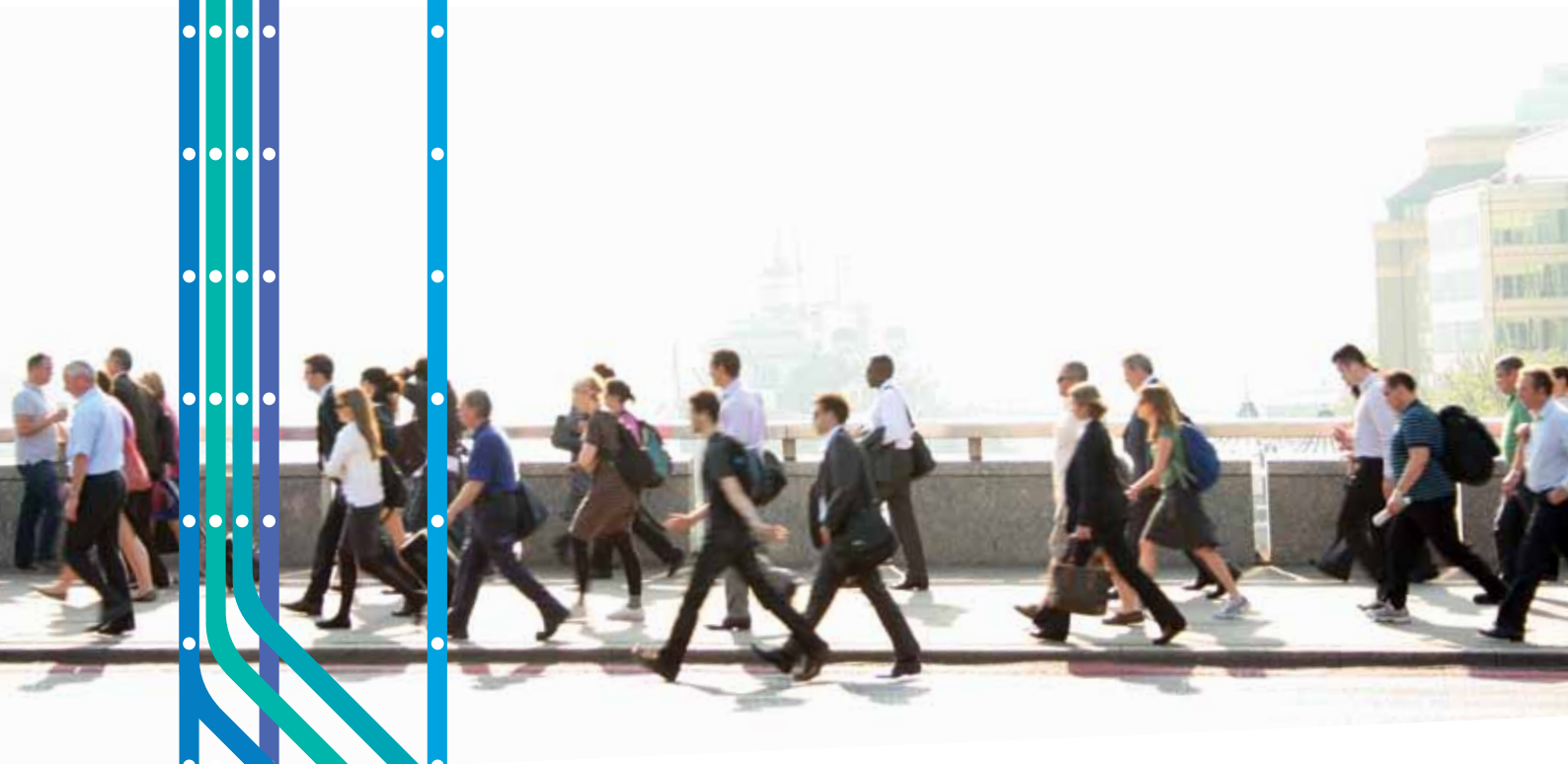




Transport Planning Society

Review 2012



TransportPlanningSociety

The voice of UK transport planners

View from the Chair

Keith Buchan, March 2012

A summary of his Chair's report given to the 2012 AGM

The last year was another very difficult one for the transport planning profession, and this has been reflected in the challenges faced by TPS members as individuals. Despite this, quite a lot of time has been devoted by Board members to the TPS itself, such that, for example, we have already completely revised our job opportunities section on the website. On skills and employment more generally, we are close to completing our round of discussions on the impact of the recession and how we should react. The next step is to present the findings publicly, and seek to raise them with Government and the relevant Select Committees during 2012.

I want to say a word about why this is so important. It's not just a question of maintaining skills for the sake of it: it's a

question of what those skills produce. The lively debate that typically occurs around any piece of transport infrastructure is usually conducted in a spirit of objective enquiry, always seeking out the best available evidence. Without this approach, public spending on transport will be wasted, or worse it will be counter-productive.

I'm concerned that an overly aggressive emphasis on growth is being used as a smoke screen to cover the shortcomings of projects that simply won't deliver either growth or, just as importantly, environmental benefits. On climate change, for example, it's too easily forgotten that the UK balance of payments (and thus borrowing) is strongly influenced by major imports of fuel for transport.

Worryingly, our member survey (see pages 4 and 5 following) revealed concerns that schemes are decided on political grounds alone, and that objective appraisal is often ignored. This has not been helped by the way in which the technical sections of the appraiser's bible – Webtag – have not kept pace with initiatives such as Smarter Choices. TPS will be gathering views on this topic to make a major input on the DfT's draft proposals – they need improvement!

For this reason, our events programme reflects both the issues of transport and climate change, and looking beyond what we are currently doing with appraisal and what we might do better.

I would also like to say that I have been concerned to build a closer working

relationship with CIHT on skills issues. The two organisations are as one on the need to promote the TPP qualification (see page 7 following), and also to review its operation. With the help of the Rees Jeffreys Fund, we are undertaking research among both our memberships to uncover any barriers which are holding back applicants.

Meanwhile, we are promoting the TPS Professional Development Scheme, not just as a means to the TPP, but as structured way of developing transport planning skills in their own right. We have just launched a special initiative for local authorities who wish to participate, and are promoting this throughout 2012.

One perennial skills issue is how to widen the knowledge and experience of transport planners. The problem is that if you're good at something, you get to do more of that something, and less of other types of work (modelling is the

classic example). We need depth but we also need breadth – this is active in our thoughts and is relevant whatever the economic situation. This is related to the key issue of promoting the profession and the work that we do.

On the policy front we have responded to Government on major topics, such as HS2 and the aviation framework, but I think we should try to become more proactive still. There is a need to ask the fundamental questions about what we should expect from our transport systems in the future years, and, increasingly important, how they relate to our communications networks. I think this is more important in a time when money is short, not less. We are setting up new ways for members to get involved.

As regards membership itself, I am continuing to get out to meet our regional and national groups, and we

have reallocated part of our budget to give them more support this year. I was in Liverpool for the North West Transport lecture in February, and will also be visiting the North East and Scotland shortly, the latter for an event on climate change. Despite the increasingly testing issue of earning a living, I would also like to thank the Board for their great support during the year.

Finally I would like to say that transport planners do need to relax a bit and TPS has always tried to provide some opportunities to do this, and I went to the pub quiz in March. Rumours that I got a question on Webtag wrong are sadly correct. It's all part of that very useful function called networking. I am glad to say this is flexible enough to cover a drink in the pub as well as lively debate on microsimulation, and many members partake in both, sometimes at the same time.

Meet the Board



Keith Buchan is Chair of the TPS. He is currently Director of the MTRU consultancy and has 30 years' experience as a transport planner in a wide range of roles. He is passionate about raising the profession's public profile and TPS taking a more proactive role on policy issues.



Sara Andrews is a Transport Planner at Peter Brett Associates LLP and joined the profession in 2009 after graduating from UCL / Imperial College with a Masters in Transport. Within TPS, Sara's focus is on organising events for members, including presentations, seminars, networking and social events.



Nicola Jones is a Senior Transport Planner working for Arup in the North East. After five years on the Board, she is now Secretary and responsible for individual membership applications and enquiries. She is also the lead representative of the TPS North East regional branch.



Christopher Mills has studied and worked in the fields of urban and transport planning, in the UK and overseas. He's currently part of the TfL team delivering the 2012 Olympic transport plan. Hobbies include triathlons and travel and his TPS Board role covers events and public relations.



Ruth Bradshaw is a freelance transport policy consultant, specialising in sustainable transport and the links between transport and other policy areas. She has nearly 20 years' experience in a range of transport policy and research roles. Her TPS Board focus is on policy matters.



Nick Richardson is a Project Director at Mott MacDonald, dealing with transport strategies and public transport schemes & managing the company's Professional Development Scheme. He has several tasks on the TPS Board including bursaries and policy matters.



John Dales is Director of Urban Movement at Urban Initiatives). He's been a transport practitioner since 1984 and his professional focus is increasingly on urban street design. His TPS Board role covers public relations and communication with members.



John Rider is a transport planning and project management specialist with over 15 years experience across the private and public sectors. As a mentor and reviewer for the TPP qualification he supports professional development, and also helps organise TPS events.



Dominic McGrath is Strategic Transport Manager with Hampshire CC, responsible for scheme development and implementation, local transport policy and development planning. His TPS Board focus is to promote the TPP and PDS within local authorities.



Charlotte Welch is the TPS Treasurer. She specialises in Smarter Choices, working part time as a Senior Consultant at Steer Davies Gleave and as the Travel Plan Manager for West London Mental Health NHS Trust. Charlotte is responsible for the Society's finances.



Martin Richards is TPS Director for Skills. Since retiring as Executive Chairman of MVA in 2000, he's been deeply involved in the training, education & professional recognition of transport planners, including as a Trustee of the Brian Large Bursary Fund.



David Whyte is a Principal Officer in the City Policy Unit of Manchester City Council, leading on transport policy & focusing on supporting the delivery of several major transport projects in the city. On the TPS Board, he is responsible for Regions and Nations.



Jamie Wheway is a Director of Integrated Transport Planning (ITP) based in Milton Keynes and has been involved in transport planning in the UK and internationally for 25 years. Jamie leads the planning and organisation of events for the TPS.



Graham Grant is former joint winner of the TPS bursary award, interested in both the social and the science of transport planning. He is the policy advisor for the Tyne & Wear ITA and his TPS role is to develop the website and the creative uses of social media.



Andy Costain formerly Managing Director of PTRC, is the TPS Development Officer and is responsible for liaison with Stakeholder and Corporate Members, the monthly e-bulletin, careers advice, the Annual Dinner and for posting job vacancies and training events on the TPS website.

Jamie Birtles represents:



Howard Potter represents:



Daniel Parker-Klein represents:



Mike Slinn represents:



Annual Member Survey

Every year, the TPS undertakes a survey of its members, asking them a series of questions, some of which are the same from year to year and others varying according to the nature of the key issues of the day. The following two pages present a summary of some of the key findings of the 2011 survey.

Spending

Question 1 of the survey asked, "Which do you think should be the top 5 priorities for transport spending in the next 5 years?"

Of the 16 options rated, changing the way we travel to consume fewer resources – but through the "Smarter Choices" approach rather than pricing – is, as in 2010, the number one spending priority for members. Support for walking and cycling rose to second place, with rail capacity improvements (other than High Speed Rail) in third place. HS2 nevertheless gained support, rising from 12th to 9th (support up 35%).

However, road maintenance fell from 2nd to 5th place, and bus revenue support from 5th to 10th – scores for both were down 30%. Perhaps this reveals the difficult choices in the face of cuts, with a focus on maintaining investment, particularly in the medium term. This is supported by a 40% rise in support for urban rapid transit – rising from 7th to 4th place.

Top 5 Priorities

- 59%** Travel behaviour change (smarter choices)
- 58%** Walking / cycling
- 57%** Non-high-speed passenger railway capacity increase
- 40%** Urban rapid transport schemes
- 38%** Road maintenance

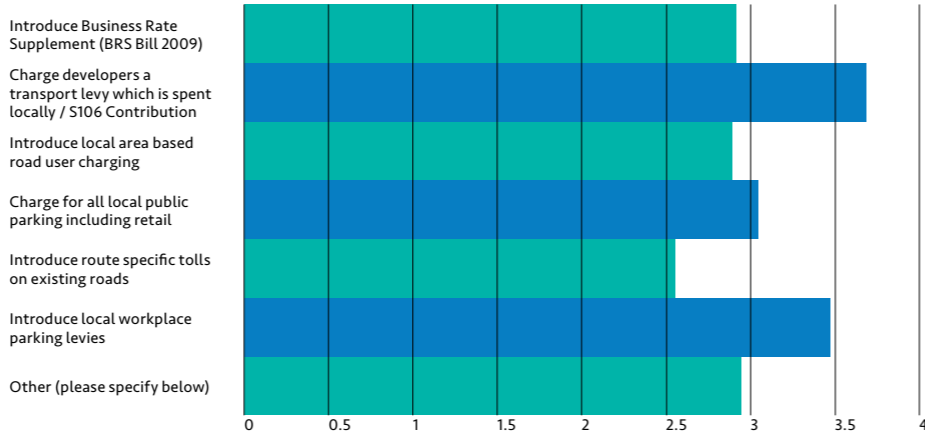
Revenue

Question 3 asked, "Assuming that transport will have to generate new income streams, and setting aside legal and administrative issues, which of the following do you think should be prioritised over the next 5 years?"

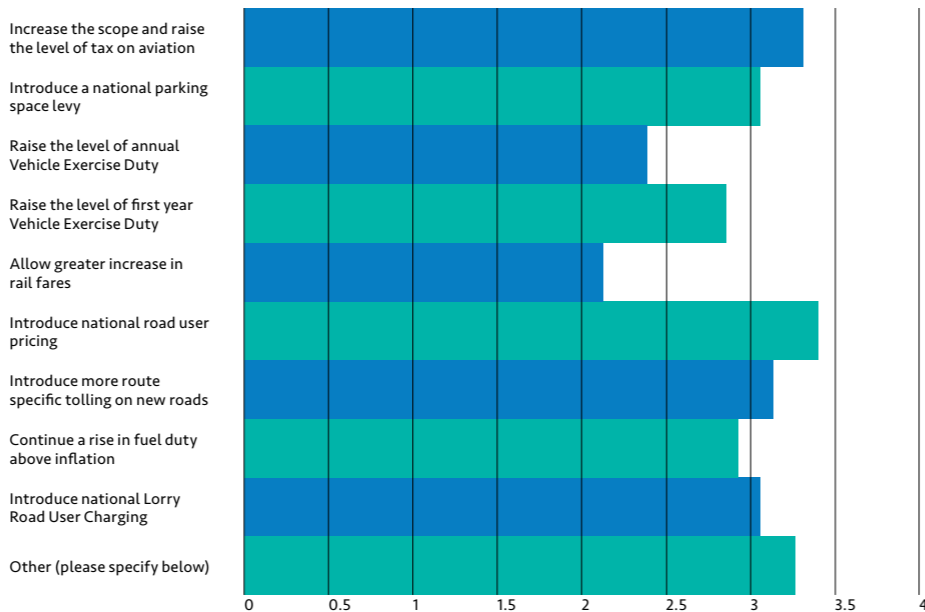
The 10 options for raising money nationally showed far less change from 2010 (less than 10% change in all cases), with tax on aviation dropping from 1st to 2nd, swapping places with national road user charging. Tolling new roads gained ground, with Lorry Road User Charging and fuel duty increases losing slightly.

Question 5, related to local revenue raising, and here the changes from 2010 were even more modest. The top 3 choices were the same as last year: first, a transport levy on new development; second, workplace parking levies; and third, charging for all parking, including retail.

Local revenue (ring-fenced for transport investment) Ranked with 5 as highest priority



National revenue options ranked with 5 as highest priority



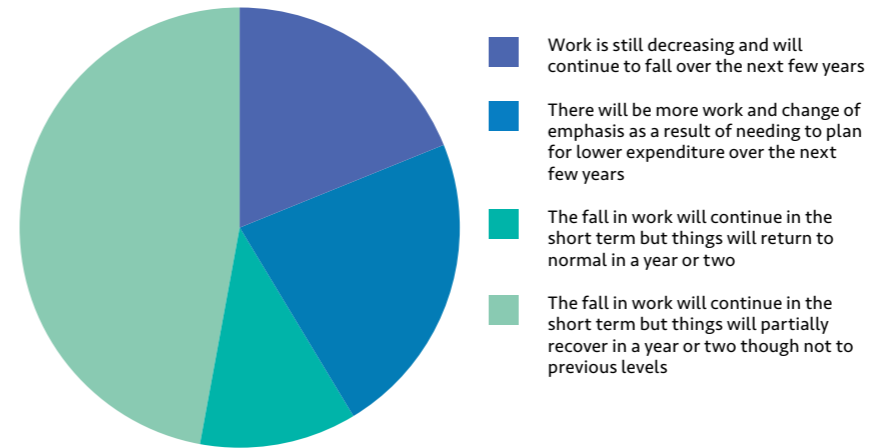
Industry confidence

Question 16 asked, "Which of the following best represents your view of current DfT appraisal methodologies?"

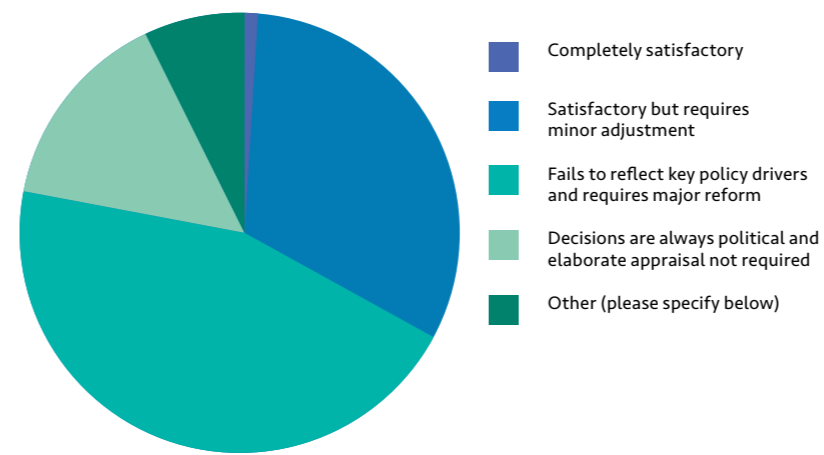
Even fewer members than last year believed that work will return soon to previous levels (11%). However, slightly fewer thought that the short term would be worse (19% from 24%), and slightly more believed that things would start to recover after further short term problems, although not to previous levels.

This reflects the views expressed in the discussion groups held as part of the TPS skills monitoring, and at TPS national and regional events.

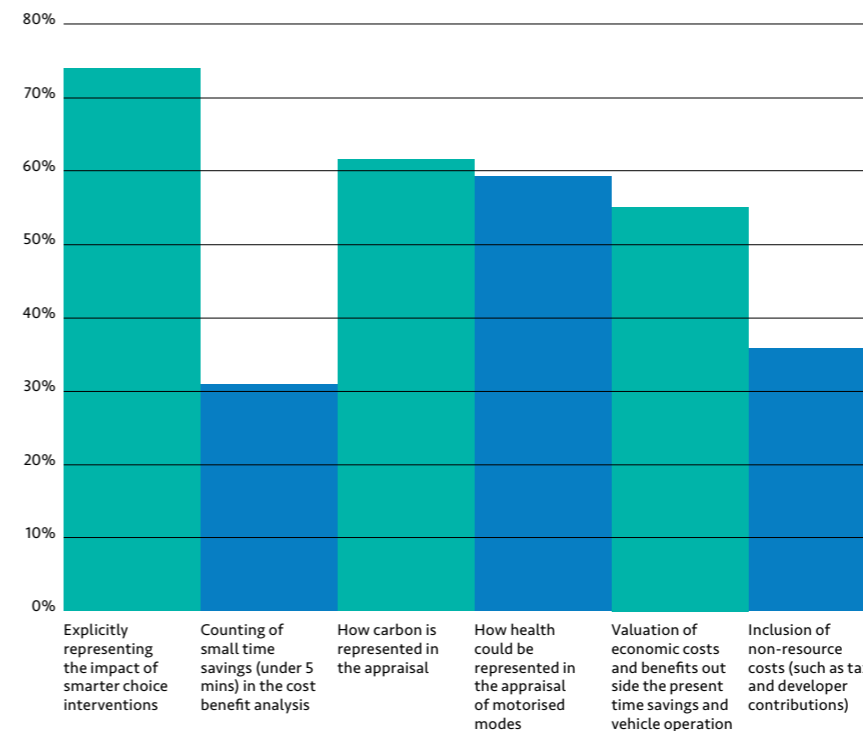
Level of work in transport planning



View of current DfT appraisal methodologies



Elements of current appraisal methodologies to be reformed



Appraisal

Question 9 asked, "Which of the following best represents your view of current DfT appraisal methodologies?", while Question 10 followed this up by asking, "If you think the current appraisal methodology needs any sort of change, which elements should be reformed?"

Responses to these questions indicated some progress by DfT but also that much is still to be achieved in the eyes of TPS members. 43% of respondents felt that appraisal in its current form fails to reflect key policy drivers and requires major reform (41% last year).

While the DfT has reviewed its technical requirements, it would appear that some practitioners are unimpressed. Specifically, respondents felt that change is needed to explicitly represent the impact of Smarter Choice interventions (74% up from 64.5%), how carbon is represented in appraisal (61% down from 67%) and how health could be represented in the appraisal of motorised modes (59% up from 56%).

Despite progress, the valuation of economic costs and benefits outside the present time savings and vehicle operation was still felt to need reform (56% down from 65%). A matter of continued debate, 30% of respondents (down from 40%) suggested that the counting of small time savings (within five minutes) in the cost benefit analysis should be reconsidered; 35% expressed the view that non-resource costs such as tax and developer contributions should be reviewed.

The appraisal process could also be influenced by the localism agenda and a possible need for a proportional approach to appraisal, better reflecting the scale of the project to the quantity of analysis required. Appraisal remains an important issue in principle, however, so as to ensure that funding decisions are well-informed and reflect fully the value of the options available.

2011/12 Event Highlights

2011 Pub quiz

In what has become a much-anticipated annual feature of the TPS calendar, around 160 people in 33 teams took part in this year's National Pub Quiz, held simultaneously in Birmingham, Leeds, London & Manchester. Teams pitted their wits against each other, answering questions on topics like children's TV, food & drink, and sport. Despite only scoring just 3/10 in the transport round, MVA London amassed an impressive 54 points to claim the national trophy, with Centro, Jacobs and MVA again winning the regional titles. In addition to the fun and/or keen competition, the event raised £300 for Transaid & Sport Relief. The suitably blurry photo below shows some of the 'minds' at work in London towards the end of the evening.



West Midlands HS2 Event

Last July saw the West Midlands branches of the TPS, RTPI and CIHT come together and put on a great HS2 event attended by around 100 delegates from across the region. The event was full of lively debate governed by TPS Chair Keith Buchan and featuring a panel of people from the public, private and business sectors speaking both for and against the scheme. There were many strong opinions in the room, with some explaining why they think we need HS2 to help the economy of the UK recover/grow and others criticising the scheme due to a lack of transparency and availability of information on routing and cost. The alternative of providing a better existing integrated rail system was also discussed and favoured by some. Interestingly, many more delegates were in favour of HS2 after the debate than before it.



Annual Dinner

TPS welcomed Louise Ellman, MP (pictured) to its Annual Dinner in November, this highly enjoyable event being held for the second year running at the Wine Tun opposite St Paul's Cathedral. Louise provided an illuminating insight into her work as Chair of the Transport Select Committee, commenting on her disappointment that transport topics of importance to the public were rarely discussed in Parliament. Other topics Louise raised, demonstrating the diversity of topics discussed by the TSC, were the response by Local Authorities to adverse weather conditions, the rising cost of motor insurance, and (of course) HS2. Louise welcomed previous TPS input to the work of the Committee and confirmed that it would always look to transport professionals to provide the experience and expertise that Committee members themselves lack.



London Cycling Infrastructure

One of several London events in the past year, this seminar in January sought to answer the question: "Cycling infrastructure in London: Have we got it right?" Addressing this very hot topic were representatives from TfL, LB Hounslow and Sustrans, as well as an independent view from Tim Pharoah. A full house, augmented by a number of cycle campaigners contacted using Twitter, gave the question a through work-over, and although answers to the lead question varied, the overall conclusion was that there's still plenty left to be done to make London a more attractive place for cycling – especially by those currently put off by concern for their safety.



Skills

The TPS is committed to the recognition of transport planners as true professionals.

TPP – Professional Qualification for Transport Planners

The Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification is the only qualification providing professional recognition specifically for transport planners, just as Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute identifies professional town planners and Chartered Engineer identifies professional engineers. The TPP is awarded jointly by the TPS and the CIHT and achieving it requires demonstration of a combination of breadth and depth of competence in a range of technical and generic skills, embracing knowledge, experience and an ability to manage others.

For most candidates, there are three key stages to satisfying the TPP requirements:

- Learning, obtaining the necessary knowledge
- Obtaining the necessary breadth & depth of experience
- Demonstrating professional competence across a broad range of modes and contexts through a Portfolio of Evidence and a Professional Review interview.

In addition, there is a Senior Route for those with extensive experience and senior management responsibilities.

The TPS Professional Development Scheme (PDS)

The TPS PDS provides a structure within which transport planners, whether new graduates or career changers, can obtain the range and depth of knowledge and experience they require to become fully professional. For the employer, an individual's progress through the PDS provides a valuable performance metric, indicating their commitment to personal professional development, and progress

Since its launch in 2008, the PDS has become the industry standard in the private sector, and is gaining increasing recognition among Local Authorities

The PDS is available under licence to Stakeholder members of the Society, as well as any Local Authority that is a Corporate member and to other Corporate members with a total staff of no more than 20. There is also a Consortium Licence arrangement for groups of Local Authorities co-operating in providing and managing their PDS. There is no charge for individuals participating in the PDS. For further info on the TPP and TPS PDS go to: www.tps.org.uk/main/profession/ or email: info@tps.org.uk



David Connolly TPP

David, MVA's Director for Technical Development, was awarded the TPP by the Senior Route in 2011. Starting his career as a lecturer at the London School of Economics, he joined MVA in 1990 and has been working his way up through the MVA ranks ever since. Although nominally based in Edinburgh, his current role involves him in various aspects of leading-edge transport-related research across the UK, Ireland and beyond. David is also active in a number of UK and Scottish technical and professional bodies. A keen hillwalker, David is seeking to bag as many Scottish 'Munros' as possible before old age catches up with him.



David Lacey TPP

David was one of the TPS members awarded the TPP in 2011 by the Professional Review route. A senior transport planner with Halcrow, David used his experience in planning the development of Yas Island in Abu Dhabi, for Aldar Properties, as his project for presentation in his Professional Review Interview. David was able to persuade the Yas Island developers to focus on sustainability in transport within the overall plan, with extensive provision for bus lanes, cyclists and pedestrians. David found the TPP application process caused him to review his achievements and plan his future.



Leicestershire PDS Showcase

Leicestershire County Council and the Midlands Highway Alliance presented the TPS PDS to Local Authorities from across the Midlands. Speaking at the event, the County's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor Lesley Pemberton (pictured) stressed the importance of staff development in achieving excellence, saying, "We have put heart and soul into training. Offering the TPS PDS has enabled us to upskill our own workforce. We are preparing for the future to ensure we have the appropriate and skilled staff for the long term".

Join Us

Individual Membership

Individual membership is open to transport professionals and students who have a genuine interest in transport planning and wish to further their career. You can join as a Student member, as Standard member, or as a Designated Member. Designated Membership is for those with the Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification (See page 7).

Individual membership benefits include: free attendance at TPS meetings; eligibility for the TPP qualification; 25-30% discounts on publications including Local Transport Today, New Transit, Planning & Passenger Transport; discounts at TPS supported conferences, including the annual Transport Practitioners' Meeting; & eligibility to apply for a Bursary Award for younger professionals (see below).

Membership is excellent value, with fees at April 2012 being as follows: Student – free for first year then £10/year for next 3 years; Standard – £35/year; and Designated – £95/year.

Organisational Membership

Organisations can support and benefit from the work of the TPS through two forms of membership:

Corporate membership

- benefits include:
- A licence to use the TPS Professional Development Scheme for local authorities and organisations employing a total of no more than 20 staff
 - Access to TPS members to circulate material of direct professional interest
 - Card allowing one employee to attend TPS events for free
 - Discounts at TPS-supported events
 - Great networking opportunities with like-minded organisations
 - Copies of the annual TPS Review, and regular event and news bulletins by email

Stakeholder membership

- benefits include:
- A licence to use the PDS, together with advice on establishing and managing the Scheme, participation in Scheme Workshops and identification as a Scheme user on the TPS website

- Branding on the TPS website with a link to your website
- Cards allowing up to five employees to attend TPS events for free
- Opportunity to host evening meetings in association with the TPS on topical issues that your organisation is leading on
- Discounts at TPS-supported events and on attendance at PTRC training courses
- Free advertisement of job vacancies on the TPS website
- Access to undergraduate recruitment through the Undergraduate Work Experience scheme
- Great networking opportunities with like-minded organisations
- Copies of the annual TPS Review, and regular event and news bulletins by email

How to join

To join, please complete an application online at: www.tps.org.uk or contact us at: info@tps.org.uk.

Join In

London Events

We have a varied programme of regular events on themes of interest to transport planners, with attendance being free for TPS members. Our largest events tend to be held in London, often at the Institute of Civil Engineers, just off Parliament Square. For details about the latest upcoming events, please visit www.tps.org.uk/main/events.

Regions & Nations

We also have a number of regional and national branches that are actively promoted through regular events. To locate your nearest branch, please visit www.tps.org.uk/main/regions. All branches welcome ideas and assistance in running events.

Bursaries for Younger Professionals

We especially encourage younger professionals to become involved in debate, discussion, research and training. Our Bursaries programme provides £500 to individuals to prepare a research paper that will be both stimulating and relevant to TPS members and the wider transport planning community. Find out more at www.tps.org.uk/main/bursaries.

Linked in.

Linked In Discussion Forum

Join in the debate on current hot transport topics – or start a discussion thread of your own – by joining the [Transport Planning Society Group](#) on Linked In. It's free and it's easy, so what are you waiting for?



Twitter

Follow us on [@TransPlanSoc](#) to receive flashes about important news for transport planners, prompts about TPS events, and live bulletins from them on the [#TPSevent](#) hashtag.

Contact Us

For more information about the TPS or to ask us a question, please visit www.tps.org.uk, email us on info@tps.org.uk or write to us at:

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