

Transport Planning Society

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 9 March 2023

Chair's Report

It's been another busy year for the Society as we have restarted a number of in-person events following the end of pandemic related restrictions. In general these have also had a hybrid element, which has been welcomed by members as facilitating a much wider access to both national and our regional events.

We have complemented these events by an ongoing and wide-ranging programme of webinars, increasingly in partnership with our supporting institutions (ICE, RTPI, CILT and CIHT).

We have also considerably upped our output on policy matters and have made a large number of significant submissions to a wide range of consultations on behalf of members. We also undertook an update of our landmark report from 2020 on *State of the Nations: Transport Planning for a Sustainable Future*.

For me, my second year has been largely around ensuring we are effectively embedding new ways of working into the society – in particular harnessing the additional support that the partnership with Jo Field Group (which commenced in summer 2021) brings, and ensuring that all of our hard working thematic groups (membership, skills, policy) as well as the lead officers for events, comms and nations & regions have the support they require.

I'm really proud of our output this year and think, as a relatively small organisation, we do a good job of punching above our weight and influencing (and sometimes leading) the national conversation.

I pick out some further highlights from the year below.

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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 Professional Development Scheme.

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 achieved double figures for the first time in 2022. We already have had that number come forward for final reviews in 2023 suggesting new records will be broken again this year.

PDS 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 were fully implemented last 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 our 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 for TPTech.

This was a landmark for TPS and work has continued through 2022 to set up the systems to deliver EPAs hopefully by the middle of 2023. Our first task has been recruiting an EPA Manager and getting IT set up. The former has now been successful and she started work on 1st October. We have started training on the industry standard IT system: ACE 360. We are all now proceeding with the EPA Implementation Plan.

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The other major area of work is international development, where we have an active number of PDS trainees from India, as part of the 2019 pilot. This was widened to include the TPP at the end of 2021, working closely with CIHT. In broad terms, TPS is leading on India, Australia and New Zealand, with CIHT leading on Hong Kong and the Middle East. As part of this we have been in regular contact with an organised group of transport planners in NZ who have formed a new national TPS group. The last Board agreed to set up a web page for them and this is now functional. There are well over 20 so far and we have had several meetings with them. We also have a pathfinder candidate for Australia and have a number of individuals in the Indian pilot who we are seeking to involve.

Although TPS and CIHT have taken the lead for different pilot areas we continue to work together on this and share information. The TPP Professional Standards Committee (PSC) has set up an International Group to oversee the TPP area of work. We originally expected a handful of candidates from each of the 4 regions, but a majority of the TPS members in NZ want to participate in skills development (25 so far). The skills team has now completed initial assessments of the first round of their expressions of interest and CVs to allocate them between Senior Route and Standard Route TPP pathways, and the PDS. We now also have 7 NZ senior route candidates who will go on to mentor Standard Route candidates.

Policy Group

A main aim in the Policy Group's 2022 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 seven TPS members that are not Board members co-opted onto the Policy Group, contributing to the Group's outputs and widening the representativeness of our contributions the policy debate. We welcome further expressions of interest from members to join the group.

A major output in late 2022 was the Society's assessment of progress on Decarbonising Transport one year on, which drew heavily on and referred extensively to the original State of the Nations report. Working once again with Stephen Joseph and the team at University of Hertfordshire, we updated 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. Other outputs included responses to the Welsh transport appraisal guidance (WelTAG) 2022 consultation, the DfT consultation on labour market and skills and on the Great British Railways Whole Industry Strategic Plan.

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 2023 the intention is to continue to enhance 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

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debate, but also enhance the way in which the Policy Group's outputs are communicated to the broadest set of stakeholders.

In a very competitive field it was also excellent to see Jillian Anable from Leeds University secure the coveted title of Transport Planner of the Year for her work around decarbonisation. We look forward to hearing from Jillian at our Annual Lecture after the AGM.

TPS Bursary

The latest competition was on the **topic** 'Buses – how do we ensure they take their rightful place as a key player in the UK's public transport network?'

In particular entries were asked to cover what role can the bus take in tackling the current challenges of:-

- Post-Covid recovery;
- Cost of living crisis;
- Climate crisis;
- Inequality.

The judges spent a lovely afternoon listening to the four finalists present their papers and they along with the Board of the Transport Planning Society are delighted to announce that all of the finalists will be awarded a bursary of £500 for their work.

The successful Bursarians for this year are:

- Sarah Whelan – Sweco
- Orla Lenehan – Transport for Wales
- Jamie Smith – Arup
- Vivian Elby – Leeds City Council

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 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.

TPS Events

Last year saw a packed calendar of events, some highlights for me:

5/5/2022 An introduction to the Great British Railways Transition Team and the Whole Industry Strategic Plan.

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It was great to be back in person at this session at Jacobs' London office, exploring the progress on the set up of Great British Railways, and the Whole Industry Strategic Plan. Lots happening in this space since of course...hoping to have an update from Elaine Seagriff at a TPS event in 2023.

14/7/2022 Transport Planning Society's 22nd Annual Dinner

As my sore head the next day would attest, I had far too much fun at the long awaited return of this industry calendar staple, expertly keynoted by Professor Glenn Lyons. It was a real joy to be back in the room with new friends and old. This year's dinner will take place on Thursday 13th July at the same venue, the Dickens Inn, St Katherine Docks, E1W 1UH. This time we will be in the capable hands of Victoria Hills, Chief Executive of the RTPI (and past TPS chair). I'm assured that Victoria has some excellent transport jokes so this will be a must attend event. For further information/queries and to book your ticket(s), please contact Sarah McSharry, TPS Business Manager at businessmanager@tps.org.uk

8/9/2022 Delivering Sustainable Transport in the Context of Major Events and Policy Change.

Another excellent in person event, this time hosted by WSP at their stunning new Birmingham office, exploring how we can deliver sustainable transport outcomes as part of major events like the Commonwealth Games and also through policy changes such as Clean Air Zones.

20/9/2022 Future proofing transport decision making - using data and modelling better.

Expertly hosted by TPS Policy Director Tom Van Vuren, this session focused on the role that models and data have in identifying uncertainties and creating effective transport solutions.

6/10/2022 Interview with David Metz

It was a pleasure to chair this lecture and panel discussion with TPS member David Metz, discussing his new book "Good To Go? Decarbonising Travel After the Pandemic'. Thanks again to Anna Rothnie, Jillian Anable and Steve Gooding for providing expert commentary. Further commentary from David in this blog here:

[Read new blog from David Metz answering questions from his book launch: 'Good to Go: Decarbonising Travel After the Pandemic' \(tps.org.uk\)](https://www.tps.org.uk/blog/good-to-go-decarbonising-travel-after-the-pandemic)

11/11/2022 Learning from the e-scooter trials, should Transport Planners accelerate the adoption of micro mobility, and if so how?

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That was the question we sought to answer in this crunchy lunch time chat to talk about the future of micro mobility. Answer – it depends, but clearly great promise in new technology.

14/11/2022 Webinar on 'Decide and Provide' in association with RTPI, TPS and CIHT.

This was an excellent discussion on one of the key topics in our industry at the current time on 'Decide and Provide' vs 'Predict and provide'. Expect much more on this in 2023!

14/11/2022 Transport Planning Day

It was great to be back in person again for TP Day, back in its rightful home at ICE.

Proceedings for this year were split into two separate sessions.

In session one we explored key issues for the sector in 2023, with perspectives from Martin Tugwell (Chief Executive of Transport for the North), Nicola Kane, Director at Steer, Emily Bobis, Founder Compass IoT. We also had a presentation from Stephen Joseph updating attendees on this year's update to the State of the Nations report (see above).

Session two took a different approach, following a scene setting presentation by Rhiannon Hardiman from the office of the Future Generations Commissioner at Welsh Assembly Government we had a lively intergenerational panel discussion on the different perspectives that different generations bring to the transport planning profession, and how best to ensure all these are represented in the design and decision making processes. With thanks to the following for their considered contributions to this debate:

- Lynda Addison, Ex-Chair of TPS and leader on Transport Planning and Integration
- Professor Phil Goodwin, Emeritus Professor of Transport Policy at UCL and UWE
- Rosella Cottam, Transport for London Youth Panel Representative
- Liani Baglietto Castellares, TPS 2021 Bursary Competition Winner
- Harshil Patel, Senior Transport Consultant and Steer

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

As well as our public event, I was also delighted to be able to organise a special celebratory dinner for our past chairs and founding members to mark the society's quarter of a century. Hosted at ICE, it was a real honor to convene a roundtable discussion reflecting on key events from the last 25 years, and challenges of the

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coming quarter of a century. You can read a summary of the discussion here: [TPS' 25th Anniversary dinner](#) , and also contributions from the ex-chairs here: [25th anniversary past chair anthology \(tps.org.uk\)](#)

We're looking forward to another year of exciting events, including our TP Day 2023 campaign, which we'll be sharing details of in the coming weeks. We're also launching a new initiative to provide our stakeholders with a platform to share their thought leadership. We were delighted that Steer were able to kick this off with an excellent event at their new London offices on 8 February exploring priorities for the Transport Planning sector over the coming years. [Watch our joint event with Steer on 'Shaping the future of transport planning' \(tps.org.uk\)](#)

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. Following the last couple of years of disruption due to the pandemic, it's been great to return to a number of in-person meetings, including but not limited to sessions hosted by Jacobs London office in May 2022 and WSP's new Birmingham office in September 2022.

In order to maximise the engagement in these sessions both were also streamed online which, following positive feedback from members, is a model we seek to follow now for all our events where possible.

We are grateful to the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland who led national events, and the North East, North West, West Midlands, South East, and South West regions who organised and led regional events on key technical and strategic topics including TRICS, Decide and Provide, 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.

2023 is already shaping up to have an interesting variety of events, both in person and virtual, across the UK and Republic of Ireland. Events hosted already in 2023 include a joint event with the University of Belfast, "*Confessions of a Recovering Engineer*", as well as events focused on Transport-related social exclusion in the North of England, and Road Safety.

Upcoming in March we have a topical discussion of free parking in collaboration with RTPI led by our South West reps, but available for everyone to join online.

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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 - a big thank you to Charlotte Brown and Grace Hancock in the South West region, Elliot Read in Manchester, Orla Lenehan and Abhiney Dinari in Wales, and Naimi Ihsan and Hugh Livingstone in London who have recently joined the team.

Finally, we're delighted that our hard working team of volunteers have been able to again organise our famous annual Pub Quiz on 23 March following a successful session on 16 June 2022 – congrats to SYSTRA and friends in Winchester who scooped the coveted winning place on this one, best of luck to everyone for this year's competition including our quiz teams joining us in New Zealand for a breakfast quiz!

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

Our membership is the lifeblood of the Society and central to all our activities, so I'm delighted to note that we are now at 1600 individual members, approaching a 10% increase from this time last year. This suggests the focus by our membership group on improving and enhancing the membership offer is paying dividends, retaining existing transport planners and exposing new people to the work of the society. A key enhancement has been a simplification of the membership process, allowing a more efficient and swifter way of joining the society. An easy sentence to write but took a lot of work in the background to make it happen!

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.

Despite a positive story of ongoing growth, 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.

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. Our Inter-

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generational panel at Transport Planning Day 2023 was a way to start thinking about how best to engage with this cohort, and two practical responses to that include the launch of our new mentoring programme and setting up a new award of [‘young transport planner of the year’](#).

Another innovation has been the development of a new video about what it is to be a Transport Planner, and why you should join the sector. Personally, I found it very encouraging to hear the obvious and genuine excitement that the participants had in describing their day to day work. It was also tremendously encouraging to see the diversity of talent on show – key message being that everyone is welcome in our industry. [Watch a video from our members on why you should become a Transport Planner and join TPS.](#)

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, though we are very excited that our 37th will be none other than the Department for Transport itself!

Of these, 19 are multi-site stakeholders and 17 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 10 Business Directory listings. This is a reduction on last year, and we welcome feedback on how to make this a more attractive proposition for potential sponsors.

Summary

I am really proud of all we have achieved as a Society in the two years that I have had the honour to hold the position of Chair. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me and I look forward to continue to support the work of the society, and the new chair, in the coming years.

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’.

Mark Frost
Chair, Transport Planning Society

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