

**WANT TO IMPROVE
THE ENVIRONMENT,
THE ECONOMY &
QUALITY OF LIFE?**



**WHY NOT BECOME A
TRANSPORT PLANNER?**

TransportPlanningSociety

TRANSPORT

WHAT IS TRANSPORT PLANNING?

Transport planning is about influencing the future. Get it wrong and we waste more of our days stuck in traffic jams or waiting for late buses and trains. Get it right and it may just be possible to travel how and when we want – in a way that helps tackle climate change, supports a vibrant economy and is right for society as a whole.

Transport planning is about preparing, assessing and implementing policies, plans and projects to improve and manage our transport systems. There is a need for transport planning on a local, regional, national and international level. It can involve understanding the links between transport and the future shape of our towns and cities, the economy, the environment, climate change and quality of life. It is also about changing people's attitudes towards travel to encourage use of alternatives to the private car.

Transport remains high on the political agenda. Whether it is the London congestion charge introducing an alternative approach to traffic management, high speed rail, the M6 Toll providing a new model of how transport could be funded or the Department for Transport's Sustainable Travel Cities initiative putting people rather than transport at the heart of the solution, the issues are wide ranging. While these matters dominate the national press, issues about speed cameras, cyclists or local traffic calming fill the letters columns of local newspapers across the land.

People's need to travel to work, to school, to shop and to leisure activities all add up to a significant challenge for central government, local government and consultants working in partnership.

WHAT SORT OF THINGS DO TRANSPORT PLANNERS DO?

Transport planning includes a very wide range of disciplines and covers everything necessary to tackle the nation's transport problems and to plan and deliver our transport systems. The wide range of work is one of the big attractions. In fact, the work of transport planners touches almost every aspect of our day-to-day lives.

Think about it:

Who plans transport for our cities, towns and countryside?

Who advises the London Mayor on developments to the London Congestion Charging scheme?

Who is advising the Olympic Delivery Authority on the necessary transport arrangements for London 2012?

Who helps design routes to ensure that kids can cycle and walk safely to school?

Who develops the strategy options for a city or town's road and public transport networks?

Who tests out the rail passenger and revenue implications of changing fares or increasing train frequencies?

Who forecasts the impact of major airport expansion on road, rail and coach access?

Who analyses the increased traffic resulting from new shopping centres and devises ways to accommodate it?

Who works with schools, employers and other organisations to encourage drivers to use alternative modes of transport?

Who asks local people what transport improvements they would like to see?

Who assesses and prepares strategies to manage the travel implications of major new areas of housing?

Who decides on whether a park and ride site is a good idea for a particular town?

Who is responsible for managing the contribution made by transport to climate change?

Yes, it's transport planners. Transport planners have an opportunity to influence everyone's lives. They work with colleagues from a wide range of disciplines and no two projects tend to be the same.



WHO DO TRANSPORT PLANNERS WORK FOR?

Transport planners work in the public and private sectors, as well as the academic, research, public interest and voluntary sectors. Many switch between sectors as their careers, and interests, develop. Most of those in the public sector work for local authorities – others work for government departments and agencies.

Most private sector jobs are with consultants, but some are with train and bus and coach operators and with developers and financing companies with transport interests. The range of consultants employing transport planners is wide, from large multi-disciplinary consultants operating around the world through medium sized companies specialising in transport planning to small, niche companies with a particular focus.

After their initial career development, some transport planners choose to work abroad, working for a UK company, an international organisation or one based where they have chosen to work.

CAN I BECOME A TRANSPORT PLANNER?

Although most transport planners have a first degree, some work their way up having started work directly after leaving school, usually in a planning or transport-related role, and others move into transport planning from another career.

As there are very few first degree courses dedicated to transport, many of those entering the profession with a degree come from town planning, geography, civil engineering, environmental studies, the social sciences and economics. There are also transport planners from a wide range of other disciplines, including such diverse subjects as music and theology. Many employers offer training to provide them with the skills to become fully fledged transport planners.

What is essential for most of those considering a career in transport planning is that they:

- *are good written and oral communicators*
- *are able to work easily and accurately with numbers*
- *enjoy analysis, wanting to understand “why?”*
- *work well with others, including people with different values; and*
- *want to make a positive difference.*

ARE WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS AVAILABLE?

If you are interested in work experience opportunities (either paid or unpaid), then many employers do offer short work placement schemes. For more information on work experience visit www.prospects.ac.uk, www.work-experience.org and www.tps.org.uk.

WHAT CAREER PROSPECTS AND DEVELOPMENT PATHS ARE THERE?

Transport planning provides many options – public or private sector employer, level of responsibility and nature of work – and research has shown that transport planners have a high degree of job satisfaction. Some transport planners choose to become experts in particular aspects of transport planning – for example in transport modelling, sustainable transport, travel planning and behavioural change. Others prefer to work across a wide range of transport planning activities, achieving breadth as well as depth of competence.

Many employers provide professional development schemes, including the Transport Planning Society's own Professional Development Scheme, to help ensure that younger staff obtain a broad range of expertise in the early stages of their career, which helps them decide how they want to continue developing their career.

Most transport planners aspire to leading and managing projects, and some to wider management roles, for which analytic and communications abilities provide a sound foundation.





HOW DO I BECOME A TRANSPORT PLANNER?

Whether you are an undergraduate, a recent graduate, a career changer or a school leaver, the best way is to talk with someone already doing the job, preferably with one of the major employers. Indeed, it might be a good idea to talk with both private and public sector employers, to give you an idea of what you might be doing with them, as well as their conditions of employment.

Go to www.tps.org.uk for information on employers who are Stakeholder members of the Transport Planning Society. Another source of information on consultants is the Top Firms in Transport Planning listing in the annual New Civil Engineer Consultant File at www.nce.co.uk

ARE THERE ANY QUALIFICATIONS IN TRANSPORT PLANNING?

Undergraduates: There are a few first degree courses that include transport - transport is usually a secondary subject (for example geography with transport). There are first degree courses in transport management and logistics, but because they're so specialist, they may prove restrictive for someone planning a wider career in transport planning.

Postgraduates: Most of those seeking an academic qualification tend to study for a Masters, and many UK transport Masters courses are world class, attracting students from around the world.

Information on postgraduate university courses can be found at www.tps.org.uk and www.utp.org.uk

Professional Qualification: The Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification is awarded jointly by the Transport Planning Society and the Institution of Highways and Transportation. It requires a combination of learning and practical experience, which candidates have to demonstrate with work-based evidence followed by a Professional Review interview. It has been designed to be of a comparable standard to other professional qualifications, and requires at least five years' post graduate experience. Go to www.tpprofessional.org for more information.

Some transport planners obtain professional recognition by becoming a Chartered member of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) while those with a first degree in civil engineering might want to become a Chartered Engineer, through either the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) or the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT), and those with town planning degree may well seek Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

WHAT SORT OF SALARY CAN I EXPECT?

Employers offer highly competitive remuneration packages, including good salaries and associated benefits.

You can find current salaries in local trade journals and websites such as Local Transport Today, Planning, Transit and the TPS's own website.

WHERE CAN I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION?

The Transport Planning Society (TPS) is the professional body for transport planners. It provides a Professional Development Scheme that employers can adopt and, together with the Institute of Highways and Transportation, awards the Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification. The Society also provides a programme of professional and social events through its regional network, advertises jobs and seeks to promote best practice in transport planning. The TPS offers student member rates, and more information is available at www.tps.org.uk

The TPS is supported by the following institutions:

Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK) www.ciltuk.org.uk

Institution of Civil Engineers www.ice.org.uk

Institution of Highways and Transportation www.iht.org

Royal Town Planning Institute www.rtpi.org.uk

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