

Shaping transport in your area

A campaigners' guide to Local Transport Plans

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Part 1. Introducing Local Transport Plans

Under the Transport Act 2000, local authorities outside London are required to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP), a 5 year programme for transport in an area, setting out policy priorities, capital spending plans and targets. They are supported by an annual update called the Annual Progress Report.

The first set of Plans was submitted in 2000 and covered the period 2001 –2006. Local authorities all over England are preparing their second LTPs for 2006 - 2011. Councils must submit provisional but complete Plans by 29 July 2005 and final versions by 31 March 2006.

This action guide explains what LTPs are, the context in which they are being written, what they should contain, what you can argue for and gives campaigning ideas for working in your area.

Applying the acid test

Transport planning is growing unnecessarily more technical, creating barriers on a subject important to everyone.

Don't worry! Cut through the jargon and technical complexities and stick to simple sustainable transport campaigning principles which are:

- Reducing the need to travel
This is about making it possible for people to do what they need and want without having to travel so far, and without having to use their car so much. This can be done by supporting local facilities such as shops, and by making sure that the places that people want to go, such as shops, offices, schools and leisure centres, are not only accessible by car but also by public transport, cycling and walking.
- Providing high quality alternatives to car use
This involves giving people real choices about travel, by investing in improving public transport and in making streets safer for cycling and walking.
- Encouraging people to use their car less
This involves encouraging people to use their cars less through demand management measures such as road pricing or congestion charging and limiting the availability of car parking.
- Ensuring that transport supports other policy objectives such as healthier lifestyles and improving social inclusion.

The acid test is whether your LTP reduced traffic and improved local transport - or not?

Why LTPs are important

They provide a key opportunity to influence transport policy in your area and to gain a local profile on an issue that affects everyone. But beyond this, they are also a chance to get across key messages for campaigners concerned about transport and the environment, for example about the urgency of action to tackle climate change emissions, the social exclusion problems caused by public transport systems which do not reflect the needs of passengers and the huge environmental problems caused by our car dependent culture.

The LTP also creates an opening for building links with other organisations (transport, environment, social justice etc) as well as with concerned individuals who may

subsequently become active campaigners.

Who writes LTPs?

LTPs are written by local transport authorities in England. These are county councils (where there is still two-tier local government) or unitary authorities (where there is now a single tier). In metropolitan areas (Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne & Wear, West Midlands and West Yorkshire) the LTP is produced jointly by all the metropolitan councils. There will also be joint LTPs in some areas of the country where there is a unitary authority within a former county council area (for example Nottingham City Council within Nottinghamshire).

The situation is different elsewhere:

- In London, the equivalent plan is written by the Mayor, with the boroughs writing implementation plans.
- In Wales, the system is the same, but the councils are working on a different timetable and are not currently writing LTPs.
- In Scotland and Northern Ireland, the system is different.

Councils rated as '**excellent**' under the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment do not have to prepare certain statutory plans, including LTPs. The 'excellent' rating has little to do with transport. Authorities are judged on their service delivery across the board, with transport forming only a small part of the overall assessment. It is a moving picture, as authorities can move into and out of the 'excellent' category.

The latest LTP guidance craftily circumvents round this situation by creating new financial incentives for all authorities, including those rated as 'excellent'. As a minimum, 'excellent' authorities will have to submit a set of local targets and trajectories and report annually on their performance. In return, they will receive funding equivalent to a middling quality full LTP. However, if they want to try for a higher level of funding they can prepare a fuller document which "may, but need not necessarily be called a Local Transport Plan".

LTP Timetable

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| • Deadline for submitting provisional LTPs to DfT | 29 July 2005 |
| • New major scheme bids for consideration in November /December 2005 Settlement | end July 2005 |
| • 5 th Annual Progress report for 2004/05 | 31 July 2005 |
| • Transport settlement announced by DfT | December 2005 |
| • Deadline for submitting final LTPs to DfT | 31 March 2006 |
| • Funding starts | April 2006 |
| • Report reviewing whole LTP1 period | July 2006 |
| • 1 st Annual Progress Report on LTP2 | July 2007 |

As an added complication, major local schemes bids in future will be accepted at any time of year and not just through Annual Progress Reports whose submission is in July. Moreover, the DfT may approve major schemes in "batches" at any time and not simply in the end of year Transport Settlement.

The policy context

National

The White Paper 'The Future of Transport: a network for 2030' (July 2004) forms the policy context for LTP2, centring on three key themes: sustained investment; improvements in transport management and planning ahead. As is often the case with transport, we read mixed messages. The document moves in the right direction on buses; it makes positive noises about cycling and walking and indicates support in principle for road-user charging. On the other hand, the line on road-building is confused and traffic growth skipped over.

You may also like to refer to other policy documents such as:

- Local Government Act 2000 – enables local authorities to take steps necessary for ensuring the social, economic and environmental well-being of residents.
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport (2001) – objectives include reducing the need to travel, especially by car.
- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005) – sets overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development. Key principles include addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change.
- Securing the future: delivering UK sustainable development strategy (2005) – introduces the important guiding principle of living within environmental limits.

Whilst the strategies express many fine sentiments, getting them to stick is another matter.

Another essential ingredient in the mix is Public Service Agreements (PSAs). These are a series of funding agreements between the Treasury and other Government Departments, linked to performance on meeting targets. The DfT has seven PSAs based on around its core work that includes improving air quality and reducing road casualties. In turn, Councils agree Local PSAs with the Government. Consider whether policies in your area will really help deliver national and local targets.

Regional

As a result of planning changes, local transport campaigners must now work on two fronts: the LTP and the RTS, both statutory plans. Policies and priorities in the LTP should be consistent with the relevant Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), an integral part of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). View the RTS for your region via your Regional Assembly website and see what it says about local transport policies and what leads it gives across the region on aspects such as demand management.

The regional level is assuming greater importance in other ways as well. Tired of regional assemblies submitting expensive wish lists of road schemes, the Government intends introducing some reality into the situation by setting Regional Funding Allocations. Each region will in due course be allocated a sum of money (on paper only) for spending on transport. This will force assemblies to make hard choices. In a parallel move, the Government in December 2004 remitted several local road proposals submitted as Local Major Scheme Bids in July 2004 to the regional assemblies for advice (in 2006) on their priority alongside local transport priorities. At the same time, they remitted a number of trunk road schemes in the Targeted Programme of Improvements which the DfT had newly classified as "regional" schemes. Regional assemblies will set up Regional Transport Boards to deal with such matters and

environmental groups will be pressing for a seat on each Board.

In each English region, local groups have formed a regional network of transport and environment groups called Regional Transport Round-tables who work together to try and influence their RTS and the regional assembly. To find out the contact in your region go to Transport 2000 website – www.transport2000.org.uk click on Regional decision making followed by Contact Transport Activists' Roundtables.

Local

The link between the LTP and land use planning has been weakened by the abolition of Structure Plans, although current Structure Plans will apply until replaced by the RSS. In addition to the RTS providing a steer on transport policies in the LTP, the transport chapter, along with the sub-regional strategies, will form an important part of the context for land use policies in Local Development Documents (LDDs) and Frameworks (LDFs) by guiding new development to accessible locations.

Part 2. What the LTP Guidance says

Councils do not have carte blanche to put in whatever policies they want. Instead, LTPs must adhere to central government guidance which sets down the key areas to be addressed and expectations.

The DfT issued final guidance on how to prepare second round LTPs in December 2004,

'Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans'

There are many positive aspects to the new document, not least its emphasis on a more joined up approach by linking transport with other policy areas and related strategies such as health, crime and quality of life. On the negative side, the Guidance is very weak in two key areas: Climate Change and Promoting Modal Shift. It is also a difficult read in places and the sheer amount of detail involved is mind-boggling.

The Guidance also shows the tensions at national level between the centralising tendencies of the Treasury and DfT requiring the delivery of national and local targets on the one hand and on the emphasis of the Office of Deputy Prime Minister on local authority freedom to decide on local priorities on the other hand.

The 115 page report and its summary can be viewed on the Department for Transport web-site at

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/page/dft_localtrans_504005.hcsp

For an easier to read run down of what's required, look at Part 5 on 'Local Transport Plan Practicalities' at pages 76 – 86.

To view what's new on Local Transport Plans, check the Dft website on a regular basis:

Enter the DfT website at <http://www.dft.gov.uk>

Click on Regional and Local Transport in the left hand column;

Then click on Local Transport Plan – process and initiatives.

The DfT website also has a dedicated section on local transport at www.dft.gov.uk/about/localauthorities - this is quicker than going through the above.

A good source of general/specific information on LTPs is the Local Transport Planning Network at www.ltpnetwork.gov.uk

What the Guidance says in a nutshell

Buzz words to remember are:

- 'Shared priorities'
- Targets and indicators
- Outcomes

If local authorities deliver on their agreed commitments, they will be rewarded with extra money. If they don't, they will receive no extra or less than usual. The role of local campaigners will be to keep their councils up to the mark.

How does LTP2 Guidance differ from LTP1?

- i) The emphasis is on process rather than policy and so LTP1 Guidance chapters and Annex D tables advising what LTPs should say about individual topics – walking, cycling, public transport etc – have been dropped.
- ii) The national policy context has changed since 2000 with publication of the Ten Year Transport Plan, Public Service Agreements between the Treasury and DfT and changes to the planning system with a strengthening of the regional tier. Such changes have emphasised the need to meet national and regional objectives.
- iii) A greater emphasis on the transport sector's contribution to wider policy objectives. In relation to the LTP this involves contributing to wider strategies and plans, for example as part of the Shared Priorities and Accessibility Planning.
- iv) A new focus on outcomes and not outputs – ie results of what councils deliver.
- v) New developments in appraisal and guidance, in particular Accessibility Planning and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- vi) Abandonment of the requirement for Traffic Reduction Reports, a regrettable change.

For a review of the LTP1 process see: [Long Term Process and Impact Evaluation of the LTP Policy](http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/page/dft_localtrans_037856.pdf), Atkins for DfT, May 2005
http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/page/dft_localtrans_037856.pdf

'Shared Priorities' at the heart of LTPs

At the heart of the Guidance lies a concept which central and local government have signed up to called the '**Shared Priorities**'. This is a detailed joint agreement covering a range of topics that include transport. The *shared priorities, together with targets, indicators and trajectories described in the next section form the basis of second round Plans and proposed schemes.*

The Guidance says that the DfT "*will look for evidence that the aim of delivering the shared priorities is at the heart of all local transport strategies and LTPs*"ⁱ and that it "*will assess LTPs partly on the contribution of the LTP towards delivering the shared priority*" (para 3.3 LTP Guidance)

The Shared Priorities are:

• **Tackling Congestion**

Authorities covering cities with a population of over 250,000 and smaller towns and cities with localised congestion problems will have to set congestion targets. Councils must judge the right balance between demand management solutions (eg local congestion charging, parking pricing and restraint, travel planning) and supply side solutions (eg improved information, public transport, improved walking and cycling), depending on the nature and pattern of congestion and its underlying causes in their local areas. 'Soft factors' (renamed 'smarter choices' by the DfT) such as school and workplace travel plans, as a way of influencing travel behaviour, are highlighted as an important mechanism for tackling congestion.

• **Delivering Accessibility**

A new innovation in the Guidance is the introduction of accessibility planning. This is

seen by the Government as an important aspect of tackling social exclusion. The main focus is on access to jobs, health care, learning and food shops. As the LTP Guidance makes clear, solutions involve more than just better buses, but also improving cycling and walking routes, reducing the cost of transport, improving fear of crime in and around transport, improving travel information and awareness and reducing the need to travel by locating development in accessible locations.

Councils are required to submit **Accessibility Plans** alongside their LTPs. Separate detailed guidance ('Guidance on Accessibility Planning in Local Transport Plans' - 120 pages on DfT website; or see shortened version, 'Accessibility Planning Guidance: Summary'), is disappointing as it concentrates on buses and neglects walking and cycling. The section on accessibility planning in the LTP guidance gives more rounded advice than that in the accessibility planning guidance.

Accessibility Plans involve a five-stage process: an LTP-wide assessment, a focus on local priority areas, an appraisal of various options, producing a Plan, monitoring and evaluation. There are 6 Core Accessibility Indicators, which refer to journey times to jobs and services - all bus-based. The DfT says that councils can identify their own accessibility indicators. Campaigners should take advantage and encourage the adoption of indicators that reflect walking and cycling.

- **Safer Roads**

The road safety shared priority offers campaigners real scope for reducing all of the impacts of transport. It has a strategic position within the LTP not only because it is a shared priority, but because of direct links to a range of other local authority duties, such as Best Value, and strategic plans (such as community safety, health improvement, community strategies and neighbourhood renewal). There is a strong equity dimension in road safety because of the greater burden of casualties borne by people from poorer neighbourhoods, especially children.

By making local roads safer for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages, the road safety priority underpins the other shared priorities of congestion, accessibility and air quality. It is also important to consider the ethical implications of expecting more walking and cycling if roads are not substantially safer for these modes than they are at present.

The Full Guidance recognises the direct relevance of the road safety priority to the health, social inclusion and liveability objectives of local authorities. It also acknowledges the benefits of the expansion of walking and cycling for these same objectives and for sustainable communities, regeneration, quality of life, noise reduction, high quality public spaces, 'making the best and most sustainable use of infrastructure' and climate change.

- **Better Air Quality**

The Government's Air Quality Strategy gives district councils and unitary authorities a duty to review and assess local air quality against national targets for seven key air pollutants. Where these targets are not likely to be met in time, councils must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and draw up an action plan to reduce pollution levels. Road transport is a key source of air pollution and 95% of AQMAs are mainly transport-related.

In areas where there are transport-related AQMAs, the action plans should be incorporated into LTPs. In other areas, authorities should still consider air quality, given

the importance of transport emissions. The Government says it wants councils to reduce emissions by better traffic management and other measures to reduce congestion.

What about climate change?

Transport is a major source of climate change emissions in the UK and yet climate change is not regarded by the DfT as a priority for LTPs. Instead it is seen as one of a list of '**other quality of life issues**', along with issues such as neighbourhood renewal and regeneration, community safety and healthy communities. In the guidance DfT says that it "*does not expect local transport strategies necessarily to be aimed at dealing with these issues as priorities*". However DfT does say that it "*wants to see local authorities take every reasonable opportunity to improve other aspects of quality of life in their communities*" and that it is "*keen for authorities to lead by example and demonstrate through LTPs how wider local transport policies would contribute to the achievement of CO2 targets*" (para 3.95).

It is essential for local transport campaigners to use LTPs as a way of tackling greenhouse emissions by calling for policies that will reduce the need to travel and promote alternatives to car use.

See Appendix 2: Ten things that local councils can do about climate change.

The Guidance's four themes of local transport planning

The Guidance identifies four themes of good local transport planning. A good LTP will:

i) Set transport in a wider context.

The Government wants councils to consider transport in its widest context and to set the Plan in the context of regional economic and spatial strategies. Transport planners will be expected to cooperate with colleagues in other departments and with local authorities across their borders. To achieve a joined-up approach, Councils will prepare a longer term (15-20 years) local transport strategy, addressing principles and objectives and reflecting long-term plans for the area such as housing developments. The LTP will translate the broad strategy to a detailed delivery programme.

ii) Set locally relevant targets.

These must be 'stretching' and relate to the four Shared Priorities whilst also contributing to other important quality of life outcomes. They must also relate to outcomes (real and measurable improvements in the quality of life and the provision of transport services) - rather than outputs (the methods, policies and schemes through which these improvements are delivered'). (2.27) For example, what is important is not how many more miles of bus or cycle route are created, but how many more people are using the bus or cycling.

Two targets are mandatory for some authorities:

- congestion targets for LTPs covering urban areas with a population of over 250,000; and
- transport and air quality targets for LTPs covering designated air quality management areas

The Guidance also expects all authorities to set targets for the transport indicators listed below in section c).

Missing mandatory targets for matters such as traffic levels, cycling and modal shift is a serious omission and you should encourage your council to set such targets.

iii) Identify best value for money

A whole chapter is devoted to Value for Money, underlining its importance. By “value for money”, the Guidance means making the most rapid progress towards the full range of local targets and objectives per unit of spending. Part of VFM will be making best and most sustainable use of existing infrastructure. Travel behaviour and managing demand are flagged up under this banner in a section on VFM. Councils are told to ‘avoid focusing on capital investment at the expense of other solutions’. They should also ‘make full use of the growing evidence base on what works’.

iv) Use indicators and trajectories

The Government’s guidance says that it is vitally important for authorities to set robust targets and trajectories to monitor success against the strategic objectives of LTPs. Although the DfT is giving some flexibility, they want all Councils to adhere to 8 Mandatory Indicators. These are:

- An accessibility target
- Changes in area-wide road traffic mileage
- Annual levels of cycling
- Modal share of journeys to school
- Bus punctuality
- Changes in peak traffic flow to urban centres
- Congestion, in terms of vehicle delay
- Air quality

There is a separate set of compulsory indicators, related to Best Value Performance. These include 3 indicators linked to the national Road Safety Strategy:

- Total killed and seriously injured
- Total of slight casualties
- Number of children killed and seriously injured

Among other indicators are ones relating to the condition of road surfaces and - note - BVP1 187, ‘Footway Condition’.

Additionally there are Optional Indicators, though one might think they are fairly crucial. These include:

- Mode share of journeys to work
- Mode share of urban peak hour trips
- Total parking provision
- Percentage of planning permission exceeding parking standards
- Proportion of workforce covered by Travel Plans

It is always worth checking out what information your Council is collecting.

Trajectories will become the platform for tracking progress and securing any performance-related funding, during the second LTP period. Check future trajectories as they are a clear sign of what the Council hopes to achieve.

You might like to read what the Guidance says in full about targets and indicators at Annex A pages 87 – 91.

Consultation

In first round LTPs, the Government saw consultation with local interest groups as very important. Involving the public was a particularly high priority and LTPs had to include a section explaining how the public had been involved, and how this had influenced the policies in the LTP. The new guidance appears weaker, saying that:

“authorities should include in their second LTP evidence that the LTP consultation process allowed timely and effective opportunity for all interested parties to contribute to the development of the final plan. In this round, we will look for evidence that consultation has offered a genuine opportunity for local communities and interested parties to influence the development of the LTP policies, programmes and schemes”.

Friends of the Earth’s pioneering project in the Longsight area of Manchester showed the value of consulting local communities fully and also early in the process. In many cases, the people and groups who are most affected by the way we travel are those who don’t get involved in consultations.

Transport 2000 has recently completed a Main Streets project where residents on eight communities affected by traffic problems have been consulted in the search for solutions. Residents have, for example, been involved in street audits. The schemes are in various stages, from planning to completion, but they have highlighted the very positive results which can be produced from genuine consultations.

Funding

Funding will be on a different basis to first round LTPs and more complicated. The Government will assess each LTP area against two criteria: local transport needs and contribution to the delivery of the shared priorities. Councils will automatically get 75% of this amount. Whether they receive any more and how much, will depend on the quality of the LTP and the extent to which it helps the Government deliver on its transport targets. The sub-text is that local authorities will be rewarded with extra money where they can demonstrate innovation, promotion of well-being and meeting targets. Councils seeking to deliver the same tired old road schemes should in theory come in for a tougher time as they will have to demonstrate how their proposals meet the targets. This new regime has yet to be tested. The first round saw long lists of road schemes alongside fine words and yet the DfT sat back.

Councils can only obtain capital funding through LTPs (for infrastructure projects such as new roads or bus stations) and not revenue funding for non-infrastructure work such as information campaigns, rail and bus subsidies and travel plans. According to the Government, money for such items should come out of an authority’s general revenue fund. This is not ring-fenced for transport and so has to compete with areas such as social services and education.

Some councils have tried to get round the capital/revenue split by capitalising revenue costs, for example, including staff-on costs for capital schemes. The extent to which they can do this partly depends on the attitude of their district auditors.

More lateral-thinking councils tap into alternative sources of finance for transport such as workplace travel plans and planning development Section 106 Agreements. Introduction of a new Transport Innovation Fund from 2008 may provide a carrot for setting up new demand management initiatives. A more joined up approach to transport may make it easier for local transport planners to tap into non-transport budgets. At national level, Government departments beyond the DfT are also beginning to consider transport. For example, the inclusion of school travel plans in Ofsted Inspections has increased schools' interest in such plans.

Besides local authorities, another potential source of funding for rural transport are the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The Government's Rural Strategy 2004 has given RDAs a much larger role in rural regeneration and particularly the delivery of rural services, with funding to match. Each RDA has its own corporate plan, which sets out how it will do this in the region. Unfortunately, the diversion of funding to the RDAs has meant an end to some much valued funding streams that were previously run by the Countryside Agency, and there is a good deal of concern about whether RDAs will show the same commitment to environmental objectives, rather than purely economic ones. Local activists will need to engage with their RDA in order to influence priorities.

For further information on capital/revenue transport spending, you might like to look at the report published by the Commission for Integrated Transport Local authority Expenditure: A review of capital and revenue funding for transport (March 2005) - <http://www.cfit.gov.uk/reports/crft/index.htm>

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

A new feature of the second LTP2 is the SEA. Local authorities must produce an Environmental Report on the likely significant environmental impacts of measures proposed in their draft LTP strategy. This is a statutory obligation under the European Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment. The process involves the development of strategic options, the types of measures for delivering the different options and an assessment of their environmental effects.

The Government's guidance on the stage for producing a SEA is unclear. It says that

"the Environmental report must be published in parallel to a consultation draft of new LTP, to allow the public and statutory environmental bodies an early and effective opportunity to influence the final LTP" (5.14).

However, it goes on to say that the,

"DfT believes that in most cases SEA requirements will directly apply only to the final March 2006 LTP and therefore authorities may exercise flexibility in when and how to carry out environmental assessment relating to July 2005 provisional LTPs".

It recommends strongly that authorities take their own legal advice on SEA matters. This lack of clarity could lead to legal challenges.

Unless major schemes have been fully or provisionally accepted for funding, they must be presented separately from the main LTP delivery programme. Consequently, local

authorities must undertake two detailed assessments – one without major schemes and one with potential major schemes.

For further information on SEA view:

http://www.webtag.org.uk/webdocuments/2_Project_Manager/11_SEA/index.htm#1_1

Part 3. Measures to look for

In line with the emphasis in the LTP Guidance on achieving outcomes, the DfT wants councils to consider how local modes (buses, light rail, cycling, walking, driving and motorcycling, taxis, freight etc) can support the goals for the Shared Priorities, rather than split their LTP into separate transport modes. This is because all the modes are rightly seen as important for delivering more than one of the priorities.

You may rightly wonder therefore why this section is structured under separate transport modes! This is because a tailored package of solutions will be required for each area and no 'one size fits all'. What's right for a big metropolitan area like the West Midlands won't be right for a smaller city like Oxford or for a rural area like Cornwall. However the principles listed in section 1 are the same for all areas.

This section doesn't give you the detail of what to call for on every issue, but refers you to good sources of information.

Way to Go Coalition

A good overview of the issues to address, the rationale for these and estimates of the likely cost of implementing good practice is the 'Paying for Better Transport' briefing produced by the **Way to Go** coalition at:

http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/paying_for_better_transport.pdf

Way to Go involved nearly thirty organisations signing up to a transport manifesto that called for eleven essential elements in any sustainable transport strategy:

- A cycle friendly road network and cycle training for all
- Networks of bus lanes
- Safe routes to schools
- Lower speed limits: 20mph default in residential streets
- Increased funding for public transport, particularly in rural areas.
- Streets, lanes and paths in good condition and pleasant for walking
- Quality standards for bus and rail services
- National railcard
- Purchase incentives for smaller, cleaner vehicles
- Funding for rail freight projects
- Services and facilities close to people so that they don't need to drive.

With the exception of the national railcard and smaller and cleaner vehicles, the list of elements is achievable through the LTP process.

Local groups have tailored the Way to Go format for their own campaign needs:

Salisbury Transport 2000 – Way to Go Plan

Salisbury Transport 2000 published a 'Green Transport Plan' for Salisbury in December 2004, looking at a number of aspects of transport policy in Salisbury - including city centre traffic management, parking strategy, buses, rail, cycling, walking, school travel and tourism - and considers what could be done to encourage the use of non-car transport modes. The report contains copious best practise examples from elsewhere. It can be viewed at:

<http://www.salisburyt2000.org.uk>

There isn't any obligation for campaigners to produce a lengthy report! You may want just to write a short letter based on the Way to Go checklist.

Checklist of What We Want

Good LTPs should:

- Contain data and evidence
- Be objectives-based
- Make clear how they relate to the DfT's four objectives
- Discuss inputs and outcomes
- Relate to Climate Change
- Have strong linkage to other policy areas, notably Land Use Planning, Regeneration, Employment and Smart Growth, Health, Education, Regeneration, Energy, Leisure/Tourism/Recreation
- Reduce traffic
- Not support 'predict and provide' calculations
- Promote revenue funding, including from non-Transport sources
- Explain why a particular option is chosen and show why alternatives are less effective
- Be good value for money
- Give due weight to rural and suburban areas as well as urban
- Promote real accessibility planning for all
- Support the new UK Framework for Sustainable Development
- Discuss car use and ways of managing and reducing it, including car-pooling and lift-sharing
- Reduce road danger
- Promote increased use of rail, bus and light rail
- Reallocate road space in favour of public transport, cycling and walking
- Integrate with Rights of Way Improvement Plans
- Continue expansion of the National Cycle Network
- Relate to the 42 action points in the DfT's Walking and Cycling Action Plan
- Spread best practice, including the CTC's bench-marking
- Involve all schools in Travel Plans and Safe Routes
- Mainstream 'soft factors', including information on travel choices, timetables and promotional campaigns, via TravelSmart marketing if possible
- Demonstrate modal shift, including the setting of local targets and how these will be achieved.

Above all, the acid test is whether your Plan reduced traffic and improved local transport - or not?

Measures to achieve the above are described in the following sections.

Demand management

The LTP Guidance emphasises the need to examine alternatives, including demand management (DM). Any local authority angling for a new major scheme in 2005 will need to have considered DM strategies. A much larger range of measures for managing demand for travel is available to local authorities than they care to admit. What is often lacking is the political will. Greater success will ensue if DM is sold on a ticket of enhancing the quality of life for everyone rather than as a way of stopping motorists (who are also pedestrians, parents etc).

Road pricing / congestion charging

In metropolitan areas and larger cities, road pricing / congestion charging has strong potential. Congestion charging in London has led to fewer cars entering the central zone, and more people using buses. DfT wants councils to develop local congestion charging alongside measures to improve bus services, as part of an integrated package for tackling congestion and as a means of paving the way for nationwide road-user charging in a decade or so. Although few authorities have signalled interest, they may do so when the Transport Innovation Fund comes into operation. Watch out for old roads being slipped in. In a blatant misuse of the TIF, Durham County Council has expressed interest in re-bidding for the Durham Northern relief road, rejected in the 2004 LTP settlement and tagging on road user charging.

The Commission for Integrated Transport has a dedicated website on congestion charging: <http://www.cfit.gov.uk/congestioncharging/index.htm>

Reallocating road space or road narrowing

In the absence of charging, removing road space from vehicles and reallocating it for use by public transport, cyclists and pedestrians is an effective way of curbing demand for car travel. Traffic has been shown to evaporate rather than switching to adjacent routes. Road space reallocation can take several forms: bus priority lanes, on-street light rapid transit, cycle lanes, pavement widening, restricted access (eg permanent or part-time pedestrianisation), road closures and traffic calming. Speed management is also an important tool for regulating traffic flows. These all involve infrastructure improvements and are therefore eligible for capital funding.

Car parking

Pricing policies for car parking are another important mechanism for discouraging car use. Setting district/County-wide parking pricing policies provides consistency in respect of both off and on-street parking. A small number of councils have yet to take over responsibility from the police for enforcing parking regulations. Maximum parking standards in Local Plans supported by LTP policies offer the best mechanism for capping overall levels of parking in new developments. Under the Transport Act 2000 local authorities have the power to impose a levy on workplace parking spaces. Revenue raised may be used to pay for public transport improvements. So far, Nottingham City Council is the only authority working up a scheme.

How parking is managed, DfT Fact Sheet, updated April 2005 at:
http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_roads/documents/page/dft_roads_035515-01.hcsp#P23_541

Using cars to reduce car use

Car Plus persuaded the DfT to incorporate advice on car clubs and organised car sharing schemes in the LTP Guidance. Car clubs and car sharing are a way of breaking the link between owning a car and using it. People who join car clubs reduce the total amount they travel and use significantly more public transport and walk and cycle more. Car-based schemes can be built into initiatives such as Home Zones, residents' parking schemes, workplace travel plans, new housing developments and community transport. The Carplus guide (see Further Reading) identifies ways of meeting the revenue costs of car based projects using LTP capital funds.

Using Cars to Reduce Car Use in Local Transport Plans, Carplus, Nov 2004
<http://www.carplus.org.uk>

Road Safety

Try to get road safety targets 'stretched' so that they are more ambitious than national targets. The guidance suggests a good LTP would have a stretching target for deaths and serious injuries of a 30% (35% for children) reduction from 2004 to 2010.

Perhaps more important is to ensure that road safety targets in your LTP are 'mode specific'. The lack of mode specific targets means that an overall casualty reduction target could be met in a context of an increase — or no reduction — in pedestrian and cyclist casualties. Doing this may help your Highway Authority, since the DfT will be looking for signs that the 'distributional impacts' of LTPs have been assessed.

Even better would be to have mode specific casualty reduction targets linked to the indicators for increased use of sustainable modes. There is an opportunity to do this with the mandatory indicator on cycling trips.

Speed reduction is the single most important measure for the area-wide approach to road safety which would benefit vulnerable road users (as well as car occupants), and which would open up the road network for sustainable modes. Over half of road deaths and serious injuries (19000) occur in 30 mph limits. 20mph speed limits could reduce these by more than 50%. Greatly increased use of 20mph speed limits and zones would create pedestrian and cyclist networks that are safe, continuous, direct, coherent and comfortable.

Home zones are designed to reduce vehicle speeds to a walking pace and give pedestrians and cyclists priority. Beyond this, they have great importance in developing communities and neighbourhood renewal because of the degree of public participation involved. Your LTP should make a commitment to the development of at least a few Home Zones within the plan period.

Quiet Lanes are the rural equivalent to Home Zones and LTPs should set out plans for these (even Metropolitan authorities may have some rural or semi-rural roads which might be eligible). Campaigners should be aware that new guidance on setting speed limits is expected soon. The guidance has particular importance for setting speed limits on rural single carriageway roads.

See the Slower Speeds Initiative website – <http://www.slower-speeds.org.uk>

Soft measures

This term, also known as Smarter Choices, covers a range of initiatives that promote and encourage sustainable transport in all its forms, and that do not require investment in and development of major infrastructure. Soft measures include:

- travel planning for both schools and businesses
- individual marketing of alternative transport to targeted areas
- promoting and supporting cycling and walking schemes
- promoting car clubs and car sharing schemes
- use of electronic communication networks to enable teleconferencing and home-working

Recent research published by the Department for Transport shows that high intensity implementation of such initiatives could reduce traffic levels nationwide by around 11%, with peak-hour traffic reduced by about 21% in urban areas and 14% in non-urban areas - see the 'Smart Choices' research referred to below for more details.

Unlike large-scale infrastructure projects, soft measure schemes are relatively cheap, but they do require committed funds over a number of years to be successful.

The good news is that the Department for Transport's Local Transport Plan Guidance for the current round of LTPs requires local authorities to incorporate such measures to a greater extent than was previously the case, so you are in strong position to lobby your local authority.

- 'Less Traffic Where People Live: How local transport schemes can help cut traffic'. This document provides an overview of what soft measures can achieve especially when combined with support for public transport. It is available from Transport 2000.
- Good information on individualised marketing is available from the Sustrans website (<http://www.sustrans.org.uk>), which has a whole section titled Travelsmart on this subject.

The Department for Transport itself has a number of guides and publications that can be downloaded from its website, including:

- 'Walking & Cycling: an action plan' which sets out the Department's recommendations for increasing walking and cycling, and
- 'Walking & Cycling: success stories', offering inspiration to those faced with implementing the Action Plan's recommendations, or those trying to persuade them to do so!
- 'Making Smarter Choices Work', providing more detailed descriptions of the various 'choices' in question, as well as case-studies and examples.

Cycling

Good quality cycling infrastructure and provision of cycle training for everyone (not just school children) will increase cycle use and achieve "safety in numbers". LTPs should contain targets for increasing cycle use and provide the means for this to happen. Improved cycling conditions will not be achieved just by building cycling routes; removing impediments such as dangerous roads and junctions is an important part of a cycling package.

One of the leading UK cities for cycle provision is York, which spent roughly £27 per head, or £5 per head per year, on cycle infrastructure in its first round LTP. York's expenditure on cycling and walking combined represented only about 8% of the total capital expenditure of the LTP, indicating that the problem is not necessarily lack of funding but political will, as the sums involved are not huge.

See the CTC website on LTP2 and cycling at:

<http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=3987>

Walking

Local authorities should be seen to champion walking and not just passively 'encourage' it. Walking should be set within a wider vision for creating vibrant communities. Walking

supports a large number of policy objectives and targets: health, accessibility, social inclusion, security, safety, revitalising local economies, culture, recreation and tourism. Accordingly, walking must be treated as a real mode of transport and made a safe and easy activity. This isn't about creating 'ghettos' by pedestrianising town centres, but about making pedestrians real users of our road network. People need high quality, safe, continuous walking networks which are well integrated with public transport and rail. Measures aimed at reducing traffic volumes and traffic speeds will boost walking. Creating attractive street environments with more greenery and variety will also enhance walking. The basic points of what to call for are in the manifesto of Living Streets – see below for details.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 introduced a duty for all local highway authorities to prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). The first Plans have to be completed by November 2007. Over the course of the second LTP period and beyond, ROWIPs will be incorporated into local transport planning. Full integration between the two sets of Plans will take place from 2010 onwards. In the meantime, authorities must submit a short progress report with their provisional LTP in 2005.

A Walking Bibliography, DfT, April 2005 can be found at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_roads/documents/page/dft_roads_038070.pdf

Imaginative walking solutions can be viewed on the Living Streets website at:

<http://www.livingstreets.org.uk>

The Ramblers website contains full details on Rights of Way Improvement Plans -

http://www.ramblers.org.uk/footpaths/misc/improvement_plans.html

Safe routes to schools

In many towns and cities, a significant percentage of traffic on the road in the morning peak is created by cars on the school run. Providing safe routes to schools would make it possible for more children to get to school on foot or by bicycle and could make a significant contribution to reducing congestion in such areas.

School travel plans, which include the provision of non-car routes for children to reach schools, are amongst the Smarter Choices (soft measures) which the Department for Transport requires local authorities to incorporate into the current round of LTPs. Ways to achieve safe routes to schools include:

- on-road infrastructure improvements such as traffic calming and pedestrian crossings
- 'micro-infrastructure' on the school site, such as cycle shelters or lockers
- Introducing 'walking buses' for children living along particular routes
- promoting school travel plans.

The first two of these involve capital investment and so fit within LTP funding. The costs involved in promoting school travel plans are mainly for staff, so this is revenue funding and harder to get through the LTP process.

- The best source of information on good practice on Safe Routes to Schools is Sustrans (<http://www.sustrans.org>).

- ‘School travel strategies and plans: a best practice guide for local authorities’ and ‘School travel: local authority guidance’ provide the latest DfT information on what local authorities can do to encourage school travel plans

Buses

DfT sees buses as integral to LTPs and to accessibility planning: *“buses demand a place at the very heart of all authorities’ LTPs”* (part 4 para 4.47) and particularly in urban areas where *“attracting motorists onto them is central to delivery of congestion reduction”*. All authorities writing LTPs will have to produce a bus strategy as part of their LTP.

The centrality of buses should be helpful to other campaigns – buses to function properly, will need priority over other traffic in congested areas, and this can be used as part of wider discussions about giving road space to cars.

In practice, better bus services will depend both on the local authority and operator. Outside London, buses are deregulated – operators are free to register and deregister services at 56 days notice, subject to approval from Government agencies called Traffic Commissioners. Only if services are not being provided commercially can local authorities subsidise services themselves. Local authorities do however provide infrastructure – bus lanes, stops, shelters, information etc. Some operators have been able to improve services and attract people out of cars even when the local authority has not been supportive; where the local authority is supportive, significant growth in use has been achieved.

What to call for:

The guidance already mandates targets and indicators on buses, including bus punctuality, bus satisfaction, public transport patronage and also mode share for journeys to school. You might also want to argue for mode shift targets, and also check that accessibility planning includes bus service provision and that this has made its way into the rest of the LTP.

A key basic problem with getting better bus services is that much of it requires subsidy, which counts as revenue funding, is not required by law (some authorities provide no bus subsidy at all), is not included in the LTP (capital funding only) and has to compete with other non-statutory services like libraries for funding. Rural authorities do get some Rural Bus Subsidy Grant, but other rural funding for buses, such as Rural Bus Challenge, is being or has been withdrawn. One way in which some authorities have got round this revenue/capital problem is to buy buses themselves with LTP money and then let contracts for running them. In some places, the buses are still owned, wholly or partly by the local authority and in these cases some (though not all) authorities have shown themselves more willing to find investment and subsidy.

Having said all that, there are plenty of basic improvements to bus services you can look for:

- better information, at bus stops and elsewhere, including area-wide timetables, and even colour-coded route maps like the London Underground
- real time information, telling you when the bus is actually going to arrive
- improved bus stops and shelters (can be funded by advertising)

- direct marketing initiatives promoting bus services to households
- new low floor buses
- colour-coded high frequency bus routes, clearly marked outside with places served
- area tickets or bus passes valid on all buses in the area
- youth tickets, giving discount fares to young people
- night buses, especially to serve particular clubs or leisure attractions
- bus links to rail stations and through bus-rail tickets (there is a national “PlusBus” scheme that is being rolled out)
- Safety and security initiatives, including CCTV
- Special school buses

Some of these are brought together and delivered through *quality partnerships*. Authorities are encouraged to enter into these partnerships with operators – typically, the operator invests in new vehicles while the local authority puts in bus lanes /other bus priority and usually upgrades bus stops and information as well. Sometimes there are other partners- police to enforce bus lanes for instance – and some recent partnerships have covered whole areas (the Medway Towns saw a completely new bus fleet as part of one QP, and Hertfordshire has an information QP covering the whole county). The big bus groups are all offering these kinds of deal – but the bus priority is often seen by councillors to be too politically difficult, especially if local businesses and media are opposed. In fact, some authorities are now taking out bus lanes, though local campaigners have sometimes run successful campaigns to keep them. Alliances with operators, bus user groups and with social groups (pensioner groups for instance) who rely on buses may be useful here. There is a particular problem in the big cities, where PTEs plan public transport and co-ordinate the LTP, but highway powers (including provision of bus priority) rest with the district councils, who are sometime obstructive and parochial. The Guidance hints at giving extra powers to PTEs if district’s don’t co-operate, but for now campaigning for better bus services in these areas may require pressure at both district and PTE level.

Two other frameworks to know about:

Quality networks: these has no statutory basis, but some authorities have sat down with operators and other local interests and replanned an area’s bus network from scratch, and then decided which services will be commercial and which subsidised. This allows a co-ordinated approach using all the local services, including special services like school buses and social services/hospital transport

Quality contracts: QPs and quality networks leave control over fares and service levels with the operators as commercial decisions. Quality contracts allow the local authority to specify services and fares and let contracts to run them. To get quality contract powers, authorities have to prove that they are the only way to achieve their bus strategy, but the Government has also suggested that Transport Innovation Fund bids [*Denise, I assume that the guide will mention TIFs somewhere?*] with traffic restraint could also include quality contracts. A number of authorities (especially PTEs) have expressed interest in QCs, but none have so far actually applied for these powers.

More on good practice on buses is on the DfT website, and in *At the Leading Edge*, published by Transport 2000.

One other issue to consider is park and ride. In their favour, P&R schemes do get motorists to use buses. Against them is their use of greenfield (and sometime Green Belt) land (and the stops can become development hubs in their own right) and in some cases their tendency to simply abstract from existing bus use. The attitude you take to it will therefore depend on local circumstances and what else is planned – in some cases it may be that p&r is the trade off you have to make to get traffic restraint in towns, in others it will be a sop (and in extreme cases set up to fail if nothing is done about town centre parking).

Rail and light rail

Unlike in the first round of LTPs, DfT is now prepared to consider using LTP funds for rail projects. While buses get a good deal from LTPs, the Government's approach to rail is much tougher. There is already a huge amount of money going into the railways – partly to make up a backlog of rail maintenance, partly because fragmentation since privatisation has increased costs – and the Government wants to reduce this rather than increase it. It has taken powers in a recent Railways Act to allow the Passenger Transport Executives to substitute buses for “lightly used” rail services and appears not prepared to fund even quite small enhancements (big schemes like Crossrail appear to be another matter). Elsewhere, local rail services are being cut back in some areas as franchises are renewed and “Route Utilisation Strategies” developed. This is a larger issue (and Transport 2000 is launching a “Growing the Railways” campaign to tackle it). For LTPs, this means that it will be a big fight to get upgrades of services (and in some cases even to keep the services going).

However, there are bright spots around, notably the development of Community Railways. The Community Railway designation is planned to cover most branch lines and many secondary main lines – it is intended to bring down costs by maintaining the lines to more appropriate standards and to increase revenues through partnerships and cost-effective improvements. To find out if your local service counts as a community railways, go to www.sra.gov.uk - though this will change in August to the DfT website. Community railways offer many options for improvements and developments and for more information on these go to the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACORP).

The LTP guidance also promotes “integration of the railways with other transport modes” and links to stations – whether by bus, cycle or foot – are likely to be well-received and also valuable. Some operators and authorities have been putting in bus feeder services to stations, some of them taxi-bus links that take you to/from your home. Sustrans has a whole programme of safe routes to stations for pedestrians and cyclists. Station upgrades with new facilities (for example cycle hire in tourist areas) are also likely to be well received.

Some basic things you could ask for:

- safer station initiatives
- better access (disabled access, extra entrances etc)
- bus-rail ticketing (see above)
- secure cycle parking at stations
- residents railcards in tourist areas

Light rail is also in outer darkness in Government thinking, after major cost escalations in recent scheme bids. Schemes in Manchester, Leeds and Portsmouth are on hold, though bids for Merseyside and an extension to Nottingham's tram line seem still to be on the cards. There are many arguments for and against light rail – some campaigners see it as a diversion from the task of improving bus and heavy rail and tackling the car, others see it as an essential part of any urban transport system. Again, local circumstances will guide the line you take.

However, you might want to challenge the whole basis of the Government's approach to rail and light rail services. Buses can't do everything – rail offers high capacity and high speed, yet the current approach means that even large settlements (new as well as old) will have to make do without any extra rail services. Local authorities should be encouraged to say this, where appropriate – and many of them are already.

Rural transport and Regional Development Agencies

Besides local authorities, other potential sources of funding for rural transport are the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The Government's Rural Strategy 2004 has given RDAs a much larger role in rural regeneration and particularly the delivery of rural services, with funding to match. This includes contributing to the Government's national Public Service Agreement target to improve the accessibility of services for people in rural areas. Each RDA has its own corporate plan, which sets out how it will do this in the region. Unfortunately, the diversion of funding to the RDAs has meant an end to some much valued funding streams that were previously run by the Countryside Agency, and there is a good deal of concern about whether RDAs will show the same commitment to environmental objectives, rather than purely economic ones. In particular the Countryside Agency's Rural Transport Partnership scheme provided grants for community based transport projects of up to £250,000. While outstanding commitments into 2006 are to be met, the RDAs will otherwise be setting their own priorities which will vary from region to region. Local activists will need to engage with their own RDAs in order to influence these priorities.

Improving transport for rural areas

Traffic danger is a particular deterrent to walking and cycling in rural areas where the speed of traffic is substantially higher. In addition, while the road network for cars is well-defined and easy to use, walking and cycling routes have grown increasingly disconnected. Rural communities need hub and spoke walking and cycling networks, so that journeys on main road corridors between villages and the nearest town can be safely made on foot or by bike on fully segregated continuous cycle tracks and footpaths. This can mean introducing cycle paths and footpaths alongside main roads, as well as improving and maintaining other routes. It is important to ensure that walking and cycling networks are continuous and well connected, and take people to the places they need to reach on an every day basis, such as shops, health centres, schools, parks and pubs.

Traffic calming and speed restrictions in villages and market towns can help to make these areas safer and more attractive. In Suffolk, a limit of 30mph in villages led to a cut in accidents of 19 per cent, while some Norfolk villages have introduced a limit of 20mph. There is often concern about the visual impact of speed restrictions, and some areas have made use of less intrusive features such as road narrowings, curves in the road, trees and widened banks or verges, as a means of reducing speed. Roundels on

the road showing the speed limit may also be more acceptable in the countryside than vertical signs. In Dartmoor 40 mph restrictions have helped to cut speeds across 90 miles of mainly open moorland roads.

Congestion in the countryside is growing twice as fast as elsewhere and strategies to reduce traffic through 'Smarter Choices' measures such as travel plans are just as relevant in the rural context. Workplace and school travel plans have both proved effective in reducing traffic at rural sites as well as urban ones (though the end level of car use usually remains higher in rural locations). At rural leisure attractions, congestion can become acute and local authorities should put pressure on these sites to develop visitor travel plans (see below).

A variety of improvements can make public transport much more user-friendly for rural communities. This includes better co-ordination of bus and rail services - to allow through-ticketing and ensure that trains and buses connect effectively. High quality public information and promotion (including bus stop-specific timetables, information phone lines and easy-to-read leaflets for specific routes) also makes services more attractive.

In mainland Europe demand responsive services have played an important role in making rural areas accessible, by providing services that fill the gaps where conventional public transport is not available. This may mean a shared taxi service or a flexible door-to-door bus service. Services can be integrated with conventional public transport, for example, connecting into bus routes. In Britain, Government funding through the Rural Bus Challenge (though no longer available) has enabled the development of some demand responsive services, though these don't generally offer the long hours of continental schemes.

Visitor car trips are a particular problem for rural tourist destinations, where traffic is often seen as the main threat to the special qualities of the area. Area-wide visitor travel strategies bring together tourism providers, conservation agencies, local authorities and public transport operators, to co-operate in schemes that make it easier for visitors to arrive and explore without a car. Such strategies can be incorporated into LTPs.

Planning for a Step-Change: A Strategy for Rural Public Transport, Peter Headicar
Oxford Brookes University for Assoc of Kennet Passengers, April 2004
<http://www.kennetpassengers.com/planning-for-a-step-change.pdf>

Rural Transport Futures: Transport solutions for a thriving countryside, edited by Lynn Sloman, Transport 2000 Trust, Sept 2003 – tel 020 7613 0743

Local Transport Plans: a better deal for rural areas - good practice guidance, June 2003 (product code CA144) The Countryside Agency – 0870 1206466

Leisure travel

The LTP priority of delivering accessibility includes access to leisure destinations. Improvements in this are expected to contribute to national objectives to improve access to countryside leisure and exercise opportunities, and to increase participation in culture and sport.

While the use of school and workplace travel plans has now become reasonably widespread, visitor travel plans, to encourage sustainable travel to leisure and retail sites, are much less common. This is partly because school and commuter trips, occurring on a repeated basis at peak times, offer a more obvious means of easing congestion. But visitor travel plans also have good potential for both addressing social exclusion and reducing traffic and deserve more attention from local authorities. They are likely to be especially important where large leisure sites have become major generators of traffic within an area.

Unlike many other sites, leisure sites are in the business of attracting visitors and have ongoing promotion strategies to achieve this. This means that there is usually plenty of scope to advertise sustainable travel options as part of existing publicity. What's more visitor numbers often soar at weekends, holidays and special event days so that large sites – such as cinemas and retail centres – usually have the critical mass to support public transport services at these times.

Visitor travel plans typically combine improvements in access - by bus, rail, bike and foot - with improvements in facilities – such as cycle parking and luggage storage – and promotional initiatives to advertise these alternatives and make them more appealing.

At Chatsworth in the Peak District, for instance, a range of improved bus services have been advertised in a user-friendly leaflet that also offers discounted admission for bus users. The leaflet can be printed out from the Chatsworth website. Chatsworth Estate's own minibus meets several key bus services, and takes these visitors direct to the door of the house.

Visitor travel plans can help attractions to nurture a new visitor market, increasing the proportion of visitors that come by sustainable means and improving access for households without a car. There is also evidence that many leisure transport services attract car drivers and so contribute to modal shift. Their effectiveness in achieving a substantial reduction in traffic is likely to depend on how far driving is actively discouraged through parking restrictions and charges.

Where new leisure attractions are planned (or new developments planned for existing leisure sites), local authorities should be encouraged to place tight limits on site parking and to seek a visitor travel plan through the planning process. The attraction can be asked to submit a proposed travel plan with the planning application, and its implementation secured through a planning agreement (though a travel plan should never be used as a reason for approving unacceptable development). Ideally, the authority should work with the attraction to develop an effective travel plan, with good public transport access, and broker negotiations with bus and rail companies. The authority may also need to implement parking restrictions in the immediate area, to ensure that visitor cars do not simply park on adjacent streets. Local transport authorities are required to prepare a Bus Strategy, as part of the LTP, and should be encouraged to address leisure travel as part of this strategy.

Even in relatively rural areas, some leisure sites have managed to operate without visitor parking in response to local concerns about traffic generation (see box), and as a result have greatly increased the proportion of visitors arriving without a car. In urban locations that are well supported by public transport, no attraction should be heavily car reliant.

Where travel card schemes are in operation there is the opportunity to make discounted admission to leisure sites a part of the scheme.

Tourists and day trippers particularly, are often attracted to services that offer 'travel as a treat', such as open-top buses, buses with tour guides, themed vehicles, boat trips and scenic rail trips. Joint marketing, to promote a range of transport services and tourist sites together as a coherent network, can enhance tourism as a whole. In Cornwall's Fal Estuary, for example, the Fal River Links project markets ferries, public transport and attractions on a single underground style map – providing joint promotion for 60 businesses.

Prior Park, Bath

Even in comparatively rural areas, some sites operate with very little parking. At Prior Park, a National Trust garden on the outskirts of Bath, residents concerns about traffic led the garden to open without a car park and to develop a visitor travel plan. The park is helping to fund a Sunday bus service and installed a bus stop outside its gates. The visitor service manager successfully negotiated with an open top tour bus company to introduce a route that goes via the park on an hourly basis. Some 6% of Prior Park's visitors arrive this way. The main leaflet for the site is designed to encourage people to arrive without driving and explains that wherever you are, you can reach the gardens on bus or by foot. As a result of the travel plan, less than a third of Prior Park's 20,000 visitors a year come by car.

- *Tourism without Traffic: a good practice guide*, provides advice on developing a visitor travel plan is available in from Transport 2000 Trust – 020 7613 0743.
- *Using the planning process to secure travel plans: best practice guide*, Df Transport and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister - www.dft.gov.uk

The Government's Transport Energy Best Practice programme offers up to five days of free site specific advice for organisations developing travel plans, and is open to visitor attractions as well a workplaces. See www.transportenergy.org.uk

Good Practice

In an attempt to measure what effect can be had from applying the Smarter Choices ideas intensively the Department for Transport launched a Sustainable Transport Towns Initiative. In April 2004, it selected 3 towns - Darlington, Peterborough and Worcester – to share a £10 million funding package to be spent over the next five years. During this period, each town will develop a package of measures to encourage more sustainable transport options. The three towns will act as a model for other local authorities, and their experiences will ultimately result in a good practice guide.

In March 2005, Sustrans presented the results of a survey of over twelve thousand people in the three pilot towns, providing a snapshot of how people travel and, importantly, the changes that are possible to improve the quality of life for everyone.

In a typical week residents of the three towns spend an average of one hour every day traveling, covering a distance of around 13 miles. The greatest proportion of trips are made for leisure reasons, with shopping and work each accounting for around one in five trips and one in ten trips being made for school or educational reasons. Around 25% of

all trips are made on foot, 8% by public transport and 3% by bike. Nearly 2/3 of trips are by car, 43% as a driver and 22% as a passenger. However around 30% of car trips in each town were no longer than 2 miles, and the majority were within the town.

The surveyors discovered that, despite the high proportion of trips by car, nearly all residents are unhappy with the increased traffic and support sustainable alternatives to car travel including public transport, cycling and walking. Nine out of ten people considered sustainable transport to be a priority for transport planners and their policies.

The survey was carried out at the request of the three pilot towns, to inform their Sustainable Travel Towns Programmes. The response shows the enormous potential for people to occasionally leave their car at home and use alternative transport. This has very clear benefits - if everyone replaced just one return car journey per week with another form of transport, traffic would be reduced by more than 10%.

All this is very positive news for the councils concerned, but also for other councils not involved in the Sustainable Travel Towns programme. The task for all councils looking at reducing traffic is to supply the information and motivation needed to enable people to make the change. The task for local activists is to encourage their local councils to take this on.

Another DfT initiative worth knowing about is the 'Centres of Excellence for Integrated Transport Planning', designed to promote good practice. Seventeen local authorities have been designated Centres of Excellence, and their initial experiences have been collected in a booklet available from the DfT website. The relevant section of the DfT site also offers links to the various authorities' own websites for those seeking more detailed information.

Where to go for more information:

- 'Centres of Excellence for Integrated Transport Planning' can be downloaded from the DfT website, local and regional transport section (type Centres of Excellence into the search box).
- Sustrans, for more information about the Sustainable Travel Towns survey visit their website at www.sustrans.org.

Part 4 Major Local Schemes

What are they?

Major schemes are capital projects normally costing more than £5 million. Preferably they will comprise public transport and rail schemes, but more often than not they are roads. Major schemes can also be made up of several different components (para 4.34 page 64 LTP guidance). Try lobbying your council for an area-wide cycle network! In a new departure, the Government will consider smaller schemes of between £2.5 and £5 million, as a way of deterring councils from 'gold-plating' small proposals by adding in unnecessary elements and thereby exceeding £5 million.

Notwithstanding new hurdles in LTP2, local authorities are limbering up for a roads binge. RoadBlock's sample survey of local authorities in the East Midlands and North-East has uncovered large numbers of new road schemes. Hence, this section focuses on new road bids and using new draft Government guidance on Major Local Schemes to thwart council ambitions.

Introduction of new hurdles

Separate DfT draft guidance in April 2005 introduces some quite significant changes which could help campaigners seeking to oppose new schemes:

Guidance to Local Authorities seeking DfT funding for transport Major Schemes

The DfT link is:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/page/dft_localtrans_037039.hcsp

i) Restriction on money for roads

As a result of the squeeze on Local Transport funds, the DfT is toughening its stance on financing local roads. In an opening gambit, the Guidance says that authorities are "encouraged to develop LTP2 targets on the assumption that there are no new majors" (1.2.1).

At the same time the LTP Guidance elsewhere invites councils to submit separate bids for Major Schemes! Where they do, councils must pass several hurdles, particularly in relation to funding but also in respect of alternatives, as outlined below.

In addition to seeking government capital grant (Public Transport Facilities Grant for public transport schemes and Transport Supplementary Grant for major road schemes), local authorities must explore contributions from other sources such as developers and transport operators and for schemes over £40 million, the Private Finance Initiative.

ii) Making sure alternatives to road building are looked at

Local authorities must demonstrate a proper assessment of alternatives. In the past, this important aspect has been conducted cursorily as a way of ticking the relevant box. The DfT has become wise to councils doing this partly in response to complaints from environmental groups. The new draft Guidance makes the case loud and clear that appraisal of alternatives is not an "add on". The key section can be found at 1.5 "Development of Options":

- “The starting point for preparing a major scheme bid is to identify the problems to be addressed and the objectives that the bid would support. The bid should not start from an assertion about a preferred modal solution”;
- “The assessment of alternatives should start from an initial wide base of possible options. Those options should include measures that reduce or influence the need to travel as well as those that involve capital spend.....we (ie the Department) require a clear understanding of why some particular options are preferred to others”;
- “Any major scheme for which the appraisal of alternatives options is considered inadequate or where the Department considers alternative options to be preferable, will not be accepted for funding”.
- “For public transport schemes options should include: different technologies, such as bus based schemes instead of light rail; or lower cost alternatives, such as bus lanes or shorter lengths of busways..... For highway schemes there should be a consideration of different link/junction standards and other alternatives to address the problems in the area such as public transport provision, demand management policies, traffic management measures and strategies”.
- “We would expect authorities promoting highway schemes to consider at least one public transport alternative”.
- “Any submission should carry at least two options – the preferred option and a lower cost alternative” (3.3.1).

Ensure that your council assesses the full range of alternatives early on including soft measures/smart choices (see Part 3 of this briefing). Once a scheme has been accepted for Programme Entry (see below), subsequent re-appraisal appears to exclude a re-examination of alternatives.

For further details, refer to Appendix 3 of this briefing: [How to ensure that alternatives to road building are considered.](#)

iii) Tackling cost escalation

A large part of the Guidance is directed at cracking down on rising costs of schemes and delays, both regular features of the first LTP. Where the cost of a project increases and exceeds the amount agreed at the various approval stages and the increase cannot be met from alternative sources, the DfT may decide to withdraw the scheme from the Programme. Speculative bids aimed at “getting a foot in the door”, will no longer be accepted. The bottom line is that local authorities will be expected to bear more of the risk for cost escalations to major transport projects.

Under the new arrangements, the Approval Process which currently involves Provisional Approval and Full Approval, will be replaced as follows:

Stage 1: local authorities must start by submitting a Major Scheme Business Case. This has five key aspects: Strategic; Appraisal and Value for Money; Delivery; Financial; commercial. If considered satisfactory, the authority passes to the next stage.

Stage 2: Programme Entry - approval will only be granted once the Department is satisfied that the scheme meets the criteria laid down (deliverable to budget and time with a likely start within three years). Programme Entry means that the Department would expect to fund the scheme subject to statutory procedures, provided there are no

significant changes to costs which the Council can't meet or to scheme design or expected benefits.

Stage 3: A new intermediate stage of Conditional Approval has been created. Councils can apply for this stage once they have obtained any necessary statutory powers. They will need to submit a revised appraisal for the preferred option and an updated Major Scheme Business Case.

Stage 4: A Council may apply for Full Approval once a preferred bidder for building the road, together with a firm price, have been agreed and the scheme appraisal has been updated to reflect the latest information on expected costs and benefits.

Mandatory Gateway Reviews for schemes costing in excess of £40 million will be required during the lifecycle of a project to monitor work.

For the first time, the Department is specifying the need for post-implementation Evaluation of high value, innovative or controversial major schemes to assess whether the project has met its objectives (i.e. have the council claims been borne out). This is a stage which environmental groups have long argued for.

Major schemes with Provisional Approval status

The Department has confirmed that Annex B: Appraisal requirements for LTP major schemes moving from Programme Entry to Conditional or Full Approval, will apply to schemes granted Provisional Approval in the first LTP round.

In a written exchange with a local campaigner seeking to clarify whether Provisionally Approved schemes would be subject to Annex B, the DfT official who drafted the Major Scheme Guidance stated:

“Schemes currently Provisionally Approved, whether remitted to the region or not, will be subject to reappraisal before being considered for Conditional Approval as described in Annex B and 5.3.4 to 5.3.8.

A scheme may require Gateway Review but that would depend on its risk score when a Project Assessment Spreadsheet is completed (see 4.3). For schemes that already have Provisional Approval we will talk to authorities individually about whether we will require a Gateway Review Stage 2 before Conditional Approval”.

Information to be provided includes: an updated appraisal of the scheme economics; an updated Appraisal Summary Table showing the environmental impacts; a full explanation of the reasons for any cost increases and scope for saving costs.

The Guidance warns:

“Promoting authorities should be aware that if a scheme is presented for Full Approval with a significant cost increase or a substantial design change, Full Approval may be denied or delayed”.

Annex B provides local campaigners with a lot of ammunition for pressing for a reappraisal of the road/traffic economics and environmental impacts.

Appraisal of Major Local Schemes

All road, public transport and rail investment projects over £5 million must be appraised to see whether a project is worthwhile. Appraisal involves the comparison of a project or a series of transport proposals against a baseline or 'do-minimum' scenario.

In 1998, the Government changed the way in which transport schemes were appraised, introducing the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA). NATA assesses the impacts of a scheme against five overarching objectives: accessibility, safety, economy, environment and integration. The large amount of information is summarised in a one page table called the Appraisal Summary Table.

NATA has spawned guidance which is encyclopaedic in scale. To assist campaigners, RoadBlock has prepared a step-by-step guide to the appraisal process which can be found at Appendix 3.

The Department operates a website called WebTAG dedicated to the appraisal of transport schemes - www.webtag.org

Positive aspects of NATA: the appraisal stage remains the most important for stopping a road scheme and getting your council to consider alternatives. The problem is that councils pay lip service to alternatives. If we can understand and influence this stage, we have a greater chance of stopping roads from being accepted.

Limitations of NATA: whilst qualitative judgements sit alongside quantitative data and give a more rounded picture, at the end of the day, the decision on whether or not to support a road or public transport/rail project is a political one. This means that it is equally important to spend time lobbying people who will influence, contribute or make to a decision (local officers and councillors, local media, your MP, Government Regional Offices, statutory environmental agencies, civil servants and Ministers).

Appraisal of Schemes funded through the Community Infrastructure Fund

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is seeking to fast-track transport projects in the growth areas identified in its Sustainable Communities Plan. Transport projects selected for funding under the Community Infrastructure Fund will be subject to further project appraisal for a decision in Autumn 2005.

The DfT has published guidance to local authorities on securing funding for Community Infrastructure Fund bids at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/page/dft_localtrans_037084.hcsp

Local campaigners may be able to exploit tensions between the DfT and ODPM on road transport infrastructure proposals for the growth areas. The ODPM failed to consult the DfT on the Sustainable Communities Plan and its implications for transport spending before publication in February 2003 and as a result the DfT is feeling miffed about the way in which the ODPM seeking to spend its money.

Roads and Regeneration Areas

For road schemes costing £5 million or more that affect travel to, from or within one or more Regeneration Areas, councils must prepare a separate Economic Impact Report (EIR). This exercise is in addition to NATA.

“An EIR should provide a description of how the Regeneration Area’s economy operates, the role transport plays in it, why improved transport will contribute to regeneration by leading to new jobs and/or reduced unemployment and what the risk are that the employment effects will not arise or may even turn out to be damaging”.

(para 3.5 of Guidance on Preparing an Economic Impact Report, DfT 2003)

See also Economic Impact Reports for Road Schemes, CPRE, 2004

Post-Bid Submission Stages

Once the local authority has submitted its bid for a major local scheme, the regional and national civil servants assess the case. Regional Government Officers and DfT officials, (the latter including traffic modellers and economists) review all bids received and seek any clarification from promoting authorities. The Statutory environmental bodies and environmental NGOs (CPRE and Transport 2000) are invited to submit any comments (see below). DEFRA also submits comments. Civil servants then prepare a briefing note for Ministers summarising the results of the assessment. The briefing will note the element of risk (such delays, degree of public support/opposition, cost overruns). Thereafter, the Government makes an announcement.

DfT consultation with environmental groups on major local schemes

During the first LTP round, the DfT came to an arrangement with environmental groups, whereby it consults national CPRE and Transport 2000 on the Appraisal Summary Tables for major local schemes submitted by local authorities in July. CPRE and Transport 2000 contact their local groups for their observations and feed them back to DfT in September/October. Environmental group’s views are summarised along with other information, to Ministers.

This arrangement has proved enormously beneficial and has resulted in the DfT rejecting road scheme bids in several instances.

Department officials have confirmed their intention to continue this practice.

The new system will be slightly messier as future major local schemes bids will be accepted at any time of year and the DfT may approve major schemes in “batches” at any time and not simply in the end of year Transport Settlement.

If you would like Transport 2000 to contact your local group at the appropriate time for comments on the AST for any local major scheme in your area, please liaise with Road Block who will pass on your details to T2000. Their email address is office@roadblock.org.uk

Role of the Statutory Environmental Bodies

The statutory environmental bodies represent an important source of advice to officials and Ministers on the environmental impacts of road schemes. Campaigners are advised to liaise with the regional office of the relevant statutory agency/ies at an early stage of scheme preparation to check their position and assist with local knowledge.

Note however, that due to constraints on funding, English Nature, English Heritage and the Countryside Agency concentrate their firepower on road schemes affecting nationally important sites. For example, the latter restricts its observations to schemes affecting Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks. The Environment Agency's areas of interest in relation to transport are air and water quality.

Part 5 Campaigning on LTPs

Structure of Chapter

This chapter looks at what you can do between now and the end of March, bearing in mind that several overlapping exercises are taking place:

- ongoing preparation of LTP2. There are two stages here; submission of a provisional but complete LTP at the end of July 2005 and the full, final report in March 2006
- work on the final Annual Progress Report for submission in July 2005.
- submission of Local Major Scheme bids in July 2005.

The next section outlines a timetable for suggested actions on LTP2. This is followed by a section on monitoring Annual Progress Reports. In campaigning on both, the briefing stresses the importance of lobbying your Government Regional Office and MP and of using the Freedom of Information Act. This chapter rounds off with a general advice on “Getting your voice heard”.

Campaign timetable for Local Transport Plan 2

As of the first week in June 2005, LTPs around the country are at different stages. Some authorities have consulted on strategic priorities, some on the actual draft LTP and a few have yet to consult on either. Hopefully you will have already been consulted over the past year on aspects of transport and are therefore likely to have an idea of the contents.

To check out what local authorities across the country are doing on LTPs – look at the Local Transport Planning Network website which is in the process of creating links to all local authority LTP web pages - www.ltpnetwork.gov.uk

Change of local political control - opportunity for influence

In May 2005, several Councils changed political control in the local elections, giving campaigners an opportunity to press for wholesale or specific changes. Unfortunately, in several cases this might mean stopping LTPs from reversing gear and going in the wrong direction.

In some authorities, strong individual personalities with bees in their bonnets about specific projects were voted out, perhaps giving scope for a re-evaluation.

Action Checklist leading up to Provisional LTP2 at end of July 2005

- Use any opportunity to take part in consultations. To make life easier, break down your written response into three simple headings: things to support; things to oppose, things missing. Within your group, develop a shopping list of commitments you would like to see adopted and promote it amongst local politicians and in the media.
- Don't feel constrained by the council's consultation programme. You should feel free to submit comments outside of consultations. As well as writing, book an appointment with the lead council officer on the LTP.
- Look at your Council's interpretation of the Shared Priorities, in particular check to see how your authority is defining congestion

- Do you support your council's indicators and targets and can you suggest others?
- Check to see what the Council's draft Accessibility strategy says about walking and cycling.
- Is your Council consulting on the draft Environmental Report on strategic options as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment?
- Has your Council satisfactorily tested a full range of options including demand management, for addressing particular transport problems?

Major Local Schemes

- Get a story into your local paper opposing any road schemes – make it controversial in the eyes of the Government Regional Office.
- Organise demonstrations outside your Council offices at key stages.

Action checklist between August – end March 2006 leading up to Final LTP2

- Continue working on the above.
- Check out the accuracy of the Council's technical analyses. For example, have the transport problems of individual areas covered been adequately defined?
- Continue to lobby on your own group's list of priorities. If you didn't have time to draw up a list in June/July, submit a list in Aug/Sept/Oct.

Major Local Schemes

- Write to the Government Regional Office, your MP (and if appropriate, the regional offices of the statutory environmental bodies) – see further on.
- Contact Road Block who will forward your details to Transport 2000 who will seek your views on the Appraisal Summary Table for your scheme as and when appropriate.
- Keep the issue in the public eye by thinking of new angles on media coverage.

Annual Progress Report Monitoring

This year, ongoing work on LTP2 overlaps with work reporting on LTP1. Every year, Councils must submit an Annual Progress Report (APR) which reports on the council's progress on delivering its LTP programme. Councils will need to submit final APRs for LTP1 in July. Time permitting, campaigners may like to review their Council's APR up in Aug/Sept and submit comments to Government Regional Offices, in time for the transport settlement announcement in Nov/Dec.

First round LTPs – August/September 2005 most years since 2000, the DfT has provided separate guidance to local authorities on putting together an APR. The criteria has changed from year to year; for example in 2000, LTPs were assessed against 27 policy areas based on "Characteristics of a good LTP"; in 2003, the APRs were assessed against 5 process and delivery themes and councils were scored poor, average, good or exceptional.

Second round LTPs – start in summer 2006

Campaigners can expect the DfT to issue guidance on writing the first APR for LTP2 in 2007 sometime in 2006. Rating of LTP2 performance is likely to be tested against delivery of targets.

APR monitoring by North-West and East Midlands Transport Activists' Roundtables

NWTAR volunteers have conducted a LTP monitoring exercise for four successive years in Aug/Sept, submitting an annual report to the Government Office for the North West (GONW). Their analysis of the region's nine APRs is based around a pro-forma they design each year, depending on the changing requirements in the DfT APR guidance. The pro-forma in 2004 examined the APRs against objectives, targets and monitoring arrangements and highlighted best practice. GONW welcomes the input of the TAR and provide hard copies of the APRs. The NWTAR coordinator collates and edits the reviews and writes an overview of the region's submissions. The work is a major undertaking but NWTAR regards the exercise as worthwhile because local authorities are afraid of the report findings. For example, Chester CC believes that DfT funding was refused for a major park and ride on a greenfield site as a result of NWTAR monitoring. NWTAR say that it doesn't matter whether this was actually the case as long as local authorities believe it to be so.

In 2003/04, EMTAR volunteers analysed the Region's nine APRs on a topic basis that included buses, cycling, rail, road freight, social exclusion, walking, and major schemes. EMTAR's 2004 report to GOEM also contained a chapter on the cross-cutting themes of integration, accessibility and behavioural change.

Post-Submission Lobbying on LTP/APR/Major Local Schemes

Once the final Annual Progress Report has been submitted in July 2005, it is tempting to forget about LTP1. However, time permitting, spend time in August/September to lobby your Government Regional Office and persuade them to curb the worst aspects.

Government Regional Offices (GROs)

GROs are the eyes and ears in the region of central government. They:

- assist the process of delivering Government policy on transport such as the Ten Year Transport Plan and Local Transport Plans. In August/September/October, life becomes very busy for their small transport teams who read all the submitted LTPs in their region and advise Ministers;
- collect and pass on information and intelligence to central offices and Ministers. The DfT has recently established a new Directorate (headed by Bronwyn Hill) – Regional and Local Transport Delivery to support the work of the GROs. Each region has been allocated an officer based in London.
- advise local authorities and others on the interpretation of government policy.

It is important for regional and local campaigners to build a relationship with GRO transport staff. With only a handful of officers, they often rely on the information provided by local authorities which can be slanted to put on the best gloss. They may welcome receiving information from campaigners with local knowledge.

We write "may welcome" because the GROs vary in character. As ever, it's often down to individuals and the collective culture they help to form. Even if it seems you aren't getting anywhere, it's important to persist because changes always happen over time. Road schemes have been rejected or shortcomings on sustainable transport flagged up as a result of information fed to GROs by environmentalists.

Send a copy of your comments on draft LTPs, major schemes etc to GROs and write to them/copy them in at other times. Don't expect to receive any reply in many cases but

you may be pleasantly surprised when announcements are made.

For contacts, look at your Government Regional Office website or else contact your Regional Transport Round-table referred to in Part 1.

Your MP

Don't forget to lobby your MP on what you do and don't want to see in your LTP. We suspect the case of a road scheme where Government Regional Officers were minded to advise refusal but as a result of last minute lobbying of the Minister by the local MP who was intent on keeping his seat with a paper thin majority, officials were told to change the decision in favour of the road.

This also flags up the need to campaign in your local community against a road scheme and build up a broad based constituency of opposition and generate a media profile or at least show that your scheme is not without controversy. Campaigners can put together a brilliant technical case, but as in section 4 on Major Local Schemes and Appraisal, a Government decision on whether or not to go ahead with a road or not is essentially political.

Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations

A Freedom of Information Act 2000 came into force on 1 January 2005 giving rights to information held by the government and local authorities.

If the information you want relates to the environment, your request will be dealt with under new Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs). These implement a European Union directive and provide a stronger right of access than FOI.

The Freedom of Information Campaign has produced a users' guide to the new access rights at www.cfoi.org.uk

Campaigners are now armed with an invaluable tool for finding out essential information:

Examples in relation to Major Local Schemes are:

Norwich Northern Distributor Route: the local action group asked Norfolk County Council to supply details of their investigations into funding options for the proposed £120 million scheme (at route selection stage). The information provided included four drafts plus the final version of an officer's report on Funding Options to Cabinet which had never been published, for obvious reasons upon reading. Firstly, the report revealed a higher cost at between £139 - £161 million, whereas the Council had continued to quote the £120m figure in its publicity. Secondly, the report showed that funding the road would require a large increase in council tax and to avoid such a politically unpopular step, it concluded that the road could only be funded through increased Government grant. The report kept secret from the public has given the action group lots of ammunition.

Bexhill - Hastings Link Road: Friends of the Earth wrote to the DfT inquiring about information given to the Secretary of State on the appraisal of alternatives. In reply, the DfT said that Ministers had been advised that non-road based solutions had been considered but rejected at an early stage partly as they could not unlock the development potential of the area. Whilst this was unwelcome news, it has at least

flagged up the need for campaigners to address the relationship between the link road and housing in preparing for a planning inquiry.

Weymouth Relief Road: the DfT rejected a similar request for advice to the Secretary of State from officials on grounds that “the ability for officials to freely provide their opinion on factual information in order to brief Ministers appropriately needs to be protected”. Some of the information that was provided was insightful.

Lancaster Northern Bypass: A FoI request by the Green Party has revealed much lower public support than Lancashire County Council usually cares to admit. A council survey found 16 per cent strongly supported the scheme, while 28 per cent tended to support the road. The council had written to local businesses in March, saying the bypass was supported by 94 per cent, a figure it later corrected to 79 per cent.

CAMPAIGNING ON YOUR LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN: GETTING YOUR VOICE HEARD

Knowing what to call for in your LTP is only part of the answer. You will also need to think about how you are going to get your message across and make your voice heard. There are many different ways of doing this. What you choose to do will depend on your local circumstances: how far your council has got in its work on the LTP, what the council is proposing and the level of resources (time, people and money) available to you. This work doesn't have to be complicated, time-consuming or expensive. There's a lot you can do effectively with relatively little effort, and this section gives some basic ideas.

Get up-to-speed

Whatever course of action you choose, the first thing to do is to make sure you're up-to-speed on what is happening and who is involved. Things you'll need to find out, if you don't know already, include:

- Which officer is leading the preparation of the LTP?
- What consultation has been carried out or is planned?
- What is the timescale for future work on the LTP?
- Which council committee will approve the LTP, who is the chair of this committee and who are the other committee members?
- Which councillors and officers are sympathetic to your point of view are likely to help?

Follow progress on the LTP by checking out your council's website on a regular basis and looking at agenda papers of the relevant committee and the Cabinet meetings. These are always informative about all sorts of matters.

What you can do

Among the possibilities for getting involved are:

- take part in consultations;
- work with sympathetic councillors and officers;
- petitions and letters;
- arrange a public meeting;
- simple actions; and
- get involved in detailed discussions.

This section of the guide just gives ideas on how these tactics could be used, rather than chapter-and-verse explanations of how to do this. For more information, Friends of the Earth's 'How to...' briefing sheets offer tips on many of the things you might get up to, including running street stalls, arranging actions and lobbying your council. These can be found at http://community.foe.co.uk/resource/how_tos/index.html

Take part in consultations

Because councils have been given more time to prepare LTPs, and because of the added complexity involved, some councils have not yet consulted the public on a draft LTP. The first thing to do is to find out – if you don't know already - where your council is up to, what consultation it has carried out, and what opportunities you will have to be consulted in the future. For example, your council may already have consulted on the general principles behind its LTP but might consult further on detailed proposals.

If your council will be consulting further, take the opportunity to get involved, and encourage others to do the same. Make sure other transport and environment groups in the area know what's happening, and maybe get together to see if you can agree a common line on what you like and don't like about what is proposed and what is missing. If you can, try to go beyond the 'usual suspects' and get mother and toddler groups, residents associations and similar groups to comment as well, even if it is only on one issue that they are concerned about, such as traffic calming in their area. Alternatively, ask the council to talk to them 'on their own territory' rather than calling meetings and expecting them to attend or sending out written consultations.

Don't feel that you have to comment on everything. You might want to pick on one particular issue and make this the focus of your work. This could be something you oppose, such as a road proposal, or something you want to see, such as safe routes to school.

Work with sympathetic councillors and officers

It's very useful to find councillors and officers involved in preparing the LTP who agree with you! Arrange to meet them, and make sure they've got all the information they need. Don't assume they know all the facts and angles: your local knowledge might be very helpful to them. Get advice from them on who else to work with or lobby and the best way to do this.

Get involved in detailed discussions

If you've got the knowledge and time, then getting involved in detailed discussions with officers and councillors will be an effective way of arguing your case and getting what you want.

Petitions and letters

Petitions and letters are simple ways for people to show their support for your campaign. It's easier to get someone to sign a petition, but letters will carry more weight, particularly if they are individually written rather than someone signing a standard letter.

Make sure you have petitions and standard letters on stalls and at public meetings. Friends of the Earth's 'How to...' series has a briefing on running effective street stalls.

The best person to target with your petition or letters is the leader of the council. If you've got people to sign a petition, don't just send the petition in the post. Contact the leader of the council to arrange for him or her to accept the petition from you, and get the local media along to take a photo of the handover.

As a group or coalition, you should also write to the leader of the council, to the chair of the appropriate committee, and to the committee members as well if possible. Explain your concerns and what you are calling for, and offer to meet them to discuss these further.

Letters to the local paper are also important. As well as getting your point across, they also help you contact other sympathetic and supportive people and groups. Letters will hopefully stimulate some debate and give you the opportunity to write again.

Arrange a public meeting

Public meetings are a great way of showing and generating support for a campaign, of attracting new people to the campaign, and of generating media coverage. They're particularly effective if you're focusing on one issue, such as opposing a road proposal or calling for more action to slow down traffic. Don't just have your side of the argument represented: invite someone from the council to speak as well so you can put them on the spot.

See Friends of the Earth's 'How to ...' briefing on holding a public meeting for tips on how to make them work well.

Simple actions

Actions offer the chance for people to get involved without too much commitment, and need not take too much organisation. You don't have to carry out a Greenpeace-style assault on John Prescott's roof to get some media profile for your work. There are lots of simple actions you could carry out which will get you some local media coverage and the chance to put your point across. Getting a group of parents and children with placards to stand beside a busy road, calling for slower speeds or safe routes to school will probably get your picture in the local paper and maybe on the local TV news. Local people opposed to a road scheme demonstrating outside a council meeting where decisions are being taken will achieve the same result.

Friends of the Earth's 'How to...' series has briefings on running effective actions, on effective props, on making sure you've got some good photos of the action, and on working with the media.

Appendix 1

Making Better Use of Local Government. Don Mathew, Sustrans

HOW COUNCILS WORK

The Local Government Act 2000 brought in big changes to councils in England and Wales. The well-understood topic-based Committee system has been mostly abolished. In its place is a small Executive, usually composed of a Cabinet of senior Councillors with particular portfolios. Most Councillors will now find themselves on Scrutiny Committees, whose job is to review how the Council is working and to make recommendations on policy and budgets. The plus side of this is more integrated thinking, the minus side is that it is often difficult to track down when Transport fits into all this. Even if there are specialist Scrutiny Committees, Transport may appear under 'Environment', 'Planning', 'Economic Development', 'Sustainability' or the latest buzz-word.

Councils are now subject to individual inspection by the Audit Commission and are given a ranking. Under-performing authorities will be the subject of special attention from Whitehall. Conversely 'excellent' authorities are allowed much greater freedom and indeed are not statutorily bound to produce an LTP, though all do, simply in order to get their work done.

Officers

Officers are paid staff employed by the Council. In theory their job is to advise Councillors on how to take the best decisions, but the fact that they are full-time professionals gives them a huge advantage. Some senior officers did their training when transport planning was all about 'keeping the traffic moving', but most these days accept a more balanced approach. Most offices will keep up to date by reading professional journals such as the fortnightly Local Transport Today: if you can afford it the subscription is well worthwhile. Officers are professional people and will expect a professional and courteous approach.

Councillors

Councillors are elected representatives who are - in theory - the ultimate authority in any local Council. They will stand normally as representative of a political party, though there are increasing numbers of independents and local interest groups. Councillors represent particular areas - wards - within an authority. Most Councils have a majority political party, and real power usually resides here, so this is where you should concentrate lobbying.

Powers

It is important to be clear what powers local Councils have. Most English senior level Councils are based on the traditional shire counties, eg Cheshire, Dorset, Norfolk. These have responsibilities for Transport, although in a relic of old-style thinking they are referred to as 'highway authorities'. It is they who have to produce a Local Transport Plan, so they are crucial bodies. They also have responsibilities for Education (cf Safe Routes to School), Road Safety, and for the Police (cf enforcement of traffic law).

What Councils Cannot Do

One of the main barriers to integrated transport planning is the lack of control over public transport. As rail and bus services are privately owned, Council powers are mostly limited to areas such as publicity and promotion. Fare levels are outside their control. Levels of rail service are set out in franchise agreements. Bus services are divided into 'commercial' and 'subsidised'. The former can be altered at 42 days' notice, the latter do involve an element of Council control as these are lighter-used services that would not run without public financial support.

However Councils can assist in a number of ways, such as providing bus lanes and bus priority measures, safe routes for cyclists and pedestrians to and from train and bus stations, high quality cycle parking, and assistance in maintaining and upgrading stations. (Transport for London and the six metropolitan Transport Passenger Authorities have a greater involvement in coordinating services). In the future Bus Quality Contracts and Partnerships should help upgrade bus services, and on the Railways Community Partnerships for local lines may either offer great opportunities to Councils to improve services, or leave them with the opprobrium of closing them, depending on your point of view.

Funding

Local Councils rely on central Government for a substantial part of their funding. Cash for local transport has increased substantially since 2001, and for the financial year 2004/5 was £659million. However shock-waves have been reverberating following the discovery that for the next 3 years it drops to £520million a year. This does mean a severe squeeze on bigger schemes - but could also increase pressure on more desirable, small-scale solutions. Most of the DfT's funds are going on road widening and upgrading the railways.

Other Areas

Besides the LTP, there are other key areas you need to check, and if possible be involved in. These include:

- **Local Strategic Partnerships.** LSPs are 'non-statutory, multi-agency bodies which match local authority boundaries and aim to bring together different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors at the local level ...'Measures to address accessibility make a valuable contribution to the range of other policy areas LSPs are concerned with, namely the economy and employment, improving health, education and the physical environment, and reducing crime and the fear of crime.
- **Community Strategies.** These are mini-versions of the above, covering District Councils or only parts thereof.
- **Local Development Frameworks.** These are the new (since Sept '04) local planning document, replacing what used to be called Local Plans. These go into considerable detail about implementing transport proposals on the ground e.g. indicating new and existing cycle routes. The higher level (e.g. county-wide) version is less detailed, but also a vital document to track. It used to be called a County Structure Plan, but is now likely to be a part of the Regional or Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy
- **Freedom of Information Act.** This came into effect on 1 January 2005. It gives members of the public access to all information held by public authorities. These

have 20 days to reply and there is a legal right to appeal if the request is not granted. Well worth using.

- **Walking and Cycling Action Plan.** Published by the DfT in June 2004, this lists 42 Actions the Department is involved with to boost these two modes. Should be available from their free literature section on 0870 1226 236. There is also an excellent, well-illustrated, separate volume on Success Stories.
- **Traffic Advisory Leaflets.** TALs are free glossary information sheets available from the Department of Transport. Ask the Publications Centre on 0870 1226 236 for more details. The latest, 2/05, is a Bibliography on Traffic Calming. These are useful, official, summaries of Government research, something officers should see but councillors will rarely get.

Members of Parliament

Even more than Councillors, MPs are expected to be experts on everything. Thus any briefings or information you can send may be valuable, but should be targeted for best impact. Use your MP sparingly and only when you have a real problem. Their views will depend a lot on whether they are the same or a different political party to that controlling the Council.

One way national groups have an impact in the House of Commons is by getting an MP to sign an Early Day Motion. These are drawn up on topics of the day and are a way of expressing an opinion. An EDM with 100 signatures gets noticed, of 200 gets the Government thinking, and of 300 gets Ministers involved.

MPs often want to speak in debates and this may be a chance to get your concerns aired. They will also pass on your letters to Ministers for a reply, though again this device should be used sparingly.

MPs will also be put on Committees examining Government Bills and this can be a real opportunity to raise issues, often in conjunction with national bodies. On the recent Road Safety Bill before the Election the Safer Streets Coalition (of 29 NGOs) wrote detailed briefings on a number of key issues and was more active than any other lobbyists, possibly stopping Government plans to lessen penalties for speeding in the 30-40 mph bracket.

Finally, always check if your MP is on a Select Committee. These are permanent bodies throughout the life-time of a Parliament and have the powers to grill Ministers and produce reports. With Gwyneth Dunwoody as chair the recent Transport Committee was particularly effective. You can check what they are up to on http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/transport_committee.cfm

Why Does No-one Listen To Me?

Councils try to be broadly representative of a mass of at times varied and contradictory opinion. Lone voices or over-enthusiastic and persistent lobbyists tend to be mentally dismissed. Views from mainstream bodies -WI or faith groups - distinct minorities, a social inclusion aspect and coalitions get given greater regard.

As said elsewhere, most Councillors are grossly over-worked, as well as having job and family commitments. They need simple, basic briefings.

The local media - TV, radio, freesheets and especially newspapers - are very influential. Take time out to cultivate local reporters and editors. They will often be unaware of national policies and new thinking. Try for human interest stories e.g. speeding traffic versus children.

But the bottom line for most Councils is jobs. The well-being of local people is usually viewed as being achieved by employment - and Councils often see themselves in competition with other authorities for new jobs. It is always worth asking for a breakdown of the various employment sectors: schools and health are often far more important than manufacturing or distribution. Moreover in a 'knowledge economy' we move information electronically, rather than having cars and lorries trundling around. Added to this is the fact that most under-performing local economies really need training and 'upskilling' rather than highly expensive road schemes of very doubtful benefit.

Appendix 2

TEN THINGS LOCAL COUNCILS CAN DO ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE AND TRANSPORT

Although the UK is on track to meeting its Kyoto target of a 12.5% reduction in six greenhouse gases below 1990 levels over the period 2008 - 2012, it will miss the domestic target of a 20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels by 2010. The 2003 Energy White Paper endorses a target of reducing total UK carbon emissions by 60% by 2050. To achieve a cut on this scale, a start on implementing measures must be made now and not in 20–30 years time.

The transport sector, including aviation, produces over a quarter of the UK's total carbon emissions and road transport contributes 85% of this, with the strategic road network making up half of the road transport emissions. Road traffic has grown at a fairly constant rate since the 1980s due to falling motoring costs, rising car ownership and use and low density building. Carbon dioxide emissions from the UK road transport sector will grow by 9% by 2010, according to the Government's review of the UK Climate Change Programme. Emissions from aviation are growing even faster. According to The Tyndall Centre calculation (2003), aviation could contribute 26% of UK CO₂ in 2020 and 36% in 2030.

In-house

1. As part of wider carbon toolkit work implement detailed workplace travel plans for all staff.
2. Develop policy on appropriate and inappropriate car use; set up low carbon pool cars (electric etc) and support cycling to work and for work by staff with fiscal incentives etc.
3. Introduce Sustainability Executive member with power to force change on reluctant departments (such as transport)

Population wide work

4. Use calculations of existing CO₂ emissions to set target for 20% reduction by 2010, and plan for 60-80% cut by 2050. Tie in to regional targets – if none, press local Government Regional Office for introduction. Area wide audits to establish levels of walking and cycling, targets for improvement (year on year).
5. Put these carbon calculations and w/c targets into: Local Transport Plan, Local Development Strategies, Community Strategies, Sustainable Development Strategies.
6. Link these projections to other work on Health, Education, Waste and Energy, Regeneration, Tourism, Housing, etc.
7. Develop a coherent set of linked infrastructure changes (including but not limited to road space reallocation and an ongoing expansion of National Cycle Network) with implemented soft measures (town wide TravelSmart, cycle training, awareness raising ...) to support modal shift to walking and cycling.
8. Implement appropriate land-use planning criteria, dealing with sprawl, setting maximum times for walking access to destinations, regulating parking levels (eg smaller supermarket car parks ...). All new developments (residential or commercial) to go through Environmental Impact Assessment and have to

demonstrate how they will lead to an overall reduction in carbon emissions, whether directly or through funding of offsetting measure.

9. Promote car free areas and housing developments, trial wider car free experiments (eg cut off access for first weekend of every month) and support a town wide car club.
10. Develop new packages of transport projects and proposals, evaluate them against emissions reduction, and reject those that fail.

Don Mathew, Sustrans



Alliance against road building

Briefing on Appraisal for local road schemes

What is “appraisal”? How can I make them look at alternatives?
Where can I find the right info? How can I use it?

“How to ensure alternatives to road building are considered”

How to use this briefing sheet

Many road schemes are now promoted by local authorities, but central government still decides (or, to use the jargon, “appraises”) whether they go ahead or not. On paper, government transport policy is actually very good: it says that road building should be a last resort. Despite this, local authorities are often not following the central government guidance. Campaigners have found that most councils do not consider alternatives to road building, or if they do, they are deliberately putting forward ridiculous proposals that would never work or gather support. There are signs the government have grown tired of this, and it is our job to ensure their patience finally runs out with the tarmac-happy councils.

The aim of this briefing is to demystify the appraisal process. We do not expect you to acquire the knowledge and expertise of a transport planner, or to plough through Internet pages or policy documents – we have produced this briefing to save you that! We simply want to give you the key parts of the government’s appraisal guidance, so you can use them in your campaign to point out to decision makers, government offices, the media or the public where a council is not following the government’s guidance, and to arm you with the quotes you need to insist that alternatives to road building are considered.

In theory, you could fight off a road scheme simply by scrutinising the appraisal process and pointing out any shortcomings. In practice, of course, you need to make this part of a much broader local campaign based on persuading decision makers to come round to your way of thinking, and raising awareness about the road scheme in your local community. You may win the arguments but, without a strong local campaign, that may not be enough to stop your road.

What is “appraisal”

Appraisal is the means by which the Department for Transport (DfT) makes its decision on whether a local road scheme is good value for money, based on how well it performs against **five core criteria**. If a council decides to build a road it has to follow a lengthy and detailed appraisal process, set out by the DfT on a special website called WebTAG (see reference at end). This explains the different procedures for assessing the effects of the road on environmental, traffic and economic grounds. The aim is that road scheme bids should demonstrate a clear path from identifying the problem to arriving at a preferred solution. This gives you an opportunity to examine all the evidence for the decision, and if necessary to challenge it.

History

The appraisal process has changed dramatically for the better since 1998. Before, the appraisal system was simply a Cost Benefit Analysis (COBA), which looked only at the economic case for a road, with the environmental impact ignored in the calculations. In 1998, after the road protests of the 1990s, the government introduced “A New Approach To Appraisal” or NATA. This new approach had to look at five core criteria: **environment, safety, accessibility, integration, and economy**, on an equal basis. NATA is now used for many policy areas, not just transport.

The language of the appraisal documents is very ‘green’. The aims are laid out in “Introduction to Transport Analysis”, Tag Unit 1.1: *“Our quality of life depends on transport. Most of us travel every day, even if only locally. And we need an efficient transport system to support a strong and prosperous economy. But in turn, the way we travel is damaging our towns and cities and harming our countryside. As demand for transport grows, we are even changing the very climate of our planet”.*

NATA was updated in 2003 by the Treasury’s “Green Book”, in order to keep a tighter control of the construction costs, and to prove value for money. New draft guidance for road schemes in the second Local Transport Plan (LTP2), published in April 2005, has tightened the process up further, and this draft guidance (DGLTP2 for the purposes of this briefing) has to be followed by all councils preparing their Major Scheme bids in LTP2, which councils are drafting now for the period 2006-11. This draft guidance may change after 30 September 2005 however.

NATA, and paperwork to ask for

A road scheme has to be appraised according to the government objectives identified in the 1998 White Paper, a New Approach To Appraisal (NATA). This guidance is continually evolving, and is laid out on a website called WebTAG – www.webtag.org.uk. NATA identifies five objectives, the environment – to protect the built and natural environment, safety - to reduce accidents, economy to support sustainable economic activity and get good value for money, accessibility to improve access to facilities, for those without a car and to reduce severance; integration, to ensure that all decisions are taken in the context of the governments integrated transport policy, and other relevant policies (TAG Unit 1.4, para 2.5.1). It should also cover Social Inclusion (TAG Unit 1.4, paras 1.1.9 and 2.7.4) and Public Acceptability (TAG Unit 1.4, para 2.7.6).

The details of the exact paperwork that should be produced are on the WebTAG website, TAG Unit 3.2. The assessment of the scheme against the five core objectives (as above), and the sub-objectives, all go into an Appraisal Summary Table (AST). This is crucial, and will be the key document with which Ministers and officials will decide to go ahead or not. The AST is an A4 summary of all the objectives, giving them a rating. This should be backed up by worksheets. There should also be an AST of the alternative option, and sheets explaining why other options were discarded. You can ask for all these under the Freedom of Information Act. There is an excellent guide to the Act on the Campaign for Freedom of Information website – www.cfoi.org.uk

Transport Economic Efficiency tables (TEEs) also have to be produced. Do not be alarmed by the maths! The TEEs represent how many minutes of journey time will be saved by the new road, and then this is put into monetary terms. This is a simplistic and controversial tool that is currently being debated amongst transport planners. The construction cost to the taxpayer is also included, in the Public Accounts section of the

AST, and controversially includes revenue raised through petrol taxes from the increase in traffic! Accidents include the cost of approximately £1.4 million for a human life. All these figures are explained in depth in the WebTAG website at TAG Unit 3.5.

The figures are fed into a computer program called COBA (Cost Benefit Analysis). This tries to put money values on the positive “benefits” and the negative “costs” of building the road to see whether the overall road plan makes financial case. The entire economic case for the road is summarised by a single number called the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR). However the BCR is only part of the picture in analysing the need for a road. The environment is also an equal part in determining value for money. A BCR of less than one counts as low value for money and is very unlikely to get funding. A BCR of over 2 counts as high value for money and is very likely to get funding. However a big negative effect on the environment will change the value for money. Road Block have produced another briefing sheet on COBA.

The new guidance now requires councils to produce a Business Case for the road scheme, in an attempt to tackle the way that costs have escalated on local authority road schemes that have already been given the go-ahead. If the DfT approves the scheme it will go into the road programme (achieve ‘Programme Entry’). The Requirements for Programme Entry are laid out in annex A of the new draft guidance.

Once the scheme has been taken through the Statutory procedures (acquiring planning permission, holding Public Inquiries if appropriate, and compulsory purchase of property), it may be ‘conditionally approved’. The council must then go through the procurement process where they will receive tenders for the scheme. Once satisfied, the DfT will give ‘Final Approval’

Also for schemes over £40 million “Gateway Reviews” at crucial stages will usually be required, administered by the Office of the Government Commerce (OGC), to keep a tight control of the costs, and reassure the DfT of value for money. Annual Progress Reports (APR) of the LTP must be produced every July. Quarterly progress reports for the road are also required, which you can ask for.

Ask for the following paperwork: Appraisal Summary Table (AST), problems and objectives identified, assessment of alternative options, supporting analyses, and overall Value for Money (vfm) conclusions. When you have had a look at them, and have more questions then ring Road Block.

The Process

1. Council identifies the ‘problems’ and the ‘objectives’.
2. Council identifies the ‘options’.
3. Council appraises the preferred option, a lower cost alternative, and a do-minimum scenario
4. Council Cabinet vote on what is included in the LTP2.
5. Draft LTP2 goes to DfT on 31st July 2005
6. Final LTP2 goes to DfT end of March 2006.

The key stage for a campaign group to be involved is when the council is identifying the ‘problems’ and the ‘options’ (option identification stage). It is not made clear how the public and campaign groups can be involved at this stage, but it is key that you should contribute to this process, and ensure that non-road building options are identified. As a

first step, contact the transport planners at your local authority, establish exactly what they are doing, and ensure that your ideas are heard, loud and clear. Try not to be confrontational, straight off; see if you can establish a more productive dialogue first. Make it clear that you understand the process, even if they don't, and use this briefing to help you point out any parts of the guidance they are not following. Some groups put forward their own public-transport alternatives and ask the council planners to consider them as realistic alternatives. Do this job well and you're not only helping the planners to do their job, you're helping them to help you achieve your campaign objectives. But don't hesitate to take the planners on if they show no interest in what you have to say.

The council has to identify traffic problems on a single A4 sheet with supporting sheets of fuller analyses. The council should first see if the problems can be solved with the standard LTP funding, then look at a range of options, including public transport, and the final submission for funding should “*carry at least two options fully through appraisal, the preferred option and a lower cost alternative*” (TAG Unit 1.4, para 1.1.10).

In the draft guidance for LTP2, it says “*The starting point for preparing a major scheme bid is to identify the problems to be addressed, and the objectives that the bid would support. The bid should not start from an assertion about a preferred modal solution.*” (DGLTP2, para 1.5.1). The council has to look at a wide range of options, not just one route for a road: “*The assessment of alternatives should start from an initial wide base of possible options. Those options should include measures that reduce or influence the need to travel*” (TAG Unit 1.4, para 2.9.3 and DGLTP2, para 1.5.2). A stern warning is given: “*The testing of alternatives is not an add-on to the appraisal but an integral part of the process of determining the preferred option*” (TAG Unit 1.4, para 2.9.1 and DGLTP2, para 1.5.3).

In the new draft guidance, the biggest changes are that the council is expected to “*consider at least one public transport alternative*” (DGLTP2, para 1.5.4), and “*measures that reduce or influence the need to travel*” (DGLTP2, para 1.5.2), and compare the road “*against a realistic do-minimum scenario*” (DGLTP2, para 1.5.3).

The council has to look at alternatives to road building, “*such as public transport provision, demand management policies, traffic management measures and strategies*” (TAG Unit 1.4, para 2.9.2 and DGLTP2, para 1.5.4). The new guidance adds “*We would expect authorities promoting highway schemes to consider at least one public transport alternative*” (DGLTP2, para 1.5.4).

Once the options are identified, the council must appraise the ‘preferred option’ alongside another ‘lower cost alternative’, and the do minimum option (DGLTP2, para 3.3.1). For schemes over £20 million, the council “*may also need to carry a ‘next best’ option through the appraisal process*” (DGLTP2, para 3.3.1). It is critical to the whole process that a range of options are looked at, including a “*realistic do-minimum scenario*” (DGLTP2, para 1.5.3).

The road scheme has to fit in with regional objectives (DGLTP2, para 1.5.2), i.e. the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), which will be part of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) - see the website of your Regional Assembly. It should also be consistent with the objectives and principles of the rest of the LTP, the draft of which should be on the website of your county council or unitary authority (DGLTP2, para 1.5.2).

Submissions must also cover how the scheme will contribute towards meeting the Department's 10 Year Plan, and Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets on such crucial areas such as 20% CO2 reduction by 2010, increasing rail use by 50% by 2010, reducing road accidents, beating congestion, and increasing bus and light rail use (TAG Unit 1.4, para 2.7.10).

Your first step, then, is to check whether the council has covered all these things. If not, why not?

How to use this in campaigning.

Currently local authorities are drafting their second 5 year Local Transport Plans for the period 2006-11 (LTP2). A provisional version has to be with the DfT by 31st July, with the final draft having to go in at the end of March 2006. Local authorities are currently deciding which road schemes will be included. Start lobbying now to remove road schemes from the draft LTP2. Once the draft LTP2 is into the DfT at the end of July 2005, this will be another chance for local groups to start lobbying to have the schemes removed. It is essential to try and stop a scheme making it into the final version of the LTP2 which has to go to DfT by March 2006. If the DfT accept the bid for funding, there is no longer a requirement to appraise alternatives, and you will have lost your chance.

CHECKLIST FOR ACTION

Pre 31st July 2005 (before the draft LTP2 goes to DfT)

1. Contact your local authority LTP team and ask which road schemes are being considered for LTP2.
2. Ask to see the Environmental Statement for the road schemes.
3. Ask to be included in their list of 'stakeholders' that are consulted.
4. Form a group if you haven't already, and start campaigning for any road scheme proposals to be removed from the draft LTP.
5. Start lobbying your County Councillors who will be voting very shortly on what will be included in the draft LTP2. Road Block have produced a briefing you can supply to Councillors on the latest government guidance, requiring alternatives.
6. Ask to see the results of earlier consultations on what should go into the LTP2. Most consultations have resulted in people demanding investment for better public transport, not roads.
7. Using this briefing, ask to see how they came to the conclusion that the road scheme would be the 'preferred option', and that 'demand management' measures would not achieve the same objectives.
8. Point out to the council all the quotes in this briefing that mean that road building should be a last resort, and that they should be looking at measures that reduce travel.
9. Publicise what is happening by writing to your local newspapers, your local MP and crucially your County Councillors who be voting shortly on whether the road goes into the LTP2.
10. When the council vote, pack your council meetings with local people. Large public involvement usually makes officials think twice, especially if the case or the road is shown to be faulty.
11. Contact Road Block at any time for help with any of this.

Post 1st August 2005 (after the draft LTP2, but before the final version in March 2006)

1. Keep up the pressure on the council to drop the road scheme from its draft LTP2, and publicise how damaging / futile the proposal is. Quote from this briefing sheet.
2. However, the main focus of your campaign should now switch to the regional government offices which will be looking at the draft LTP2, and will make the recommendations to Ministers.
3. Find out who in your regional government office is looking at Major Scheme bids for your local authority.
4. Strike up a good relationship with them, and start informing them of your concerns about the road, quoting from this briefing sheet.
5. You could make them aware of how much local opposition there is to the road, by organising letters or postcards to go to the government offices, or to the Secretary of State for Transport.
6. Keep up the pressure locally by making the case against road building, using the government's own guidance (as above) to back up your case.

References

TAG Unit 1.4 - This is the main summary document which transport planners should refer to on the WebTAG website. Unit 1.4 is called 'Major Schemes in Local Transport Plans', and was last updated April 2004. If you would like to refer to the original, and do not have access to the Internet, Road Block can post you hard copies. If you have access to the Internet, you can find it at www.webtag.org.uk and then click on Documents, then Guidance Documents, and then select Unit 1.4.

New draft guidance – This is actually called '**Guidance to Local Authorities seeking DfT funding for transport Major Schemes**' and was published in April 2005. You can find this on the DfT website. You can access it by going to www.dft.gov.uk and then clicking on Regional and Local Transport in the menu on the left hand side. Then click on Local transport plan – process and initiatives in the menu. Then click on Major Schemes. You should then see the Guidance document as above. At the moment it is here:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/divisionhomepage/038049.hcsp

Please refer to it by its full name when referencing it, *not* by our abbreviation – DGLTP2.

Useful websites

www.webtag.org.uk has an enormous array of appraisal guidance documents, and it is up to you how deep you want to go! You particularly will need TAG Unit 1.4, as above
www.dft.gov.uk is the home page of the Department for Transport (DfT). Go to Regional and Local transport in the menu on the left hand side.

www.roadblock.org.uk is our website, and if you look under Campaign Resources, you will find under Transport Policy a document called "Sustainable Road Transport - key government policies". This quotes key government policies that you can use as ammunition.

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(check the Road Block website regularly, as this briefing will be updated regularly)

Appendix 4

CHECKLIST FOR EMERGING LONDON BOROUGH LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

Improving Road Safety

Does the Council link its road safety objectives to wider sustainable transport objectives?
For example:

- **Hierarchy of road users:** Has the Council developed for its LIP a hierarchy of road users, i.e., pedestrians and disabled people first, followed by cyclists, public transport users, business vehicles and taxis, road freight, and then private cars?
- **Progressive approach to road safety:** Has the Council adopted a progressive approach such as that developed by the Road Danger Reduction Forum, which links the complementary objectives of road safety and sustainable transport and modal shift?
- **Motor traffic speed and volume reduction:** Does the Council's road safety plan, in combination with robust action plans for walking and cycling, form part of a clear mechanism for motor traffic speed and volume reduction, including less emphasis on motor traffic capacity and more emphasis on pedestrian and cycle accessibility, particularly in town centres and at major attractors?
- **Borough-wide 20mph limits:** Has the Council demonstrated support for introducing a borough-wide 20mph speed limit (with certain excepted roads)?
- **Target 7:** Does the road safety plan demonstrate links between Target 7 (on modal shift) and Proposal 4G.12 of the Mayor's Transport Strategy, which sets traffic reduction targets?
- **Engineering principles:** Does the road safety plan set out principles for highway design and a broad programme for investment in all road schemes (other than local safety schemes and school travel plans) that is based on tackling areas with the worst air quality and greatest social exclusion / multiple deprivation first?
- **Hierarchy of engineering solutions:** Does the plan demonstrate a clear hierarchy of solutions, with quality schemes that influence driver behaviour, reduce motor volumes and speeds and encourage walking and cycling considered first and 'traditional' solutions including guard railings, overt segregation and anti-skid considered last?
- **Safety and accessibility audits:** Will all road schemes be audited in terms of safety and accessibility, convenience and comfort for pedestrians, disabled people and cyclists? Will schemes contribute to making the borough a place that is conducive to more walking and cycling (including for journeys to public transport)?
- **Education:** Does the road safety plan establish progressive principles for education that deals with the central premise of identifying and controlling the principal sources of threat, whilst being positive about travelling safely and sustainably?
- **Reducing fear of road danger:** Will implemented schemes give parents more confidence to allow their children out and will people's fear of road danger be diminished? How will the Council monitor this outcome from a baseline opinion survey?

- **Active travel:** Does the road safety plan combine the desired objectives of reducing the number of (injury) collisions and increasing the amount of active travel (walking and cycling, including for journeys to public transport)?
- **Enforcement:** Does the road safety plan demonstrate strong support for effective enforcement of moving and stationary motor traffic offences, and are motor traffic offences included in the Council's Crime and Disorder and Community Safety Plan? Does the Council regard motor traffic offences as criminal acts?

Linking LIP Policies to Land use Planning

Do the Council's LIP policies demonstrate strong linkages with its planning policies? For example:

- **Sustainable development:** Does the Council demonstrate strong planning policy support for patterns of development that reduce the need to travel and reliance on private motor vehicles?
- **Sequential development:** Does the Council demonstrate in its planning policies strong support for sequential development and encouragement of higher density development in the vicinity of town centres and public transport nodes?
- **Regeneration of town centres:** Do the Council's policies demonstrate strong support for the regeneration and enhancement of its town centres, in preference to the allocation of new sites for car-based retailing?
- **Mix of uses:** Does the Council encourage a vibrant mix of uses and social environments?
- **Urban design:** Does the Council require developers to have regard to good urban design, permeability and other relevant principles of urban design and public realm enhancement?
- **Travel plans:** Does the Council require developers to implement travel plans to stimulate sustainable travel, and more generally contribute to ongoing improvements in accessibility on foot, cycle and public transport?
- **S.106:** How does the Council's approach to securing s.106 planning agreements contribute to its objectives in the LIP?
- **Car sharing etc:** Does the Council demonstrate strong support for the development of car clubs, car sharing schemes and car-free development? Do its planning and LIP policies act together to promote the development of such schemes, thus increasing the likelihood of them receiving (planning) permission?
- **Parking standards:** Are the Council's parking standards robust in terms of reducing capacity for motor traffic and enhancing capacity for cycle parking in accessible and convenient locations within new development? Do the standards provide sufficient guidance on the design and location of cycle parking? (The use of secure lockers and / or 'Sheffield' stands with adequate spacing is preferred.)

Walking

Does the LIP contain policies that aim to make the borough more conducive to walking, through its road safety plan and other policies? For example:

- **Importance of mode:** Has sufficient emphasis been placed on this mode of transport given its importance and near-universality?

- **Disabled people:** To what extent have the needs of disabled people including those with physical and sensory impairments been taken into account? Has the Council involved disability focus groups in the development of its plans for walking?
- **Action plan:** Will the Council develop an action plan for walking; and is the promotion of walking given sufficient attention in the Council's scheme auditing procedures?
- **Reference in road safety plan:** Has clear reference been made between the Council's plans for walking and the combined objectives of safety and sustainable transport in the road safety plan?
- **Public realm:** Do the Council's plans for walking include enhancements to the public realm and improving the convenience, comfort and conviviality of walking?
- **Crossing points:** Do the Council's plans for walking include the provision of sufficient crossing points and short wait times, consistent with pedestrian desire lines and the need to give greater priority to pedestrians over motor traffic?
- **Personal safety:** Does the LIP deal adequately with the issues of personal safety, including proposals for enforcement and surveillance, provision of improved lighting, cleansing of spaces and resolution of 'hiding places'?
- **Pedestrians as traffic:** Are pedestrians regarded as traffic in their own right, consistent with the Traffic Management Act 2004?
- **Hierarchy of design solutions:** Do the Council's policies in respect of design for pedestrians have regard to the hierarchy of design solutions in the road safety plan (if any) and the DfT's Local Transport Note 1: Policy and Design for Walking and Cycling?
- **Traffic calming:** Will traffic calming measures (such as 20mph zones and 'home' zones) be designed around the needs of pedestrians rather than motors?

Cycling

Does the LIP contain policies that aim to make the borough more conducive to cycling, through its road safety plan, cycling action plan and other policies (a full cycling action plan should be included in the 2006/7 Borough Spending Plan)? For example:

- **Importance of mode:** Has sufficient emphasis been placed upon this mode of transport given its potential importance and the considerable benefits to the individual cyclists, the environment and society of encouraging cycling? Have these benefits been made explicit in the cycling action plan?
- **Whole network approach:** Does the Council's cycling policy recognise that the whole road network (other than motorways and certain roads) is available to cyclists, and that planning for cyclists should include measures to maximise the permeability of the borough for cyclists? (Measures include restoration of two-way working for all vehicles or for cyclists through exemptions; off-road links across parks and along suitable short-cuts, and leisure routes).
- **Hierarchy of design solutions:** Do the Council's policies in respect of design for cyclists have regard to the hierarchy of design solutions in the road safety plan (if any) and the DfT's Local Transport Note 1: Policy and Design for Walking and Cycling?
- **Traffic calming:** Will traffic calming measures (such as 20mph zones and 'home' zones) be designed around the needs of cyclists rather than motors?

- **Cycle parking:** Does the Council propose a comprehensive approach to cycle parking, including on-street short stay cycle parking (Sheffield Stands) and long-stay cycle parking including arrangements to enhance home bike storage in existing development and sufficiently generous cycle parking standards in new development?
- **Cycle training:** Has the Council included in its LIP, policies and proposals to provide free cycle training for adults and children in accordance with the new National Standards endorsed by the Department for Transport?

Public transport

Does the LIP seek to maximise the benefits to be obtained from public transport, through implementing priority measures for buses and promoting interchange enhancements through both transport and planning policy? For example:

- **Bus priority:** Will the Council invest in additional length of bus lanes (to 4.0m minimum width where possible in order to provide additional benefits to cyclists) and ensure that where possible they provide priority 24 hours a day?
- **Access to public transport:** Does the LIP contain measures to improve pedestrian and cyclist access to public transport including improving walking routes to bus stops and stations and providing cycle parking for public transport users?
- **Bus stop accessibility:** Will the Council undertake measures to improve bus stop accessibility, allowing buses to draw up full-square with the kerblin, which will improve accessibility for wheelchair users and other mobility impaired bus passengers?
- **Enhancement of waiting facilities:** Does the LIP include a programme to enhance bus waiting facilities including the addition of new or improved shelters, seating and information where appropriate, and new, relocated or improved bus-bus / bus-rail interchanges?
- **Major destinations:** How will public transport be improved in relation to major travel generating destinations?

Other motor vehicles

Does the LIP seek to improve journey time reliability and traffic congestion relief through the implementation of measures to reduce motor traffic volumes and evening out of speeds across the network?

Transport 2000 believes that the travel demand measures in the LIP guidance have considerable potential to change travel behaviour beyond the Mayor's targets. This is encouraged by the Transport Strategy and strongly supported by Transport 2000. The boroughs are encouraged to promote car sharing and car clubs, and required to promote more sustainable modes with programmes that include school and workplace travel plans and travel awareness campaigns. It is particularly important that the boroughs themselves, as major local employers, lead the way in adopting workplace travel plans. The relevant boroughs must also introduce controlled parking.

Checklist examples:

- **Reducing motor traffic volumes:** Has the Council demonstrated robust policies that will enable it to meet the Mayor's targets for reducing the rate of motor traffic growth (to zero per cent in inner London and all town centres at 2001 levels, and to 5 per cent in outer London by 2011)?
- **Reducing motor traffic volumes:** Has the Council set tougher targets of its own to reduce the volume of motor traffic beyond the Mayor's targets and to below the 2001 levels?
- **Lorry ban and LEZ:** Has the Council in its Air Quality Management Plan demonstrated support for the London-wide Lorry Ban and Low Emission Zone? Does the Council have a LEZ in its area that is subject to (future) controls?
- **Evening-out of speeds:** Does the Council have plans and proposals to even-out the speed of motors on Borough roads?
- **Motor traffic management:** Does the Council have progressive motor traffic management arrangements consistent with the spirit of this checklist?
- **Freight transfer to rail:** Does the Council demonstrate support for transfer of freight to rail (and water), and is this demonstrated in planning and LIP land use policy?

Council fleets and social services / special needs transport

Does the LIP set out proposals and policies to maximise the efficiency of its fleet and the use of motor vehicles, including through the use of carbon-efficient fuels such as biodiesel?

Will biodiesel fuel supplies also be available to the public?

Does the Council have a robust procurement policy to minimise the distance over which goods and services travel?

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