

# Transport Planning Society

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 10 March 2022

### Chair's Report

The Society has continued to adapt to the changing circumstances brought on by the pandemic, with our activities (board meeting, AGM, events) being almost wholly in the virtual world in 2021-22.

The move to online has brought many benefits. Feedback from members, particularly those living outside the main cities, has been that they find such events easier to access and have engaged more with the Society's output as a consequence.

However we have also had feedback that the online space does little to help people make new connections, or to help them feel part of a genuine society of other likeminded professionals. As noted in my [chair's message for February](#), we therefore want to start hosting more in-person events in 2022 including the return of Transport Planning Day itself at ICE on 14 November 2022.

For me, my first year has been largely about understanding in more detail the day-to-day workings of the society. A particular task has been supporting the transition from our hugely valued and long serving (and long suffering!) business manager Andy Costain, to the new arrangement with Jo Field Group who, following competitive tender, won the contract to provide a range of secretariat services for the society moving forward. JFG bring particular skills in transport communications (having supported our Transport Planning Day campaign since its inception) but also in administrative, business development and policy support. An early change facilitated by this new arrangement was to increase secretariat support to our policy group to help up our output on responding to government consultations and providing original thought leadership for the sector.

I have been keen to bring a bit more transparency to the workings of the board for members should you wish to see in more detail what we get up to. As a start, my reports to board have been loaded up onto our website. These provide a good

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overview of the activities of the society, and priorities for discussion at board meetings.

It was also good to be able to bring back the role of Vice Chair to the Society, and I've really benefitted from the support and wisdom of Laura Putt who took that new role on and has engaged with it with gusto. I'm pleased to say that Laura will continue in that position for my second year's term.

In a competitive field it was excellent to see past chair Stephen Bennett from Arup secure the coveted title of Transport Planner of the Year for his work on supporting the industry's response to the pandemic. We look forward to hearing from Stephen at our Annual Lecture after the AGM.

I pick out some further highlights from the year below.

### **Transport Planning Skills and Qualifications**

Our skills work remains at the heart of what we do as a professional society, supporting our members through the TPP (run in partnership with CIHT) and the TPS PDS. Despite a slowdown in the pandemic, numbers are stable with over 400 trainees on the PDS and over 200 holders of the TPP. PDS completions are rising and this is proving an ideal path to TPP, with the latest TPP Outstanding Candidate completing PDS just over 2 years earlier. The opportunity to gain a CTPP title should encourage every transport planner, not just the newly qualified, to make this their goal. Following a 10-year review process, the TPP requirements have been updated, and will be fully implemented this year. The PDS was revised at the same time to ensure compatibility but also to improve clarity and is now being used by all new trainees.

Another key workstream for skills has been developing and supporting new pathways for transport planners to gain the qualifications they need. The apprenticeship programme has now established itself, both at technician and degree level. TPS has been instrumental in keeping both apprenticeship routes compatible with TPP and PDS. We are offering the opportunity for degree students to follow the PDS concurrently with their degree.

In 2018 we also introduced a new title 'Incorporated Transport Planner' (IncTP) for those who complete PDS. For those at an earlier stage in their careers we have developed a technician qualification: TPTech. This will enable technician apprentices to have their own transport planning qualification, rather than having to apply for EngTech. This plan was complicated by new requirements for Ofqual approval for its use for apprentices which has occupied the skills team for much of last year. Following application there was a panel interview which we are pleased to say was successful and TPS is now registered with Ofqual to deliver End Point Assessments. The new system needs further preparation and testing but should be fully operational later in 2022.

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Finally, we previously undertook a pilot for the PDS in India, using both local and UK based mentors. Although held up by the pandemic, this is now being taken to the next stage and combined with an international pilot for the TPP, working closely with CIHT. The initial TPP pilots will be in India and three other areas including New Zealand, where a new TPS Group is being started. This is an exciting development for TPS, which will also enhance the international standing of the profession as a whole. We expect our first non-UK based PDS and TPP completions in 2022.

## **Policy Group**

A main aim in the Policy Group's 2021 Business Plan was to engage our membership more in the Policy Group activities. We invited all members to contribute to our consultation responses and wider policy statements and had a satisfying response, with four new members co-opted onto the Policy Group.

A major output late 2021 was the Society's response to the government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan, which drew heavily on and referred extensively to the State of the Nations report.

The Policy Group has benefited greatly from the expertise provided by the JFG in shaping and promoting our outputs to a wider readership than just using the website.

For 2022 the intention is to continue membership engagement in the Transport Policy Group's outputs, to refresh and make better use of the membership survey and to be more proactive rather than reactive, shaping the transport policy debate.

An early task will be to explore a limited refresh to our State of the Nations report to pick up further learnings post Covid, and to explore the widening divergence in transport policy across the nations of the UK.

## **TPS Bursary**

The 2021 Transport Planning Society Bursary Competition tackled the topic of 'Scenario Planning – How can Transport Planners best plan for the new normal?'

The judges spent a lovely afternoon in January listening to the finalists present their papers and it was clear how much work had gone into all the papers and presentations.

All of the three finalists were awarded a bursary of £500.

The finalists were;

- **Liani Baglietto Castellares** – Arup
- **Julia Coonan** – PJA
- **Lucy Prismall** – Reading Borough Council

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Later in our AGM, Jo Ward, the Board member responsible for organising the competition, will announce the overall winner. In the meantime, please take time to read all the papers from all of this year's finalists available on the TPS website (along with those from other years) here: <https://tps.org.uk/profession/bursaries>

A massive thank you to all the finalists, mentors and judges.

## **Transport Planning Day and TPS Events**

As with last year, we unfortunately had to cancel our in-person events due to the pandemic, including our very popular Pub Quiz and Annual Dinner.

For those events that did run, we continued to run them virtually, and this included events relating to our Transport Planning Day Campaign.

Our team put together an exciting programme of eight events in the run up to TP Day to fit with our theme of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Events included a webinar on community engagement in transport planning, a presentation from our Bursary Award winners, a webinar on Best Practice in Equality Impact Assessment, a very popular discussion on the tensions between accessibility and sustainability and; a session coordinated by TfGM on 'New Advances in Assistive Technology and Independent Mobility'.

Our main Transport Planning Day events were once again held online. In the run up to TP Day, we hosted a Parliamentary Reception focusing on tackling hate crime on public transport. Speakers at this event included Lisa Garrett - Superintendent at British Transport Police, Jo Field – President of Women in Transport and Tim Herbert – Operational Policy Manager at Transport for London.

TP Day itself was split into two separate sessions. In session one we saw some really interesting presentations from two of our sponsor organisations; Rachel Billington - Head of ED&I for Europe at AECOM, and Nina Quarshie – EDI Lead at Arup. We were also treated to a presentation from our 2020 Bursary Competition winner, Victoria Heald, who spoke about unconscious bias in transport planning.

Session two consisted of two presentations, looking at how our work can be more inclusive. Keynote speaker, Emma Ward, Director General for Roads, Places and Environment at the DfT, spoke about improving accessibility and inclusion. To close the session, we heard from another Sponsor organisation; Richard Sanderson, Sherin Francis and Katie Pearce from Jacobs on gender in transport planning.

All of our events are available to view on our Youtube channel: [Transport Planning Society - YouTube](#)

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We've also continued to strengthen connections with our supporting institutions over the past year – CILT, RTPI and CIHT – by sharing speakers and promoting each other's events.

We're looking forward to another year of exciting events, including our TP Day 2022 campaign, which we'll be sharing details of in the coming weeks. As ever, we're always open to ideas for new formats and suggestions for events, topics and speakers, so please do get in touch if there is anything you would like to see featured in our events calendar.

## **Regions and Nations**

Regional and national representatives are invaluable in developing the TPS local communities. This year it has not been possible to hold regional events in person due to Covid-19, but we have brought regional and national representatives together virtually a few times to discuss opportunities. We have not done this before but will continue going forward with the aim of coordinating the promotion of events and providing support, where needed.

We are grateful to the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland who led national events, and the South East, North West, and North East regions who organised and led regional events on key technical and strategic topics including TRICS, Decarbonisation in the Context of Economic Growth and TfN's [Draft Transport Decarbonisation Strategy](#). The move to virtual events enabled international attendance and speakers, expanding TPS's reach to a broader network.

2022 is already shaping up to have an interesting variety of events, both in person and virtual, across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

We are looking to build our network of regional and national representatives so please get in touch if you would like to take on this role. We hope to be able to revive our famous annual Pub Quiz this year, when social distancing rules allow, and possibly even our Annual Dinner.

## **Communications**

We have made a conscious effort over the last year or so to improve our communications to members and the wider world. We have a constant flow of news and updates on the [News pages of our website](#). This is also summarised and communicated to members via the monthly Bulletin email.

We are also trying to be more proactive on our social media channels, via [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#), so please do follow us, share with your networks and engage with our posts.

## **Membership**

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Our membership is the lifeblood of the Society and central to all our activities. We are now at 1485 individual members, which we hope to maintain and potentially increase. As a Society we are keen to represent the full breadth of those participating in transport planning activities and are exploring ways in which we can attract new members from different backgrounds, particularly young people.

It is important that we have your most up to date membership data on our records to allow us to efficiently communicate with you. We would be grateful if you could access your MyICE account and update your email and work details as appropriate.

One of the continued challenges we face is a drop-off in numbers each year at subscription renewal time, often just due to delays in members renewing their subscriptions. There is a direct debit payment option to avoid this issue, and I would urge members to take this up.

We are currently undertaking a review of membership benefits to ensure that TPS activities and offerings meet the expectations of our members. To help us with our review we are set to launch our updated annual members survey and I strongly encourage you all to share your feedback. This year, to encourage you to complete the survey, we will be offering the opportunity to all participants to win a prize.

We are also pleased to report that Stakeholder Membership has stood up really well despite the continuing challenges to organisations in the last year. We currently have 36 stakeholder members – one more than last year which is encouraging. Of these, 20 are multi-site stakeholders and 16 are single site. All except four have a PDS Licence. The Business Directory launched in 2019 and has begun to take off as it allows small consultancy firms, freelancers, providers of services and voluntary groups to advertise their services at a very reasonable rate on the website. We currently have 15 Business Directory listings.

## **Summary**

So, we continue to try our best to support the profession during turbulent times, and we will continue to do so in future, as we recover from the pandemic and aim to 'build back better' recognizing the important role of transport planners in addressing the ongoing challenges of climate change, health and wellbeing, and traffic impacts on our towns and cities.

I am really proud of all we have achieved as a Society in the past year which I have been Chair. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me and I look forward to working with the board, JFG and our wider membership across my second year term.

We have lots more activities planned for this year, so please do get involved and support your Society, we really are 'the professional home for transport planners'.

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**Mark Frost**  
**Chair, Transport Planning Society**

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