



Better public transport

Increase public transport usage by increasing services, integrating services and reducing fares

- *Introduce national travel cards, building on the success of the Oyster Card in London and the travel cards in other cities, to enable greater flexibility, choice and integration*
- *Provide more demand-responsive transport services to people living in rural and urban areas so that they can choose to travel sustainably.*

Regular, reliable, affordable and integrated public transport is crucial to achieving more sustainable travel in the UK in urban and, particularly, rural areas. Investing in affordable and reliable public transport that links into walking and cycling networks extends the opportunities to travel sustainably to all.

Questions and answers

Q. Isn't Public transport already highly subsidised by the government?

All public transport systems across the world require government investment, just as road networks do. [In 2007/2008 the Government subsidised the bus industry with £2.5 billion in England](#), which accounts for roughly 40% of the bus industry's total income. [While in 2008 government spent £7.2 billion on highways in England also](#). Although buses are used more than any other public transport option for local journeys their use has declined by 11% over the last decade.

Q. Won't reducing public transport fares make it impossible for the companies operating services to deliver good services?

Adequate levels of funding are required to operate public transport services in a way that encourages people to use them. A number of options are available to national and local government to generate additional funding to enable the lowering of fares. More public transport use will result in lower congestion and pollution, with wider savings and benefits for our economy and our health.

Q. Aren't travel smart cards like the London Oyster Card very expensive to set up and operate?

The London Oyster Card cost £100 million as a part of a 17 year contract when it was set up in 1998. Since its introduction, public transport journey times increased [and use of public transport has increased by 32%](#). A similar experience has been enjoyed in cities across Europe.

Q. Why do we need demand responsive transport services?

In rural and urban areas where it is not appropriate to invest in bus or rail infrastructure, often because the population is too spread out, a more flexible approach is necessary. [Areas within the UK and across Europe that have invested in flexible public transport](#) have enabled people to make a sustainable travel choice when required.



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Q. Aren't demand responsive services just cheap taxi services?

Access to transport is a key issue for many people. As individuals who do not have access to a car, either because they cannot afford one or for reasons related to ill-health, disability or age, are at a disadvantage in a society in which jobs, shops, health care and leisure facilities are planned and located on the assumption that everyone can drive. [Amongst the poorest fifth of households, those who do own cars spend nearly a quarter of their income on the cost of motoring. Sustainable travel choices are vital to enable access to essentially services, shops and employment.](#)

The following paper relates to both elements of this section

[Mackett, 2001 Policies to attract drivers out of their cars for short trips](#)

This paper examines the policies and personal actions that might attract motorists out of their cars and into the alternatives for short trips. The analysis is based on the results of surveys carried out on a project for the UK Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. According to the respondents, the most significant action to reduce the number of car trips would be to improve public transport.

Introduce national travel cards, building on the success of the Oyster Card in London and the travel cards in other cities, to enable greater flexibility, choice and integration

Evidence

[Thogersen, 2009 Promoting public transport as a subscription service: Effects of a free month travel card, Transport Policy, 16](#)

This article evaluates this method as a means to promote commuting by public transport in a field experiment and based on a solid behavioural–theoretical framework. By measuring important antecedents and mediators, the applied approach offers important insights not only on what behavioural outcomes were produced by the intervention, but why they were produced.

[FitzRoy & Smith, 1998 Public transport demand in Freiburg: why did patronage double in a decade? Transport Policy, 5](#)

The German city of Freiburg has experienced an enormous and unprecedented rise in the demand for local public transport since the early 1980s. This study investigates the causes of this dramatic increase in the popularity of both tram and bus use.

[Commission for Integrated Transport, 2009 Planning for Sustainable Travel: Public Subsidy for the Bus Industry: The Case for Incentive Per Passenger](#)

The focus for this analysis is the existing Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG, formerly Fuel Duty Rebate: FDR) dating back to the 1960s. BSOG is an uncapped payment system, administered centrally by the DfT to reimburse bus operators for some of the excise duty (approximately 80%) paid on fuel consumed. BSOG payments amounted to £413m in 2007/08 and have increased annually to take into account recent growth in bus mileage and reductions in the fuel efficiency of new buses, driven by legislative obligations regarding



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accessibility and emissions. More generally, public expenditure on bus services has increased by 34% between 2003/04 and 2007/08, and is currently £2.5 billion (2007/08). This is roughly 40% of the bus industry's total income

Besser & Dannenberg, 2005 Walking to public transit. Steps to help meet physical activity recommendations, *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 29

This study suggests that those who walk to and from public transport stops obtain an appreciable amount of daily transport-related physical activity (median of 19 minutes). This study also suggests that 29% of public transport walkers achieve 30 minutes of daily physical activity solely by walking to and from transport stops.

Sustrans information

TravelSmart has a strong track record in delivering significant and sustained travel behaviour change, helping to reduce the environmental, social and economic costs of transport. Detailed travel behaviour surveys before and after the Individualised Travel Marketing implementation provide robust evidence of reductions in car use, together with increases in walking, cycling and the use of public transport. The outcomes of the some recent large-scale TravelSmart projects can be found in the following reports:

[Worcester Interim Research Report 2006](#)

[Worcester Interim Research Report 2007](#)

[Peterborough Interim Research Report 2006](#)

[Peterborough Interim Research Report 2007](#)

[South Ribble Interim Research Report 2007](#)

[Torrisholme Interim Research Report 2007](#)

Policies from other organisations

[Stagecoach Group, 2003 Public transport offers the best environmental solution](#)

This document outlines the Stagecoach Group environmental policy.

Further reading

[Transport for London, 2007 London Travel Report 2007](#)

The London Travel Report is an annual compendium of statistics of travel and transport in London.

[Department for Transport, 2009 Public Transport Statistics Bulletin GB: 2009 edition](#)

This annual bulletin provides estimates of bus and light rail patronage for Great Britain and regions of England as well as other key variables for the bus, coach, taxi, and rail industries.



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Provide more demand responsive transport services to people living in rural and urban areas so that they can choose to travel sustainably

Evidence

Brake et al, 2004 Demand responsive transport: towards the emergence of a new market segment, *Journal of Transport Geography*, 12

This paper focuses on recent British experience with telematics-based Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services in rural areas. In recent years, the ability of DRT concepts to provide efficient, viable transport services has been greatly enhanced by the use of transport telematics as demonstrated in a variety of environments across Europe.

Baker & White, 2010 Impacts of free concessionary travel: Case study of an English rural region, *Transport Policy*, 17

Concessionary fares are offered to those aged 60 and over for bus travel in Britain. This study examines the effects of replacing a half-fare concession in England by free travel in April 2006.

Logan, 2007 Best practice demand-responsive transport (DRT) policy, *Road & Transport Research and Practice*

This paper presents recent demand-responsive transport research and seeks to identify public transport delivery trends and best practice planning and decision-making approaches. The research indicates that a change in policy focus can be consistent with improved public transport service delivery in regional areas and can enhance community prosperity, safety and lifestyle in rural and regional areas.

Policies from other organisations

Office of Deputy Prime Minister, 2003 Making the Connections: Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion

This report examines the links between social exclusion, transport and the location of services. It is particularly focused on access to those opportunities that have the most impact on life-chances, such as work, learning and healthcare.

Cabinet Office, 2009 An analysis of urban transport

This analysis reviews the challenges and opportunities for transport in urban areas. It finds that the impact of transport on the people that live and work in cities goes beyond the benefits of mobility and the economic consequences of congestion. Poor air quality, ill health and road accidents from transport in urban areas all impose significant additional costs on society. Transport also significantly contributes to the negative experiences of urban streets and public spaces.

Cabinet Office, 2009 The wider costs of transport in English urban areas in 2009

The estimates presented in this paper show that congestion, poor air quality, accidents and physical inactivity all impose costs of around £10 billion every year. Understanding the full



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range of impacts that transport has on urban areas is therefore vital for policy to deliver successful towns and cities.

Further reading

Scottish Government, 2006 Review of Demand Responsive Transport in Scotland

This report describes the findings of research commissioned by the Scottish Government to review evidence on Demand Responsive Transport delivery in rural and urban settings in Scotland.

Enoch et al, 2006 Evaluation of Demand Responsive Transport Services in Wiltshire

In 2006, Wiltshire County Council employed a research team from Loughborough University to evaluate Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services in the County and make recommendations as to how the County Council should proceed regarding its DRT services in the future.

Department for Transport & Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, 2004 INTERMODE: Innovations in Demand Responsive Transport

The purpose of this study was to look at the potential for Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) as an alternative public transport system in terms of market or demand niches, and from the viewpoint of the public authority and the commercial operator. It aims to determine how DRT might be developed to serve journeys that are not currently well served by public transport and explores why DRT has so far failed to make much impact, and how government and other public authorities might rectify this.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2004 Transport, Young People and Rural Areas

This report, written by members of the United Kingdom Youth Parliament, highlights how effective integrating public and local transport services can be in order to help everyone access essential services. This is particularly important in rural areas where public transport services are less frequent.

Commission for Rural Communities, 2009 Rural Accessibility: best practice case studies

This report shows the diverse ways accessibility planning is able to deliver a range of innovative ways to help improve access to a range of services for rural areas and features a detailed list of case studies where rural transport accessibility has been addressed.

Commission for Rural Communities, 2008 Thinking about rural transport: Rural life without carbon

This paper for the Commission for Rural Communities attempts to take a long-term view of sustainable rural transport provision. Throughout, it recognises that in order to understand how we might get to a sustainable future, it is helpful to consider what that future might be like.

The Rural Services Network, 2009 The Rural Services Manifest 2010 and Beyond

The manifesto calls on political parties to give a fair deal to those living in rural areas.