ Arena itself a live feed to the Jubilee Line is displayed to provide up to date information.

AEG even acquired Thames Clippers in 2006 to provide a river boat service to the venue.

The first monitoring report in June 2009 showed 87 out of 98 targets being fully met, including 75% of customers and 90% of staff travelling by non car modes.

Station of the Year

The **Docklands Light Railway's** upgrade of its original London terminus, Tower Gateway, took the award for Station of the Year.

Tower Gateway was opened in 1987. The original island layout of the station was not designed to serve the high numbers of passengers using the station 22 years later, resulting in platform overcrowding.

An upgrade of station finished in March 2009, with a number of improvements to relieve congestion and speed up passenger flows. The island platform was replaced with new three-car-length horseshoe platforms where passengers board from one side and alight on the other. The wider platforms give a greater feeling of safety.

Columns were removed to improve passenger circulation. New canopies have replaced the old ones and are bigger to give better weather protection.

The station successfully coped with 35,000 passengers on its busiest day of 2009, the day of the London Marathon.

Most Innovative Project

The award for innovation was claimed by **Islington** for its Vouchers for Permits project. As part of its climate change initiative the borough offered its 31,000 parking permit holders the chance to exchange their permits for a £200 voucher, to be used either for car club membership with Streetcar or

towards buying a bicycle at Holloway Cycles.

Between March 2008 and March 2009 245 residents responded, of which 156 were eligible. Of these, 95 chose the bike option and 61 the car club voucher.

A follow-up survey found that participants reduced their car mileage by 66.2% from 69 miles to 23 miles weekly per person. They have increased the time they spend on trains and tubes from 3.2 to 3.9 hours weekly (up 21.9%) and on buses from 1.9 to 3 hours weekly (up 57.9%). They have increased cycling time from 1.5 to 2.5 hours weekly and walking from 3.8 to 5.6 hours weekly.

The project is estimated to have reduced CO₂ emissions by between 80 and 97 tonnes annually.

Go-Ahead London's GoGreen campaign was highly commended.

Team or partnership

The award for a team or partnership went to **Haringey and Enfield's Communities Road Safety project**, whose aim is to decrease the disproportionate number of people from areas of deprivation or from black African and minority ethnic communities killed or seriously injured.

Crucial to the initiative was a partnership with Edmonton Islamic Centre. The centre provided access to community organisations such as two Arabic schools based there; active representation on its steering group; lan-

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london transport awards

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guage skills; and intimate knowledge of target group. It also provided input into development of initiatives.

Road safety events are timed to complement other activities within the centre. The two Arabic schools have placed emphasis on road safety – holding road safety themed assemblies, launching competitions and providing children with the opportunity to promote and champion road safety with their peers. Family pedestrian training courses have developed community members' road user skills. TfL accident data shows a 10% reduction in all casualties for this area since the project commenced.

TfL, Southern and DfT were highly commended for their initiative to install gates on 12 stations as part of the re-letting of the South Central rail franchise as was TfL and Bromley's problem-solving partnership.

Contributions to Sustainable Transport

Transport for London's low carbon bus programme is intended to reduce its carbon footprint in line with the Mayor's climate change plan. The two elements are to introduce hybrid buses (more fuel efficient, cleaner and quieter) rapidly in the short/medium term and to move to "zero-emission" technology such as hydrogen fuel cell power in the longer term.

Under phase one of the hybrid programme 56 hybrid buses from four manufacturers have been evaluated and proved successful in service. Results show a 41% reduction in fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions, a 40% reduction in nitrogen oxides and 5dBA noise reduction in the EU standard test.

Phase two, the introduction of hybrids widely across the fleet, is now under way.

Islington was highly commended for its "green fleet" policy of replacing vehicles in its fleet with the lowest-emission vehicle suitable for each role.

Most Influential Transport Achievement

This special award was made to Sutton in recognition of the achievements of its Smarter Travel Sutton project.

This initiative has achieved such dramatic results, the judges felt, that it deserved to be publicly recognised. The strategy has dramatically changed the way people in the borough travel, achieving a 50% increase in cycling, a 19% reduction in pupils travelling to school by car, a 13% increase in bus use, a percentage point modal shift away from car use,



Joe Weiss (centre) was recognised for his Lifetime Contribution, pictured here with Grant Stott and Nick Lester

and a 17% reduction in cycle theft. It was, the judges said, an example of a project that achieves "such effective results that they set the benchmark for others to aspire to".

Awards for Individuals: Frontline Employee of the Year

A joint award was made in this category, to Winston Dottin of First London buses and Kay Shatford of London Underground.

Mr Dottin recently received his 33rd year Safe Driving Award and is engaged in a range of voluntary activities, which range from organising an annual public transport workers' service of thanksgiving to co-ordinating a community-based float for the Notting Hill Carnival. Kay Shatford represents a clear example of someone going beyond the call of duty, both as a part-time customer service assistant on the Central Line and as British Transport Police Homebeat Liaison champion for the Buckhurst Hill group of stations. Peter Stoneley of London Overground Rail Operations and Comfort Nkrumah of First London Buses were highly commended.

Road Streetworks Contractor of the Year

Barhale Construction won the Road Streetworks Contractor of the Year, an award nominated by TfL. TfL said the company has been extremely co-operative, particularly at work

sites where the rebuilding of cable chambers was necessary, both on the Victoria Embankment and in Victoria Street. At both sites the contractor worked extended hours, seven days a week, with the result that both chamber constructions were completed quickly, allowing these busy roads return to traffic well ahead of schedule.

Customer Service Team of the Year

North Harrow station staff retained the LUL Customer Service Team of the Year, decided by a vote among passengers. In the TfL-sponsored award, over 2,500 votes were received from the public for 270 different station teams. The five members of the North Harrow team, who have a reputation among regular users for their helpfulness, friendliness and for providing a personal touch to station service, held off a strong challenge from a number of larger, busier stations.

Awards nominated by the judges

Tom Edwards, named Journalist of the Year, sponsored by Tube Lines, impressed the judges with his extensive and balanced coverage of transport stories in London. The judges said: "He has developed an in-depth understanding of the sector which has allowed him to speak authoritatively on the stories he has covered."

The City of London's Joe Weiss

was recognised for his Lifetime Contribution to Local Transport in London. He retires this year after devoting most of his working life to improving transport in the capital, showing leadership, drive and energy in transforming the city's performance on transport, which gained it the Transport Borough of the Year award in 2007. His expertise and knowledge has been influential right across London, said the judges.

The Outstanding Contribution to Transport across London, sponsored by EC Harris, went to Shashi Verma, TfL's head of ticketing. As the man in charge of Oyster, the world's largest smartcard ticket system, he has focused on improving performance, reducing the cost and extending the reach of Oyster to London's national rail and river services. He is also developing the next generation of fare collection systems for London.

A special award for an Outstanding Contribution to National Transport was presented by *Transport Times* publisher David Begg to Transport Secretary Andrew Adonis. Lord Adonis was praised for building cross-party support for his policies, particularly high speed rail; for prioritising funding for Crossrail; for bringing rail electrification to the forefront; for a drive to improve facilities for cyclists at the capital's rail stations; and for "a personal crusade" to improve conditions for passengers at the UK's worst stations.

We must all keep our nerve

It's ten years since the establishment of the Mayor and the current system of London governance, which is a good reason to reflect on the enormous change that has been made to the quality and quantity of transport in London.

This city would not have won any awards on the world stage in 2000. Well, maybe one for economy – or, more accurately, parsimony. True, the Jubilee Line had just been built; the rest of the Tube was on a maintenance holiday as a result of that and the PPP. Otherwise, it was business as usual, which meant minimum spend, minimum quality and little, and tentative, innovation.

Then the new London governance structure came in – with a mayor, and now a second mayor, fully exploiting their position on the big political stage, and with transport their biggest responsibility.

The mayors – and mayoral system – have made their mark. And, for transport I think the results have surpassed all expectations.

To 2008, there has been a 7% shift from car travel to public transport. We said 5% to 2005 was a world-beating figure – 7% is even more so.

The quality and quantity of public transport has been transformed – an entirely low-floor bus fleet, a Tube with passenger-focused staff and management, more and better information, a transformed DLR and Croydon Tramlink, a renaissance of the orbital railway round London, a transformation of door-to-door transport. And, of course, huge increases of passenger numbers.

Infrastructure is transforming if not transformed: despite the PPP, stations have changed, systems improved, with seven-car Jubilee trains, and more new rolling stock on its way; better road maintenance, more traffic signals, and more cameras.

And what about the real innovation – congestion charging, never before done on this scale; a Low Emission Zone, the only one in the UK; hybrid buses; and Oyster, the world's most successful smartcard.

And local innovation – the transformation of local implementation plans and borough funding, dou-



Hendy: "Expand London's transport systems to create work and wealth"

bled in 10 years, and now used for walking, cycling and "total place" and public space initiatives.

Sadiq Khan has announced a projected change in the TIF funding – called the Urban Challenge Fund – to award funding to policies that deliver a wide range of benefits. In London, in partnerships between London's Boroughs and TfL over the last ten years, we already have this approach: it works.

The new arrangements for LIPs and borough funding, instituted by Boris, really make the most of the idea that better targeted transport spending not only produces transport benefits but helps sustainability, healthy living, the local economy, and people's feelings about where they live and how they live there. Many of the awards this evening show how good schemes can fulfil these multiple objectives.

The picture going forward, however, is painted in darker colours and on a smaller canvas, whoever forms the next government. The national financial crisis must lead to reductions in public spending, and all the debate is about when and by how much. Nothing will be untouched; every penny will have to be fought over and justified.

Where we stand in London is this: we are the most productive part of the UK economy, and the climb out of the recession is starting right here. The population is still increasing, and the City's productivity and growth is still challenged by transport overcrowding,

congestion and unreliability.

Fortunately, the projects we need to enable the city to continue to grow are defined, starting or started. Thameslink, Crossrail, the Tube upgrades, the Overground and DLR upgrades are all in progress, and although, of course, they need to be vigorously reviewed to make sure nothing is wasted, we must carry on with them.

Of those not yet committed, I want to single out one: the signalling for the Metropolitan, District, Hammersmith and City and Circle Lines (the sub-surface lines). If anyone doubts the need for investment both to replace obsolete equipment and improve capacity, come to look at the signal cabin at Harrow on the Hill. You can't look into the equipment room, actually: that's because the cabling in it is so fragile if it is touched the insulation crumbles. Tim O'Toole said that London would be able to tell whether we were serious in the upgrade of the tube when the sub-surface line signalling contract was let – and he was right. It will be a critical test.

Another is the work to be done by Tube Lines in the second seven and a half years of the PPP. We are in a very difficult position with Tube Lines. The Jubilee Line upgrade is late; the Northern Line upgrade will be late; the arbiter has suggested so far that Tube Lines' costs for the next eight years should be about £400m more than we believe, or can afford. He thinks he might decide that TfL should

raise this balance as our borrowing will be cheaper. This would be an extraordinary position, given the original PPP proposition that market discipline would force greater efficiency. In any event, we have no further borrowing capacity. But make no mistake, unless the cost is right, or there's more money, something would have to give.

Let's suppose that might be some element of the Piccadilly Line upgrade. Whatever the future of Tube Lines and the PPP, the Piccadilly will need its new signalling and trains too. The signalling is over 50 years old, and it was for its Earl's Court control room that we were famously buying parts on eBay. You might understand why the Mayor is so insistent, on behalf of London, that there is no descoping as a result of the Arbiter's decisions in the next few days. Watch this space.

My predecessors knew all about managing transport in London in a recession. Their answer, as ours is, was to look forward to the future of the City, and expand the system, and on the way create work and wealth. We have the schemes, we are creating the employment and we will deliver the capacity increases. We just need wise and determined politicians at national level to keep their nerve on schemes which have every good reason to continue, paid for by a funding package already in place.

Is this a stout defence of the status quo? Well, yes, in a way. We – TfL, the boroughs – are saving money, by cutting overheads, staff and non-essential activity. Boris would never have put the fares up without making sure TfL was ruthlessly saving money. Our offer to national government is: follow what we've done, save on everything, let the fares take some pain, but preserve investment and the service levels that make this city work. For it is those things that will make London grow into the future and support the economic revival on which the national economy depends.

Peter Hendy is Commissioner of Transport for London. This is an edited version of his address to the 2010 London Transport Awards.

Passenger Focus exists to make a difference to all passengers and tackle examples of the poor service they receive. Our primary goal is quite simply to get the best deal for passengers. We're independent and consumer focused, and as far as we're concerned all decisions on transport should start and finish with the passenger experience in mind.

Whether it is identifying areas for investment at a strategic level which will improve service reliability, or finding out why elderly passengers are frequently being left waiting in the rain by the late-running Number 10 bus: these are among the many issues that drive our work.

Our strong emphasis on evidence-based campaigning and research, knowing what is happening on the ground, is vital to our work. We use our knowledge to influence decisions on behalf of passengers and we work with the industry, passenger groups and the Government to secure journey improvements.

Passenger Focus was initially set up by the Government to protect the interests of Britain's rail passengers, but from February this year its remit was expanded, outside London, to include England's bus and coach passengers on scheduled domestic services, as well as tram passengers.

We already have an excellent track record of using research and evidence to help secure the best deal for rail passengers. We will use this experience, which has been built up over a number of years, to achieve the same for bus, coach and tram passengers. In the past year more than 120,000 passengers have told Passenger Focus what they think of their services. In the rail industry this has already been used to benchmark performance and delivery – in future this will happen in our new areas of responsibility.

Our approach to working with these industries will be about building constructive relationships to high-light best practice and identify areas



A wider focus

The passenger watchdog's brief has been extended to bus, coach and tram passengers. **Anthony Smith** sets out how it will go about its new task



for improvement. The operators we've talked to so far have welcomed our involvement and said that they will use it to understand what improvements to services passengers want. In the long term we believe that the sector will also benefit because the improvements we help to secure will lead to more satisfied passengers, which in turn may encourage more people to use their buses, coaches and trams.

To help us understand the needs and expectations of passengers, regional and national stakeholders and the views of operators, we are investing time and effort in talking and listening to those individuals and organisations that have an influential part to play in the industry.

Our initial piece of research work focused on the impact of the England-wide concessionary fares scheme which was introduced in April 2008. This was chosen as it is a source of debate among bus operators, local and regional transport authorities and government. We wanted to understand the passenger perspective on this issue and ensure that their voice was being heard.

We found that older passengers and people with disabilities have been using buses significantly more since free travel was introduced and it has made it easier for them to get out of the house, visit friends and relatives, go shopping and take advan-

tage of sport, leisure and recreation opportunities.

Over a third of pass holders are now using buses on journeys they would have made by car or van, either as a driver or passenger. Pass holders also indicated that the lack of available travel information and bus service reliability, particularly regarding connecting services, was a barrier to using the bus outside their local area. This work was published in July 2009.

In March 2010 we also published the results of research which found out what over 3800 passengers want from their bus services. They were asked to rate how well their expectations are currently being met for a





number of different attributes of the bus stops and bus services they use, and what their priorities are for improvement. The report, *Bus passenger priorities for improvement*, found that the number one priority for passengers was more buses turning up on time. This was followed by more frequent buses and all passengers being able to get a seat.

The research found that passengers' expectations are being met or exceeded for seven out of the nine bus stop attributes they were asked to rate, the exceptions being the provision of real-time information and information on fares provided at the stop. Expectations are also being realised for all but two bus journey attributes: punctuality and value for money.

We have developed our own Bus



Research shows that passengers want more frequent and reliable buses and more widespread real-time information at stops. Over a third of concessionary pass holders are using buses for journeys they previously made by car

In the longer term our dedicated team will identify and share best practice across the four industries

Passenger Satisfaction Survey and have completed this initially in six pilot areas: Tyne and Wear, West Midlands, Lincolnshire, Bristol, Dorset, and Southampton. This research will be published in the next few months. We have completed further fieldwork in 14 other areas, the results of which will be published in July 2010. Fieldwork in an additional 20 areas is expected to start in autumn 2010.

We have also taken over the management and publication of the Department for Transport's existing Mystery Traveller Survey – this provides evidence from researchers travelling unidentified on local services in several areas of England.

Passenger Focus has made a solid start to its new area of responsibility, but there is a lot more for us to do. In

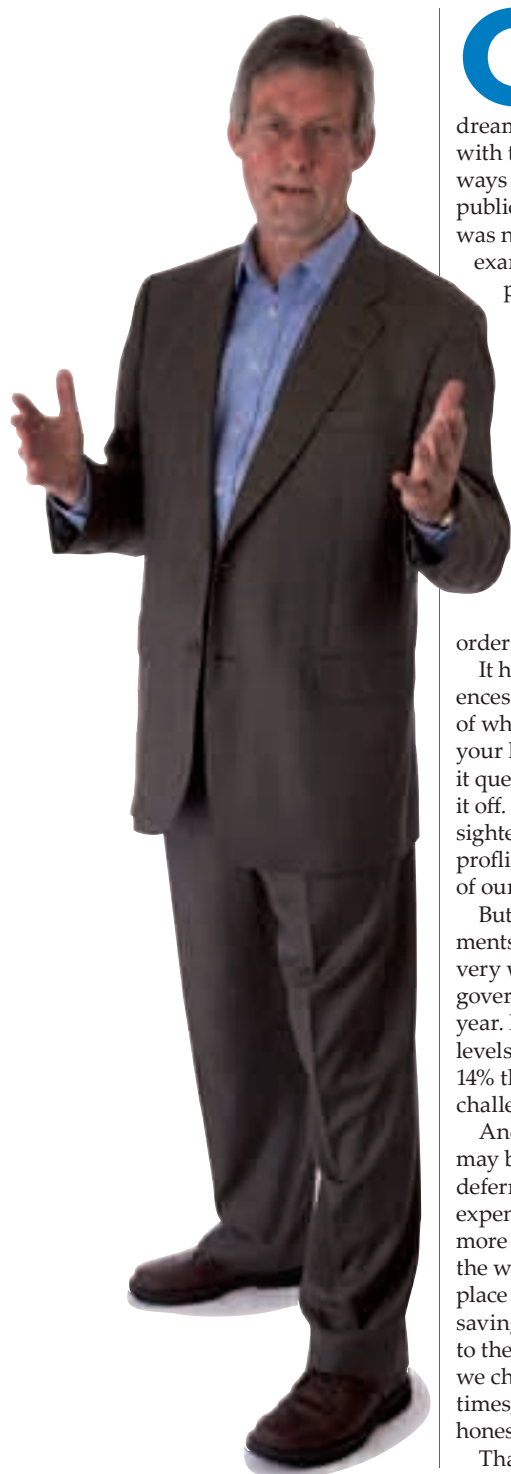
the short term, we will continue to build our programme of passenger research across the country and a team of regionally-based staff will develop the working relationships with operators, authorities, other stakeholders and of course passengers. In the longer term our dedicated team will identify and share best practice across the four industries.

It will take time for the public, industry and other stakeholders to get used to our new role. However, Passenger Focus will be using a tried and tested formula, so our aim is to position ourselves as the independent national passenger watchdog and make a difference on the basis of research and evidence. Our established consumer focus will help us to get the best deal for passengers.



Cut waste, not investment, to balance the books

Our campaign to protect transport investment continues over the next four pages. Here, **Jim Steer** argues that operational inefficiency and contradictory policies are where we should look for cuts in the transport budget



Over in the United States, they know what a fiscal stimulus package really looks like. Fully \$785bn dreamt up, it seems almost overnight, with the challenge being finding ways to spend it and a plethora of public works programmes. So there was no wailing in the Senate at, for example, the \$8bn high-speed rail programme, scarcely visible in the swirl of federal largesse.

Our own fiscal stimulus package avoided any allocation policy challenges by giving everyone 2½% off VAT for a year. All very equitable, but no investments to show for it. And having declined the greatest Keynesian moment *de nos jours*, we're now straight into the season of competitive proposals on what to cut, in order to reduce the fiscal deficit.

It has become the sport at conferences to probe away at the question of where cuts can be made. Think of your least favourite project and label it questionable: now is the time to see it off. An unedifying sight, and short-sighted too, not to say potentially profligate, given the time and expense of our planning processes.

But cuts will come no doubt. Investments needed for the upturn are all very well, but in central and local government, budgets will be cut next year. Probably not by the massive levels some have computed, nearer 14% than 40%: but this is still a huge challenge.

And so some cherished projects may bite the dust, or be subject to deferral. But curtailing investment expenditure designed to support a more efficient transport system and the wider economy is not the first place we should be looking to offer up savings. Instead, we should face up to the really tough questions, those we chose to ignore during the good times, but which must now be faced honestly.

That challenge is called efficiency.

Is there wasteful expenditure entailed simply in keeping the transport systems running? Are we denying ourselves rightful income streams in the face of special pleading? The correct answers are: *yes* and *yes*.

Local government is already well on the case. For senior officers, it's clear that each authority having the same capabilities as those adjacent is wasteful, and sharing services can be a source of big savings. Their bigger challenge is around the use of assets, which across the public sector amount to a huge resource. In hard times, the family silver gets pared

Curtailling investment designed to support the wider economy is not the first place we should be looking for savings

back, if not sold entirely.

What next? Well, the rail sector is inefficient, not for the want of effort by management and staff across a very fragmented industry, but because of the sheer complexity of trying to make it all appear seamless, when it isn't.

It costs money to have two companies in operational "control" – the franchisee and the network operator. We can't afford a wholesale reorganisation but we can simply demand that this practice ends. One of you can do both tasks. The same at stations too, please.

Underscored by a questionable ambition to offer customers choice, we are prepared to entertain open access entrants even when most of their income is abstracted from franchised (subsidy-receiving or premium-paying) operators, and when the track charges payable by them are but a fraction of franchisees'. This costs the

public account dear.

Still on rail, where have we got to with the basic efficiency measures around driver-only operation (still missing from some services, despite repeated franchise re-lettings), and, on the infrastructure side, on recognising the scope for savings on the least-used parts of the network, where I'm told Network Rail still happily lays new rails instead of recycling steel from main lines?

And don't think that rail is uniquely wasteful, even though with effort on the revenue and cost side we could surely find a £1bn saving. The bus sector consumes a huge annual subsidy too, and is saddled with the requirement to carry the over-60s for nothing. A wonderful and deserved perk or a costly indiscriminate dole-out? I can't for the life of me see the logic. Another bad habit to give up, as is the expensive replacement of articulated buses.

In general, across both rail and bus, we have created a situation in which service levels outside the peaks are simply too generous. Near-empty trains and buses hardly help the sector's green credentials. We can be more cost-efficient and reduce carbon and energy consumption. Service frequencies can be cut without the usual customer pain in this age of communication excellence through mobile real-time information.

Of course if we didn't have a national rail fares system so baffling that any journey time saving is lost by the time it takes to work out a decent deal, maybe those off-peak trains would be carrying more passengers and earning their keep.

So to meet the budget cuts, let's keep the capital investments that support economic recovery and face up to the really tough challenges: operational inefficiency and sloppy policy thinking.

Jim Steer is a director of Steer Davies Gleave and was responsible for strategic planning at the erstwhile Strategic Rail Authority.

Impending squeeze spells pain for councils

Local authorities face a dilemma, with few frontline services that can be cut without creating a public outcry. But the alternative is improving efficiency at an unprecedented rate, says **Tony Ciaburro**

For the first time in decades central and local government are talking about the prospect of cuts in public services with no attempt to hide behind a range of euphemisms, such as “efficiency savings”. The scale and extent of the current economic situation is such that it is almost impossible to mask the need for a reduction in provision, regardless of demand, accompanied by an inevitable loss of jobs in the public sector.

The issue is now one of determining how best to scale back and where and when the cuts will come. We are faced with the prospect of extremely difficult choices that the public will not find palatable, and the transport sector is well and truly in the firing line.

The term “efficiency” in the realm of local government translates into doing more for less. In practice this means, at best, managerial skills are harnessed to build capacity, think innovatively, use technology wisely, and rationalise support services, and functions together with an open approach to set aside territorial considerations.

At worst, the public sector adopts its traditional fallback position of “salami slicing” as the key mechanism of achieving efficiency targets. Some authorities have already leapt into action; others aim to ride the storm while there are still some who may be burying their heads. Whichever category an authority finds itself in, there seems to be little doubt among pundits that local transport services and jobs will be hit hard. The question remains how this will manifest itself in service delivery, and the impact it will have on those in the industry who rely upon a steady stream of commissioning by local government.

According to May’s Operational Efficiency Programme report the public sector spent in the order of £175bn on external goods and services in 2007/08. The report also suggests that

we could achieve annual savings of around £7.7bn (4.4%) by 2013/14 through more collaborative procurement. As local authorities continue to sharpen up procurement our transport contractors and consultants will feel the pinch, as councils cut back on their services and expertise or attempt to squeeze out better deals.

Visible services of this kind are funded through revenue budgets, which are now under pressure. Highway maintenance has traditionally been the first port of call for budget cuts in the past. However, it will be a brave authority that announces it is going to reduce its frontline pothole activities, given the current state of our roads.

Transport contractors and consultants will feel the pinch as councils cut back on their services or attempt to squeeze out better deals

In reality we have nowhere else to go if we are to continue to meet the requirements of demand-led services such as education and social services. Something must give and different approaches must be adopted. The old chestnut of what is “statutory” and “discretionary” in service provision has already raised its head, but local authorities know from experience that there is very little they can stop doing without political uproar and public backlash.

It has been estimated that the next comprehensive spending review will face an £11bn hole in the budget that is expected to be met through further efficiencies. This would represent a threefold increase on the current level of efficiency gains and it is difficult to see how it can be achieved through

salami slicing alone if key front-line services are to be maintained. Councils are already experiencing pay freezes, job losses and bans on the use of agency staff in an attempt to stave off the fiscal tidal wave.

From a transport perspective, at the local level one of the main casualties is likely to be the use of consultancy studies and feasibility work that make demands on revenue budgets. Greater emphasis will be put on satisfying public perceptions through front-line delivery rather than preparing for the implementation of much-needed infrastructure and transport services as we emerge from the recession.

At a national level it is likely that the Government will focus on a smaller number of key major projects rather than spread itself thinly. In reality, this means that there could be a lag of several years between the money eventually becoming available and a sustainable programme of schemes coming to fruition, which in turn will generate its own negative economic consequences.

There is much talk of sharing front and back office capacity in order to save money and provide better services, especially with the health sector given the obvious relationship between sustainable travel and personal well-being. Hence the Total Place concept could have much to offer. But local government is not exactly snapping up new ideas. A recent survey has shown that 63% of all English and Welsh local authorities are unsure about implementing the Community Infrastructure Levy and there are few examples of the innovative pooling of resources. This must change.

Perhaps we can start by scrapping the Comprehensive Area Assessment, saving around £2bn, and recycle resources into fixing our neglected transport system instead.

Tony Ciaburro is corporate director for environment, growth and commissioning at Northamptonshire County Council.



New approaches to funding

Andreas Markides offers some ideas on how to tap into new sources of investment, and make what money there is go further

“ Perhaps we ought to change both the way the money is spent and the way we undertake movement ”

Tolls and selling off state assets such as the Dartford Crossing are a possible source of new revenue

There is no doubt that transport has been blessed with a plethora of funding sources. The Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF), the Growth Area Fund (GAF), the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) and its successor, the Urban Infrastructure Fund have in the last few years joined more traditional sources of funding such as Local Transport Plans and Regional Funding Allocations (RFAs). And yet more is coming. The Homes and Communities Agency joined the ranks in the last year with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) being introduced this month.

Hence lots of funding *sources* but limited funds! How will we tackle increasing levels of traffic and rising movement activity?

Congestion: In the final analysis we may have to accept that we actually do not need to put any more money into transport infrastructure and that congestion is good! But I (and I'm sure many others) would not accept that position for the obvious reason that congestion is costing the country £20bn annually. In any case the need to fund new infrastructure is not solely for combating congestion. It is for facilitating mobility as well as regenerating the economy.

If congestion is not the answer, what about congestion charging?

Congestion charging: The world's most successful and oldest scheme is that in Singapore, which was introduced with a plethora of objectives in 1975. A few others such as Bergen (1987), Oslo (1990), London (2003) and Stockholm (2006) have followed since.

Road user charging could be used to raise funds for transport infrastructure even though that goal has been undermined by the high costs of revenue collection (which range from 5 cents in Bergen and 10 in Oslo to 35-48 in London for the collection of 1 euro). Nevertheless, and despite recent disappointments in Manchester and Edinburgh, I believe that congestion charging could be applied to certain cities – and (so long as there is political will), it could be a future source of funding transport infrastructure.

Road Tolls: The debacle two years ago when 1.8 million drivers signed a petition opposing road pricing on the Downing Street website cannot be easily forgotten. Yet the Committee on Climate Change (the Government's own advisory body) has just recommended in its first annual report to Parliament that "motorists should pay higher taxes in the form of a national road-pricing system to cut carbon dioxide emissions". It is unlikely that there will be a national road pricing

scheme (the IT requirements alone will be huge) but targeting certain roads for tolling and ensuring that the money is ring-fenced specifically for transport improvements will gain the idea public support. What about starting by tolling just HGVs as they currently do in Germany?

Agglomeration Benefits: When accessibility to a place is improved, there can be an increase in land value and this can be measured and captured. This is partly how Crossrail is being funded and is also how the Delhi Metro was funded. Therefore funds for transport infrastructure can be secured by allowing the private sector to bring forward its own schemes, funded by their own charging regimes or the increase in land values.

All the above could provide funds to supplement traditional (but limited, as from 2010) funding sources such as the RFA, LTP and Section 106 agreements. By no means will any of this be remotely sufficient. Should not our Government therefore be following the Americans' lead and attempting to pour billions into the economy (including towards transport infrastructure)? After all this is one sure way of kick-starting the economy.

In a way the Government is attempting to go down this route. Plans to sell off numerous Government assets (the Dartford crossing has been mentioned, even though bankers have no idea how much it is worth, and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link which has been estimated at £2bn-£3bn) in a "national car boot sale" would provide the Treasury with much-needed funds. But there can be no guarantee that the proceeds will go towards transport infrastructure – or that the sale will take place in time.

So there are no funds. Even if there were, it might be unwise to pour it into the economy because (experience tells us) it could be wasted. What is one therefore to do? Perhaps we ought to instead change both the way the money is spent and the way we undertake movement. This means the following:

Be more careful with the money: This is exactly the message expounded in a recent paper by the independent think-tank Reform which argues that transport policy and decision makers should focus on "practical, value for money solutions instead of big, white elephant projects".

Maintenance: Studies have shown that more jobs are created when cities and states repair existing roads than when they build new ones. Highway maintenance projects not only put more people to work more quickly than building new roads does but also keep costs down in the future.

Innovation: The Eddington report argued that good transport systems are vital for supporting the productivity and future success of the UK's urban areas. The role that innovative urban transit systems could play in this context (in addition to their environmental benefits) is clear. The planned opening in 2010 of the world's first personal rapid transport system at Heathrow has led to widespread speculation about how such a public transport service would perform in a town. We may be in for a surprise but PRT could prove to be as successful as previous innovations, such as the railway and the motorbus, were in their heyday.

Good public transport: Good public transport alternatives to the car are therefore essential but they are needed in the travel markets where the car is dominant – and this (in my view) is not the long distance travel market favoured by high speed rail enthusiasts such as Lord Adonis. Central London has long achieved a mode choice of about 85% of its commuter flows by public transport. Similarly Oxford has achieved about 50% on public transport (or bikes) to the city centre. And you don't need to be a politician to spot that better public transport could be far more acceptable than road pricing!

Traffic management: In the final analysis limited, rather than too much, funding may be more cost effective. Hence traffic management measures may yield disproportionate increases in capacity. The way the network is managed can yield efficiencies – even without further road building. Consequently, education (how and when people use their car), technology (to increase capacity with smaller headways for example), advance driver information/signs, ramp metering (and yes, even hard-shoulder running) are some methods which can produce more capacity out of the existing road network.

Smarter choices: Smarter choices have become an increasingly important component of transport initiatives. No wonder, as recent research by DfT found, that an intensive smarter choices programme over 10 years could cut traffic by more than 20%. But how are smarter choices to be funded? The Government is directly supporting local authorities by providing funding for such initiatives.

Way of Life: How far we are prepared to adopt smarter choices will determine the extent that our lives will be reshaped. For example in Vauban, a district on the outskirts of Freiburg, cars have been banned for the past decade. As a result, streets

are devoid of vehicles and there are tough disincentives for car lovers: no home garages, no street parking and a charge of some \$30,000 for a space in one of two parking lots. The impact has been dramatic: the car-ownership among the 5,000 residents is less than half of that of Freiburg itself. Under these conditions little car infrastructure is needed – just a change in the way we live!

Continued investment in infrastructure is critical. Therefore the big question is how we are going to find the money to fund nationally significant infrastructure projects. The ICE's promotion of a national infrastructure investment bank is certainly a step in the right direction as it will ensure that vital projects will have a secure and predictable source of funding.

CIL, if it is successfully introduced later this year, will in my view be fragmented. Different Local Authorities will have their own CIL and it will therefore be nothing more than a more homogenous interpretation of the current system of S106 and S278 agreements. Therefore the only real changes to the way we fund infrastructure will come in the form of congestion charging in certain cities; road pricing on some targeted roads or solely for HGVs; allowing the private sector to bring forward its own road schemes funded by its own charging regimes or uplift in land values; and finally taxing the increase in land/property values arising from the new infrastructure.

While the above will provide additional funds for infrastructure, it will be possible to save funds that might otherwise have been spent on new roads through highway maintenance projects which keep future costs down; traffic management which may yield disproportionate increases in capacity; innovative urban transit systems and public transport in general which would cut car use and hence the need for yet more roads; and finally smarter choices as well as fundamental changes to the way we choose to live our lives (as in Vauban in Germany).

Is this telling us that we are at the beginning of a new era? Is the (lack of) funding for transport infrastructure the catalyst for a new way of living whereby we recognise the significance of a better environment at the cost of reduced (or at least altered) accessibility?

Is Sir Colin Buchanan's "beast which we all love to hate" about to be tamed?

Andreas Markides is chairman of Colin Buchanan

Travel planning with a health focus



Discussions with participants in smarter choice activities in Dundee is providing a new insight into motivating people to change and how travel planning can benefit other goals, such as health, says **Martin Higgitt**

Dundee's experience suggests that linking active travel and health provides a readily accepted message

Maureen's seriously overweight. She's diabetic. She worries that the state of her health might mean she's not able to take an active part in her 13-year old son's life as he grows up. She's been told by her doctor on several occasions that she must lose weight and get more exercise. She knows he's right, but she's never quite managed to get round to it. Until now.

When a Dundee Travel Active Adviser turned up on her doorstep, it seemed to just give her the boost to get her started on more active travel. She started off by walking the short trip into town. Now she's starting to walk to the shops in Hilltown.

As the name suggests, these shops sit on top of one of Dundee's big,

steep hills. She lives at the bottom. At first, she needed to stop and rest on the way up. Now she challenges herself to "do it in a one-er". She reckons she's probably walking 20-30 minutes a day more now. Is she going to keep it up? "Definitely."

Dundee Travel Active is a wide-ranging programme funded by the Scottish Government's "Smarter Choices, Smarter Places" programme. Its primary objective is to improve health by promoting active travel. Consultant JMP is responsible for the personal travel planning component of the project. Recent focus groups with our year one participants have given us an insight into how PTP works.

Maureen doesn't own a car, so we can't tick any boxes related

to reduced car use. But she does describe our project as "life-changing, possibly life-saving". Had we persuaded someone to leave the 4x4 at home and walk the kids to school, we'd have more easily measurable impacts, but which of these interventions would have really been more powerful?

As JMP's lead on PTP project design, I like to bury myself in behavioural psychology books and spend earnest hours with colleagues debating the nuances of how we bring about behaviour change. But an hour and a half in a focus group with Maureen and others makes me feel that in some respects, it's a lot more simple than that.

It's the fact that someone's taken the time to come to her, listen to her

and put together a package of ideas, information and incentives specially designed for her. It's not so much the resources themselves, it's the thought behind the resources.

Rather than telling her what to do we've given her the materials to enable her to do what she already knows she needs to do. And we've given her the motivation by staying in touch to see how she's getting on.

Sceptics tend to point out that, as travel behaviour interventions go, PTP can be expensive. This is correct. They also point out that nobody else sends people door to door, the implication being that PTP is somehow unsophisticated in its marketing approach. This is wrong.

I've been involved in enough PTP projects now to see that it is face to face engagement with people that is the critical factor that gets people to move beyond "thinking about it" to actually "trying it out".

Of course, some commercial enterprises, such as utilities and broadband providers, also send salespeople round door to door. They know that sending a leaflet highlighting that their service is better and cheaper than the competitors isn't going to be enough when the other person has a satisfactory alternative supplier. Sitting down with them and processing the paperwork there and then may often achieve the sale.

For many people, the car is their satisfactory travel choice and it's only by sitting down with them, taking them through the alternatives step by step and giving them everything they need to try them out that gets them started.

The most crucial aspect of changing behaviour is to build commitment. We've been seeking to do that through personal challenges to encourage participants to act on the information and ideas we've provided them. We've been starting with modest requests. For an elderly person or someone with mobility or fitness problems, the challenge may be to walk to the local shops.

Theory and evidence show that starting off with a small request that people think is reasonable and achievable is the best way to get individuals going and then the commitment can be scaled up. We've then been offering "advanced PTP" to eager participants who've completed their first challenge and want a more demanding second challenge.

We're also trying to create social norms that value active travel through talking to community groups, taking part in community

events and developing case studies of individuals who've changed their behaviour.

We're aware that going door to door involves some waste of effort: at best, we can expect only half the population to take part, with some never answering the door and others declining the offer. However, logistically, it is as easy and cost-effective (certainly in urban areas) to send people door to door in a target area as it is to target more specifically. Segmentation techniques are good for telling you the best area of town to target, but they can't tell you who's behind each individual door and whether their circumstances may make them ready for change.

Nonetheless, experience is telling us that we should be working harder with households who seem eager to participate (and dropping those who aren't). So we're continuing to work on our advanced PTP offer and consider how the dialogue can be kept going beyond the timescale of a PTP project. In our recent focus groups we asked participants how far we could push them. They all said they would not feel harassed to be contacted further, and would indeed welcome it and would like to be involved in a celebration event with other behaviour-changers.

We also need to work harder at integrating PTP with other smarter choice activities that are going on. Common branding and a high level message across different pathways – schools, employers, health referrals and so forth – really raise the visibility of the project and start to transfer ownership to the community. Taking an active part in community events and engaging through community groups authenticates the project as the messages are coming through trusted sources and group settings can be powerful mechanisms for garnering commitment.

It's essential to ensure that PTP projects are supported by a long-term press and communications strategy. Getting human interest stories, such as Maureen's, out into the community can help to challenge the social norms and make other people think "I can do that".

One of the interesting things about the Dundee Travel Active project is its primary focus on improving health and promoting active travel (rather than cutting car trips). Our recent focus groups show that promoting the project on the basis of active travel is easy for people to grasp and gives it a clear rationale (from their point of view)

It's the fact that someone's taken the time to put together a package of ideas, information and incentives specially designed for her

rather than just simply trying to get people out of their cars for transport and environmental benefits.

Of course, we need to continue to research, build evidence and reflect on our methods. The focus groups have been particularly revealing about why some people do change behaviour as a result of the project. Intriguingly, together with broader project evaluation they show that a significant minority of people are making very considerable behaviour changes.

Traditionally we've assumed that behaviour change comes from lots of people making small changes, but in Dundee, a third of our participants say they're walking more: on average over 20 minutes extra per day.

If funding can be available and the evidence base built up, it may be that the case for PTP to address health benefits as well as transport outcomes could further bolster its cost-effectiveness and value. As public sector funding tightens, we'll need to show how we can hit multiple Local Area Agreement and Single Outcome Agreement targets through this one versatile method.

Martin Higgitt is an Associate Director of JMP and leads the consultant's Personal Travel Planning specialism

Dundee's hill provide walkers with a challenge



New group will scrutinise TfL investment programme

 London Mayor Boris Johnson has confirmed the appointment of six world class engineering, commercial and project management experts to a new independent investment programme Advisory Group which will advise on and scrutinise the delivery of the TfL Investment Programme. This follows the announcement by the Mayor and the Secretary of State for Transport last October that an advisory group would be set up to oversee maintenance, renewal, upgrades and major projects across its modes, but not the operation of services.

The group, chaired by **David James**, former managing director of Balfour Beatty Management, will consist of: **Derek Fryer**, board director for Mott MacDonald and former director of Taylor Woodrow's engineering division; **Charles Penny**, former deputy tunnel engineering director for the Channel Tunnel construction project; **Nicholas Pollard**, chief executive officer of Bovis Lend Lease in the UK; **Nigel Quick**, former director of Arup and chair of Mouchel Management; and **Robin Whalley**, former board director at Mott MacDonald.

Boris Johnson said: "Members of the new group have experience in a range of disciplines including engineering, finance and project management, and will be able to offer expert advice on all aspects of TfL's investment programme, including the vital upgrade work that was formerly being carried out by Metronet."

The group will focus on reviews of major projects but will also examine the overall approach to delivery of TfL's Investment programme.

 The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) has announced the appointment of **Mike Lloyd** to its board as non-executive director. His appointment runs for five years from 1 March this year.

An electrical engineer and a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, Mr Lloyd has wide experience in manufacturing and supply chain roles.


He was technical director and later managing director of GEC Large Machines, where he and his team were awarded the 1992 UK Productivity

award for the innovative application of lean manufacturing techniques. He has extensive railway experience, joining GEC-Alstom Transport in 1992 and holding several international business and operations roles including senior vice-president of Alstom's global train assembly businesses from 1999-2002. In 2002 he joined Rolls Royce as president of gas turbine operations, and was appointed Group Manufacturing Director in 2009.

Current non-executive directors Richard Goldson and Peter Bucks have accepted extensions to their term in office, while Jane May moved on from the ORR to the Information Commissioner as a non-executive director when her term ended on 31 March.



Mark Reddy


 First has announced changes at managing director level within its UK bus operating companies.

Andy Scholey, MD for First in Manchester, is being seconded to the central First UK Bus team to help deal with the current Competition Commission inquiry. Mr Scholey, who has been MD in Manchester since 2007, will also assist in planning First's bus provision for spectators at the 2012 London Olympics. He will return to his position in Manchester once his work on those projects is completed.

Replacing him in Manchester will be **Richard Soper**, the current MD for First in Hampshire and Dorset.

His responsibilities at Hampshire & Dorset will be assumed by **Marc Reddy**, who will combine the role with his current position as MD for First in Devon & Cornwall.



 PTEG has appointed **Pedro Abrantes** to the newly created post of economist at the PTEG Support Unit. He joins from the Institute for Transport Studies at Leeds University where he is currently lecturer in public transport. His research has ranged from the analysis of rail infrastructure pricing to the study of public transport demand and passenger behaviour, on which he has advised the DfT, EU and transport operators. His recent work has focused on the identification of barriers to multi-modal travel, the analysis of bus reliability, the valuation of soft factors and the use of real-time and smartcard data for the planning and optimisation of public transport systems.




Pedro Abrantes

 **Richard Middleton** has joined Jacobs Consultancy as a director and head of rail. Mr Middleton was previously at Steer Davies and Gleave. Before moving into consultancy, he held senior positions in a number of railway companies, including group general manager for passenger business for New Zealand Railways and group general manager of Cityrail for the State Rail Authority


in New South Wales. In this role he had experience of running the business under both vertically integrated and track access environments. He has also had a heavy involvement in UK franchise bids over the last decade.



Richard Middleton

 Transport planner JMP has recruited **John Pinkard**, an expert in travel behaviour, as an associate director with a company-wide remit. Initially he will focus his activity on Scotland and the Midlands. He is an experienced transport professional who specialises in interventions that are designed to change travel behaviour and has an extensive track record of project achievements.

Australian-born Mr Pinkard first joined Steer Davies Gleave in his homeland in 2003 before moving to the UK operation the following year. He joined Vipre UK in May 2005, becoming a director in 2008.

 Eminent transport journalist and TT columnist **Christian Wolmar** has been appointed by the University of Aberdeen as an honorary research fellow in the institution's Centre for Transport Research. He will bring his expertise on the implications of transport for society and the economy to his role within the centre.

Christian has spent the majority of his working life as a journalist, including eight years as transport correspondent for *The Independent*.

Acknowledged as a leading expert on Britain's rail industry, he undertakes consultancy and advisory work for organisations seeking to understand the workings of this area of transport.

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Lord Adonis, Secretary of State for Transport, June 2009

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