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News

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This newsletter describes some of the projects which DHC has been working on over the last year. If you would like to find out more about any of these please do not hesitate to contact Derek Halden at the above address. There are also more details of some of the projects at www.dhc1.co.uk.

Influencing Travel Attitudes and Behaviour

Unless public attitudes towards integrated transport are changed through improved understanding of the key issues it will continue to be difficult to promote key infrastructure and service changes.

In recent years DHC projects have been at the forefront of measures to influence travel behaviour. Research projects for the Scottish Executive in recent years have shown that travel awareness and behaviour change campaigns do not always have the impacts they hope for, and can be perceived as "patronising" or "irrelevant".

Two new projects during 2002 are helping to manage behaviour change initiatives to make them more effective and

relevant.

"Barriers to Modal Shift" for the Scottish Executive is looking at all the factors affecting mode choice including culture, lifestyles and attitudes, with a view to recommending how to change perceptions and promote use of public transport, walking and cycling. This should be completed in December this year and the findings should be relevant not just to the Scottish Executive, SPT and Councils but to transport operators and businesses.

We have also been awarded a contract to look at how "Dialogue Marketing" techniques (e.g. individual action programmes) can be used to change attitudes to demand responsive transport

(DRT) and how this affects the ways that DRT should be planned and managed in the future. This research for the Department of Transport is being undertaken jointly with Aberdeen University (who also receive EPSRC funding) and is part of the national Future Integrated Transport research programme.

Travel Behaviour Research

DHC completed research for SPT in the Spring which analysed the travel diary data in the Scottish Household Survey. This looked at trip distribution across the SPT area by trip purpose and mode, taking account of transport availability including congestion. The work identified that:

- People are less sensitive to travel time and cost when travelling by public transport than when travelling by car for all trip purposes. Travel behaviour and perceptions of travel vary more by trip purpose and the choice of mode available than by people group.
- For most trip purposes men are less sensitive to travel time and cost than women. This reflects the lower travel time budgets and lower incomes of many women. However men and women have similar sensitivity to travel

time for shopping so the data appears to confirm that women do prioritise shopping higher in their lifestyle choices.

School Travel

Our Review of School Travel for the Scottish School Travel Advisory Group concluded that social factors have been inadequately considered in school travel planning.

There are still only around 2% of schools with an effective school travel plan prepared with the involvement of local communities. Where school travel plans are prepared as part of a comprehensive safer routes to school process, the social, educational, environmental, financial and transport issues can be considered together within a framework that allows practical problems to be resolved.

Eligibility for free or subsidised school travel is not adequately linked to need, buses and bus drivers do not reinforce positive messages about public transport, and current provision requires very substantial public funding. The research recommended that bus travel to school needs re-invented as something for which children and parents can feel some ownership, rather than simply a transport mode of last resort.

Adopting successful approaches from other countries might be successful, but far better would be the development of a distinctively Scottish approach in which all stakeholders can take pride.

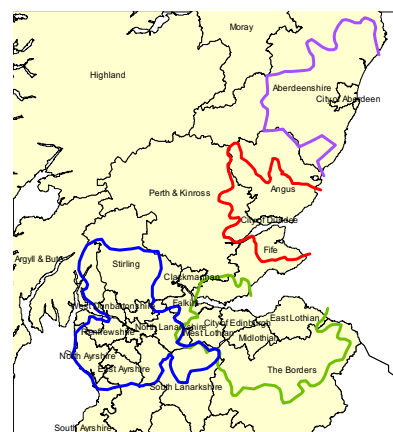


City Regions

As part of the Review of Strategic Planning by the Scottish Executive and the national Cities Review, DHC was commissioned to review working market areas, travel to work areas, retail catchments and proposed transport changes for the four largest Scottish cities: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen.

There have been huge changes in travel to work patterns over the last 10

years which have been closely linked with the economic conditions for the cities. When the Aberdeen economy was overheating, people were travelling huge distances to work but this has now settled down to patterns more typical of the rest of the country. The decline of the Borders economy combined with a strong Edinburgh economy means that for many parts of the Borders at least one in 10 people now travel to work in Edinburgh.



Accessibility Planning, Economic Development and Social Inclusion

When DHC prepared the national guidance on accessibility measuring techniques and their application in 2000 we highlighted that accessibility analysis needs were set to grow. Integrating transport with wider policies inevitably focuses on accessibility issues and key drivers for growth in accessibility planning from national developments in 2002 include:

- The Social Exclusion Unit identified that accessibility planning was needed to ensure that social inclusion aims are reflected in transport plans and schemes.
- The Department for Transport identified that accessibility planning was needed to understand transport and economic development issues as a key step in implementing the SACTRA rec-

ommendations.

- The Scottish Executive STAG guidance required accessibility analysis in transport appraisal.

Absolute levels of accessibility are important but the distribution of accessibility impacts is particularly relevant to policy development because:

- Travel demand management policies need to identify who is affected and in what ways if equitable schemes are to be developed.
- Past transport trends have widened the gaps in society
- Accessibility affects the locations where economic activity is pursued, so each part of Scotland needs to ensure that it can compete nationally and internationally.

Over the last year DHC has been involved in a wide range of accessibility studies illustrating the range of ways that accessibility planning can be used. For example, in the Central Scotland Transport Corridor Studies (with MVA) we needed to identify what geographical locations were most affected by the planned infrastructure changes, and for the Clyde Corridor Studies (with SWK) we identified current accessibility problems and how they might be affected by alternative transport strategies. We have published a leaflet summarising the main uses of accessibility planning and will be preparing more detailed guidance on accessibility planning in the coming months.

New Staff

Paul Davison joins the staff this year. He has over 10 years experience as a consultant having previously worked with the firms Transport and Travel Research and AEA technology. He brings considerable experience of transport research, modelling, analysis, and business travel planning. He has undertaken many detailed analyses of the environmental impacts of transport and brings specialist expertise in consultation techniques and working with communities.

Philippa Davison (Paul's wife) will also be assisting us on a part time basis from the new year. Philippa was the travel plan officer at Oxfordshire County Council and introduced many innovative and successful approaches. Her "cycle trains" in addition to more established "walking buses" as part of safer routes to school schemes attracted widespread publicity. Philippa will also be continuing work with Youngtransnet.

Future Rural Transport

Our review of rural accessibility for the Scottish Executive was published in the Spring and concluded that current public transport trends were economically and socially unsustainable for rural communities. An increasing proportion of bus services are subsidised, and with rising car ownership and declining passenger numbers, the cost to the public purse of protecting lifeline services is growing.

Bus services and routes do not currently meet the needs or aspirations of the changing rural population. The first generation of people who have experienced mass car ownership all of their lives is currently approaching retirement and these people demand different things from rural public transport than their predecessors.

To tackle these rural accessibility problems, the research recommended that government should provide financial and professional support to develop more community based solutions. This will help local communities and businesses develop transport schemes which meet their needs whilst managing the trade-offs between rural lifestyles and accessibility.

DHC continues to work with Aberdeen University researching new appraisal tools for managing land use and transport change as part of current research largely funded by the Treasury.

We have also been commissioned jointly with Colin Buchanan and Partners to develop a rural transport Strategy for WESTRANS, the strategic partnership of Local Authorities in west central Scotland.