

# Transport Planning Society

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## **Response to Department for Transport Consultation on Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy**

The Transport Planning Society is an independent institutional body in the UK, established to facilitate, develop and promote best practice in transport planning and to provide a focus for dialogue between practitioners and others interested in the field. It is supported by four long established professional institutions – ICE, CIHT, CILT and RTPI - all of whom have an interest in transport planning as well as their own core activities.

The Transport Planning Society administers its own Professional Development Scheme for transport planners, leading to award of the Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification which is the only professional qualification uniquely aimed at transport planners. The Society has over 1200 individual members and 30 corporate member providers of transport planning services in the UK and elsewhere. Many of our members are working actively within the Transport industry to ensure that all modes of transport are catered for in a safe and considered way.

Our response has been drafted by the Policy Group within the Transport Planning Society Board, all of whom were elected by the membership as a whole. The Policy Group is in constant dialogue with other members of the Society and the views expressed here may be taken as representative of those held generally by our membership.

## **Consultation Response**

Although our individual members may have views on a range of issues relating to cycling and walking, as a Society we would like to respond to the consultation. Responses may also be received from our partner organisations, as listed in the introduction to our response.

The Transport Planning Society supports the DfT's overall commitment to increase Cycling and Walking and welcomes the opportunity to comment on this document.

The TPS annual members survey in 2015, rated walking / cycling as the top priority for Transport Planners, with 60% of survey responders ranking it as such. Thus we are delighted to see the DfT launch this draft strategy to encourage traveling by bike or on foot.

In responding to this consultation we will answer the questions as laid out in the consultation document and then provide an overall conclusion.

### **Question 1**

**The Government would be interested to hear the views on the approach and actions set out in Section 8 of this strategy.**

Whilst in broad agreement with the approach and actions laid out in Section 8 of this strategy; we feel that without a clear, appropriate and long-term committed budget very little will change, the risk being that none of the targets will be reached and this will be a missed opportunity.

Whilst walking and cycling are often discussed together, it is important that the clear and definite needs of the very different users are identified; therefore we would welcome more separate and specific targets and measures for both modes, but particularly walking.

We are also concerned that whilst the overall aims and targets are listed, they are not SMART and/ or broken down into easily manageable targets for specific groups and their specific needs i.e. Women, Black and Asian groups and others.

### **Question 2**

**The Government would be interested to hear views on the potential roles of national government departments, local government, other public bodies businesses and the voluntary sector in delivering the strategy and what arrangements could best support partnership working between them.**

As stated in our introduction, the TPS, is a large and well respected professional organisation within the UK and therefore represents a wide range of professionals with expertise within the Transport field, many of whom, who have been working to increase cycling and walking over many years. The TPS therefore would welcome the opportunity to work with the DfT to in delivering the strategy. Further we think that in order to achieve

success the partnerships between the groups mentioned above is imperative. However in order to make this happen as stated above there needs to be a clear, appropriate and long-term committed budget.

### **Question 3**

**The Government would be interested to hear suggestions and evidence of innovative projects and programmes which could be developed to deliver the objectives outlined in Section 4.**

The TPS feels that whilst Section 4 is ambitious, without clear targets it is unlikely to reach a positive conclusion.

We would like to see a clearer set of SMART targets feeding into the bigger ambitions. The monitoring from previous initiatives; e.g. the LSTF and or Cycle Cities and others, should be used to inform the delivery of new initiatives. There is also the potential to link walking and cycling initiatives to programmes that discourage short trips by car to reduce overall car dependency and encourage behavioural change.

We would also like to see walking and cycling incorporated in mainstream quantitative transport planning and analysis (including TAG) in a positive and informative manner.

Looking forward, we feel that improved methods and data collection could assist in better informing walking and cycling interventions.

All of the above would make more informed data available for use within the planning system.

We would also like to see a fairer system in place for allocations of money to ensure that, any monies available to deliver initiatives are spread across the country and amongst user groups as fairly as possible.

### **Question 4**

**The Government would be interested to hear your views on how to increase cycling and walking in typically underrepresented groups (for example women, older people, or those from black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds).**

The TPS would like to see some kind of consultation plan put in place for talking to members of these groups and others in order to understand their specific needs. It is, we feel, impossible to cater for the many different groups mentioned above without engaging with them to identify their specific requirements.

## Question 5

**The Government would be interested to hear views on what type of assistance Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships would find beneficial to support development of ambitious and high standard Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.**

With focus currently on local economy and how we can all assist in making the places that we work and live, vibrant and economically viable, the TPS believes that whilst the broad ambition is clear, there does need to be a focus on the ability to provide clear, secure and long term funding to support the proposals. Without any further funding, the opportunity to build on all the work, by numerous individuals and organisations over recent years to get more people cycling and walking will lose momentum.

We would also like to see professional bodies such as the TPS involved in the development of walking and cycling programmes in future to ensure that walking and cycling are given the appropriate status as serious transport modes, in terms of training and professional development. This in turn could lead to more opportunities for professional exchange between transport planning and other areas such as public health and environment.

To conclude we are broadly happy that this strategy is being proposed, but keenly aware that in order to develop the strategy into real outcomes, more thought on budgets and targets needs to be considered at a local and national level.

We will be happy to provide any further information requested or to engage further with the DfT on this subject.