



**North Sea Commission response to the European  
Commission Document COM (2007) 551 Green Paper:  
Towards A New Culture For Urban Mobility**

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### **Introduction**

The North Sea Commission welcomes the opportunity to respond to the European Commission's green paper on urban mobility. We encourage the European Commission to continue to engage with stakeholders regarding any future action plan, further policy proposals or legislation.

### **The North Sea Commission**

The North Sea Commission was founded in 1989 to facilitate and enhance partnerships between regions which manage the challenges and opportunities presented by the North Sea. Furthermore, to promote the North Sea Basin as a major economic entity within Europe, by encouraging joint development initiatives and political lobbying at European Union level.

The North Sea Commission has determined that its activities must be action orientated, involving co-operation programmes, research activities, funding applications, and joint policy statements which bring positive benefits to the people of the North Sea Basin.

The North Sea Commission is one of seven Commissions under the umbrella of CPMR (the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions).

### **The North Sea Commission Transport Group**

The Transport Group was established in 1991 and is one of the six thematic groups set up by the North Sea Commission. It aims to improve cohesion, accessibility and competitiveness in the North Sea Region (NSR) through the development of sustainable and efficient transport solutions.

The group's objectives are as follows:

- Improve knowledge in the transport sector
- Facilitate transport planning among regional authorities and businesses
- Influence and develop EU and national transport policies to the benefit of the NSR
- Facilitate networks and partnerships among all relevant stakeholders
- Raise awareness on the requirements for efficient and sustainable transport
- Promote transport solutions which may improve the competitiveness of the business community

The main roles and functions of the Transport group are as follows:

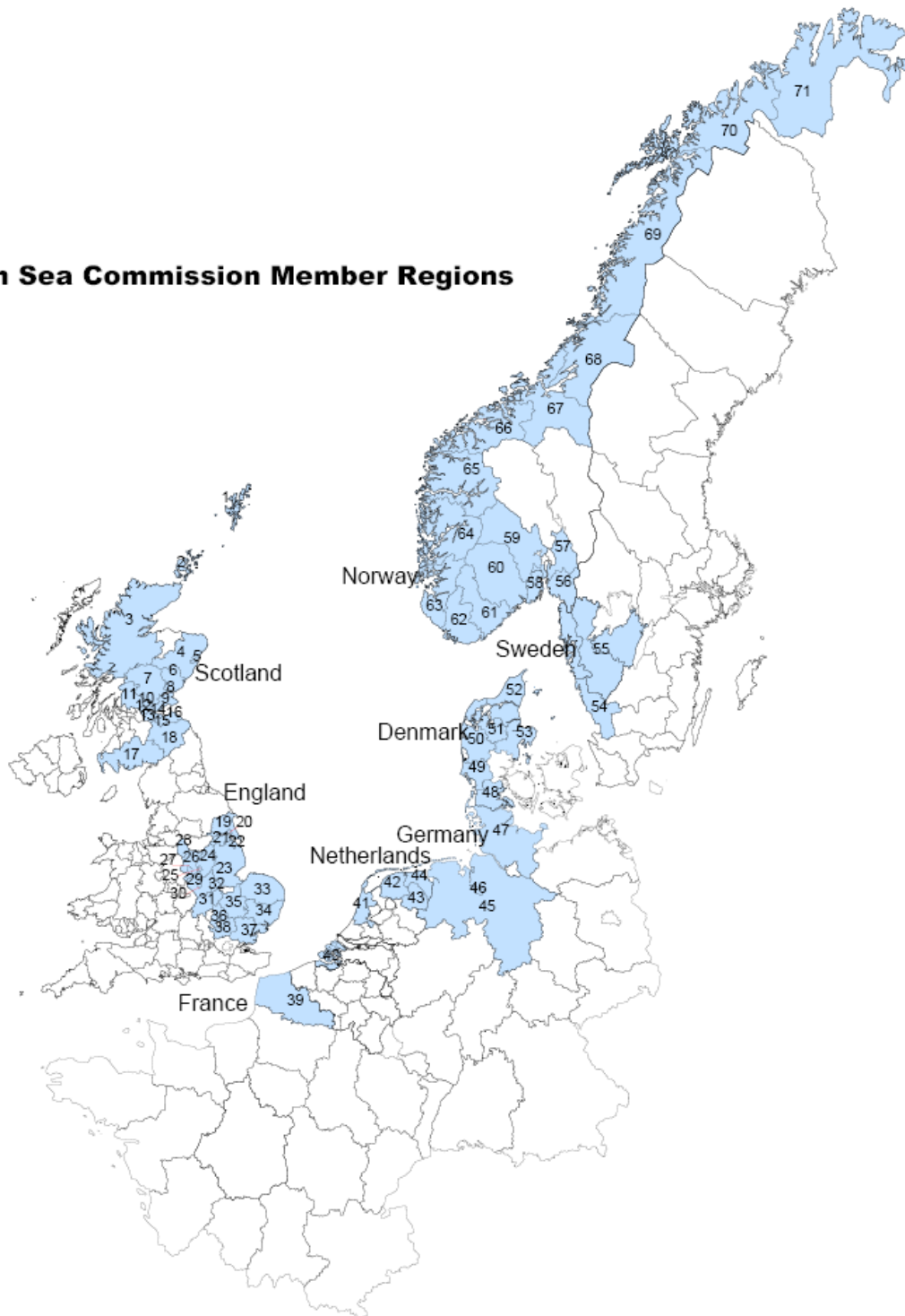
- Monitoring key developments in the industry and within policies at all levels
- Facilitating co-operation and partnerships among relevant stakeholders
- Liaison between industry actors (i.e. businesses, transport users) and policy makers
- Forum for the exchange of information and experience among relevant stakeholders
- Understanding the needs of different transport users and convey the needs to policy makers at relevant levels
- Developing Interreg and other projects
- Disseminating knowledge through conferences, seminars and studies
- Synthesising and disseminating findings from Interreg & other projects
- Influencing EU and national transport policies
- Adviser and secretariat for the NSC Executive Committee on transport issues
- Co-operation with other NSC thematic groups
- Interaction with the CPMR and other geographical Commissions

Key issues for the group are as follows:

- Sustainable transport
- Accessibility
- Competitiveness, growth and innovation in line with the Lisbon strategy
- Intermodal transport links, including ports and combined terminals

- Short sea shipping, incl. Motorways of the Seas
- Significance of ICT in transport
- Integrated spatial & transport planning
  - Infrastructure pricing policies
  - Need to improve physical transport infrastructure

**North Sea Commission Member Regions**



**Structure of this response**

This text first lays the NSC's key messages to the European Commission. It then makes some important comments on issues which we believe are not significantly covered by the Green Paper. It then goes on to focus its response on the consultation questions themselves.

Throughout the response we highlight in italics areas where we foresee a potential role for the EU, a question the European Commission poses throughout the green paper.

In putting forward the NSC's views, the opportunity has been taken to highlight existing good practice in the North Sea area on sustainable transport issues - whose value and innovative nature should be maintained and enhanced by any new EU policy initiatives in this area.

## **Key points from the North Sea Commission:**

### **Modal shift – a change in mindset**

The North Sea Commission believes that modal shift is ultimately the key goal but we recognise that there is no “one size fits all” solution. We believe that the solution will require a sophisticated approach, combining both soft and hard policy measures tailored to each locality. We specifically draw the Commission’s attention to the following priority measures:

- Technology: maximise the use of existing and new technologies (such as ITS to improve the efficiency of public transport, clean vehicle technology and integrated ticketing)
- Improvements to public<sup>1</sup> transport: increase reliability, frequency (especially during peak times), general comfort (sufficient seats / carriages, improve cleanliness etc.), safety and competitiveness (cost must compete with private car)
- Intermodality: make it easier to change transport modes
- Cheap, innovative approaches: such as those which facilitate lift sharing and innovative, synergistic pricing policies for car parking and public transport
- Early education: to instil a sense of personal responsibility for improving urban mobility
- Infrastructure improvements: to increase safety and convenience for cyclists and walkers
- Workplace travel plans: encourage employers to raise awareness of and use innovative tools to increase sustainable travel
- Pricing: implement well-researched urban charging schemes where these are appropriate and go hand-in-hand with significant investment in public transport

See the North Sea Commission’s response to question 3 below, and also 2, 8, 11, 12, 16 and 20.

### **Subsidiarity**

Actions must be determined locally where at all possible. However, we agree that the EU has a role in supporting local authorities and could have a facilitating role in urban mobility. EU involvement through strategies or action plans in the area of urban transport must add value. See the NSC’s general comments on chapter 2.1 below, and responses to questions 3, 6, 12, 13, 22 and 24.

### **Best practice**

We believe that one of the key roles for the EU in urban mobility is disseminating best practice. Throughout the paper the North Sea Commission highlights key areas where we believe this could be achieved. See responses to questions: 1-12, 16, 17, 20-22 and 24 below.

### **Collaboration**

We believe that achieving a new culture of urban mobility will require close partnership working between the public and private sectors.

### **Funding**

We would like to stress the need to balance any potential future legislation and access to EU funding. The EU has a role to play in providing essential funding in targeted areas, primarily through R&D via the Framework Programme. We also call for the continuation of the CIVITAS initiative. In terms of R&D the NSC would like to see funding targeted on the following:

- Walking, cycling, rail, light rail and bus-based rapid transit systems in urban areas
- Land use planning and transport-led developments
- Lightweight and clean vehicles for urban areas
- Bus design
- Fuel especially gas and biogas
- Impact of transport policy on economic development and regeneration

See also the North Sea Commission responses to questions 21-25 below.

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<sup>1</sup> Referred to as “collective transport” in the green paper.

## Key comments:

### The economy

Whilst the introduction to the Commission's green paper is strong on the economic importance of urban areas (85% of the EU's GDP is created in urban areas) and the detrimental impact of chronic congestion to the health of the EU economy in general (costing 1% of EU GDP), the main focus of the document is on the environmental and social implications of urban mobility. The North Sea Commission welcomes this focus, but we would like to re-emphasise the role of transport in sustaining productivity and competitiveness and encourage the EU to remain committed to creating a new urban mobility culture which significantly benefits the economy.

### Health and transport

The North Sea Commission would like to highlight the important link between health and transport, which we believe is not significantly covered in the green paper.

The EU green paper on urban transport also does not address a key fact that many journeys are said to be health-care related.

We believe the Green Paper does not currently address and separate the potential health benefits and the potential harm to health from urban transport (except briefly on pp.3, 6, 8 and 15). **The potential health benefits of transport include<sup>2</sup> improving access to services;** (since access to education, employment, fresh food, friends and family, leisure and health services can enhance health); **increasing physical activity,** (since replacing motorised transport with cycling or walking for routine short journeys can increase physical activity and help meet physical activity targets set by the Chief Medical Officer<sup>3</sup>); **and enhancing social capital and minimising social exclusion,** (since there is an observed relationship between positive social capital and health<sup>4 5 6</sup> and when members of a community are interconnected health benefits follow<sup>7</sup>. Thus improving local environments, improving public transport (e.g. increasing accessibility for disabled clients) and locating services and activities in more accessible places or at more accessible times allows more people to participate and benefit. The widening of participation allows otherwise socially diverse communities to meet and for bridging social capital to be built<sup>5</sup>.

**It is also well recognised internationally and nationally that increased levels of transport activity can damage health** including through increased levels of air and noise pollution; road traffic and pedestrian and cyclist injuries; and transport can also be detrimental to health through severing communities and creating social exclusion. A recent multi-country European study<sup>4</sup> identified that 310,000 premature deaths occur across Europe (more than 32,000 per year in the UK, only 4000 in Austria) due to particulates emitted by traffic, industry and heating. On average there is 9 months loss of life expectancy associated with air pollution levels across Europe. Every European takes on average half a day off sick a year due to illnesses linked to air pollution costing the economy more than 80bn euros (£55bn). Experts say these deaths could be avoided by reducing pollution levels.

Further, despite calling for greener urban areas, we believe the EU Green paper on urban transport does not adequately address the **pollution mitigating effects of green infrastructure** including reducing air pollution from particulates from motorised transport, reducing traffic noise pollution, reducing fuel evaporation from cars parked during heatwaves, reducing temperature of nearby buildings by up to 3 degrees in heatwaves etc.

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<sup>2</sup> ERPHO (2006) *Transport, Access and Health in the North Sea Commission*

<http://www.erpho.org.uk/Download/Public/8282/1/Transport%20FINAL%20proof%20with%20live%20links.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Chief Medical Officer. At least Five a Week; evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health. London: Department of Health; 2004. <http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/08/09/81/04080981.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Holtgrave D & Crosby R. Is social capital a protective factor against obesity and diabetes? Findings from an exploratory study. *Ann Epidemiology* (in press 24 October 2005 cited <sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Berkman L, Syme S. social networks, host resistance and mortality: a nine-year follow-up study of Alameda County residents. *Am J Epidemiology* 1979;109:186-204.

<sup>6</sup> House J, Landis K & Umberson D. Social relationships and health. *Science* 1988; 241:540-545 cited <sup>5</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Ziecrsh A. Health implications of access to social capital: findings from an Australian study. *Soc Sci Med.* 2009; 61(10):2119-2131. cited <sup>5</sup>

## **Spatial Planning**

Many regions across the North Sea area are set for significant housing growth over the next few decades. We would therefore like to highlight here the important role that spatial planning has to play in reducing the need to travel and in discouraging car use. Clearly approaches to spatial planning need to reflect local circumstances but measures worthy of consideration include, for example:

- Land use zoning should be developed so that towns are not separated into large areas of exclusively residential or industrial buildings, generating high travel demand
- The amount of land allocated to parking private vehicles should be minimised to increase planning density and thereby reduce the need to travel
- New flats and houses should have good secure provision for cycle storage designed in from the start and convenient pedestrian routing provided
- Residential development should be clustered around nodal points in public transport networks such as in France and the Netherlands
- Central areas should be invigorated with new housing and good access to local services (shops, pubs, cafes etc), using empty space above shops and offices for housing and designing new buildings with mixed uses, commercial at street level and residential above

## Our response to the Green Paper

### Chapter 2. Addressing the challenge

#### **Chapter 2.1 – Towards free-flowing towns and cities (i.e. congestion) - comments**

##### **Mobility management**

Whilst there is a need to improve the quality of 'mobility', there is also a need to consider the development of lifestyles that reduce the need for mobility such as **home working** and **internet shopping**. Mobility management includes using procedures such as those which require developers to prepare a site specific mobility plan or mobility impact assessment for a large scale infrastructure development. We would support such initiatives which can prevent mobility problems in urban areas.

##### **Case Study – Aberdeenshire - Reducing Business Mileage**

As part of the SustAccess Interreg project and with assistance from Nestrans, Aberdeenshire Council have set up two IT Hot Stop offices. These provide local residents, businesses and community groups with free access to meeting areas equipped with the latest Information and Communications Technology (ICT), including PCs for hot-desk working, Wi-Fi access, and video-conferencing equipment.

The IT Hot Stops have been set up to investigate how ICT can reduce business mileage and the need to travel for meetings, but at the same time deliver wider community benefits. The offices are equipped with PCs offering industry standard office applications, internet access, and web-conferencing facilities. In addition, business users can take advantage of meeting areas with state-of-the-art video-conferencing equipment, Wi-Fi access, allowing free internet access for those with their own laptop PCs, and access to printers and fax machines. Key to the successful launch of the IT Hot Stops in September 2006 has been partnership working. There is an opportunity for the IT Hot Stop to be used by local students to follow lectures offered by the college in Fraserburgh and the universities in Aberdeen, or elsewhere.

The IT Hot Stops are entirely free to use, with users simply asked to complete a short feedback. The success of the project will be used to inform the decision whether there is potential to 'roll-out' this initiative to other parts of Aberdeenshire. A key feature of this project has been the extensive publicity campaign, involving press releases, radio adverts and bus panel advertising, used to promote the IT Hot Stops. Innovative marketing methods will continue to be used to raise awareness of the need to alter current travel patterns.

##### **Freight transport**

We believe that the negative impacts of long distance freight transport passing through urban areas could be reduced through planning, technical measures and increased flexibility in curfew periods, when undertaken with sensitivity to residents. Urban freight distribution could be better integrated within local policy making and institutional settings.

Modal shift is essential for the freight sector as growing flows are foreseen in the near future. Large flows of containers already enter gateways like Felixstowe, a resource which offers easy handling. We believe that the development of the rail structure in member states (and of inland waterways in other parts of Europe) must be supported fully at regional level as much as at EU level. The Interreg North Sea project SustAccess aims at setting up a system of rail-focused dry ports – inland foreposts of gateways that take much of the main gateway's functions such as customs, container storage, container handling.

This leads us to the immediate problem that increasing freight flows by rail interferes with the demand of increased public transport on the same infrastructure. In many countries these infrastructures are not able to cope the pressure for growth and major intervention will be needed with related large investment.

*Freight consolidation could be an area where the EU could provide a stimulus similar to that which has been so successful in making local authorities in the UK consider alternatives to landfill. The EU has a role in supporting projects that aim to improve the communication and active involvement of stakeholders from both the passenger and freight transport arenas.*

## **Waterways**

We believe that the European Commission should take into account the potential of waterways within towns and cities (where these exist) as a means of transport.

### **Case Study – North Sea programme - waterways**

The city of Norwich is involved in an Interreg-funded project called Water City. The first stage of the Water City initiative included a 3-year programme of riverbed dredging creating better access for rivercraft and a pilot River Bus scheme on the River Wensum. Water City I formed the framework for the Water City II bid, funded through Interreg IIIB. Focusing on the River Wensum, this exciting new initiative aims to:

- promote the river and valley as a travel route
- provide a link between Norwich and surrounding countryside as far as Whitlingham Country Park
- encourage river-based tourism and provide facilities for visitors
- enhance the riverside landscape through new development along the river, incorporating public art
- encourage informal recreational use of the river and its valley by local people and visitors
- promote the river as a sporting resource, including a whitewater canoeing facility
- interpret the heritage of the river and its role in Norwich
- encourage community participation in the project

Enhancing biodiversity and generally improving the landscape will be a key part of all of these proposals.

## **Consultation question 1.**

**Should a “labelling” scheme be envisaged to recognise the efforts of pioneering cities to combat congestion and improve living conditions?**

We would support the EU introducing an accreditation scheme, with the following characteristics:

- linked to dedicated EU funding for urban transport to encourage towns and cities to apply;
- comprised of different categories as urban transport is multi-faceted (for example, a city could be awarded for an innovative park and ride system, yet fail to provide good cycle lanes);
- it should have different levels of attainment (for example, bronze, silver and gold);
- dissemination of best practice and information about the winning cities would be the responsibility of the European Commission;
- accreditation would be provided on an annual basis, with cities and towns having to prove they attain the relevant standard year on year.

However, the EU must recognise that different member states will not be competing on a level playing field in terms of the levels of state funding for urban transport initiatives. Funding should be afforded to support those areas that achieve accreditation, to improve other areas/categories (i.e. to bring them up to standard). Likewise those urban areas which are not advanced in their progression towards sustainable urban transport could learn from others, perhaps through the already established cooperation mechanism, or through the establishment of the European Road Safety Observatory as suggested under question 20.

## **Consultation question 2.**

## What measures could be taken to promote walking and cycling as real alternatives to the car?

The promotion of walking and cycling and other non motorised transport is largely a matter for local planning, but the cumulative effects on the environment, the level of car traffic, health and quality of life make it a regional issue. With so many short distance journeys there is scope for much more walking and cycling.

*The EU could take a role in promoting best practice and suggest better ways of monitoring cycle use (perhaps through Intelligent Transport Solutions).*

We believe that other modes of transport, such as electric buggies, scooters and electric bikes should be taken into account. The numbers of electric buggies will be set to rise, due to the increasing numbers of elderly people. Scooters and electric bikes, when used as an alternative to the private car, reduce both congestion and pollution. We have therefore included an action under infrastructure improvements below to highlight this.

There are three main areas where action could be taken to promote walking and cycling:

- Awareness-raising / promotion to assist in cultural/social change (for example, the EU Initiative “In Town Without My Car” campaign)
  - provide better information about cycle and walking routes, including maps (see case study below)
  - promote websites which allow travellers to plan integrated journeys
  - promote the health benefits of walking and cycling for example by promoting websites which combine routes with calorie consumption
  - include cyclist awareness training in national driving tests
  - promote cycling and walking as a means of mobility within the business community

### Case Study – Interreg - pedestrians

Spatial Metro is an international project dedicated to finding new and exciting ways of improving city centres for pedestrians. The project is being led by Norwich City Council. The objective of SPATIAL METRO is to provide a way of making cities and their component elements legible and navigable for visitors and local people. The project includes ‘metro’ style maps as the model for guiding pedestrians around the city. The map features attractions as well as ‘stations’. Groups of themed attractions form routes e.g. the cultural circle line. The project also uses technology, audio and brail to make the city’s arrival points a more welcoming experience as well as physical enhancement using ICT, paving and street furniture.

- Infrastructure improvements to increase safety and convenience
  - provide sufficient numbers of bike stands in secure and safe locations
  - ensure that where cyclists share lanes with other traffic, designers take into account speed differential
  - provide re-charging points in key places in towns and cities to encourage the use of electric vehicles
  - improvements in integration and quality of cycle routes (on and off street)
  - improve street lighting
  - build adequate cycle lanes (that are not just an after thought but are integral to the planning process)
  - provide facilities (e.g. showers and lockers) at appropriate destinations through the travel plan initiative (see case study below).
  - consider initiatives such as bike loan schemes, as well as the loan of child buggies and wheelchairs to limit the use of the private car in the centre of towns and cities.
  - provide guidance and support for innovative cycle hire projects
- Planning new towns and growth with cycling and walking in mind, such as eco towns.

*The EU must guarantee the continuation of adequate, dedicated funding streams such as the continuation of CIVITAS in order to invest in innovative approaches, which increase the use of public transport, walking and cycling in towns and cities.*

## **Case Study – Aberdeenshire - School Travel Planning**

### **What is the purpose of a School Travel Plan?**

School Travel Plans have a key role to play in a Local Transport Strategy that is committed to travel behaviour change. School Travel Planning provides an opportunity for school communities to identify and promote a range of practical, sustainable alternatives for travel to school. By encouraging parents, pupils and staff to consider different ways of travelling to school, school travel planning can:

- Reduce congestion and air pollution – both around schools and more generally;
- Increase physical activity to benefit health; and
- Improve journey quality and maximise travel safety.

### **Aberdeenshire’s Progress**

There are currently 116 schools, academies and special schools at various stages of involvement in the initiative, with the target of having all 174 involved by 2008. Our work with NHS Grampian on the Health Promoting Schools initiative will help to achieve this.

A consultation process demonstrated that awareness and support for School Travel Planning was very strong. Child safety is a key concern for parents, teachers and, more widely, within communities; in recognition of this, projects such as the Schools’ 20mph zones, Walk to School and Road Safety events are working to promote and encourage safe travel behaviour. Partnership working with Grampian Police is key in delivering these and other programmes such as cycle training.

### **Walk to School Weeks**

Walk to School Week takes place in May and October every year, bringing together the aims of travel planning, road safety and health promotion to show the benefits of lower car use. In the October 2006 week, over 10,000 pupils and staff in Aberdeenshire schools walked or cycled to school. Pupils unable to walk the whole way were encouraged to ‘Park and Stride’, getting dropped off a small distance from the school (for example a nearby car park or friend’s house) and walk the rest of the way. For those travelling by bus, school walking clubs were set up during school time to enable them to take part.

### **Edumagic Show, October 2006**

The Edumagic Road Safety Show is a primary 1-3 magic show run by professional magicians. In October 2006, to tie in with Walk to School Week, pupils in 9 Aberdeenshire schools learnt about travelling and crossing roads safely through fun and magic. The feedback received from schools was so positive that consideration is being given to running this event annually.

## **Consultation question 3.**

### **What could be done to promote a modal shift towards sustainable transport modes in cities?**

The NSC believes that modal shift will ultimately be brought about by providing citizens with robust alternatives to the private car. For this to happen many tools must be employed and changes brought about including a major change in behaviour towards sustainable transport modes.

The NSC believes that this will require regional, local authorities, transport providers and other delivery agencies to:

- Raise awareness of the real costs of unsustainable transport and the benefits of sustainable transport;
- Encourage the wider implementation of workplace, school and personal travel plans;

- Introduce educational programmes for sustainable travel; invest in business initiatives, including but not limited to tele-working, and other means of decoupling economic activity from the need for travel; and investigate ways of providing incentives for more sustainable transport use.

Furthermore, we believe that there are four major areas where action could be taken to promote modal shift:

- Information / communication – the public must have easy-to-use, real-time information (timetables, clever maps) both at the point of use (e.g. bus stops) and via the web (such as journey planners incorporating all forms of public transport). This would encourage more confidence in public transport.
- Quality public transport – public transport must ultimately be punctual, reliable and good value for money. However, if long-term modal shift is to be brought about, the whole public transport experience must be of high quality in order to increase the numbers of repeat journeys by passengers. It is key that passengers are consulted when authorities plan to either create or change public transport routes and systems.
- Education - A real change of mindset is needed and education plays a key role in this. There is a real need to educate youngsters – for example the EU could promote exchanges between schools on the subject of transport. Likewise, cities could work together on promoting sustainable transport to tourists and visitors. Employers should be given incentives for introducing travel plans and encouraging sustainable means of getting to and from work.
- Connected, fluid transport systems – public transport must be better interlinked, with improved services to / from transport hubs and community centres (shopping centres, markets, health surgeries, etc.), with intelligent timetabling to allow users to efficiently move from one transport mode to the next without undue waiting. “Park and Ride” schemes should be encouraged. Public transport services must better fit those travelling to work and back, with more frequent services at peak times, according to local circumstances. Integrated ticketing should be much more widely used. Local areas must better tap into the wealth of transport management tools available which can help to develop a hierarchy of road users appropriate to the locality (e.g. buses / cyclists / pedestrians / Multiple Occupancy Vehicles / taxis etc.).

*The EU could take the lead role in sharing best practice on all of these areas.*

#### **Case Study – East of England - workplace travel plans**

Cambridge ‘Travel for Work’ (TfW) is a not-for-profit partnership that works with employers in Cambridgeshire to deliver and promote sustainable and healthy travel to work. The initiative works with a network of nearly 50 local employers who are at various stages of implementing workplace travel plans. TfW aims to assist employers deliver quality workplace travel plans that are good for business, good for the employees and good for the environment.

Examples of practical solutions for work travel include a bus service for employees set up by three funding bodies working together. Popularity of the service has grown to the effect that four buses operating Monday to Friday carry up to 12,000 passenger trips a week, and carried 430,000 in 2005.

#### **Economic mechanisms (parking policy, public transport pricing and urban charging schemes)**

We can appreciate the value of initiatives such as differentiated parking fees and urban charging schemes, similar to those that operate in London, to reflect the limited availability of public space in urban centres and to create incentives to use facilities such as Park & Ride and other non-car measures.

As many motorists consider the cost of motoring as being the cost of fuel and parking (and not depreciation of their asset, running costs, road fund licence, insurance etc.) there is a delicate

balance between the rate at which parking fees are set by local authorities and the number of motorists who would consider modal shift to collective transport such as buses.

Road pricing (urban charging) could be used where it is appropriate, beneficial, without detriment to business and where it does not lead to social exclusion (see response to question 6 below). The system could be introduced in conjunction with changes in vehicle tax and fuel tax to maintain fiscal neutrality if required.

Public transport must be provided at a competitive rate in comparison to the private car. Price incentives can be used to change the behaviour of users to increase the quality of public transport, e.g. free travel for older people only valid during off-peak times (in order to allow better quality journeys for commuters and children / students travelling to school / college) and concessionary fares for under-18s.

*The EU has a role to play in promoting innovative economic instruments such as this where they have a proven track record. However actual solutions should only be decided upon at a local level and issues such as economic impact need careful consideration.*

### **Buses**

The deregulation has led in some countries to fragmentation in the industry but has worked well in others, such as in the Netherlands where periodic competitive tendering for a national system gives the winner time to plan routes, timetables, effectiveness and efficiency, enabling the successful company to operate at a cost-effective level, on a wide enough scale, and to provide a comprehensive, well-used, frequent and reliable service. We believe that aspects of competition law can be detrimental to the development of attractive and innovative bus services.

*The EU has a role to promote best practice on deregulation and systems where de-regulation has worked well.*

### **Case Study – Aberdeenshire - Quality Bus Corridors**

A Quality Bus Corridor (QBC) is the introduction of a number of measures aimed and designed at providing an overall level of local bus service provision and reliability supported by the introduction of enhanced public transport infrastructure. Such measures will provide improved access to both existing and potential passenger demands and at the same time promoting public transport as a suitable alternative to the private car.

The works being carried out as part of this initiative include:

- installation of new high quality bus shelters with solar power illumination;
- retro-fitting of existing bus shelters with solar power illumination;
- introduction of additional bus stops to meet service development and identified passenger demand;
- improved bus stop flags incorporating stop name, Traveline contact details and SMS number;
- improved modern bus stops with integrated timetable displays;
- improved roadside publicity at all boarding stops;
- installation of raised platforms at bus stops to assist boarding/alighting; and
- provision of “Bus Clearway” road restrictions to ensure free access to bus stops.

### **Car sharing<sup>8</sup>**

Many journeys into urban areas, especially for commuting but also for shopping and for entertainment originate in more rural areas where public transport is limited. The result is travel by car, often single occupancy, especially for the commute to work. On the other hand, those living in

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<sup>8</sup> Car Sharing is also known as liftsharing or ridesharing (not to be confused with car clubs – a form of local short-term hire). Car sharing is when two or more people share a car and travel together.

rural areas who do not have cars can become socially excluded, because travel becomes very difficult or time consuming.

A solution applicable in all countries is car sharing where two or more car drivers share the same car for their journey. This option is frequently ignored relative to much more expensive infrastructure schemes. The cost is zero or negative, especially if drivers take turns to drive, congestion is reduced, emissions are reduced, and fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions are reduced. Employers also gain in that cost of parking provision is reduced and staff morale and retention can benefit. However, in spite of these many benefits of car sharing, there are barriers to uptake that prevent significant uptake. These barriers are primarily ones of ignorance and perception and can be overcome if local authorities and regions as well as employers give serious attention to this low cost sustainable option.

The internet has transformed the ability of drivers to find partners for lift sharing and a small business in the East of England, Liftshare.com, is the UK and European pioneer in this niche. The University of East Anglia in Norwich was one of the first organisations to sign up with Liftshare.com. The company has now sold systems to hundreds of businesses and local authorities across the UK and is now exporting to continental Europe.

Nevertheless, the barriers to uptake persist, notably the fact that lift sharing is not promoted as a key option along with other sustainable transport modes in green travel plans that more and more businesses and local authorities in the UK are pioneering.

*There is a clear opportunity for the EU to promote successful car sharing schemes. We would also support initiatives which help to raise awareness of car sharing.*

#### **Case Study – East of England - car sharing**

The University of East Anglia in the East of England is leading a programme to investigate the barriers to uptake of lift sharing in the city of Norwich and the county of Norfolk. Partners include Liftshare.com, Norfolk County Council, Norwich Union insurance group and The Open University.

The activity is supported by Carbon Connections (see: [www.carbon-connections.org/](http://www.carbon-connections.org/)) a programme funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England to support organisations with innovative projects for carbon reduction.

The work will result in recommendations for organisations that aim to promote green travel and new innovations to stimulate uptake of lift sharing.

## **Chapter 2.2 Towards greener towns and cities**

### **Consultation question 4.**

#### **How could the use of clean and energy efficient technologies in urban transport be further increased?**

One important point is to allow a higher level of alternative fuels mixed with diesel, taking into account the potentially detrimental effect of growing crops for fuel. There should be more standardized rules regarding performance standards for the operation of vehicles within green zones, noise, tax rules for travel to work. One idea is to connect alternative fuels to green zones in towns and cities.

The Swedish public transport association has recommended that public transport should be fuelled by alternative fuels by at least 40 % in 2012 and 90 % in 2020.

#### **Case Study – North Sea Commission - sharing of best practice**

The North Sea Commission is collecting and compiling good practice solutions from the NSC

member regions on the use of more sustainable fuel in the transport sector, including the use of renewable energy and fuel saving schemes. The intention is to publish this information on the NSC website.

### **Case study – Västra Götaland – smart energy**

In Västra Götaland there is a dialogue called “smart energy”. The goal is to decrease the dependence on fossil fuels. The purpose of the dialogue is to draft challenges, agreements and undertakings. This is an interesting collaboration between local authorities, the private sector and NGOs in order to reach the overall goal of reducing the use of fossil fuels.

#### Research and Development

*EU funding through the Framework Programmes should continue to be available for R&D into the further development of clean and energy efficient technologies. The EU should encourage partnership working between universities, local authorities, the private sector etc.*

### **Case Study – CIVITAS - gas-powered transport**

As an outcome from its work with Civitas SMILE, the University of East Anglia arranged that a dual-fuel gas-powered truck was exhibited at the university on the occasion of a SMILE partners meeting in Norwich in April 2007. The truck, also visited Norfolk's waste treatment company, NEWS (Norfolk Environmental and Waste Services) outside Norwich to permit the company to become familiar with the benefits of gas-powered vehicles, especially for urban transport. NEWS is to build a residual waste treatment plant that will produce 17m cubic metres of biogas a year, enough to power several hundred heavy duty vehicles.

The UEA also arranged for Hardstaff Group (the owners of the truck and developers of the innovative dual-fuel technology) to speak at a conference on sustainable transport in Essex in September 2007. In this manner, UEA is creating awareness within the region of the benefits of gas-powered transport for urban areas. There is growing interest in rural areas in anaerobic digestion to treat farm and food wastes which will increase the volumes of biogas being produced in the UK.

Working with national bodies that support research on low-carbon transport, the UEA is working within the Eastern Region to provide an impetus for a totally new green transport option in the region. This initiative has been stimulated by cooperation with Malmo in Sweden within CIVITAS SMILE and by national initiatives within the UK to promote gas-powered transport.

#### Harmonised minimum performance standards

The Green Paper suggests the setting of harmonised minimum performance standards for the operation of vehicles and a gradual tightening of these over time in order to phase out old heavily polluting vehicles and encourage upgrading.

*We would support the EU gradually tightening these performance standards over a set period of time as we believe that legislation is the best way to ensure that the vehicle manufacturing industry improves vehicle efficiency.*

#### Public procurement

The Green Paper suggests economic instruments such as incentives to encourage local authorities to purchase clean and energy efficient vehicles, as well as non-economic instruments such as restrictions for heavily polluting vehicles. If schemes were to be introduced whereby heavily polluting vehicles are restricted from accessing urban areas, this should only apply to new vehicles and therefore not be applied retrospectively. A time limit for vehicles to comply should also be set. We feel that promoting schemes which give privileged access to low-emitting vehicles would probably work better, such as the London Low Emission Zone introduced in February 2008.

*The EU, national governments and local agencies have the potential to act as early adopters of new technology. This would give the market confidence but does present financial premiums. The EU could offer financial assistance to early adopters of such technology.*

#### Private vehicles

Urban areas have great potential to stimulate the take-up of low carbon vehicles. In London, low-carbon vehicles do not pay the congestion charge. There are several ways in which local authorities can provide incentives for residents to invest in clean vehicles and disincentives against more emitting vehicles.

*Such action should be encouraged with examples of good practice and effective methods widely disseminated.*

#### Tax through vehicle duty

*The EU could take a role in sharing best practice on the effects of vehicle duty on the sales of clean and energy efficient cars and / or on CO2 levels in cities.*

### **Consultation question 5.**

#### **How could joint green procurement be promoted?**

*The EU should take a lead role in encouraging joint green procurement and promote the economic benefits of this to national (for example the UK National Health Service Purchasing & Supply Agency, PASA), regional and local authorities across the EU by using examples of best practice, especially in terms of green vehicle procurement such as in Stockholm. The North Sea Commission would encourage the EU to continue to support pilot projects in this area.*

However, there are a few factors which will impact on the success rate. Firstly most local authorities do not operate under a whole life cost (WLC) model. Currently this tends only to apply to large infrastructure projects like construction of waste projects or schools for example. So an increase in learning and capacity to make these types of assessments will be key.

A second issue is the level of agreement on WLC when negotiating with contractors. The market is very mature and has many cost factors which weigh it down not least of which is labour and fuel. The best WLC model will try to manage this but it is extremely difficult to predict what the outcome would be. The result of these factors is that to date there are limited examples of authorities providing incentives for contractors to allow them to run more efficient vehicles. This tends to happen by contractors on their own (in a limited way) and also by authorities for internal fleets.

*The EU could perhaps take a role here by providing and promoting examples of WLC in action - specifically for fleet arrangements*

*Again the EU could assist by promoting examples of joint working in the transport field particularly in terms of vehicles. The EU could helpfully provide minimum green standards for the public procurement of vehicles either through guidance or legislation.*

#### **Case study – Region Västra Götaland - procurement of green vehicles by a local authority**

Large authorities such as regions have an important task to lead the development of green mobility. For example the Region Västra Götaland, Sweden, has made a decision to purchase only green vehicles in the organisation. As a result the car manufacturer Saab said that this decision itself was important for the development of a biofuel car. The same development is possible with procurement of public transport vehicles if authorities make the necessary decisions.

### **Consultation question 6.**

**Should criteria or guidance be set out for the definition of Green Zones (pedestrianisation, restricted access, speed limits, urban charging, etc.) and their restriction measures? What is**

## **the best way to ensure their compatibility with free circulation? Is there an issue of cross border enforcement of local rules governing green zones?**

Whilst we can fully appreciate the benefits of traffic restrictions and urban charging we would not want to create a fragmented patchwork of urban areas with new 'border lines' across Europe. We would want to avoid the creation of disproportionate barriers to mobility for citizens and goods.

### Green Zones

*We believe that the EU could add value by issuing guidelines for the establishment of Green Zones. This could be done on a population basis, with guidelines being developed to suit different sizes of town and city. (Please also see the North Sea Commission case study under question 16).*

### Road pricing

We believe that before any type of road user charging takes place there is a need for:

- significant improvements to public transport to take place hand-in-hand with implementation of a charging policy
- any additional monies raised are hypothecated into improved access to urban areas
- all technical and other implementation problems can be adequately addressed
- application takes full account of the variation in circumstances across the region
- the best available research indicates the likelihood that charging could be implemented in such a way that potential detrimental effects will be outweighed by advantages
- consideration of the wider urban economy to avoid detrimental impacts on productivity.

*The EU could promote best practice in terms of road pricing schemes, however road pricing should ultimately be decided upon at a local level.*

### European registry

*Rather than support the creation of a European registry of all vehicles, we would encourage the EU to provide support to all member states of the EU (and neighbouring states where relevant) to help them improve systems and facilitate the sharing of information on registered vehicles. At this time there is no centralised EU database of driving offences. Without this piece of technology drivers that are banned in one country can continue to drive, and accumulate points in another without the knowledge of law enforcement agencies. It is also hard to track foreign drivers once they have left a member state preventing the police from effectively prosecuting and bringing to trial this group of drivers. These two factors make it difficult for agencies to enforce traffic law on overseas drivers.*

## **Consultation question 7.**

### **How could eco-driving be further promoted?**

Understanding the principles of eco-driving should be a pre-requisite to passing every Member State's national driving test. Drivers should be made more aware of the technology in many vehicles, which allows the driver to monitor fuel consumption. The UK Driving Standards Agency introduced a compulsory eco-driving element into the driving test theory examination in September 2007 and a number of European countries are also promoting eco-driving to a greater or lesser extent. *Amongst other measures to promote eco-driving as the norm, the EU could require motor manufacturers to fit in-car eco-driving devices such as in-car speed limiters.*

Citizens must be made aware not only of the reduced environmental damage caused by eco-driving, but also of the economic benefits in terms of reduced fuel consumption. There is much that can be done with fleet operators who have significant financial incentives to maximise fuel economy especially in times of rising fuel prices. An exercise in eco-driving was very well received by Civitas SMILE participants from all participating countries at a meeting in Norwich in December 2007 while the UK Department of Transport has promoted eco-driving among fleet operators for several years. This is one area where sharing and dissemination of good practice could be very effective.

*Perhaps the EU could study the effect of promoting eco-driving in terms of its impact and promote this across the EU if it represents good value?*

*The EU could investigate whether such a concept could apply to other forms of carbon-emitting transport.*

## **Chapter 2.3 – Towards smarter urban transport**

### **Consultation question 8.**

#### **Should better information services for travellers be developed and promoted?**

Yes. The use of real-time information for travellers is critical to ensuring increased user confidence and ultimately increased modal shift. Information as well as being timely also needs to be easy to understand, easily available (e.g. at point of use and also via the internet) and interoperable for a multi modal trip. *The EU could support this by promoting and disseminating best practice. It could develop a “gold standard” timetable model for example.*

It is essential that the latest technology is used when it helps to bring about a faster, more sophisticated service. However, it is important that the use of technology does not result in social exclusion. Many users of public transport do not have access to the internet for example. Other options for receiving information must also be maintained.

Whilst the above is exemplary, it is important to understand the competitive, deregulated market in which some member states operate. This can make it difficult for operators to integrate systems.

In terms of in-vehicle information for car and freight drivers, the use of SAT NAV can be used to reduce delays by avoiding congestion and also reduces mileage from drivers getting lost. The private sector are trialling technology which allows the route calculation to be more sophisticated and alter routes in real time.

### **Consultation question 9.**

#### **Are further actions needed to ensure standardisation of interfaces and interoperability of ITS applications in towns and cities? Which applications should take priority when action is taken?**

Yes. Standardisation of interfaces and interoperability of ITS applications is a major issue. Cooperation between local authorities and public transport providers (mainly private companies in the UK) is fundamental.

The top priority in terms of action taken is to move to a new, standard communication protocol, which uses a digital transmission network. A standard protocol would mean that buses would only have to carry one type of equipment even though they travel through different local government areas, and that passengers will find similar information and services in different areas. *Whilst developing a standard protocol should be the responsibility of national governments, the EU could have a role in promoting best practice from member states which have the most advanced and successful systems. We also believe that the EU has a role to play in developing industry stakeholder groups to ensure best practice is driven from the bottom up.*

### **Consultation question 10.**

#### **Regarding ITS, how could the exchange of information and best practices between all involved parties be improved?**

It is perceived that there is a reluctance to share information and best practice within the ITS industry. A stronger role for expert forums, such as ERTICO – ITS Europe would provide convenient, exiting platforms to assist in the exchange of best practice.

Groups such as the North Sea Commission Transport Group can also be used to disseminate information to members.

*The EU could provide support through the funding of projects that focus on information exchange which is not anti-competitive and encourage cooperation at the local level. See also question 3 above regarding buses.*

### **Consultation question 11.**

#### **How can the quality of collective transport in European towns and cities be increased?**

*As reliability and frequency of service are the key elements of quality collective transport the EU could help disseminate best-practice on successful integrated transport networks, and help to bring about a change in mindset in member states such as the UK where an overly competitive system prohibits the sharing of information on such matters as timetabling and routes between transport operators.*

At a more practical level, the quality of transport can be increased in the following ways:

- To encourage modal shift and reduce congestion, collective transport needs to be fast, reliable, frequent, comfortable and accessible.
- There needs to be a better public perception of safety. This can be achieved through a range of soft and hard measures, but it is vital to ensure that people are willing to use the network (without a fear of crime).
- Collective transport stations and stops should be well lit and comfortable. This environment provides a greater perception of safety for passengers.
- Policy tools should be used where necessary to increase the use of such tools as Quality Transport Partnerships and contracts in order to make it a requirement for Local Authorities and private companies involved in providing transport services to improve the quality of transport in their area.
- There is a need for improvement in access on and off collective transport including the removal of steps or gaps at the entrance/exit of vehicles and making all vehicles compliant with national legislation on disability rights. A 'plating' system for electric buggies and wheelchairs would help bus drivers identify whether that vehicle meets the regulations set out for physical size and therefore whether it is safe to carry. This would help the consumer in terms of purchasing a buggy or wheelchair, as well as drivers at the point of service delivery.
- Non polluting collective vehicles could provide a more positive image and increase the (environmental) benefits of travelling by public transport.
- Collective vehicle employees should display consumer oriented behaviour.
- Collective vehicles should be designed for intermodality (e.g. by allowing cyclist to take their bicycles on public transport).

*The EU should support initiatives that aim to improve the quality of transport systems including those mentioned above.*

### **Consultation question 12.**

#### **Should the development of dedicated lanes for collective transport be encouraged?**

Yes. The development of dedicated lanes is one of the tools available to local authorities in order to manage traffic, ease congestion, encourage cycling as well as improve collective transport punctuality and reliability. Depending on the local need, dedicated lanes could be used by taxis, high occupancy vehicles (HOV), low emission vehicles and cyclists. The key is to ensure that the method employed is sophisticated enough to avoid creating undue congestion, whilst speeding up the flow of collective transport and improving journey time and safety for cyclists (ensure that where cyclists share lanes with other traffic, designers take into account speed differential). The use of dedicated lanes should be locally determined and be used to solve a previously identified problem.

The effect of such tools on the economic health of towns and cities should also be taken into account before being introduced.

*One of the main issues relating to dedicated lanes is enforcement. The EU could have a role to play in promoting the use of technology which restricts access to dedicated lanes for those vehicles not entitled to use them. The EU could play a role in funding further research into methods to reduce delays at interface points, such as junctions and lane terminations. This is currently an inefficiency in the operation of dedicated lanes.*

## **Chapter 2.4 Towards accessible urban transport**

### **General comments on Chapter 2.4**

**Accessibility** –In many areas, where social exclusion is to be tackled, demand-responsive services may offer the greatest level of accessibility. Public transport must be available to as high a proportion of households as possible to enable them to access core services such as education, employment, health and retail. Accessibility is obviously a key issue for those people with reduced mobility, disabled people, elderly people, families with young children and young people.

#### **Case Study – Aberdeenshire - A2B Dial-a-Bus**

##### **What is A2B Dial-a-Bus?**

In summer 2004, Aberdeenshire Council introduced its very own demand responsive transport (DRT) service, the A2B dial-a-bus. These door-to-door services, which operate in partnership with bus, taxi and community transport operators, formed part of a Scottish Executive pilot study to develop best practice in the field. The service was initially introduced in Alford, Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Strathdon in 2004, and in 2005 in Central Buchan.

A2B dial-a-bus was winner of the Scottish Transport Awards Rural Transport category in 2005.

##### **How do they operate?**

On all A2B services, passengers are asked to pre-book their trips by calling the dial-a-bus hotline. Calls are answered by the A2B travel despatch team, based in the Council's Public Transport Unit, who use specialist software to work out passenger pick-up and drop-off times.

There are two different types of A2B dial-a-bus services in operation. The Central Buchan and Strathdon services are open to all members of the public, whereas the other A2B services are restricted to those people who have difficulty using or have no access to mainstream bus services. All of the services operate on a door-to-door basis.

**Meeting citizens needs** – as highlighted in the Green Paper citizens expect efficiency, therefore travel times must be comparable with the car, it must be more flexible e.g. taxis/small vehicles for demand responsive services, affordable for people with low incomes. Citizens with reduced mobility and senior citizens expect increased and higher quality mobility, personal mobility is key to independence, importance of efficient transport for tourist industry in regions – inside the urban area and also access to this area from outside.

#### **Consultation question 13.**

##### **Is there a need to introduce a European Charter on rights and obligations for passengers using collective transport?**

A European Charter on rights and obligations for passengers using collective transport is a positive step. However the European Charter would need to be appropriate and relevant to all Member States. In order to be effective it should aim to harmonize existing national Charters.

#### **Consultation question 14.**

##### **What measures could be undertaken to better integrate passenger and freight transport in research and in urban mobility planning?**

*The EU could have a role in supporting projects that aim to improve the communication and active involvement of stakeholders from both passenger and freight transport arenas. Projects such as CIVITAS successfully integrate both passenger and freight transport in its research work (see Case Study below). These projects require support and promotion by local authorities.*

*The EU has a role, particularly as a funder, in sustainable transport projects such as CIVITAS. Local and regional authorities, research centres and the private sector need EU support for this type of research work and related pilot studies to enable such projects to grow into real sustainable urban transport solutions. This further underlines the need for the EU to guarantee the continuation of funding of CIVITAS.*

### **Case study freight - CIVITAS**

The work of CIVITAS with Norfolk County Council has included the development of an urban consolidation centre for freight deliveries and collections within central Norwich. The aim of the project is to achieve an overall reduction in the overall number of freight vehicle movements with the Norwich urban area and in the city centre. In particular it combines loads for multiple drop deliveries and ensures that the final delivery is made by vehicles with low emission engines. The aim is to use the CIVITAS funding to develop the project into a commercially sustainable operation that will continue beyond the end of the project.

As we have noted above (general comments on chapter 2.1), however, uptake of this freight consolidation initiative is hindered by the lack of any financial incentives for businesses to take part. Contrast this situation with waste disposal where gate fees provide a strong incentive for businesses to reduce their waste. *Freight consolidation could be an area where the EU could provide a stimulus similar to that which has been so successful in making local authorities consider alternatives to landfill.*

### **Consultation question 15.**

**How can better coordination between urban and interurban transport and land use planning be achieved? What type of organisational structure could be appropriate?**

Better coordination between urban and interurban transport and land use planning can be achieved by integration between environment, transport and land use departments with the use of integrated strategies and implementation plans.

### **Case Study – Göteborg - Strategic Plans for Public Transport**

K2020 – a strategic plan for future public transport in the Göteborg area is a good example of planning for increased urban mobility with public transport integrating several policy sectors. The plan is as much a city development plan as a public transport plan.

The purpose of K2020 is to create a common picture of the future in order to provide basis for planning and decisions in each organisation at different levels; local, regional and national. To reach the goal of sustainable development with a good environment in the cities a massive increase in public transport will be required. The goal for Göteborg area is that at least 40 % of all travel must be done with public transport. The project is a joint effort of local, regional and national authorities.

The project is divided into 2 phases; development of a long term vision and structure and a public transport development plan. Each municipality in the Göteborg area are now planning a local K2020. The ideas have also spread to other areas in Västra Götaland and the same concept will be applied there.

Crucial points are to shorten travel time, create own spaces for public transport and coordination with land use planning, for example public transport interchange points

The principles of the future public transport:

1. connect more areas by a netstructure
2. the travel must be faster
3. offer high frequency travel
4. develop interchange points
5. high level of quality and service

Strategic questions:

- Political will
- Coordination with land use planning, new areas concentrate around train stations
- Expanded regional train traffic and a new train tunnel under the city
- Priority for public transport – own spaces
- Development of the city core towards walking area
- Development of interchange points
- Measures for parking, marketing etc.
- Financing

*We would support the use of Sustainable Urban Transport Plans (SUTPs) and welcome the guidance that the Commission will consult upon in the future Action Plan of this green paper. However it is important to ensure that the aim of an SUTP is more than a collection of transport strategies and actually has a requirement for actions in the form of implementation plans.*

### **Case Study – East of England - transport and land-use planning**

The Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE) sub region is projected by Central Government to have significant community growth over the next 15 years. The draft Regional Spatial Strategy (the “North Sea Commission Plan”) sets targets of 43,800 new dwellings and 55,000 new jobs between 2001 and 2021 for the region encompassing the five authorities of Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend-on-sea, and Thurrock. With so much at stake decision makers believed that more information about demand response was crucial to turning the plan into a reality. On behalf of the TGSE Transportation Board, Essex County Council commissioned consultants to develop a unique model linking a transport model with a land-use model, SETLUM (South Essex Transport and Land-use Model), which gives realistic feedbacks between these transport and land-use variables that jointly shape the regions future.

The model was jointly funded by Essex County Council, Southend and Thurrock and also Central Government (CLG), and is currently being used to assess different scenarios of the distribution of dwellings in the TGSE area.

## **Chapter 2.5 Towards safe and secure urban transport**

### **Consultation question 16.**

#### **What further actions should be undertaken to help cities and towns meet their road safety and personal security challenges in urban transport?**

In order to encourage people to use collective urban transport it is vital that they feel safe. There need to be improvements in safety and security infrastructure and procedures. People need to feel confident in systems that exist to address safety and security, for example the use of CCTV is helpful, but a person in danger needs to feel that it is a proactive measure, so that if CCTV highlights an incident there is somebody or something that can respond in real time.

*The European Commission could provide support on road safety and security at a more strategic level of transport planning and policy making. The European Commission can make strong statements to highlight the need to reduce the number of accidents and to improve road safety. It is essential that exchange and promotion of best practice from across the EU is utilised in order to provide support and guidance for all involved in transport planning.*

*Areas where the European Commission could target their support include:*

- Education and information campaigns to communicate awareness raising campaigns and best practice: the education of car, taxi and bus drivers, training for cyclists (e.g. wearing of helmets).
- Safety and security infrastructure: provision of adequate infrastructure e.g. improvements in the number and quality of cycle routes, improvements in the quality and design of streets; the use of CCTV and *we would like the EU to seek to establish a coherent policy on the provision of seat belts on all vehicles, including on urban buses (which are currently exempt from 2006 regulations) where there is evidence to suggest that this would cut injuries and fatalities. There must be good evidence to suggest that any change in legislation would be beneficial.*
- Policy initiatives such as traffic calming/living streets initiatives that aim to reduce the predominance of the car e.g. giving pedestrians priority over vehicles, reduction of speed limits where necessary, home zones and “environmental rooms”. The Shared Space concept provides a method to reduce the antagonism between cyclist and motorist that currently exists in many member states. The EU could bring great benefit by promoting Shared Space initiatives and disseminating good practice.
- Technology: supporting research in safer vehicle technology
- Link the meeting of road safety targets with the accreditation scheme proposed under question 1 above.
- There is a distinct need to think beyond the conventional/traditional way of transport planning to encourage modal shift and provide for a safer travelling environment.

#### **Case Study 14 – Aberdeenshire - ‘Safe Drive, Stay Alive’**

‘Safe Drive, Stay Alive’ is a road safety campaign, which targets young people who are approaching driving age and aims to leave them with a strong and lasting message about their vulnerability and the severe impact that road accidents can have.

The message is presented via a series of live stage shows incorporating filmed footage of an all too typical crash involving a group of young people. People affected – emergency services personnel, victims and the bereaved – speak frankly and openly about their feelings, experiences and life afterwards.

The campaign is organised in partnership by the emergency services, Aberdeenshire Community Safety Partnership, Aberdeen City Community Safety Partnership, Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council, and NHS Grampian.

The 2006 event was viewed by fifth year pupil from every secondary school in the Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray local authority areas and builds on the success of the inaugural event held in 2005. The presentations have been extremely well received by pupils, teachers and members of the public, who are able to attend an open public presentation, and it is planned to establish the ‘Safe Drive, Stay Alive’ event as an annual event.

#### **Consultation question 17.**

**How can operators and citizens be better informed on the potential of advanced infrastructure management and vehicle technologies for safety?**

*The EU could play a role in promoting communications with the automotive industry, in order to encourage the industry to focus upon providing technology that can enable safety. For example providing technology that prevents the ability of a driver to speed (although this must be “intelligent”), rather than relying on speed cameras. The EU can also play a role in promoting and disseminating information on EU projects that focus upon infrastructure management and vehicle technology for safety e.g. such as those in FP7, more effectively.*

#### **Consultation question 18.**

## **Should automatic radar devices adapted to the urban environment be developed and should their use be promoted?**

As highlighted in question 17, interaction with the automotive industry should be encouraged to provide technology that prevents speeding from taking place, there would then be less of a need for automatic radar devices that are not always effective. Automatic radar devices may penalise a person but do not necessarily create a long term behavioural change, which requires awareness and education. Drivers need to know why the cameras are there.

Any revenue raised from automatic radar devices in the urban environment should be invested in achieving sustainable urban transport solutions.

*We would like to see further research into the development and promotion of car-activated speed warning signs.* A Transport Research Laboratory study in 2002 found that vehicle-activated signs cut collisions involving fatal or serious injuries by 60 per cent at 19 sites in Norfolk. We believe car-activated speed warning signs can be an effective in reducing speed, however we do recognise that enforcement may need to go alongside warning signs in some circumstances to provide a real deterrent.

The NSC is interested to see that advances are being made in in-car information such as pedestrian radar collision avoidance systems.

### **Consultation question 19.**

#### **Is video surveillance a good tool for safety and security in urban transport?**

In general video surveillance is a good tool if it is being used to deter crime and avert violence on urban transport. It can increase the perception of safety, however for the public to feel confident there is a need to ensure that video surveillance equipment is part of a proactive procedure which will react and provide support for the travelling public when they are in danger.

## **Chapter 3 Creating a New Urban Mobility Culture**

### **Consultation question 20.**

#### **Should all stakeholders work together in developing a new mobility culture in Europe? Based on the model of the European Road Safety Observatory, could a European Observatory on urban mobility be a useful initiative to support this cooperation?**

Developing an urban mobility culture, essentially changing people's way of thinking and behaviour is a long term process. Achieving this objective will necessarily involve many stakeholders.

*There are a number of ways in which the European Commission can play a part in creating this urban mobility culture.*

- Simple Terminology

Firstly, to encourage cultural change the European Commission needs to convey a simple message and clear guidance. The terminology which is used by the EC is sometimes complex and difficult to understand. The European Commission could launch EU wide awareness campaigns based on facts, for example, informing the public about the real environmental impact of private car usage.

We would also suggest that the European Commission increases the usage of the term urban 'access' as this would suggest an urban transport structure which is inclusive and which, in particular, allows vulnerable groups to reach essential facilities.

- Gender

There is a need to consider the question of gender equality. Men and women have different needs for mobility and valuations of transport. An overall goal for a new mobility culture should be that women's and men's values should receive equal consideration and that they should have the same possibilities to influence the system's design and formation.

There is a need to consider gender equality in the data collection in order to increase our statistical knowledge on how men and women use the transport system. We know for example that men more than women travel by car and it is the other way around with public transport. This knowledge is important when it comes to planning for the different systems. Studies also show that women have mobility constraints because of perceived risk and risk of violence associated with different travel modes.

- Age

The NSC would also like to point out that with an ageing EU population, urban transport must evolve in order to meet the needs of this group.

- Education

Education for all stakeholders is vital for achieving a long term behavioural change. Encouraging people to choose more sustainable forms of transport should start an **early age**. For example, children could be encouraged to walk or cycle so that they 'get into the habit' of doing so. School and youth exchange programmes such as Comenius and Youth for Europe could be used for children to find out how children from other countries travel to school.

#### **Case Study – East of England - promoting cycling in schools**

Schools within Luton, Southend, Bedford and St Albans are involved with the BIKE-IT campaign which is being facilitated by Sustrans, a leading sustainable transport charity in the UK. A dedicated BIKE-IT officer works with school children to promote cycling, cycle training, cycle maintenance, cycle storage, lessons on cycling and the impact on environment, health, geography etc.

Luton City Council and Southend Borough Council also undertake cycle training in schools and talk about road safety alongside it, as well as security of the bike. All children receive a certificate to whatever level they achieve, to encourage them to keep practicing. In addition, a School Travel Plans officer works in schools to promote cycling, walking, walking buses and car sharing.

- Promoting Walking and Cycling as a Mode of Transport

One of the strategic objectives of the EU White Paper: Together for Health A Strategic Approach for the EU 2008-2013 is to foster good health in an ageing Europe which focuses on both improving the health of children and older people. Walking and cycling are cost effective, a good way to keep fit and healthy and a key activity to enable the European Commission to achieve its aim of promoting physical activity across the EU. *Walking, in particular, should be promoted by the European Commission as a form of transport.* The Scottish Planning Policy 17 prioritises walking and cycling ahead of public transport and other motorised modes.

Young people can be enthusiastic promoters of sustainable options, especially where they themselves are involved. Travel to school is therefore a journey type that can pay significant dividends if it is promoted in sustainable ways – for example via green travel plans for schools.

#### **Case Study – East of England - promoting walking in schools**

Southend Borough Council is implementing the Walking Bus project to try to encourage children to walk to school. This in turn will increase physical activity within school children, reduce environmental pollution from cars and make the area around schools safer. The scheme involves

school children walking along set and safe routes accompanied by a minimum of two adults. Everyone must wear fluorescent jackets so that they are clearly visible for other road users. To encourage participation reward systems are in place: a sticker reward system for the children whereby those with the most stickers get small prizes and also if a bus is active for one year the responsible school receives £1,500 pounds which may be used on green issues within the school. £1,000 of this money is donated by a local company. For further information see:

[http://www.epommweb.org/study\\_sheet.phtml?sprache=en&study\\_id=1517](http://www.epommweb.org/study_sheet.phtml?sprache=en&study_id=1517)

- Disseminating Best Practice

*The European Commission has a role to promote those sustainable urban transport activities and projects which have worked in other Member States and also those which have not.* This could be done through a number of means such as an annual conference on urban transport topics, further development of the European Local Transport Information Service <http://www.eltis.org/> and continued support for projects under European Funding Programmes such as Interreg and Intelligent Energy Europe II.

- A Need for Statistics

In order to tackle urban transport problems such as congestion, there is a need to have accurate data e.g which groups are the biggest polluters, commuting distances and methods of transport. Only then can appropriate solutions and policies be developed.

An Observatory based approach would also be a useful tool for obtaining and sharing EU wide data on urban transport issues. Such a facility, that has statistics on urban transport, can be important in the development of campaigns. An Observatory is valuable for providing authoritative knowledge on urban transport issues, which can be used to dispel rumours and myths about sustainable transport. It is important that an Observatory facility provides adequate support to help people to interpret the information that it holds.

## Chapter 4 The Financial Resources

### Consultation question 21.

**How could existing financial instruments such as structural and cohesion funds be better used in a coherent way to support integrated and sustainable urban transport?**

In terms of the Cooperation strand of the structural funds, the Interreg IVB Programme in particular will look at topics which are relevant to urban transport:

- Novel approaches to sustainable urban/regional transport solutions to congestion;
- Developing strategies tackling changing requirements for land-use and transport patterns;
- Pilot activities to identify solutions that will help to reduce the transnational impacts of commuting between cities, towns and rural areas;
- Activities making more efficient use of existing transport infrastructure capacities;
- Intelligent Transport Systems

*The North Sea Commission has a number of recommendations regarding how European funding can be better employed to support urban transport projects:*

- More awareness raising of potential EU funding schemes should be carried out
- EU funding schemes should be complementary and should be user friendly, to encourage more applicants to submit project proposals
- The Research and Development Programmes should be linked to the Structural Funds. Framework Programme 7 could be used to encourage more companies to invest in urban transport projects

- When assessing potential transport projects, the European Commission should ensure that high standards are being achieved by projects. Also, funded projects need to be sustainable after the completion of the project and demonstrate that they achieve significant targets for example, making significant contributions to cutting CO2 emissions

## **Consultation question 22.**

### **How could economic instruments in particular market based instruments, support clean and energy efficient urban transport?**

*We think that the EU could play a valuable role in comparing financing schemes and economic instruments across the EU. Such work could be linked to the Observatory as a way of making it easily accessible for all Member States.*

The European Commission consultation on the “Preparation of an Impact Assessment on the Internalisation of External Costs” described the following financial policy instruments as possible tools for encouraging clean and energy efficient urban transport: differentiated charges, tax, electronic road user charging systems and tradable permits. We would like to make the following specific comments on these economic instruments:

#### Differentiated charges

Imposing differentiated charges as a way of dealing with congestion in urban areas e.g. cheaper parking spaces at earlier times of the day when the centre is less congested can be an effective policy tool, although as pointed out under question 3. There is a delicate balance between parking rates and the propensity to encourage modal shift. The use of such tools should be part of an overall pricing strategy and should only be decided at a local level. It is crucial that the economic consequences of local pricing regimes are considered prior to implementation.

#### Tax

*The EU could promote best practice on the effects of vehicle duty on the sales of clean and energy efficient cars and / or on CO2 levels in cities.*

#### Electronic Road User Charging Systems in road transport

We would support the use of Electronic Road User Charging Systems in road transport, where appropriate. This is a tool that should be decided at a local level in the context of being part of a wider road pricing strategy.

#### Tradable permit

Whilst in principle market-based instruments can be a good idea as they can be promote change, the cost of administering, implementing, functioning and monitoring such ETS schemes is often very high compared to their effectiveness. Therefore whilst in principle we would support such a scheme it would be on the basis of a detailed cost benefit analysis. Such a scheme also needs to have a target of continuous improvement of pollution levels to ensure that it is effective.

## **Consultation question 23.**

### **How could targeted research activities help more in integrating urban constraints and urban transport development?**

*More targeted EU research is needed on the following areas:*

- Rail, light rail and bus-based rapid transit systems in urban areas
- Land use planning and transport-led developments including purpose built mobility centres to promote greater choice
- Lightweight and clean vehicles for urban areas
- Bus design
- Fuel especially gas and biogas
- Impact of transport policy on economic development and regeneration

#### **Consultation question 24.**

**Should towns and cities be encouraged to use urban charging? Is there a need for a general framework and/or guidance for urban charging? Should the revenue be earmarked to improve collective urban transport? Should external costs be internalised?**

The principle of urban charging is supported where it is appropriate and where it is determined at a local level. A full assessment of the economic, social and environmental impacts would be necessary to ensure that detrimental impacts are minimised. Any such proposals should be developed by the relevant transport authorities who can consider these impacts and introduce a scheme that is appropriate for their region.

Before any type of road user charging takes place there is a need for:

- significant improvements to public transport to take place hand-in-hand with implementation of a charging policy
- any additional monies raised are hypothecated into improved access
- all technical and other implementation problems can be adequately addressed
- application takes full account of the variation in circumstances across the region
- the best available research indicates the likelihood that charging could be implemented in such a way that potential detrimental effects will be outweighed by advantages
- consideration of the wider urban economy to avoid detrimental impacts on productivity.

*The EU can promote guidance and examples of best practice on urban charging. It would be valuable to show the real costs of private car use versus the alternatives to this type of transport that are available. It would also be important to ensure that urban charging links back to the main aims of the EU sustainable urban transport i.e. using public transport, encouragement of cycling and walking etc.*

The NSC believes that any urban charging revenues should be reinvested back into urban transport strategies and solutions, this should not necessarily mean only collective urban transport. *We do not believe that the EU could add value by legislating in this area. External costs should be internalised.*

#### **Consultation question 25.**

**What added value could, in the longer term, targeted European support for financing clean and energy efficient urban transport bring?**

*EU support should be allocated to activities involving a package of measures (and not just reducing emissions) which have an impact in the long term.*

We would like to further underline to the Commission the value of EU funding on urban mobility by summarising EU projects that have been undertaken in the North Sea area: SustAccess, Spatial Metro, Transurban and CIVITAS Smile. All of these projects include partnerships with other EU member states and are valuable for knowledge transfer and communication across borders. *Therefore we think that it is vital that EU funding in this area continues and is enhanced by promoting more effective dissemination and sharing of lessons learned.*

We note that CIVITAS action creates a wider influence and impact than each specific measure might indicate. For example, within the measure on alternative fuel vehicle fleets (below), not only have a range of fleet operators been encouraged to consider and to use renewable fuels and blends, but both small and large businesses within the supply chain have been stimulated to innovate and local suppliers have been helped to improve product quality. Beyond this even, renewable fuels and low-carbon transport options are considered more widely than before amongst stakeholders. Awareness has been generated of biogas as a low-emission, low-carbon transport fuel and new technologies to monitor emissions and real-time fuel economy have been brought to the awareness of participants from participating cities as well as staff from the EU.

As already noted in the “Key Points” summary, there is a major opportunity to share and spread good practice across the EU that is not yet fully appreciated or supported. Problems relating to urban mobility are often generic and similar in cities across member states, but there are many solutions that individual towns and cities have already tried and adopted.

### **SustAccess – part-funded by Interreg IIIB North Sea programme**

SustAccess is short for Sustainable Accessibility between Hinterlands and Gateways around the North Sea.

The overall aims of SustAccess are on the one hand to make gateways more accessible from their hinterlands and on the other to support an increased use of more sustainable modes of transport. It covers both goods and passenger transport and includes partners ranging from gateway cities to smaller towns in hinterland areas. Partner activities and pilot projects include a wide variety of activities such as supporting the development of different gateway cities and their connection to their hinterland or improving public transport and making it more accessible.

### **Spatial Metro – part-funded by Interreg IIIB North-West Europe programme**

Aims to make city visits more enjoyable for pedestrians by making them easier to navigate, easier to walk around, and easier to understand and appreciate. The project, which has major European funding, got under way in 2005 and will run until 2008.

Partners are concentrating on:

- Producing **metro-style maps** of thematic routes for pedestrians.
- Improvements to routes which form **pedestrian links** between attractions – including special paving, lighting, public art and visual devices.
- **Improving signs** and other conventional means of providing information to pedestrians in city centres.
- **Information gateways** at arrival points – such as airports and bus stations - where relevant information about the city, and how to get around it, is easily available.
- **Virtual reality models** of buildings and routes – providing information to visitors, and helping them to plan visits and to get around.
- **Using mobile phone and internet technology** to make sure information is readily available to everyone.
- Improving key landmarks along thematic routes so that they serve as **stations** – public spaces which pedestrians can enjoy, relax in, and use to discover more about the city.
- Testing and introducing environmentally friendly **transport** methods - such as rickshaw-style velotaxis and electric scooters - within pedestrian zones.
- Measuring the **public response** to the new maps, information, signs and media.

### **TranSURban – part-funded by Interreg IIIC**

Aims to examine the development and operation of Urban Transit Systems in Small and Medium-sized Cities through innovative strategies towards sustainable development, cohesion and urban regeneration.

Specific Aims:

- Planning of Northstowe (new town) and the Guided Bus Link to produce a set of options for interchange and intermodality
- Community planning and social cohesion for the new development
- Detailed design for the north and south spur, and interchanges, including a consideration of partners' experience.
- Promote sustainability and sustainable travel behaviours.

### **CIVITAS Smile – part-funded by Framework Programme 6**

Provides the strategy to combine a set of measures to develop an intelligent, sustainable and intermodal city traffic that makes it possible to live an active life independently of use and ownership of private cars.

Measures implemented in Norwich:

- Alternative Fuel Vehicle Fleets
- Introduction of a Low Emission Zone (LEZ)
- Introduction of time controlled access restrictions
- Influencing the choice of vehicle towards smaller and more fuel efficient vehicles
- Rail station interchange
- On street ticket vending machines
- Linking individual passenger transport information with healthcare appointments
- Development of a city centre car sharing club
- Development of Strategic Freight Holders Club to Deliver Improved Efficiency of Freight Operation in the City Area and Effect Improved Air Quality in Urban Areas
- Priority access for clean goods vehicles
- Urban transshipment centre
- Goods delivery to Park & Ride Sites
- Travel Planning
- Car-pooling
- individual travel advice
- Customised traffic and travel information service for freight operators
- Provision of real time passenger information