



**GREENING TRANSPORT IN YOUR AREA  
NORTH WEST REGIONAL WORKSHOP  
Manchester, 16 September 2023**

**OPENING PLENARY**

**INTRODUCING LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS AND QUANTIFIABLE CARBON REDUCTIONS**

**Roger Geffen** (Low Traffic Future Alliance) - see [Presentation](#)

After outlining the aims and structure of the day, Roger's introduction set out

- The background to the Local Transport Plan (LTP) process, and why its revival presents a great opportunity to press for a low traffic future at the local level;
- The indications given by the Department for Transport (DfT) about what its long-awaited LTP guidance will advise councils to include in their LTPs, if they want to secure a good funding settlement: ambitious Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs), Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs), electric vehicle charging strategies and Quantifiable Carbon Reduction (QCR) targets.

**GREATER MANCHESTER'S LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN**

**Mia Crowther** (Senior Transport Strategy Officer, Transport for Greater Manchester) - see [Presentation](#)

Key points:

- TfGM does not control all transport in Greater Manchester - negotiation essential
- Current LTP ('Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040') adopted 2017, being refreshed (see last bullet)
- Contained a 'Right Mix' ambition to increase public transport and active travel from 39% (now) to 50% of trips by 2040. So even with population growth, aim is no net growth in motor vehicle traffic.
- Network principles: integrated, inclusive, healthy, environmentally responsible, reliable, safe and secure, well-maintained and resilient. Plus modal principles for highways, walking & cycling and public transport.
- Complemented by 5-year delivery plan 2021-6: covers buses, metrolink, rail, streets and network integration.
- LTP refresh reflects: The Bee Network, bus franchising, call for new funding model, Places for Everyone (joint development plan with the 9 boroughs), ambition for GM to be carbon-neutral by 2038, 'Trailblazer' devolution deal, external factors (inflation, Russia's war, pandemic). Expected to be in place by summer 2025.

## **EVERYONE WANTS A BUS, BUT WILL THEY USE IT?**

**Lorraine Smyth** (CEO, ACTion with Local Communities in Cumbria) - see [Presentation](#)

Key points:

- National policy, and a free-market approach, are not working for rural areas - and local authorities are overstretched
- Community-led solutions and partnerships with local businesses work better
- Need for flexibility (e.g. minibuses, demand-responsive solutions)

## **ROUNDTABLE SESSION 1: LARGE CITIES, SMALLER TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS**

**LARGER CITIES:** led by **Ian Pennington** (Walk Ride GM)

The discussion mainly focussed on the processes for developing transport policies. Issues raised:

- Importance of good communications and consultation. Needs to be genuine 'engagement', presenting the info and getting buy-in for solutions to the issues. Key role for local Councillors.
- Example of [mapping in Urmston](#).
- Issue of piecemeal funding: hard for LA to create coherent plans given stop-start funding. Need to keep focus on connectivity.
- If public transport is under public (i.e. local authority) control, it is then much easier to engage the public in developing plans. Analogy with public control of water in Paris - a representatives' board.
- Schools and similar 'community hubs' can play a key role in sending out messages about engagement opportunities.
- Link with spatial plans is crucial: higher housing densities make it easier to meet travel demand with walking and cycling (lower distances) as well as public transport (greater concentration of demand for PT services). See recent [Create Streets article](#) in Guardian.
- Opportunities to capture increases in land value as a means of funding public transport improvements.

**SMALLER TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS:** led by **Lorraine Smyth** (ACTion with Communities in Cumbria) and **Roger Geffen** (Low Traffic Future Alliance)

Issues raised:

- In smaller towns, fewer car journeys are made solely within the town. So, to reduce car use in smaller towns, cycle networks need to extend into surrounding countryside, providing an alternative to using 60mph 'A' and 'B' roads. In some places, that will mean joining up the planning of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs, often seen as mainly urban and for 'utility' cycling and walking) and Rights of Way Improvement Plans (RoWIPs, often seen as rural and recreational - but this distinction needs to be more blurred!)
- E-bikes: in Netherlands, the average e-bike trip is 60% longer than the average length for trips made by non-e-bikes. Significant potential carbon savings.
- But both e-bikes and e-cars (or other e=vehicles) need charging. Also need much better charging provision for e-buses - it currently takes a very long time.

- Loss of funding for rural buses - undermines their economic viability. Example of Witby - Scarborough. Certainty needed.
- Cornwall Council secured a very good funding settlement for rural buses - but how? Suggested answer: having a good long-term strategy and policy framework.
- Community transport services provide great flexibility and have under-utilised potential. DfT / LAs are reluctant to fund them, perceiving them as unreliable. They may rely on volunteers but they aren't "amateur" - on the contrary, they are often much more knowledgeable than PT operators about the communities they serve.
- Suggestion to use tourist taxes as a source of funding for rural PT in tourist areas? Lake District would like to trial this. Manchester's Business Improvement District (BID) has effectively raised funds to improve PT services, but contributions are voluntary, as regulatory framework does not allow this to be levied as a proper 'tax'.
- Cumbria doesn't have an air quality problem but it does suffer congestion. Aspiration to reopen Penrith to Keswick rail line.
- Problem of poor integration of rail and bus services - unlike countries such as Austria!
- Opportunities to make lift-sharing work: (a) using WhatsApp, and (b) based on schools.
- Car-share schemes can also work in rural areas [e.g. see [Hour Car in Calderdale](#), more examples [here](#) (though the rural examples are mainly in Scotland)].
- Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)): can be funded by Rural Mobility Fund.
- Planning public transport for 'touristy' rural areas also needs to meet needs of residents. E.g. in Lake District, buses exist to meet tourists' needs, but some large communities that are off the tourist trail lack buses.
- Bad planning isn't helping! - e.g. permitting housing in areas that lack (and cannot support) good public transport services.

## **ROUNDTABLE SESSION 2: ASPECTS OF TRANSPORT**

**WALKING, CYCLING AND SAFER STREETS:** led by **Ian Pennington** and **Cazz Ward**  
(Walk Ride GM)

Discussion of School streets:

- One part of the solution! But can also be combined with 'walking buses' or 'bike trains' (needs training for ride leaders).
- Visible change.
- Need to adopt a place-based approach, and to relate to the context, e.g. different approach on busy main roads.
- Head teacher's support (or lack of it) can be critical.
- ANPR enforcement.
- Data - [see report](#).

Other issues:

- Promote a "[pedestrian manifesto](#)" - e.g. calling for reduced waiting times at traffic-light crossings.
- Small steps can lead to bigger changes - can show Councillors the level of support.
- 20mph schemes - importance of enforcement? 20sPlentyForUs says that simply putting in limits can reduce actual speeds (even if not down to 20mph!).

**PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT:** led by **Matthew Topham** (Better Buses campaigner, We Own It) and **Josiah Deakin** (Policy & Research Officer, Community Transport Association UK)

Issues raised:

- Key criteria for services: affordable, fast, frequent, reliable, clean, comprehensive network (goes to places where it's needed), integrated (PT services connect well), accessible, economically viable (this isn't a user need but it's also important!) [*Which were the top 4?*]
- Need to make PT the 'default option' - i.e. it should be 'more affordable', 'faster' etc than car travel
- The economics of PT: higher-density housing increases the viability of PT.
- Shouldn't necessarily require PT to be economically viable on its own. It can be justified by wider economic benefits: e.g. (i) access to employment or education (ii) health benefits (physical and mental); (iii) supporting local tourist economies, etc.
- Community transport - perception is often that the voluntary sector will 'plug the gaps' in the public transport network, instead of planning for Community Transport in its own right.
- Community transport service providers need a seat at the table on Enhanced Partnership Boards (or failing that on EP Forums)
- Public (i.e. local authority) control of public transport can greatly strengthen public engagement in influencing PT services
- Parish Councils can also contribute funding to support PT or CT services.

**AIR POLLUTION:** led by **Sarah Rowe** (Clean Cities Campaign)

Discussion:

- Info [here](#) on the difference between the UK legal limits and the WHO suggested limits of major pollutants - just because the air in your town is within the UK legal limit doesn't mean it's safe.
- A public health policy - analogies with smoking bans.
- How do we obtain data on the scale of the problem? - hard to get the right facts.
- Freedom of Information Act requests.
- How do we communicate the issue? Win people over?
- Example of [Russell Scott primary school](#) in Denton (Tameside), where the Year 5 pupils acted as PCSOs, handing out leaflets to warn drivers of the dangers of inconsiderate parking etc. Got [regional](#) / [national press](#) and [TV](#) coverage! See [guide on how to do it](#).
- Workplace Parking Levies.
- Car-pooling and ride sharing: the Clean Cities Campaign's [European city ranking report](#) showed that UK cities generally perform poorly on the availability of shared electric cars. [Evidence](#) shows that every car club car can take multiple private cars off the road.

## **ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS: CAMPAIGNING SKILLS**

### **UNDERSTANDING YOUR COUNCIL, INFLUENCING COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS:**

led by Andy D'Agorne (formerly Transport Cabinet Member, City of York Council)

Processes:

- In 2-tier areas, understand which authority does what (transport, highways, planning)
- Understand your council's decision-making processes - are decisions made by individual cabinet-members, by committees, by officers under delegated powers?
- If it's unclear, ask your ward Councillor - it's their job to be your point of contact
- Make sure decisions are acted on: by when will action be taken? Don't let decisions be kicked into the long grass.
- Be aware that a 'strategy' is sometimes a bid for funding rather than a firm strategy. You may need to badger them to commit funding - or help them secure it from national Government.

Influencing - tactics can include:

- Petitions.
- Motions to Council - can be submitted via your ward Councillor.
- Protests / demonstrations.
- Articles / letters in local papers.
- Well-researched reports.
- Be persistent: Never take "No" for an answer!
- Make it easier for the Councillors to 'do the right thing'.
- Identify supportive Cllrs and officers and aim to build bridges - whether with decision-makers, your ward councillors or sympathetic allies (even if they're in opposition, they can still exert influence and extract information).
- Being aware of party politics - it can affect your strategy (as well as which wards get the funding!)
- Also be aware of how the timing of elections will influence decision-making. Councillors are much more likely to take controversial decisions soon after an election than shortly before one. But does your council have all-out elections every four years, or do councillors rotate, with elections most years?