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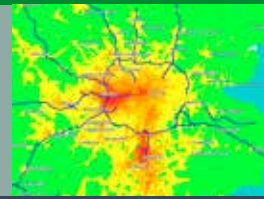
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# transporttimes

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## Labour's new policies go against the evidence

In the run-up to the general election, politicians will seek above all else to find policies that will resonate and connect with the public. This is only to be expected. Even so, since Michael Dugher became shadow transport secretary, Labour has moved in a considerably more populist direction.

On rail franchising and speed cameras, Labour policy seems to be going against the weight of evidence.

There was much that was flawed about rail privatisation two decades ago. After a disastrous record, Railtrack had to be reinvented as effectively a public sector company. The Roscos, which have tended to stay out of the spotlight, are only now beginning to come under scrutiny as the companies change hands for increasingly large sums.

But many would argue that franchising is the success story of privatisation. Passenger numbers have more than doubled since privatisation, for one thing. And despite claims of excess profits, the combined profits of all the train operators in the last financial year was just over 2% of turnover. We have said in these pages before that some of the recently awarded franchises, such as Thameslink/Southern/Great Northern, Essex Thameside, Scotrail and the Caledonian Sleeper service, are likely to



“On speed cameras we have a sense of déjà vu”

struggle to make a profit at all. Revenue risk is being transferred to the private sector.

The East Coast franchise under government-owned Directly Operated Railways may have returned £1bn to the Treasury during the five years it held the franchise. But the Virgin/Stagecoach's Virgin Trains East Coast has undertaken to pay £3.3bn in premiums over the next eight years.

And, writing in this issue, Jim Steer argues that an absence of organisational changes in the rail industry in the current Parliament has contributed to the industry's recent impressive safety record: “Rail safety has continued its extraordinary long run without passenger fatalities. Policymakers should note that this was achieved during a period of organisational stability.” The last five years, he argues, have been a period of payback for the upheaval of privatisation.

Passengers' main gripe, about unending rises in fares, is not the fault of the operators themselves but stems from a policy decision to shift more of the burden of subsidising rail

services from the taxpayer in general to farepayers, and began ten years ago under Transport Secretary Alistair Darling.

On speed cameras we have a sense of déjà vu. On his first day as Transport Secretary in May 2010, Philip Hammond pledged to end “the war on the motorist” and to clamp down on the use of speed cameras.

Yet after the acceleration in the installation of cameras between 2001 and 2005, the ingrained habit among many drivers that speed limits could be ignored with impunity had gradually begun to change, and the number of fatalities on the roads fell dramatically. Estimates of how much of this was due to the effect of speed cameras vary and the figure is almost impossible to pin down, but research for the RAC Foundation estimated that 800 more deaths and serious injuries would result if all cameras were switched off or removed.

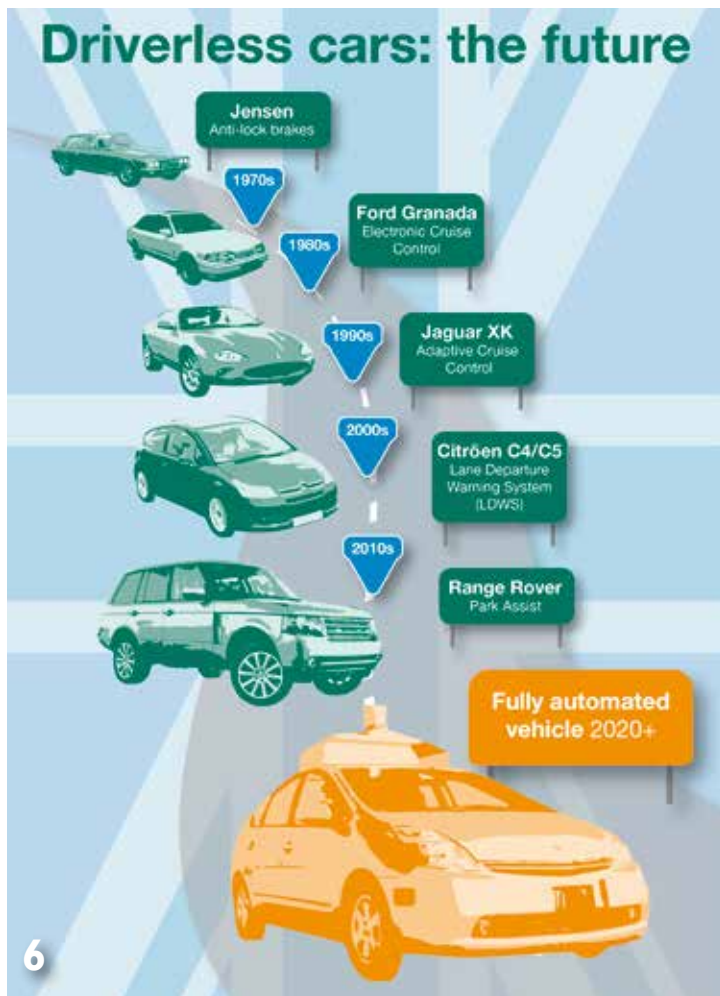
Philip Hammond went on to cut £38m from the road safety budget which had been used to fund cameras. Oxfordshire switched off its cameras, only to reverse the decision after eight months, following an alarming rise in accidents and injuries.

For Labour, promising to end franchising and limit the use of speed cameras may play well with a section of voters it is seeking to attract. But for the rail industry, franchising is an area in which the market appears to be working effectively. Another period of upheaval is the last thing it needs.

As far as speed cameras are concerned, Labour should welcome the fact that a policy it espoused when it was in government has contributed to a significant improvement in safety. Surely this counts for more than a short-term surge in popularity engendered by a populist approach that neglects the evidence?

**David Fowler is editor of Transport Times**





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# Dugher plans to ditch franchising and roll back speed cameras

**T**he Labour party has been accused of allowing its policies to be driven by populist sentiment rather than evidence, following statements by shadow transport secretary Michael Dugher.

Mr Dugher recently promised wholesale reform of the current rail franchising regime alongside "more public control" of the railways if Labour wins the general election, and has backed limitations on the use of speed cameras, which he attacked as "cash cows".

Labour has previously said it would allow public sector bodies to bid for rail franchises and has called for an overall "guiding mind" for the railways, expected to combine Network Rail with a new passenger representative body, intended to coordinate the industry more effectively.

But in an interview with the *New Statesman* last week Mr Dugher went further.

He said: "Privatisation was a disaster for the railways. I'm adamant about putting the whole franchising system, as it stands today, in the bin." He added: "The public sector will be running sections of our rail network as soon as we can do that."

He stressed this did not mean going back "to some sort of 70s and 80s British Rail" but continued "I think we've got to make the starting point that privatisation was a mess, it was botched."

On the subject of the new passenger body he said: "I'm going to be honest and proud about this: I want there to be more

public control of the railways. Actually, that's what the public think as well. The only people who have no voice at the moment in the running of the railways are the passengers themselves."

He criticised the Rail Delivery Group as a forum in which Network Rail and the private train operators "stitch up the running of the railways, and they do it with our money".

Critics have responded that rail franchising has succeeded in transferring risk to the train operating companies. Labour criticised the Government for not allowing state-owned Directly Operated Railways to bid to continue running the East Coast franchise when it was re-let earlier this year. Under DOR control East Coast had returned £1bn to the Exchequer. Stagecoach and Virgin, winners of the new franchise which starts on 1 March, said: "Stagecoach-Virgin will pay the Government £3.3bn over eight years versus the £1bn paid by DOR over five years. At the same time, Virgin Trains East Coast will be investing £140m in customer improvements."

Rail Delivery Group director general Michael Roberts said: "Britain's railway has been transformed into Europe's fastest growing and safest network through a combination of private sector innovation, competitive tendering and government policy. Passengers rate Britain's railway more highly than do their counterparts on any other major network in the European Union and we are committed to do even bet-



Michael Dugher: "Privatisation was a mess, it was botched."

ter. We will continue to work with the Government, passenger bodies, suppliers and other key stakeholders in delivering a better deal for passengers and taxpayers."

Separately, commenting on reports that the Government may be reviewing the use of "stealth" speed cameras on motorways which were being introduced under the smart motorways policy, Mr Dugher said: "The previous Labour government issued strict guidelines that speed cameras should be in accident black spots and that they should be painted yellow. At the same time, we worked to deliver the best road safety record in the EU. Under this Conservative government we have seen a proliferation of grey, hidden stealth cameras, and at the same time road safety has deteriorated."

He called for "one universal standard whereby all fixed speed cameras are in accident black spots and are painted yellow." He said ministers should issue guidelines to the Highways Agency "to stop treating motorists like a cash cow."

His words recalled those of Philip Hammond who, on appointment as Transport Secretary following the 2010 general election, pledged to end "the war on motorists", and later cut the Road Safety Grant which had been used to pay

for speed cameras. In October 2010 Oxfordshire switched off its cameras, only to perform a U-turn after eight months following an increase in deaths and serious injuries over the county.

Safety campaigners pointed out that since speed cameras were introduced in 1992, road fatalities had reduced from 4,229 to 1,713 in 2013. Though it is impossible to say to what extent cameras influenced this, the figures point to a change in driver behaviour.

In a report for the RAC Foundation in 2010 and updated three years later, Professor Richard Allsop of University College London found that speed cameras offered continuing road safety benefits since their introduction was accelerated between 2001 and 2005, including a reduction in average speeds at fixed camera sites and a particular reduction in extreme speeding. Prof Allsop estimated that, if all Britain's fixed and mobile cameras were decommissioned, 800 more people would be killed or injured on the roads.

Professor Stephen Glaister, director of the RAC Foundation, said: "It's not about cameras being painted grey, yellow or blue with green spots, but whether speed enforcement is consistent and understandable. Surveys have repeatedly shown that the majority of the public back speed cameras and that is a position we hold."



Directly Operated Railways ran East Coast for five years but was excluded from bidding for the new franchise



## Britain 'poised to become global h



**T**he UK is ideally placed to become a global centre for the design, testing and development of driverless vehicles.

This is the conclusion of a new government report, *The Pathway to Driverless Cars*, published last week.

The review concludes that driverless vehicles can legally be tested on public roads in the UK without changes to the UK's legal framework.

Launching the report, transport minister Claire Perry and business secretary Vince Cable revealed details of test projects which are due to get under way in four cities later this year, with £19m of government funding.

Ms Perry said: "Driverless cars are the future. I want Britain to be at the forefront of this exciting new development, to embrace a technology that could transform our roads and open up a brand new route for global investment."

"The trials present a fantastic opportunity for this country to take a lead internationally in the development of this new technology."

The review examined the

approaches being taken in North America, Europe, Japan and China. Regarding existing UK legislation it found that "our legal and regulatory framework is not a barrier to the testing of automated vehicles on public roads. Real-world testing of automated technologies is possible in the UK today, providing a test driver is present and takes responsibility for the safe operation of the vehicle; and that the vehicle can be used compatibly with road traffic law."

The US was the first country to introduce legislation to permit testing of automated vehicles, but only four states have taken this route. Fifteen states have rejected bills related to automated driving, the report says.

In Europe, only Germany and Sweden are known to have completed a review of their legislation in this area, with a further three countries currently progressing one.

"Those wishing to conduct tests in the UK are not limited to the test track or certain geographical areas, do not need to obtain certificates or permits, and are not required



# ub' for driverless cars

to provide a surety bond provided they have insurance arranged," the report continues.

Ms Perry said: "We have an opportunity to make the UK a global centre for the design, manufacturer and use of driverless vehicles." The driverless vehicles industry is expected to be worth £40bn globally by 2030.

Though legislation is not needed, the Government will publish a code of practice this spring which anyone wishing to test driverless vehicles on UK roads will be expected to abide by.

This will be "quicker to establish, more flexible and less onerous" than the approach being followed in other countries. The report says that by virtue of involving industry stakeholders in developing the code, they will be expected to act in accordance with it. Failure to follow the code's guidance "would be a clear indicator of negligence." Following the code will be a requirement for the teams involved in the city trials.

The report sets out areas where the legal and regulatory framework will need to be changed in future to allow everyday

use of vehicles "designed to allow the driver to disengage from the task of driving".

These include clarification of liability in the event of a collision involving a driverless car. Vehicle use regulations will need to be amended to allow the use of automated technology without a test driver and to ensure the technology is maintained correctly. This could involve changes to the MoT test.

On safety the Government will consider whether a higher standard of driving would be expected of vehicles operating automatically than would be expected of a human driver. Consideration will also be given to protecting driverless cars from possible cyber threats.

Changes will also be required to the European type approval standards for mass-produced vehicles before they can go on sale. This will take several years.

The Government said it would engage with international partners "with a focus on ensuring that the necessary amendments can be put in place before vehicle manufacturers are ready to bring these technologies to market".

Those wishing to conduct tests in the UK are not limited to the test track

Above: GATEway's Meridian Shuttle (left) and Venturer's BAE Systems Wildcat. Left: how automated driver assistance systems have evolved

## On the starting blocks

Three consortia will begin trials of driverless cars in four British cities over the coming year.

### GATEway

In Greenwich the GATEway (Greenwich Automated Transport Environment) project will test the fully driverless Meridian Shuttle. Led by TRL, the project will demonstrate automated transport systems in a range of environments; explore the legal and technical changes required to introduce automated vehicles; and explore the reactions of pedestrians, drivers and other road users to automated vehicles.

Over the next two years it will test the shuttle on roads on the Greenwich peninsula; it will also test automated valet parking, where a vehicle is left to find a specified parking space by itself.

Partners in the consortium are: TRL; the Royal Borough of Greenwich; the RSA; Shell; Telefonica; the University of Greenwich; the Royal College of Art; Imperial College London; Phoenix Wings (which is providing the automated vehicle technology); Commonplace (analysis of user responses); and Gobotix (an engineering consultancy and Oxford University spin-off).

### UK Autodrive

UK Autodrive will be undertaking trials in Milton Keynes and Coventry. The three-year programme is led by consultant Arup. The consortium will develop the L-SATS (Low-Speed Autonomous Transport System) vehicle, described as the next generation of autonomous pod. The aim is to create an intelligent, driverless public transport system that includes 40 L-SATS pods. The project will build on experience gained from the Lutz Pathfinder programme, a separate project led by Transport Systems Catapult which is testing three autonomous pods in Milton Keynes.

Partners are Arup, Milton Keynes Council, Coventry Council, Jaguar Land Rover, Ford, Tata Motors European Technical Centre, RDM Group (providing low-speed autonomous pods and telematics), MIRA, Oxbotica (developing autonomous control systems), insurer AXA, international law firm Wragge Lawrence Graham, the Transport Systems Catapult, Thales (infrastructure systems and cyber security), the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, and the Open University.

### Venturer

The Venturer consortium, led by Atkins, will undertake trials of autonomous vehicles in the Bristol and South Gloucestershire council areas over three years, to investigate the legal and insurance aspects of driverless cars and the public reaction. Testing of the consortium's autonomous vehicle, the BAE Systems Wildcat, on private and public roads is due to begin in early 2016.

Partners are: Atkins, Bristol City Council, South Gloucestershire Council, FirstBus, Fusion Processing (advanced sensor systems), Williams Advanced Engineering (driving simulator expertise), the University of the West of England Centre for Transport and Society, the University of Bristol, and AXA.

# Hammond and ACE call for infrastructure mega-ministry

**A** new Department for Infrastructure should be set up in Whitehall to plan, oversee and manage construction of the UK's whole range of strategic infrastructure needs.

The proposal was put forward this week by former transport minister Stephen Hammond and the Association for Consultancy and Engineering.

Mr Hammond said the idea "could drive a step change in delivery and hence economic performance". Details are contained in an ACE report, *Delivering our Strategic Networks – A Department for Infrastructure*.

The plan is intended to solve the problem that long-term planning for infrastructure needs is hindered by the five-year electoral cycle.

The proposed DfI would take over responsibilities from the DfT and the departments for Energy and Climate Change, Culture, Media and Sport, and Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Infrastructure UK would move from the Treasury to continue its role of planning at a high level.



Stephen Hammond

The various industry regulators would take responsibility for overseeing implementation of the plans through existing mechanisms. Responsibility for operation and maintenance of the new assets, once completed, would revert to existing departments.

The DfI would also incorporate Sir John Armit's proposed National Infrastructure Commission, which Mr Hammond described as "an incomplete solution".

Mr Hammond, who was a minister until July last year and is a member of the ACE advisory board, said: "Delivering large-scale infrastructure projects

has always been a challenge, particularly for politicians who, for obvious reasons, view the world through five-year cycles. I am happy to see that this attitude is shifting and we have seen much good work done in recent years to abolish this stop-start culture of investment. We must be ambitious, however, and continue to seek to improve."

The report identifies the main obstacles to long-term investment as a lack of strategic planning with "decisions taken in ministerial silos" and a lack of "evidence-based assessment of need". Policy uncertainty arises because major infrastructure projects "are often highly controversial and confront politicians with political risk with little corresponding reward". There is "a lack of transparency around funding". Delays are also caused by "decisions to use the planning system to decide policy issues rather than having the responsible minister make them", Heathrow expansion being the prime example. And the regulation of privatised industries has created "an environment of short-term priorities [focused on] efficiency

and consumer protection".

The ACE and Mr Hammond said their plan would provide clear leadership at the top of government. It would embed a greater appreciation of the interdependency of infrastructure in Whitehall culture, as different modes were brought into one building and began working alongside each other. There would be better programme management and a whole-life cost approach could more easily be adopted. Cost and efficiency savings would be expected to follow as functions were merged, delivery was streamlined and programmes better coordinated, "to reduce further the stop-start tendencies we have seen previously".

Mr Hammond said that although the Armit proposal for an NIC was seeking to answer the right questions, its process of undertaking national infrastructure assessments would take too long. "Streamlined and working within a new DfI, however, a NIC could provide the rigorous analysis that restores confidence to government pronouncements on infrastructure needs," he said.

## Leeds station plan heralds 'new approach' on HS2, says Greengauge

**C**hancellor George Osborne has asked HS2 chairman Sir David Higgins to report on options for an integrated station in Leeds, in a move hailed by Greengauge 21 as "a new approach" to thinking about the high-speed line.

The high speed rail campaign group says the initiative addresses concerns that arose in the consultation over phase two of the project, from Birmingham to Leeds and Manchester. "This is a new approach to thinking about HS2 – looking for much quicker wins, while keeping the long term plan in place," it said.

Sir David Higgins warned in a report last year that by

the time HS2 arrives in the city the existing Leeds station will have reached capacity.

Speaking in Leeds earlier this month Mr Osborne said: "I have asked Sir David Higgins to produce an interim report, to present to me in the autumn. I want this report to explore the options for a major redevelopment of Leeds station to prepare for the arrival of high speed rail."

In a blog posted on its website, Greengauge 21 recalls that a year ago the organisation highlighted four recurrent concerns of stakeholders in responses to the consultation on phase two of the high-speed project. These were an ambition that HS2 should be developed from north to

south rather than from London northwards; a wish for phase two to be completed earlier than the planned 2032; a call for better integration with existing lines so that city centre stations can be served, allowing faster connections between regional cities; and a concern that proposed station sites would require significant complementary investment to provide good access to them. The last point particularly applied to Sheffield and Leeds.

Mr Osborne's call for plans to be developed to expand the existing station at Leeds to accommodate and integrate HS2 services means "a key step" has been taken to meeting the third and fourth of these concerns, Greengauge says.

It adds that the Government should "adopt the One North proposal from its report last year to bring forward the Yorkshire section of HS2 and to connect it directly into the existing city centre station at Sheffield", rather than the existing proposal which would leave "an awkward connection from Meadowhall".

That would address the first two points and offer a major journey time saving "between a whole host of cities – Newcastle, Darlington, York, Bradford and Leeds to the north and Sheffield, Derby, Nottingham, Birmingham and Bristol to the south".

It would also undermine the perception that HS2 is a London-centred project.



## Infrastructure Act reaches statute book



**T**he Infrastructure Act became law on 12 February, paving the way for the creation of the new roads body Highways England.

The Highways Agency will be turned into a government-owned company with a government promise of stable

long term funding. This is expected to drive down costs to the taxpayer and make the new arm's-length company more accountable to Parliament and to road users.

Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin said: "Highways England will for the first time use long-term sustained funding to deliver the government's roads investment strategy, worth £15bn."

More than 100 schemes are expected to be completed between now and the end of the next parliament.

"Through the creation of Highways England we expect to see savings to the taxpayer of at least £2.6bn over the next 10 years," Mr McLoughlin said.

## New Metrocab goes into service

**T**he new Metrocab, designed and manufactured by Frazer-Nash Research and Ecotive, has gone into operation in London.

A small fleet of the new cab, the first range-extended electric taxi to be licensed in any metropolitan area in the world, is operating on a trial basis with ComCab.

For a week, passengers who are willing to participate in a promotional film recording their reactions to the zero-emissions capable taxi will be given their journey free of charge.

The taxi is driven by two electric motors, with its range extended by a one-litre petrol engine coupled with a generator to recharge the battery pack, which takes as little as 10 minutes

while driving. The batteries can also be charged via any mains electric outlet. The powertrain offers ultra-low emissions and a zero emission mode, as well as reduced noise pollution.

Operation and maintenance costs are significantly reduced, according to the makers.

Other features include air suspension, full disabled accessibility, a panoramic roof, increased luggage space and room for up to seven passengers. The taxi is fully compliant with London taxi private hire regulations.

The Metrocab has been shortlisted for the London Transport Awards 2015 in the Taxi & Private Hire Innovator of the Year category. The winners will be announced at a ceremony on 5 March.

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# Roads can live in harmony with the landscape

We are used to roads as scars on their surroundings. **John Hayes** outlines a vision in which sound design principles are built in from the start, and aesthetics becomes a primary consideration

**J**ust before Christmas the government announced the biggest upgrade to roads in a generation – a £15bn programme to triple investment by the end of the decade. This is not just a great opportunity to mend potholes, build new road capacity and reduce congestion. It's also a chance to put decades of ugly and sometimes brutal road design behind us, and start afresh with a new vision for our roads and motorways – one where form is as important as function, and where aesthetics, architecture and the interaction between roads and the environment are primary considerations.

This was the central theme of a lecture I delivered in early February at an event organised by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England and the Campaign for Better Transport.

Change is long overdue. As our road and motorway network developed, we seemed to care less and less about how it looked, or blended with the landscape. Planners, engineers and architects were speaking different languages, and projects were fast-tracked. Gradually, we grew to accept that roads must be intrinsically ugly. Drab, soul-sapping design became the norm.

Now we can start putting these past failures behind us. We have moved on from the days when Swampy was headline news. Those road protests were against schemes designed more than a quarter of a century ago, by a generation of road builders whose careers began when the first motorways were being created.

Today, offering either an effective transport system or a clean and green environment is a false choice. Through the Roads Investment Strategy, we can instil sound new design principles right at the start of infrastructure development, so aesthetics and environmental issues are considered alongside engineering and local planning issues.

We can benefit from massive advances in green technologies and construction techniques – from false cuttings and quieter tarmac to better noise barriers.

Good design need be no more expensive than bad design. By involving different groups at an earlier stage, we can speed up the planning process by securing consensus, saving money in the long run.

Our goal must be to integrate roads into their surroundings – flowing with the landscape, concealing structures where possible. Roads should be environmental assets, and carry cleaner, greener vehicles. Bridges should be beautiful. Biodiversity must be preserved.

**Today, offering either an effective transport system or a clean and green environment is a false choice**

There are some fantastic examples of what can be achieved. The Hindhead A3 scheme didn't just protect the surrounding countryside. It enhanced it, reuniting two commons previously split by the road, and creating the largest area of lowland heath in southern Britain.

I understand this is a massive task. That's why I made a number of practical proposals to change the way we approach road design.

First, I want every project to be rooted in its locality, reflecting and enhancing the natural landscape. This is about giving communities greater ownership of schemes that are going to affect their lives.

Second, I proposed a fresh approach to working with contractors and industry partners, ensuring that design and quality are central considerations from the start. The relationship

between highway authorities, councils, architects and others is of paramount importance – so they design solutions together, rather than in silos.

Third, I want to create a roads Design Panel – just as we have with Crossrail and HS2. The panel would include countryside groups, architects, engineers, highway authorities and suppliers, though the emphasis will be on quick, efficient and inclusive decision-making.

Supporting this process will be a set of design principles, providing guidance for developers, incorporated into the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. These would be similar to the 10 principles set out by the Prince of Wales in an article for the *Architectural Review* last year. He urged developers to pay attention to scale, harmony with surrounding buildings, and the use of local materials with distinct character.

Finally, I want to foster a new appreciation of industry best practice, and to send out a clear message that this is not an add-on to what we're already doing. Increasing road capacity and smoothing traffic flow are not the sum total of our ambitions here. What I'm proposing is a fundamental shift to make Highways England an exemplar of good design.

This is a new vision for the single biggest asset owned by the government – our roads.

By involving different people and groups, I believe we can set a new design standard for roads, one that balances aesthetic, functional and technological considerations, yet one that ties the road to its locality.

Our goal is not just to undo the most intrusive road design of the past 50 years. It's to create new aesthetic values that reflect and even magnify the beauty of the local landscape.

**John Hayes is Minister of State for Transport and MP for South Holland and The Deepings**



# Rail industry needs a fairer approach on tickets

Revenue protection systems are too draconian and fail to distinguish between fare dodgers and people who have made a genuine mistake with their ticket. They need to be overhauled for the 21st century



**E**arlier this month Passenger Focus renewed its call to the rail industry to play fair with passengers who don't have a "valid" ticket.

At the same time, we were pleased to see the Department for Transport launch a consultation on an overhaul of the rail penalty fare appeals system.

The proposals outlined by the department will make appealing against penalty fares fairer and more transparent. These are things we have been pushing for over the last three years.

Passenger Focus has always taken the view that everyone should buy a ticket when travelling on the railways. Passengers who avoid paying their fare are in effect being subsidised by the vast majority of fare-paying passengers. We agree that train operators should take steps to stop those who deliberately try to avoid paying. But what about the honest passenger who simply makes a mistake?

In response to a growing number of complaints from passengers we looked closely at the processes and protection surrounding ticketless travel. Our subsequent report, *Ticket to Ride?*, was published in May 2012 and set out a number of concerns along with a series of recommendations.

Since its publication we have continued this work. The need for change seems to have been accepted by the industry, though there is still much debate about what form this should take. Some improvements have been made, but many thorny issues still need to be resolved.

Some individual train companies have made changes. An Association of Train Operating Companies working group is grappling with many of the issues.

But it appears that some problems are systemic and that there is a need to address the causes as well as treating the symptoms.

The current revenue protec-

tion system was designed in another age and it is time to update it. We want it to serve the needs of the industry and passengers of the 21st century.

We believe this means removing the existing three-tier system of penalty fares, unpaid fares and byelaw prosecutions and creating a single, unified process with common procedures, forms, and appeal mechanism, plus a common training programme to ensure consistent application.

Some of these issues are complex and will require time and application, but some changes can and should be undertaken promptly.

Areas for immediate focus include ensuring consistency of approach for penalty fares and

**“The current revenue protection system was designed in another age and it is time to update it”**

unpaid fares. The principle of no loss-no penalty must underpin revenue protection activity. No criminal prosecution should be brought or threatened where there has been no revenue loss to the operator (and therefore no gain to the passenger). The most obvious examples are when a railcard has not been presented at the time of the ticket inspection but can subsequently be proved to have been held; failing to print print-at-home tickets; and not having all parts of a ticket but where a receipt or bank statement can show it had been bought.

Where a passenger has a clear proof of purchase or entitlement there should be a set procedure, including timescales, for producing evidence and receiving the reimbursement of additional charges or revoking penalties.

The bodies assessing appeals should be audited on a regular

basis to assess compliance with the relevant criteria and the results made public. Appeals bodies should not be allowed to add administration charges when an appeal is upheld. If an appeal is lost the passenger should be informed and given a period in which to pay before any admin charges for non-payment can be added.

The Government needs to set out guidelines controlling the use, and threat, of prosecutions under the rail byelaws. Passengers should not face criminal prosecution without proof of intent to defraud. In the longer term, this means removing the ability to prosecute without proof of intent – in line with previous moves to decriminalise parking offences.

However, this would require legislation. In the interim we would like to see letters sent to passengers about prosecution or offering a settlement in lieu of prosecution not using intimidatory language or tone. The practice of threatening imprisonment under the Regulation of the Railways Act (which would require proof of intent) must not be used when seeking settlement of something that would otherwise be pursued by the byelaws.

Non-payment of a penalty fare should not be transmuted into a criminal prosecution. Debt collection is usually a civil action and yet the railway uses threats of criminal law, including imprisonment, to “encourage” payment of a debt.

“Rail companies told to stop treating passengers ‘like criminals’ ” ran the front page headline of the *Metro* newspaper on 3 February. The industry must find a way to provide a safety net for honest passengers making genuine mistakes within its revenue protection policies. Until then Passenger Focus will continue to press operators, ATOC and the DfT to find solutions to these issues.

**Anthony Smith is chief executive of Passenger Focus.**

# What has the coalition meant for transport?

With the general election approaching, rail has enjoyed substantial investment, with roads policy now following suit. Local transport has been less lucky – and where next for fuel duty?

It's time to review how transport has fared during the five years of the coalition government.

We should start with safety. The UK has a great road safety record, up there with Sweden, but figures for the first half of 2014 showed a disturbing upward spike against a continuing background improvement. According to Kit Mitchell's analysis for CIHT, the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured was up more than 20% on the year before (increased usage being a factor perhaps), but how could road deaths rise more than 5% on the first half of 2013? Worrying.

Rail safety has continued its extraordinary long run without passenger fatalities (none in the last five years). Policymakers should note that this was achieved during a period of organisational stability. It's also a better safety record than railways in continental Europe. The last five years have been a period of payback for the upheaval of privatisation in the 1990s. These things take time to settle.

In a welcome display of common sense, we've tried learning from our successes and so Highways England is to be set up as a near-carbon copy of Network Rail, complete with the same regulator. Just two things to note on this: it was the previous government that invented Network Rail; and Network Rail itself, now thirteen years old, is showing signs of stress.

In part this is because the Government got used to making commitments to invest in rail over the last five years (until last September, this had no impact on measured public debt). So the rail sector built up a huge programme of work: five major route or area electrification projects, several major station rebuilds, lines redoubled or to be re-opened, plus smaller schemes such as new chords and junctions, phasing out of nearly all signal boxes,

a level crossing replacement programme... Until Christmas 2014, there was a strong pattern of successfully completing projects in tricky circumstances, including emergency reconstruction to deal with weather damage on an unprecedented scale.

But the roads programme suffered, with virtually every capital road project put on hold back in 2010. This had nothing to do with the Government's cutbacks, since the theology was meant to protect capital investment. But the outcome for highways on the run-in to this general election is not just a return to previous commitments but a major increase in spending, and it builds on another success – managed motorways.

**The defining characteristic of the last five years has been a chancellor who understands the value of a good rail network**

What remained numbingly familiar in the past five years was a reluctance to countenance charging for road use – although it was thought about for the A14. And while deferring fuel tax rises was understandable when prices were high and incomes remained flat, there has been no sign of correction since fuel prices started to fall significantly. Maybe the state of the public finances isn't so precarious after all. Or maybe this will change at the start of the next government, when unpopular measures need to be taken. Increased fuel duty could be dressed up as a "green" policy: but this would be novel because for five years there has been no interest in carbon or sustainability.

No luck either for local government and local transport budgets. In county after county, cuts in rural bus service support

have been severe. City deals may have been welcomed, but the idea that local government might be trusted to raise its own funding and decide on priorities has slipped further into the mists of history. Manchester's dramatic devolution package last autumn merely represents a return of powers that existed pre-1986. London and Scotland pull off transport schemes and policies that the rest of England (and Wales) can only dream about. The attritional battle to devolve power has scarcely advanced.

Through this period, while ministers come and go, the Department for Transport has had its purpose clearly defined. Deliver HS2 is the number one target on DfT's business plan and there has been really strong progress, with phase one negotiating its committee stage in the Commons. Ministers challenged that HS2 would abstract spending from other worthy transport projects have been able to point to the stream of rail investments in defence. Perhaps the defining characteristic of the last five years in transport has been a chancellor of the exchequer who understands the value a good rail network brings to the national economy.

He has been helped by the evidence. Rail demand kept on rising year after year, driven by growth in employment in the knowledge economy in city centres.

But this meant more pressure on performance reliability. On some lines, the timetable simply can't be achieved in peak periods – passenger boarding times at the busiest stations play havoc with line capacity and timing, a sign that network capacity is at its limit.

Not that the same isn't visible in London's airports, where we are not allowed to know the answer until the next quinquennial.



**Jim Steer is director and founder of Steer Davies Gleave.**

# Do not assume the case for infrastructure is made

Apparent cross-party support for infrastructure investment before the election will not necessarily translate into progress on real projects afterwards, warns **Stuart Thomson**



**Stuart Thomson:** "Local opposition to many schemes remains high"

**L**istening to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor or the Opposition front bench, you could easily be convinced that infrastructure development is the saviour of the economy. That without it, jobs and growth will be impaired and that to compete in the global market we have no option but to invest in our creaking national infrastructure. There is much to commend this argument. But until the cheque is written, no one should assume that the case for infrastructure is made. It still needs to be fought for.

Take Crossrail as an example. The project took decades to come to fruition. After taking three years to get through Parliament and gain its permissions, there were still delays. The Treasury wrote a cheque only after several statements of commitment, reviews of project costs and a simpler tunnelling strategy. There was an earlier deal on London's financial contribution as well. So while HS2 is progressing well through Parliament and could complete its passage by early 2016, the project is not guaranteed until the money is in place.

Money remains at the heart of whether infrastructure projects will really go ahead. There remains a fear of London-centric spending and cities across the UK are working hard to highlight their needs. The Northern Powerhouse may demonstrate that thinking is being given to cities outside London but a South West powerhouse, North East powerhouse and others are all bound to come forward with their own proposals.

Finances are limited and will continue to be so for the next Parliament and possibly beyond. That makes the role of local contributions, and those of businesses, to infrastructure projects even more attractive for the Government. This ties infrastructure development directly

into the devolution agenda: many are some way from agreement. That could, in turn, have an impact on infrastructure.

The process of agreeing on project priorities to help speed things up is being considered. Most recently, the Armitage Commission produced its report for the Labour party and a draft Bill is being readied so that the party can move swiftly if it enters government after the election. Labour is also consulting on the draft remit for Sir John's proposed National Infrastructure Commission.

During debates in the Lords on the Infrastructure Bill, Sir John's idea enjoyed a large degree of cross-party consensus. However, in the

**Money remains at the heart of whether projects will really go ahead**

heightened atmosphere of an election campaign and possible lengthy coalition negotiations the proposals will need as many friends as they can get.

Critically, infrastructure in the abstract may have cross-party support, but specific projects are a different matter altogether. Local opposition to schemes remains high in many cases. Consultation can help and is a right and proper part of project development. However, in some cases, opposition will remain loud and vociferous. Take Heathrow expansion as a case in point.

The Liberal Democrats oppose any net increase in runways in the UK, and restated that commitment at their party conference. UKIP's policies have yet, in some areas, to be fully explored but its opposition to HS2 has been fairly consistent. That could mean that a new coalition government, should

one be the outcome of the election, may not be as infrastructure-friendly as many expect.

Labour may want to make a decision on airport expansion soon after the Davies Commission has reported, but there is no timescale on that; and no party has agreed to abide by the outcome of the recommendations.

Government departments do not help the situation. They remain siloed, so competition is still possible between them. This can affect the feasibility of projects. Part of the reforms of the civil service should be to move us beyond a mentality of winners and losers that still seems to permeate governmental discussions. Again, a possible National Infrastructure Commission could help here.

Crossrail and the Olympics show what can be achieved when projects get going – they can be completed on time and on budget. Just as the Olympics was an important case study for Crossrail, the latter will now become the project to learn from.

While there appears to be momentum and unanimity about infrastructure projects, a potential iceberg sits beneath the water line. Talking about infrastructure in the abstract allows politicians, especially in the run-up to an election, to speak in warm and glowing terms. Talking about specific schemes means they have to express an opinion and say where the money will come from. So though politicians from most parties are saying the right things, there remain many issues to be worked through.

Supporters of infrastructure development have to keep the fight going – battles have been won but the war continues.

**Stuart Thomson is a public affairs consultant with Bircham Dyson Bell and the author of 'Public Affairs: News, Views and Hullabaloo'. @redpolitics**

# Aiming for peak performance

The bus industry has not seen a conference of the scale and ambition of the UK Bus Summit for over 15 years. There was much to discuss at this month's inaugural event

Not since the days of John Prescott at the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions have so many bus industry leaders assembled to discuss the future. The UK Bus Summit brought together over 300 delegates, a cross-section of the industry from bus operators, councils, PTEs and combined authorities, local enterprise

partnerships, and lobby groups. There was a lot to talk about and a number of potentially controversial themes.

But there was also a considerable amount of common ground – on questions such as the importance of buses to the economy and to local communities, enthusiasm for new technology including smart ticketing and greener buses, and on the need to make the passen-

**Below: exhibitors included bus makers Optare, ADL, and Wrightbus, HJS Emission Technology, and public information system supplier RSL**

ger the central focus of all efforts.

The significance of the event was reflected in the fact that Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin gave the opening address, and transport minister Baroness Kramer the closing one.

The day was divided into four sessions, each with a different theme – The vision for buses; Why buses matter; How technology can create efficiency; and How should buses be delivered. Whatever the subject, the discussions were never less than stimulating.



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## The Vision for Buses



**P**atrick McLoughlin's keynote address opened the first session, which brought together the Transport Secretary with ministers from Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as Transport for London's managing director of surface transport. His keynote address was straight to the point. "We all agree buses are key to helping people get around," said Mr McLoughlin. "But we need buses that are modern, clean, reliable and easy to use, and that meet the needs of passengers."

Four elements had a part to play in achieving this, he said. First the Government, which had allocated more than £300m for major bus projects in this parliament, plus £70m through the Better Bus Areas programme. Many bus schemes had benefited from the £600m Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

Second, the private sector. "I back a strong, commercial bus market," he said. "Bus operators innovate because they are commercial businesses competing against other forms of transport and other operators."

Third, cities. Bus services are the most local form of public transport and decisions should be taken locally. The momentum for devolution was growing, notably in Greater Manchester. But local enterprise partnerships also had a pivotal role. "If we want buses to thrive we need to make sure LEPs are getting the message."

Fourth, technology – in the form of clean buses, and smartcards integrated across all modes of transport. "Multi-mode, multi-operator smart ticketing does not always get the priority it should," Mr McLoughlin said.

There were great prospects for the industry, he concluded. "By putting the passenger at the heart, and working together in partnership; by grasping the opportunities provided by devolution; innovating and harnessing technology; and by

meeting local challenges with the right local solutions, I've no doubt those great prospects will be realised."

Scottish transport minister Derek Mackay said: "The mixed model of market-driven services, regulated and supported by a mixture of central and local funding, is not fundamentally broken. But there are challenges which better bus services could help us address – in environmental quality, economic development and combating exclusion and inequality."

His aspiration was to bring about modal shift to public transport and active travel. "We will work with local authorities and LEPs as appropriate," he said. He expressed disappointment that "we haven't seen more quality partnerships in Scotland". The Scottish government was looking at the operation of the Local Transport Act in England "to see what more can be done" and doing further work on franchising and quality contracts, which require ministerial approval in Scotland. Mr Mackay promised a drive to push forward smart and integrated ticketing, working with rail, ferry, bus and other transport providers.

"We will be pushing the integrated transport agenda very hard," he said.

Northern Ireland transport and regional development minister Danny Kennedy said: "Much work still needs to be done to achieve modal shift." In the province, integrated transport operator Translink would be seeking to "streamline" Metro services in Belfast and build on the success of flagship Goldline express coach services outside the city. It aimed to introduce a single smartcard for all modes of transport. A bus rapid transport network under construction in Belfast would feature high quality buses, real time information, and off-bus ticketing to speed boarding, and was expected to attract three million additional journeys annually. Interchange between modes would be improved, for example by connecting cycle routes to transport hubs such as bus stations. "This will be a major step forward in integration," Mr Kennedy said.

Leon Daniels, Transport for London managing director for surface transport, said a number of special conditions prevailed in the capital to make the regulated bus market a success. One was the congestion charge. "Rigorous attention to detail" was needed on a daily basis to keep bus services operating at the highest level possible. Fares had to remain affordable, requiring a balance to be struck between farepayers' and taxpayers' contributions. This required "strong political leadership".

For the future, zero-emission buses were about to appear and future challenges would include big changes such as autonomous vehicles. Mr Daniels warned that technology could be disruptive in unexpected ways. A large-scale online system to match "every journey with available vehicles in a sort of global car share" was "only one step beyond Uber". This was a revolution for which the technology already existed; the industry needed to be alert for developments such as this which "could overtake us," he said.

**"Better bus services could help us address challenges in environmental quality, economic development and combating exclusion"**  
- Derek Mackay



**"The industry must work harder than ever to speak with one voice and make the case for the bus"**  
– Claire Haigh

## Why buses matter

**"How to create flourishing public transport networks? One word: partnership"**  
– David Martin

**T**he second session focused on the importance of bus services to thriving local economies. Greener Journeys chief executive Claire Haigh summarised the body of evidence the organisation has assembled in recent years to quantify the benefits of bus services to economic growth, improving the environment and reducing congestion.

More people commute to work on buses than any other form of public transport, creating economic output worth £64bn; shopping and leisure trips made by bus passengers amount to £27bn annually. Bus priority measures generate £3.32 in benefits for every £1 spent. Greener Journeys' evidence had helped safeguard bus service operators' grant in the last spending review.

But now, she said, "the industry must work harder than ever to speak with one voice and make the case for the bus". With scarce public funding, and much transport capital funding devolved to local enterprise partnerships, "transport will need to compete for capital investment with training, housing and so on", she said.

Unlike rail and now road there was no strategic plan to invest in infrastructure to benefit buses. "This is why we need a National Statement on local bus infrastructure," she said. This would provide guidance to LEPs and local decision makers on the benefits of bus services when they were devising their strategic economic plans.

Alex Pratt, chair of the LEP Network, said local enterprise partnerships were established as a means to the end of creating economic growth. Transport was one of the factors in creating places where firms could grow. The 39 LEPs had published their strategic economic plans and had set about prioritising elements within them.

Between the LEPs there was a problem of integrating their aims and priorities. "It would make perfect sense if there was a National Statement to guide LEPs, because we have to find a better way of integrating between them."

LEPs accepted the importance of transport and buses. But because of the focus on economic growth, "the case [for funding] has to be made on economic grounds", and bus supporters in any area "needed to say the same thing in a coherent manner".

Arriva chief executive David Martin said: "How to create flourishing public transport networks? For me it can be summed up in one word: partnership."

But there needed to be clear rules. "Stakeholders have to stick to their commitments, such as delivering bus lanes and maintaining them for the duration of the agreement."

Liverpool, where most of the city's bus lanes had been removed, illustrated the point. Bus services had been slowed down as a result. "We'd invested in buses on the basis of investment in the bus lanes. On top of that we're now having to put more buses on to make up for longer journeys.

It's this sort of thing that can lead to the breakdown of relationships."

He added: "I'm not an advocate of a regulatory approach. We will work with what we have in place. If it's not broken we can deliver and build on that." UK operators, he said, "were not dug into trenches. There's a lot of fertile ground and a huge willingness to work in partnership."

Robert Hough, chair of Liverpool City Region LEP, asked how the industry could appeal to new customers, particularly in the business sector. Some groups did not use buses partly because of a lack of awareness about how the networks work. Apps and real time information were helpful, as was wi-fi on buses.

John Henkel, West Yorkshire Combined Authority acting director of transport, said that maximising the bus's economic contribution required effective services, networks, and possibilities for interchange; availability, with services matching working hours; affordability; easy accessibility with understandable information about services and fares; and the ability to serve new growth areas before demand is fully realised.

Manchester LEP chair Mike Blackburn told the conference that in the city, "over the last decade public transport has played an integral role in creating the conditions for growth." He added that "better services outside core daytime hours can stimulate the night time economy and make the city a better place to live and work".

David Begg leads a panel discussion with (l-r) Mike Blackburn, John Henkel, Robert Hough, David Martin, Alex Pratt and Claire Haigh



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**M**ark Nodder, chairman and chief executive of Wrights Group, said technology was affecting bus design in a number of areas.

Weight has been reduced: "Our current buses are several tons lighter than their predecessors," he said. This has been achieved through a combination of more efficient structural design and the use of lighter materials such as aluminium and composites. "Every ton saves 6% of fuel," he said.

Regarding fuel and environmental efficiency, new microhybrid technology recaptures braking energy to power ancillaries such as power steering and the compressor. This cuts fuel consumption by 10%. Flywheel hybrids can save 15-20% of fuel. Full diesel-electric hybrids



save 30%; plug-in and range-extended hybrids increase this to 40 and 60%. Fully electric and fuel cell buses produce zero emissions. However, fuel cells are still many years from commercial viability, he said.

For fully electric buses, single deckers may operate with a large battery pack and be charged overnight, but for double deckers the battery pack becomes too heavy. Opportunity charging while in service is preferable. "We think that's the way ahead for double decks," said Mr Nodder.

All these technologies come at a price; payback periods range from 0.8 years for a microhybrid to eight for a full diesel-electric hybrid. Regarding electric buses, Mr Nodder said the key question was "Where is all the electricity going to come from?" A thousand double deckers undergoing rapid charging at the same time would require 400MW, the output of Enfield power station.

On the same theme, Low CVP managing director Andy Eastlake said "The bus industry is a success in the low-carbon vehicle market." Buses for the UK markets have their performance assessed and meas-

ured very comprehensively, on a whole-life, "well to wheel" basis.

The success was founded on active collaboration between manufacturers, operators and local authorities, facilitated by a framework of incentives, "among the most advanced in the world", put in place by the DfT. "The UK bus sector has embraced new technology more than any of the other sectors of the market," he said.

He added that "no one technology is a panacea". Diesel would still have a place for many years to come. New Euro VI diesel buses will have lower NOx emissions than a van in 2017, he said.

Smart ticketing is another key technology area. Last November the big five bus operators announced a commitment to introduce multi-operator smart ticketing in English cities. Stagecoach UK Bus managing director Robert Montgomery said the proposal was based "on work that has been going on for the last few years". The initiative would be built on operators' existing smart systems rather than designing a bespoke new system. The plans cover all nine major city regions, would be competitively priced, would cost local authorities/PTEs nothing, and would be introduced by December this year. "Once it's introduced [on buses] we can add trains, ferries and trams," he said.

Rob Denton, Worldline head of client innovation and customer experience, said customers were wedded to convenience, things that made life easier. "Customers want buses to be reliable, safe, secure, and value for money." They are also "impatient - they want things now".

He said: "Wi-fi is something I'd expect on my bus today", but though this was the case in the UK, on the European mainland this was not a priority for passengers. Innovation, he said, is "not necessarily about inventing something new but comes about through small changes."



(l-r) Andy Eastlake, Rob Denton, Robert Montgomery, Mark Nodder and David Begg

**T**he final session addressed the potentially most controversial issue of partnerships versus a regulated, franchise-based model.

Manchester plans to introduce franchising as part of its devolution deal. TfGM chief executive Jon Lamonte said that the transport authority did not think about the problem in regulation/deregulation terms but "in terms of economic goals".

Manchester sought a bus network fully integrated with trams and rail, easy to understand, with good quality buses, real time information, and simple ticketing. The city had global aspirations. "Fantastic things" had been achieved in the bus market through partnership, but "to get to another level we need to do more. The answer for us is franchising."

FirstGroup UK Bus managing director Giles Fearnley described improvements to services that had been brought about in a collaborative way around the country – in West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Bristol, Manchester, Darlington and elsewhere. "I vote for partnership," he concluded. "It has worked for customers and transport authorities and allows improvements to be delivered rapidly."

Anthony Vigor, National Express director of policy and external affairs, said the company was "proud of its partnership with Centro. We believe it's

delivering for passengers and addressing many concerns." A mature relationship had replaced an antagonistic one, and the partnership had provided "a platform to discuss changes". Soon the National Express and Centro teams were to move into a joint office. "We are running more services and carrying more passengers," he said. "There is an opportunity to build on this."

PTEG director Jonathan Bray said "in future the bus market is not going to be one thing or the other – not one size fits all." While local government was not going to move en masse to a franchised model, "franchising gives authorities more of a stake in the success of bus services. Serious players in the transport sector see potential benefits and opportunities in franchising."

Go-Ahead group chief executive David Brown said that it was important to remember that "franchising can produce rubbish services". He borrowed Brighton & Hove Bus Company veteran Roger French's analogy that creating a good bus service is like baking a cake. "London's cake has been baking for 25 years and there have been some mistakes along the way." He added: "My belief, especially in tough times, is that bus operators require flexibility, and we need regulatory transport authorities not bogged down by the minutiae of running services."

The North East Combined Authority is already going through the

approval process for a quality contract scheme. NECA managing director for transport operations Tobyn Hughes said that, having done the research over a number of years, the authority had concluded that "quality contracts will work for the North East".

He accepted that operators "have tried their best to come up with alternatives" and that the route the authority had taken was "challenging". But he added: "If everything was rosy in the garden we wouldn't be here." He challenged operators, who oppose the plans: "Are you going to portray us in the media as left-wing loonies, or are you going to accept that there are opportunities and work with us?"

Closing the conference, transport minister Baroness Kramer said: "One thing we can all agree on is that our aim should be to get the best deal for passengers."

She continued: "The bus sector is evolving. Progress on smart ticketing in the last few months has been remarkable. We're looking at new ways of providing the services that communities need. And the industry is showing new resolve in adopting new technology."

"But the test stays the same. Are passengers getting a good deal, and could it be improved? I believe there's more that could be done. So in 2015, I'll be looking to the bus sector to lead the way."

**Wrapping up:**  
David Begg with  
(l-r) Tobyn Hughes,  
David Brown,  
Jonathan Bray,  
Anthony Vigor,  
Giles Fearnley and  
Baroness Kramer

## How should buses be delivered: quality partnerships, quality contracts of franchising?

**"I vote for partnership"  
– Giles Fearnley**

**"If everything was rosy in the garden we wouldn't be here"  
– Tobyn Hughes**

**"One thing we can all agree on is that our aim should be to get the best deal for passengers"  
– Baroness Kramer**



# The persuader

As minister responsible for smart ticketing, Baroness Kramer tells **David Fowler** how she has sought to move the industry towards the long-heralded multi-operator, multi-mode future

Baroness Kramer tries out Norfolk's Holdall multi-operator ticket and (below right) launches Southern's the Key (inset) on TfL services.

Main photo: Eastern Daily Press

**A**ctive support for smart ticketing has been government policy at least since Lord Adonis was Transport Secretary. But the advantages of smart tickets over their paper counterparts – the ability to buy, renew and top up tickets online and avoid queuing at ticket offices, security against loss of a valuable season ticket, the ability to check your journey history – are still enjoyed by relatively few outside London. And integrated ticketing – the ability to use a the same ticket on different operators or on different modes of transport – is even rarer. The Government took the opportunity in 2008 to specify the ITSO standard for the English concessionary travel scheme for older and disabled people, following Scotland's lead. This was intended to provide an incentive for operators to fit ITSO-compati-

ble ticket machines on their fleet. In 2010, a higher rate of bus service operators' grant was introduced for those who did. But although this has resulted in most buses being fitted with smart ticket machines, it has generally not led to widespread use of smartcards for everyday journeys.

## Co-operation

Since Baroness Susan Kramer became a transport minister in 2013 – following fellow Liberal Democrat smart ticket enthusiast Norman Baker – she has stepped up efforts to encourage the move to the smart world, using approaches such as hosting industry round tables to bring parties together and hammer out solutions.

So what does she see as the remaining barriers to the adoption of smart tickets?

"There's been a real pick-up in momentum around the smart tick-

eting agenda," she says. "We see that momentum continuing."

The hurdles, she says, are no longer primarily technological. These tend to be exaggerated: "All the various players are getting to grips with the technology issues."

No, the barriers "are institutional more than anything", she says. "We have a fragmented transport system in this country with devolved decision-making." It has taken "a lot of work on the institutional front to move forward".

For smart ticketing to work effectively, it requires the operators to work together; while there may be buy-in at senior levels of companies, "getting the details sorted is difficult with so many players". However, "The DfT can get everyone round the table... I think that's really made a difference." It seems clear that these round tables have been used to get across the

message to operators that the department's patience is not unlimited.

Progress, says Baroness Kramer, is being seen on three fronts.

On rail, an early decision was taken to focus on the south-east England commuter belt, linking in with Transport for London, through the South East Flexible Ticketing project. "SEFT is crucially important," she says. "We are in various stages of discussions with the 12 train operators,"

Of these, Southern and c2c are fully engaged and have already launched smartcards, Southern's the Key and c2c Smart, which can be used on the TfL system as well as their parent companies' routes. So a passenger from Essex or Sussex can load on the same card not just a ticket for travel between their home station and London, but also a standard TfL Travelcard for onward travel within London when they arrive.

"One of my pleasures in this job was that one of the first things I had to do was to launch the Key card," says Ms Kramer.

The same thinking, she adds, has been picked up by the new overarching transport body in the north of England, Transport for the North, which held its inaugural meeting last month. "They can see an approach to build on as part of the agenda to build connectivity."

## Buses

The second area is buses. "Virtually all concessionary travel is smart now," says the minister. "That's important because on most buses there is a reader that can read smartcards." The issue now is to get mainstream travel tickets on to smartcards. But while it is relatively easy to persuade commercial operators to put their own tickets on to smartcards, it's more difficult to get them to collaborate on multi-operator schemes.

The Oxford SmartZone project, in which Stagecoach and Go-Ahead subsidiaries Oxford Bus Company and Thames Travel accept each other's tickets on key routes, was "a big step forward", she believes. "Solent, Birmingham and Merseyside are also moving forward on multi-operator ticketing," she says (see overleaf).

And the pilot led by Norfolk County Council "is looking at ways to make smart ticketing beneficial for small operators". The pilot recognises that for small operators on tight margins the cost of installing smart equipment can be overwhelming. To avoid this, the project has set up a managed service with a shared back office, intended to bring the cost within their reach.

The £2.5m, three-year Norfolk pilot was announced in February 2013 with the aim of fitting the county's entire bus fleet with smart technology, making it the first mainly rural

county to do so. There has been "a high level of engagement"; 36 bus operators are taking part in the trial which will increase the number of smart-enabled buses to over 700.

The Holdall multi-operator ticket was launched last March for use initially on Norwich park and ride services, replacing conventional weekly, four-weekly, 12-weekly and annual season tickets, and introducing a new saver ticket valid for ten days of travel taken any time within a year. "A lot of companies are benefiting from one workstream," says the minister. Feedback from operators and passengers has been "extremely positive".

Baroness Kramer adds that another advantage for operators of going smart is the feedback they get from the cumulative data collected about smartcard use, which gives them much more detail about passengers' habits and the journeys they seek to make. However, "getting the operators to understand the data should be shared is another institutional barrier, for the small guys in particular".

## Smart Cities

A third initiative, the Smart Cities Partnership, is seeking to encourage multi-mode, multi-operator ticketing on bus and rail.

Founded in October 2013, it brings together Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Birmingham, Leeds, Newcastle, Bristol, Leicester and Nottingham.

The DfT has been holding regular round tables with the group aiming to work through the issues that continue to hold up progress. These include questions such as whether to adopt a local brand for a multi-operator ticket that everyone signs up to, or whether each operator keeps its own brand but offers the same multi-operator product.

A senior industry figure attests that the initiative has been speeded up developments. "It allows all the cities involved and the operators in those cities to see what progress is being made and share best practice. The focus on the cities, where the Government has previously invested in setting up back office systems, has allowed momentum to build. Baroness Kramer in particular has been very clear that the DfT wants to see progress, because it has been too slow and because of the previous investment. She's been very frank."

Baroness Kramer admits that the DfT is excited at the commitment made by the big five operators towards the end of last year to introduce multi-operator flexible ticketing in all the cities in the partnership by the end of this year.

The announcement took many by surprise, not least the passenger transport executives, coming just

**I think the Manchester announcement concentrated minds**



a few days after chancellor George Osborne announced plans for devolution to Manchester which would include bus franchising. Indeed, the PTEs have expressed reservations about the plan. Manchester has been working on its Getmethere smart ticketing project for several years but has only launched it on Metrolink tram system so far. Its ambition was for it to be extended to buses in 2016. Was the DfT equally surprised?

"I think the Manchester announcement concentrated minds," she says. "But [the big five] couldn't have made the announcement if they hadn't done the background work. In meetings we've had we've seen significant progress." This had perhaps not been recognised, or communicated, to the world outside, she adds.

"We know they are working now on the detail of how it will be rolled out. We understand they're making good progress. Everyone is confident that the deadline will be met."

## Sticking point

A remaining sticking point on multi-operator schemes is whether there should be a price premium over a single operator's ticket. PTEs tend to be against this. Baroness Kramer points out that there are some people for whom a multi-operator ticket is no advantage, and argues that many people would accept paying some degree of premium for the extra convenience a multi-operator ticket offers. The principle adopted in the DfT's discussions with the smart cities group is that any price premium must fairly reflect the additional value offered by a multi-operator ticket. "This has been broadly recognised as workable," she says.

Smart ticketing has, it seems, been just around the corner for many years. There seems to be a good deal of confidence in the DfT that the much-heralded revolution is finally almost here. With key deadlines approaching for both South East Flexible Ticketing, the Norfolk pilot and the major operators' integrated ticketing plans for the cities, 2015 promises to be a critical year.

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## Regions play their cards right

**□** Merseytravel will launch its Saveaway day ticket on its Walrus smartcard over the whole of Merseyside next month after a pilot on the Wirral.

The smart version of the off-peak ticket, which is valid on buses, trains and ferries, will replace scratchcard versions of the ticket which have existed for 30 years.

More than 45,000 smart Saveaways have been sold since the start of the pilot in November last year, which is said to make the scheme one of the most active outside London.

It will be possible to upload the tickets to Walrus cards at around 800 PayPoint outlets, more than double the number of retailers who sold the scratchcard versions.

Within the coming year Merseytravel plans to introduce the ability to buy smart Saveaways in advance, with plans for another of its existing pre-paid tickets to go smart too.

Merseytravel and operators are working on a strategy for the future of smart ticketing on Merseyside. A broad outline is expected in the next few months with detailed recommendations to follow later this year.

Merseytravel chair Cllr Liam Robinson said: "To have one of the largest smart ticketing schemes outside London from Wirral sales alone shows the scale of what we've achieved in just a few months. We now want to start the rest of Merseyside on its smart ticketing journey."

**□** Solent Go, the new region-wide South Hampshire travelcard, went live in August last year and the city-based card for

Portsmouth and Southampton went live this January.

Bus operators involved in the project include First, Stagecoach, Bluestar, Emsworth and District, Xelabus, Uni-link, Brijan Tours and Wheelers.

Ticket choices include one-day, seven-day, 28-day and 13-week bus tickets for the Solent Region zone and Portsmouth and Southampton city zones, plus carnets of two, 14 and 56 trips on Hover Travel, the Gosport ferry and the Hythe Ferry. Ferries to the Isle of Wight will be going live soon.

A spokesperson said: "DfT funding opportunities such as the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and Better Bus Area Fund have been the key drivers in helping to advance smart ticketing in the Solent region."

**□** In the West Midlands, passenger transport executive Centro had undertaken significant work over the last four years to introduce smartcard technology under its Swift brand. It has funded the introduction of smart ticket machines on the bus network and Metro.

Ticket types introduced so far include Swift pay as you go, launched in October 2012. This offers a simple flat fare on 10 different bus operators' services (excluding National Express) with savings of up

to 60p per journey compared with the standard adult fare. Although each operator charges a flat fare on its own buses, the fares can vary between operators. Pay as you go passengers can top up their cards at New Street and Wolverhampton travel information

centres, on line, and via an auto top-up function linked to their bank account. Swift was the first ITSO scheme to offer this function.

It is planned to introduce an enhanced version of pay-as-you-go, to include daily fare capping, this summer – working with 26 operators.

Coventry and Black Country nBus (the Centro/Network West Midlands brand) direct debit tickets were launched on Swift in autumn 2013. They allow passengers to use multiple operators' services in those areas instead of buying a region-wide ticket. This saves £120 annually for Coventry passengers and £78 for the Black Country. The regional nBus ticket was moved to the Swift card at the same time.

Adult one-week and four-week nBus and National Express tickets are available through travel centres. Tickets can also be bought or topped up at 250 Payzone outlets.

Centro has also developed the system to allow National Express to issue carnets of five, 10 or 15 day tickets, called e-daysavers, available in regional and Coventry versions and designed to suit part-time workers.

Centro is currently developing Swift version of Metro, NX plus Metro, and nBus plus Metro season tickets. These should be available by summer. It is seeking DfT funding for a pilot Swift project on the rail network for people using the current nNetwork season ticket. This will provide a truly multimodal solution covering train, bus and Metro.

Centro said in a statement: "Centro is pleased to be supporting DfT's Smart Cities Partnership. We have already delivered a multi bus operator scheme in the West Midlands and we are sharing our experiences with the rest of the country through the Smart Cities programme to support the wider introduction of smart ticketing across the UK."



Eight bus companies participate in Solent Go



The Holdall card was introduced on Norwich park and ride services



## Norfolk's smart service

**T**here are around 36 bus operators in Norfolk. First is the biggest, followed by Stagecoach and Go-Ahead subsidiaries. The rest are local firms. Yet by the middle of last month, 99.8% of all local bus services were run by buses with ITSO-compliant ticket machines.

This is a significant achievement for a mainly rural county with a diverse bus market. It is the result, says Norfolk County Council travel system manager Laurie Egan, of the county's smart ticketing managed service pilot.

Norfolk was awarded £2.5m from the DfT in 2013 to set up the service. "It allows small operators in particular to go smart without worrying about the equipment, setting up systems and so on," says Mr Egan.

Companies which sign up to the service give the council the 8% extra BSOG payments they receive for going smart for three years. Under a contract with Norfolk, Ticketer provides a single back office and supplies participating firms with ticket machine, and their own web portal, installs the machines, gets the system running and maintains it. "We take it out of the hands of the operators and make it as easy as possible," says Mr Egan.

After three years the bus operators can choose to keep the equipment or



return it. If they keep it they have to pay a maintenance charge, but they get their BSOG increment back.

The Ticketer system is modular and will allow the addition of new modules, such as for near field communication, to be added in future.

Operators have been enthusiastic, and the project took off, says Mr Egan, after local operators Sanders Coaches (the biggest local firm) and Simonds of Botesdale signed up and conveyed their enthusiasm to colleagues in other operators.

Alongside the managed service, Norfolk has launched the Holdall smartcard. This

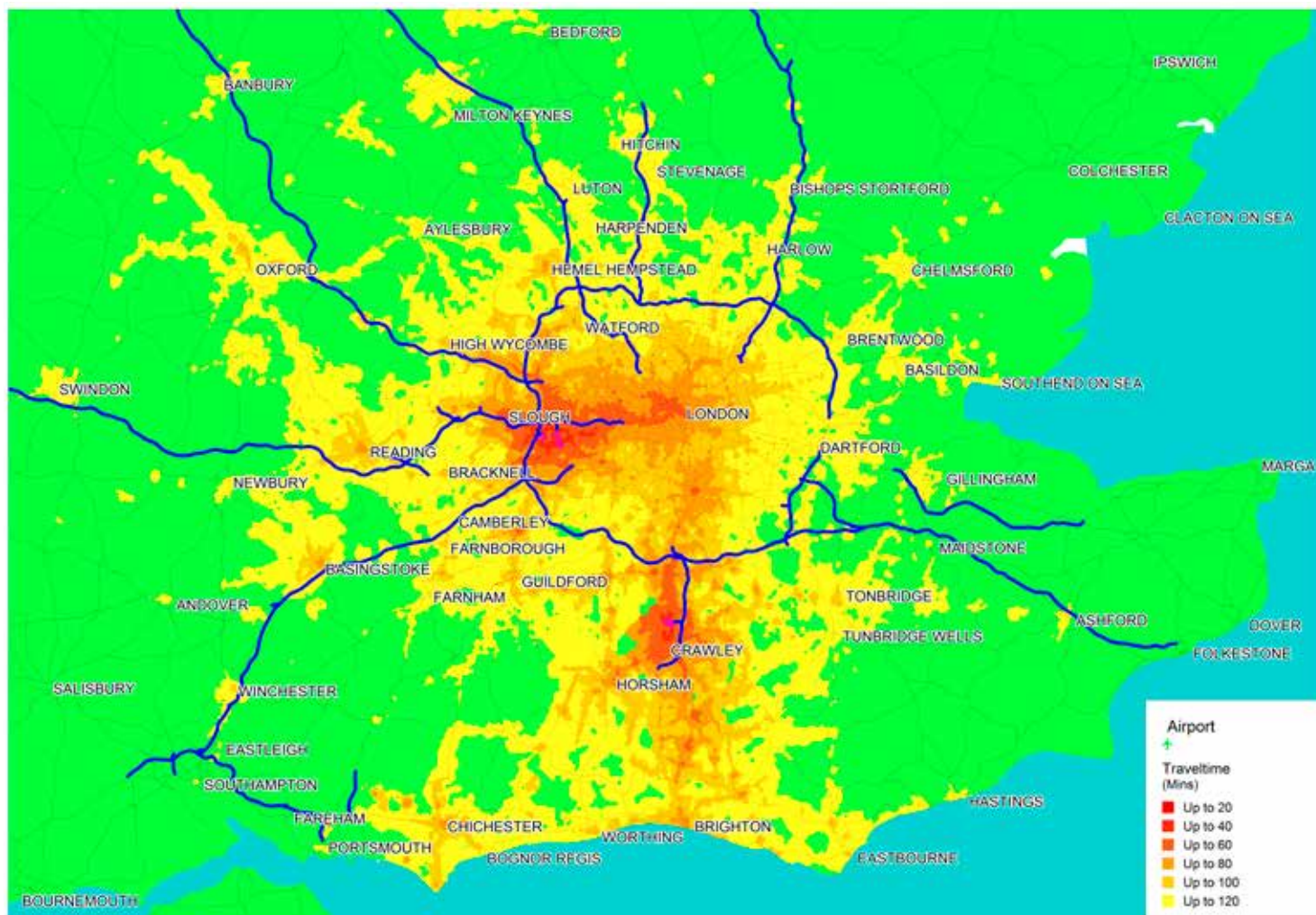
went live for journeys on the city's park and ride services from April last year. It is a multi-operator card, allowing travel on both operators that serve the park and ride, Go-Ahead subsidiary Konectbus, which has its own smart ticket system using Vix machines, and Norse Group, a participant in the managed service. 4,000 Holdall cards are in circulation.

"We're very pleased with the uptake," says Mr Egan.

Next stage of the plan is to replace the daily multi-operator Fusion card covering Norwich, which involves seven operators, with a smartcard. A multi-operator Norfolk Day Rider for use anywhere in the county is also planned, with the visitor and tourist market in mind. It is hoped that both tickets can be introduced by the end of this year.

Also planned are a 16-19 entitlement card, giving passengers in that age group a 20% discount off the standard fare, and a Norfolk scholars' pass for the 16,000 plus pupils who have to travel more than three miles to school and are transported by county-provided services.

"I can't overestimate how much the managed service has taken the headache out of installing ITSO equipment," says Mr Egan. "Smaller companies wouldn't touch smart ticketing with a bargepole without it."



## Easier airport access?

A new study quantifies and compares the impact of Crossrail on the number of people within easy reach of Heathrow and Gatwick airports by public transport, writes **Jo Dorrington Ward**

**C**rossrail will significantly improve the accessibility of Heathrow airport from a wide range of destinations, according to a new study.

This is important if any decision to build new runway capacity in the South East goes in Heathrow's favour, and from the standpoint of the airport's sustainability policy.

The aim of the study was to analyse how Crossrail, when fully operational, will affect travel times to both Heathrow and Gatwick airports. Both are on the Airports Commission's shortlist as possible sites for new runway capacity in the South East, with a decision due after the election. Heathrow in particular is keen to increase the proportion of passengers travelling to the airport by public transport, seeking to reduce emissions and improve sustainability.

Crossrail will run across London and from 2019 its western section will run to Heathrow and Read-

**Heathrow Terminals 1-3 and 4 will experience the greatest improvements in accessibility**

ing, providing four trains hourly to the airport in addition to the current Heathrow Express service.

### On TRACC

The study was conducted using Basemap's Visography TRACC, a multi-modal accessibility planning tool. This software can be used to quickly and accurately calculate travel time using a multitude of public transport and road travel modes to give accurate journey times from many origins to many destinations in one calculation. The calculation engine and advanced database design are able to fully utilise national datasets within a calculation, allowing analysis of results across the whole country.

TRACC also provides the ability to focus on specific geographical areas, in this case the areas surrounding the two airports. Visography TRACC covers a full range of transport modes including walking, cycling, driving and public

transport, and allows a mixture of these to be used within a calculation.

The public transport modes used in this study included: bus, coach, National Rail, light rail, Tube and tram. The first step was to import timetable data, which were sourced from Basemap's latest NPTDR dataset (January 2015). For the road network Meridian 2, a vector map dataset, was imported. This is an Ordnance Survey OpenData product, allowing walking access throughout the network and between various stops to be included if an interchange was required.

Origins, the point at which a calculation starts, can be created from postcode centroids, addresses, or as a grid across an area. For this study a 350m standardised grid was selected. The grid consisted of over 1 million origin points, extending across the Midlands, the whole of the south of England and throughout Wales.

Crossrail will run directly into

Heathrow Airport, thus potentially improving accessibility. Heathrow's ambition to build a new runway to increase capacity makes an assessment of whether travel times to the airport will improve, and how many people this may affect, extremely pertinent.

Heathrow Terminals 1, 2 and 3 were considered as one destination point – they are close together and served by one Tube station. Terminals 4 and 5 were considered separately as travel times and travel routes would differ. Gatwick Airport was selected

Similarly, areas north of Horsham and Crawley have short travel times to an airport of up to 20 minutes, which is most likely Gatwick.

The latest census data from 2011 was imported into TRACC to produce demographic data reports, assessing the total population affected by Crossrail.

The table below shows that once Crossrail is fully operational, Heathrow Terminals 1-3 and 4, which both have Crossrail stops, will experience the greatest improvements in accessibility, particularly within a 30-min-

**Left: Map shows travel times to Heathrow and Gatwick in 20-minute bands after Crossrail is operational. Below: The route taken by Crossrail. Bottom: The table shows the increase in populations within the given travel times of both airports**



for comparative purposes, looking at the North and South terminals separately. Though Crossrail will not directly serve Gatwick, it was considered worth assessing whether it improves accessibility at all.

The destinations were plotted using the draw tool within Visography TRACC at the approximate terminal entrance points.

Visography TRACC was used to conduct an analysis of the journey time from each origin point to all destinations on a Tuesday between 10am and 2pm, showing current accessibility to both airports.

## Impact

Visography TRACC was then used to model the Crossrail route and its services, in order to see its impact on travel times to both airports. Crossrail provided station to station transit times which were entered as a new rail service into TRACC along with the various routes, including the spur off to Heathrow. A frequency of four trains an hour was assumed during the peak times and two an hour during the off-peak, as stated on the Crossrail website. After the creation of the new route, this was run through TRACC using the same time period (Tuesday 10 am to 2pm).

The map shows travel times to both airports using six time bands of 20 minute intervals after Crossrail opens. This represents the total travel time taking into account any walking time, interchanges between stops and time spent on public transport. Central London, west London and areas surrounding Slough have the shortest travel times to an airport, most likely Heathrow, of up to 20 minutes.

ute period (9.8% and 15.7% increase respectively). Terminal 5 experiences a much smaller increase of 0.8% in the population that can reach it within 30 minutes, because there will not be a Crossrail stop there, so passengers will have to change on to the Piccadilly Line. Nevertheless, the overall improvements in travel times are highly relevant given the proposals for additional runway capacity at Heathrow.

**Jo Dorrington Ward is a product specialist at Basemap**

## The Gatwick experience

TRACC shows that Gatwick is unlikely to experience any improvement in accessibility within the 30- and 60-minute time bands due to Crossrail. However, accessibility to Gatwick does improve when looking at travel times of up to 90 and 120 minutes, particularly for the South terminal, which is closer to Gatwick Airport railway station than the North terminal. This reflects the fact that Crossrail can be used by people located east and west of London and in the Home Counties to travel to London to access hubs such as Victoria (via the Underground) to reach Gatwick.

HS2 plans also show a spur into Heathrow, which has the potential to further improve accessibility. It is planned to increase the accessibility of Gatwick through separate improvements to main line rail services, including Gatwick Express and the continuing Thameslink programme, aiming to double rail capacity by 2020. These were outside the scope of this study.

Plans are also under consideration for Crossrail 2, which will improve accessibility into Surrey, with potential to improve accessibility to Gatwick (by interchanging at Clapham Junction). However, plans for Crossrail 2 do not focus specifically on accessibility to Gatwick, highlighting that the airport should be considered closely in future infrastructure plans, particularly if it is chosen as the site of an additional runway.

Terminal	Total Journey Time	Total Population Before	Total Population After	Additional Population	% Change in Population
Heathrow T1, T2, T3	30 minutes	240261	263776	23515	9.8
	60 minutes	3527834	3624989	97155	2.8
	90 minutes	9036534	9164589	128055	1.4
	120 minutes	13740065	13751735	11670	0.1
Heathrow T4	30 minutes	229911	265906	35995	15.7
	60 minutes	2788401	2933550	145149	5.2
	90 minutes	8143252	8273792	130540	1.6
	120 minutes	12658716	12694379	35663	0.3
Heathrow T5	30 minutes	207388	208954	1566	0.8
	60 minutes	2808362	2829417	21054	0.7
	90 minutes	8543897	8642864	98967	1.2
	120 minutes	13207212	13211877	4666	0
Gatwick North	30 minutes	28472	28472	0	0
	60 minutes	725208	725208	0	0
	90 minutes	5848755	5854989	6235	0.1
	120 minutes	11305847	11315852	10005	0.1
Gatwick South	30 minutes	81819	81819	0	0
	60 minutes	1471406	1471406	0	0
	90 minutes	7312703	7323591	10888	0.1
	120 minutes	12311728	12338419	26691	0.2



Beverley Bell



Graham Dalton



Julian Howes



Steve Wakeland

# Traffic commissioner to be next CILT president

**Beverley Bell**, senior traffic commissioner for Great Britain, will take up the presidency of CILT from incumbent Jim Spittle at an inauguration to be held in London in May. She has been a fellow of the institute for nearly ten years and a vice-president for the past two years.

Ms Bell began her career in private law practice before establishing her own practice in 1990, specialising in criminal and transport law. She was appointed traffic commissioner for the north-west of England in April 2000 and senior traffic commissioner for Great Britain in June 2012.

London Underground has named **Steve Griffiths** as its new chief operating officer. He will join the organisation in May, assuming accountability for Underground operations and maintenance, reporting to managing director Mike Brown.

Mr Griffiths started his career with Rolls-Royce, where he completed his apprenticeship and gained an engineering degree. He became a senior engineer in the product support and engineering division before leaving to join Virgin Atlantic. As director of engineering for Virgin Atlantic he was responsible for all aspects of aircraft engineering and maintenance. He became the airline's chief operating officer in 2009, responsible for engineering, operations, airports, cabin crew, and cargo.

**Nick Brown**, who has been acting as interim chief operating officer since December,

will remain in the role until June to ensure continuity.

The chief executive of the Highways Agency, **Graham Dalton**, has announced that he is leaving his post in the summer.

During his seven years in the post, Mr Dalton has led the agency through a time of financial constraint and of growing ambition for the strategic road network.

He has led the agency as it has established a strong reputation for efficiency, for undertaking capital investment, and for operating one of the most intensively used road networks in Europe.

Mr Dalton said: "It has been a privilege to lead the Highways Agency through such an exciting time. I am leaving the business in good shape with a great team of people and an unprecedented five-year fixed investment plan.

"Highways England, which will come into being in April following Royal Assent of the government's Infrastructure Bill, will need a chief executive who can commit to delivering the first roads investment strategy which runs to 2020. I will work with chairman Colin Matthews to ensure an orderly handover to my successor in the summer."

Stagecoach and Virgin have announced a number of new senior management appointments for Virgin Trains East Coast, the company which takes over the East Coast main line franchise from 1 March. As reported last month, the team will be headed by **David Horne**,

- **Steve Griffiths appointed London Underground COO**
- **Graham Dalton leaves the Highways Agency**
- **New senior managers for Virgin Trains East Coast**
- **Julian Howes to head Mott MacDonald modelling business**
- **Steve Wakeland named general manager of ITSO**
- **Roger Mountford appointed non-exec director of HS2**

until recently managing director of Stagecoach-owned East Midlands Trains.

The new team includes: commercial director **Andy Sparkes**, who was bid director for the successful East Coast bid and leader of the transition team; finance director **Richard Bodicoat**, a member of the successful bid team; people director **Clare Burles**, also from East Midlands Trains; engineering director **Jack Commandeur**, who held the same role at previous franchisee East Coast; major projects director **Tim Hedley-Jones**, also from East Coast; and safety and operations director **Warrick Dent**, who was a Network Rail area manager on the London North East & East Midlands route.

Consultant Mott MacDonald has appointed **Julian Howes** head of its UK transport modelling business. Mr Howes will co-ordinate and manage the modelling strategies and services as part of the consultancy's integrated transport team and will strengthen the use of best practice in the use of transport

modelling tools throughout the business.

Mr Howe has over 25 years' transport planning experience, with expertise in the areas of modelling, appraisal, business and operational management, business development and stakeholder management. He previously worked for Atkins where he led major modelling projects for HS2 Ltd and local authorities.

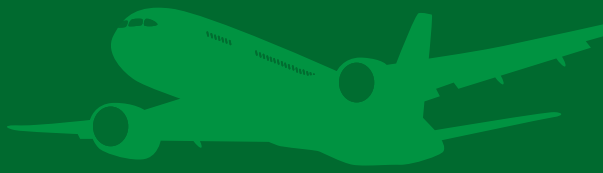
**Steve Wakeland** has been appointed general manager of ITSO Ltd, the DfT-supported membership organisation which develops the national specification for interoperable smart ticketing in transport. ITSO also provides the security management system for ticketing scheme operators, as well as testing and certifying equipment for compliance with the specification.

Mr Wakeland joined the company in October 2011 as governance manager.

**Roger Mountford** has been appointed as a non-executive director of HS2 Ltd by Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin.

Mr Mountford is a former member of the board of the Civil Aviation Authority as well as chair of the Housing Finance Corporation, which raises long-term funds to finance social housing.

He is currently chairman of HgCapital Trust, an independent trustee of several pension schemes, and a member of the council of the London School of Economics.



# The Great Transport Debate

11<sup>th</sup> March 2015

KPMG, 15 Canada Square, London



## Political Debate ↓

Chaired by Prof David Begg, Chief Executive, Transport Times



**Baroness Kramer**  
Minister of State for Transport



**Patrick McLoughlin MP**  
Secretary of State for Transport



**Lilian Greenwood MP**  
Shadow Transport Minister

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Chair: David Williams,  
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David Brown,  
CEO, Go-Ahead Group

David Brown,  
CEO, Merseytravel

## Aviation Debate ↓

James Stamp, UK Head of Transport,  
Global Head of Aviation, KPMG

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