

Transport Planning Society

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Dear Secretary of State,

Six themes and actions to improve transport planning in the UK

The Transport Planning Society is the professional body representing transport planners in the UK. The Society has over 1,500 individual members and more than 38 Stakeholder members. The Society is supported by the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT), the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT) and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

Our individual and Stakeholder members work extensively with your Department to deliver improved accessibility for people through policy developments and transport schemes across the country. However, there is considerably more to be done to tackle the impacts of our transport system on both society and the environment particularly in the light of the health implications and the climate emergency.

The Society's overall recommendation is to deepen the Department's integration of spatial planning, land use and transport planning, with a clear focus on decarbonising the transport system whilst improving accessibility.

We believe this objective can be delivered best through the six priorities and accompanying actions we posed in our pre-election policy note:

1. Deliver climate change actions that will reduce transport emissions

Transport emissions accounted for 33% of all UK emissions in 2018.

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The Climate Change Committee has judged the actions taken by previous Governments, such as electrification of the existing vehicle fleet, to be insufficient. Therefore, more radical action is required to achieve net zero emissions by at least 2050.

- **Reprioritise spending to focus on public transport, active and sustainable travel modes and away from infrastructure to support passenger cars**

2. Mandate closer integration of spatial and land use planning and transport planning in decision making

Transport for New Homes has identified many new developments designed without appropriate consideration of public transport, active and sustainable transport modes in both new housing developments and new “garden” settlements. This is manifest where some sites are in locations away from the public transport network or where there are no footways for residents and visitors to walk safely.

- **Reinforce the joint working arrangements between the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Transport to ensure better, holistic planning guidance is used to ensure quality sustainable access for developments of new homes and ensure policy drives appropriate behaviour and decisions (*note: we are already working with the Ministry and the Department on this initiative*)**

3. Increase funding settlements for local transport, including buses, and active travel significantly

Across the UK, five times more money is spent on rail and 2.7 times more is spent on roads than on local and other transport modes. While roads and rail benefit from established funding and planning cycles, buses, walking and cycling investments depend on short term funding commitments.

- **Elevate the funding settlement of local transport, including buses and active travel infrastructure, to the same level as for the strategic road and rail networks**

4. Integrate public transport in city regions

Public transport networks outside of London are fragmented and poorly integrated. The increase in public transport journeys in London contrasts with declines in other areas. Devolution of transport to cities, combined authorities and strategic transport bodies has been a success.

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- **Continue to devolve the powers to plan and integrate public transport networks and prioritise the strategic connectivity within and between cities outside of London**

5. Develop the case for road user charging

A new national discussion is required to agree how transport should be funded across all modes and the proportion which the user should be expected to pay. Specifically, the funding required for each mode should internalise its external impacts on society.

- **Re-start the discussion on road user charging to ensure its costs to society are internalised and users pay their fair share**

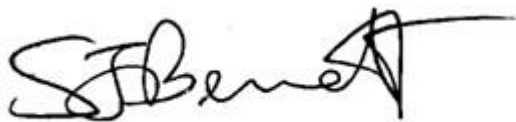
6. Put social need at the heart of technology development

Transport infrastructure supports accessibility and mobility which has both positive and negative impacts on society. Expanded engagement with the full breadth of stakeholders is needed to ensure future investments are fit for purpose.

- **Commit to fund the Future Mobility Zone pilots which demonstrate how technology can maximise the positive impacts on society**

The Society remains committed to working with your Department over the next Parliament and we would be pleased to discuss this with you to provide further advice, if this would be useful to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Bennett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Bennett
Chair, Transport Planning Society

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