

NATIONAL RETAIL PLANNING FORUM RESEARCH GROUP

COMMISSIONING STATEMENT FOR A SCOPING PAPER ON IMPROVING ACCESS FROM TOWN CENTRE ARRIVAL POINTS TO KEY ATTRACTORS

The research group of the National Retail Planning Forum wishes to commission a scoping paper to explore how best to provide customers with access from arrival points to key attractors in town centres, especially the primary retail area.

To maintain and improve the competitiveness of town centres it is important to improve the ease, convenience, quality and attractiveness of routes from the arrival points, whether car parks, stations, bus stations/stops, or park-and-ride facilities, to the key attractions in the town centre.

The project should review strategies and projects undertaken to improve access to the key attractions from arrival points in town centres, using examples from the UK and elsewhere.

The objectives are:

- to understand what influences shoppers' behaviour in choosing their means of transport to use town centres
- to review and evaluate the effectiveness of measures taken to improve access from arrival points to key attractors in town centres
- to consider the nature of the arrival points and their impact on behaviour patterns (e.g. customer friendliness etc)
- to assess the potential effect these measures have on pedestrian flows in the centre and the overall use of the centre
- to consider the effect of the changing location of attractors and hence the need for flexibility
- to relate the findings to different levels in the urban hierarchy
- to identify areas for further research which will improve access from arrival points to key attractors in town centres, especially the primary retail areas.

The scoping paper will conclude:

- a literature review, outlining the contribution of past research to an understanding of the issues highlighted;
- an analysis of strengths and weaknesses in available knowledge of these issues amongst planning practitioners, retailers and other investors;
- an assessment of the effectiveness of planning policy in the context of these issues;
- recommended research priorities to address current policy weaknesses (including any relevant topics not already highlighted by the Steering Group); and

- recommended research methodologies for follow-up studies.

Full answers are clearly beyond the remit of scoping papers. The emphasis at this stage should be on determining the extent to which the issues raised in the statement of objectives *can* be answered, with an indication of how this might be achieved. Where the available information is limited, the practicality and priority of plugging information gaps should be considered.

The researchers appointed to undertake the scoping study should have specialist knowledge in the areas identified, and be prepared to offer their own considered views, as well as drawing on the views of others.

The commissioning of the scoping studies and their output will be monitored and reviewed by the Steering Group.

Improving Access from Town Centre Arrival Points to Key Attractors: Scoping paper

by
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I Introduction

The Centre for Transport Policy welcomes the National Retail Planning Research Forum's foresight, which has led to the development of this important study. The Centre for Transport Policy is unique in that all our employees share the same vision — that of working towards creating a sustainable and integrated transport environment. Our aim is to work alongside a wide range of organisations including the business sector, all levels of Government and the transport industry to progress this vision. On behalf of the Centre Professor George Hazel has undertaken the majority of this work and has been assisted by Marion Gourlay and Lex Harrison.

This scoping study has been prepared in response to the National Retail Planning Forum request to,

'explore how best to provide customers with access from arrival points to key attractors in town centres —with particular focus in the retail sector'.

The National Retail Planning Forum has identified several objectives:

- understand what influences shoppers' behaviour in choosing their means of transport to use town centres.
- review and evaluate the effectiveness of measures taken to improve access from arrival points to key attractors in town centres.
- consider the nature of the arrival points and their impact on behaviour patterns, for example customer friendliness.
- assess the potential effect these measures have on pedestrian flows in the centre and the overall use of the centre.
- consider the effect of the changing location of attractors and hence the need for flexibility.
- identify areas for further research which will improve access from arrival points to key attractors in town.

It has been recognised by the National Retail Planning Forum that to answer the above objectives is beyond the scope of this paper, however it has been our intention to ascertain if and how these objectives can be answered. In addition we have highlighted gaps in existing research which could ultimately lead to future research and where appropriate outlined other potential objectives.

2 Context

Firstly, we thought it was appropriate to establish the context of the scoping study in order to provide our interpretation of the brief. An individual's experience of a city has to start from the arrival point, if this experience is negative then this will have a direct impact. One Town Centre Manager succinctly makes the point:

"A classic example of a consumer issue is the treatment of car parks. They can be merely cash cows to local authorities and pawns of traffic management planners. But for businesses, they are the first impression for customers and visitors. If the car park is grotty, they bang on my door rather than the Council's to say they are not coming back".

Lydia Bowman, Cambridge City Centre Management.

To put it another way Jan Gehl, the renowned Scandinavian Urban Designer, when asked his views on the importance of routes from arrival points to town centres used the analogy of *"getting dressed up to go to the theatre then entering by the back door"* — **somewhat of a let down!**

Nowhere are the effects of transport, whether good or bad, more intensely felt than in our cities. The shape of our cities, the activities found there, the way we live and work, are determined to a very large extent by the ways in which transport has been planned or evolved. Transport can create opportunities for work, leisure, shopping and housing. But at the same time it can also lead to a deterioration of quality of life.

John Prescott, Minister for Environment, Transport and the Regions when launching the White Paper on the Future of Transport said "there was now a radical change in transport policy". He considered that the

Government's commitment to Transport was reflected in the White Paper and that he looked forward to working with companies, individuals, employees and local authorities to progress the vision.

As the Government seeks to take an increasingly tough stance on motor traffic, nowhere will this be felt more than in our Town Centres. However, if town centres are to remain competitive places to live, work and shop their vitality and viability need to be enhanced. One way they can compete effectively is to consider (as correctly recognised by the National Retail Planning Forum) improving the ease, convenience, quality and attractiveness of routes from arrival points in town centres to the key trip attractors.

The Transport White Paper encouraged local authorities to consider road user charging and work place charging. Some authorities are keen to test workplace charging or road tolls to cover costs for public transport improvements. However an emerging issue is that businesses feel 'in the dark' at the lack of information available to use in judging whether the potential benefits of an improved transport system justify their short term costs. In terms of routes from arrival points if a local authority was to introduce 'sticks' such as road user charging then this would certainly have an impact upon the nature and location of arrival points. For example a 'road user charging cordon' may lead car parking outside the cordon.

3 Methodology

This scoping paper has primarily involved a literature review together with several key player interviews with practitioners in the planning, retail and property development sectors. It has by no means been an exhaustive literature review, but we believe it has focused on the key issues. In summary we have employed the following methodology:

1. Literature review
2. Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of "available knowledge" amongst;
 - planning practitioners;
 - retailers; and,
 - investors
3. Assess the effectiveness of planning policy amongst professionals.

For the purpose of this study, we have set out the following list of arrival points:

- Car parks
- Rail stations
- Bus stations and stops
- Public transport interchanges
- Park and ride facilities
- Cycle parking facilities

As 'shopping activities' require individuals to get about on foot, we have for the purpose of this study, identified 'routes' from the above arrival points holistically as 'pedestrian environments'.

4 Literature review

In this scoping study our literature review was necessarily restricted by the study budget and the focus of the study on access between arrival points and key attractors. Our search concentrated on literature held by the Centre for Transport Policy, the Library of the Robert Gordon University and Internet databases accessible through the auspices of the University Library, including the Social Sciences Citation Index.

4.1 Main findings

Current research does not answer our specific objective of evaluating the effectiveness of transport measures to improve access from 'arrival points' to key trip attractors in town centres. Rather current research focus generally on town centre accessibility issues. When conducting the literature review it became clear that the issue of 'arrival points' has never been specifically tackled. The reader will later see that this view is reflected in the responses from the selected professionals we interviewed.

It is our view that future work may need to look beyond our traditional professional experience towards 'theme park' companies such as Disney in order to take lessons on viewing our towns and cities as 'cultural experiences'. It is not our view to turn our cities into theme parks, but to consider Disney's view of 'looking after' its visitors from beginning to end.

Firstly the available Planning Policy Guidance — PP6, PPG13 and NPPG8 does not single out the need to tackle 'arrival points'. This is certainly one reason why local authorities do not seem to have a programme for tackling routes from arrival points. Rather the Guidance generally advises local authorities to consider improving accessibility such as provision of park and ride facilities etc. Town Centre Management is also seen as having a key role to play in improving communication between the private and public sectors and also improving physical environment of shopping streets.

The Department of Environment in 1994 published a report entitled "*Vital and Viable Town Centres: Meeting the Challenge*" it identified *accessibility* as a key factor in order to maintain and enhance an urban centre. Increasing traffic levels can reduce accessibility through increased or unpredictable journey times resulting in shoppers deciding to travel elsewhere. In parallel major retailers are in many cases finding it more profitable to move out of town where access by car is easier. A major challenge in the future is how to redress the balance between car and non-car use whilst not driving consumers and business away from the town centre.

One of the most up to date and interesting studies we came across was commissioned by the British Council of Shopping Centres entitled *A Good Practice Guide: Sustainable Urban Centres in 1999*. This study involved a survey of the views of British Council of Shopping Centres' members and other key players on the Governments Transport White Paper initiatives. The main points emanating from this study found that:

- 80% welcomed the "carrot" policies, including improved interchange facilities, quality bus partnerships, fewer school journeys, green transport plans, improved facilities for pedestrian and cyclists.
- The "stick" policies of workplace parking levy and congestion charging was respectively favored by 42% and 28%.
- When asked their views on carrot v stick, respondents favored a ratio of 50:50 and 80:20 in favour of carrot.
- When asked views on the importance of improvements to the six main modes of transport, bus was favored by 80% of respondents. Bus was favored as having the greatest potential for every 'type' of town.
- Importance of maintaining the vitality and viability of town centres in order to attract businesses and individuals was also seen as important.
- As all journeys involve a walking stage it was considered improvements to pedestrian facilities can have a significant impact on town centre attractiveness.

This study identified many broad transport measures, which would increase the attractiveness of town centres, such as bus priority, increased provision for pedestrians and cyclists. However in terms of the detailed question of routes from town centre 'arrival points' this issue was not comprehensively tackled. The study questionnaire asked respondents how each individual mode of transport would enhance the vitality and economic viability of their area. Nevertheless, without specifically mentioning 'arrival point treatment', broad issues did emerge to suggest more provision for passenger facilities at park and ride sites. The report highlighted the success of the Ipswich park and ride facilities which have increased patronage by 42%, thus bringing more people into the town centre to shop.

The report for the British Council of Shopping Centres reveals much activity around the country, much of it dating before the Transport White Paper in 1998. These casestudy examples could be used to assess the potential effect that transport measures have on pedestrian flows in the town centre. But again these would not be specifically targeted at measures from 'arrival points'. The report points out that any adopted measures must be implemented consistently across regions, otherwise, people will bounce from centre to centre in search of the least restrictive one (or on a positive note we add the most attractive).

There exist plethora of studies, which highlight several recurring themes on issues effecting shopper's views on town centres. A report by the National Cycling Forum, DETR entitled 'Issues in Retailing' highlights that the quality of the retail environment is extremely important to the shopper. The report found that the main factors customers considered when choosing where to shop; were cleanliness of the environment, a pleasant environment and a convenient journey.

'Urban Access for Commerce' published by the South East England Development Agency, suggests that the dedication of routes into town centres for goods deliveries and buses could increase business. The report also

highlights the needs of couriers and those with delivery vehicles have trouble finding daily parking spaces.

'Sustainable Access to Town Centres', a report by Halcrow for the London Planning Advisory Committee, says that the space taken up by car parks in the capital's town centres can be freed for new development by initiating improvements in public transport and a fall in demand for parking.

'Transport Corridors: Blessing or Blind Alley?' by ARUP Planning for the Council for the Protection of Rural England and Friends of the Earth, suggests that many transport corridor plans are not receiving enough scrutiny to ensure they are integrated with high density housing and good quality public transport.

The Local Government Association has published a report setting out its views on how the Government can enable local authorities to push forward town centre improvement. Key points include:

- The need for a supportive framework in the Local Government Bill to create the conditions for local authority innovation in town centre improvement in partnership with business and the community.
- The need for more effective and efficient processes for implementing town centre strategies.
- Local authorities need to be able to raise resources and act quickly to aid investment in town centres, especially where the private sector is concerned.
- Recommendation that Town Improvement Zones should be made statutory, this reiterates the recommendation by the Urban Task Force.
- Streamlining the process; there is a need to boost local authorities in a more proactive way.
- Greater use of Supplementary Planning Guidance

En terms of shopper's behaviour, this paper only touches on this issue. We feel it is an issue which should not be ignored, but would advise that it be 'picked up' in the 'commissioned' research and should be tackled with more in-depth discussion with the industry and with consumers at large. All the major retailers will carry out their own customer profiling studies, which may be sought for future work.

5 Views from practitioners and organisations

Phil Noble, Senior Transport Planner, City of Edinburgh Council

Phil works in the policy side of transport planning for the Edinburgh City Council. At the moment Edinburgh does not have a specific strategy for improving access from town centre arrival points to key trip attractors. If there are examples of good practice in this area it has come about naturally rather than through a specific focus on arrival points. For example, Edinburgh does have an area-wide pedestrian strategy encompassing a large central area, within which exist (as defined by this study) 'arrival points' which have benefited from improved pedestrian accessibility such as priority at traffic lights, road narrowing and the creation of central island reservations. In addition the Council's Cycling Strategy has created many cycle parking sites adjacent to the retail outlets.

Brian Hermiston, Senior Partner, Montague Evans

Brian is a senior partner in the Property Development Group Montague Evans. He deals with local authorities on a regular basis in order to secure planning permission etc. He views current Planning Guidance as far too restrictive and considers that access by private motorised transport will be in demand by consumers so as long public transport provision remains inadequate. Planning Guidance should be more flexible to reflect different city contexts and consumer needs. Brian considers local authority planners should exercise their Compulsory Purchase Powers more regularly in order to secure the 'sequential approach' - to preferred town centre development.

Tim Lawson, DETR, Local Transport Plans Division (LTP)

Tim works in the Local Transport Plan Division at the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions. His job involves the assessment of LTPs and the promotion of the Guidance issued to Local authorities on the preparation of LTPs. Tim did not recall any LTP submissions, which tackled the issue of 'arrival points' specifically. In terms of the Guidance itself: it does not single out this issue.

Chris Roland, ED! Group -Edinburgh Property Company owned by the Council

Chris has wide experience in town centre management from both the UK and North America. Chris pointed out that very few local authorities in the UK have detailed development plans specifically for their town centres. This makes it difficult to assess whether local authorities consider arrival points to town centres as meriting special attention. Chris also highlighted that 'Town Improvement Zones' should be made statutory, these could create

the opportunity to integrate 'arrival points' thinking into a town centre plan.

Duncan Sutherland, Association of Town Centre Managers

Duncan is involved in policy development for the Association of Town Centre Managers. He also runs his own economic development company. Duncan finds current Planning Policy Guidance useful, he will always use the 'sequential' test when preparing development opportunities. Duncan does not recall any specific studies which have looked into the issue of 'arrival points', seeing it as an area which certainly is worth attention.

Brian McLeish, Senior Partner, Wetherall Green and Smith (Property Developers)

Brian is a Planner and Land Economist Surveyor for a major London based property developer. Much of his work involves re-development of major land uses. He considers that current Planning Policy Guidance gives a good steer on Government thinking. He did highlight that confusion exists between the English and Scottish Guidance — especially in the definition of 'town centre' in Scotland and a 'primary shopping centre in England.

Association of Town Centre Management

The ATCM believes that any new transport scheme should satisfy the following objectives:

- Positively affects congestion within the town centre.
- That the need for the scheme can be clearly and accurately measured.
- Achieves clear and realistic objectives within a defined budget.
- Represents value for money.
- Contributes to town centres' viability as competitive locations.
- Achieves agreed and shared objectives.

An article in the Financial Times in January 2000 claimed that developers and retailers in some areas accused the Government of "hampering business growth" by failing to act consistently in planning decisions and support infrastructure improvements on brownfield sites. Critics highlight that confusion about Government planning guidelines is resulting in investment decisions being delayed. Richard Anderson, corporate affairs Manager at Tesco, was quoted as saying "I think the guidelines generally are over complicated..., it is obviously frustrating when you are trying to get developments underway and to create jobs and investments, although we do understand there have to be regulations. We would like to see regional powers extended so that more decisions can be made locally.

Summary of emerging issues from the literature review and key player interviews.

- **Existing Guidance does not** advise on the treatment of 'arrival points' to town centres.
- **Very few** local authorities have detailed development plans specifically for their town centres let alone arrival points to town centres!
- Lack of detail in 'existing guidance'.
- Existing Planning Guidance is causing delays in development decisions.
- Lack of detailed knowledge of shoppers behaviour
- Importance of developing partnerships between public and private sectors.
- Development of a Town Centre Strategy to include 'arrival points'.
- Role of Town Centre Managers
- Major cities have grabbed attention over traffic congestion for the simple reason that the traffic congestion and pollution **are so obvious. But there** are **many** towns in the UK where the juggling act between economic health and social welfare are just as critical.
- Marketing Town Centres including how to get there.
- Information on transport to and from town centres.
- Promoting development opportunities around arrival points
- Increasing variety of facilities at arrival points
- Quality public spaces for waiting — shopping encompasses much more than buying. Social interaction plays an important role in this process for example meeting people, talking and people-watching!
- Improving pedestrian environment
- Shop front improvements
- Improving safety

6 Lessons from existing UK experience

As mentioned in the literature review, there are **existing UK towns and cities, which have taken steps to improve accessibility**. Key lessons on improving access whilst maintaining a **vibrant economy can be learnt**.

Leeds

Congestion and pollution are part of the fabric of big cities such as Leeds, perhaps this is why it is keen to progress radical solutions such as road user charging. According to the WSP's Good Transport Guide, Leeds recognised that transport was integral to the town centre. Its strong public/private partnership approach and succession of improvements has meant that the Leeds approach has been widely copied.

Oxford

Historical towns such as Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh have unique problems in that they have ancient street patterns and large numbers of tourists. Oxford began a park-and-ride scheme some 26 years ago and has expanded and improved on it ever since. Marcus Laphorn, Oxford's city centre manager, said that the scheme is proving very popular, "we provide stress free journeys". The car parks have security staff that meet the evening buses and deal with any problems the motorists may encounter. There is also a rest room at the car park.

Ipswich

This town has introduced 'Real Time Information' at bus stops, which reduces the frustrating problem of 'uncertainty of when a bus will arrive'. This is done with the use of a satellite link, information is provided at bus stops informing people when the next bus is due. Buses run every 10 minutes and improvements are continuous.

Cambridge

An historic town which is also one of the fastest growing areas in UK. With traffic expected to grow by 25% by 2016 planners have spent the last couple of years introducing restrictions to the private car. In the future more radical decisions will have to be made.

Taunton

Buoyant centre of 60,000 people. It like many other medium sized towns is torn between restrictions on private car and the need to maintain competition with other regional centres for the 280,000 potential shoppers in its catchment. The local authority has introduced some restrictions, with a cordon around the central area controlled by parking charges. These are also proposals for 2 park and ride sites and three new rail stations.

Croydon

A thriving business centre, Croydon has developed measures for a sustainable transport policy ranging from bus lanes and parking restrictions to directing development towards transport nodes. Balancing economic demands with environmentally friendly measures is a key element. Consultants WSP's **comprehensive** national study of transport initiatives noted **the** importance the local authority placed on collaboration with the private sector.

7 Conclusion and recommendations for future research

We noted earlier that we had uncovered **very little work directly addressed to the topic of** arrival point accessibility. Nevertheless we are **aware** that **the topic is considered by planning practitioners** in the course of town centre planning and urban design activities. A **more** extensive, broader ranging, literature search could well prove fruitful in uncovering studies and reports relevant to the question of arrival point accessibility and related topics.

We therefore recommend that the initial stage of any further research is a comprehensive literature review. Examining topics such as the design of transport interchanges and termini, traffic management schemes, car parking policies and car **park design**, urban **design (including** pedestrian malls, precincts and other pedestrian facilities). The review would also usefully address issues such as modal choice, personal security. Non-traditional sources of information including the role of "Place Marketing" in overseas countries, the "Disney" experience on customer service and the experience in the USA of Business improvement districts should be included. We also believe that the experience of Tourist Board and the tourist industry in general has much to offer and these sources should be tapped for information.

The review should also explore existing National Transport and Planning Policies/ Guidance in detail with a view to recommending additions to future guidance revisions. It may be appropriate to investigate the possibility of

producing a Planning Advisory Note (PAN) in conjunction with the Royal Town Planning Institute. Other Institutes may also find it helpful to produce guidance for their members.

In summary, the literature review should also consider 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' sources of information including topics such as:

- Design of transport infrastructure especially at the 'trip end' including interchanges and car parks.
- Traffic management schemes including pedestrianisation.
- Urban design and the role of Place Marketing — lessons from other countries.
- The 'Disney' Experience on customer service.
- International Experience USA experience of Business Improvement Districts.
- **The role** of Tourist Boards in town centre improvement.
- National Transport and Planning Policy
- Existing Transport and Planning Guidance

Completion of a broad ranging literature review of this kind is likely to cost in the region of £6000 - £8000. A time-scale of perhaps up to four months would be appropriate.

The completion of the literature review will provide a natural hold point of the research and allow a redefinition of the focus of the remainder of the research. However it is clear from this scoping study that a more detailed examination of existing practice will form an important element of the research. We therefore recommend two approaches to examine existing practice. Firstly, we propose a survey of practitioners involved in the planning and development of town centres and associated transport facilities. The survey would be a formal postal self-completion survey, but would be preceded by personal semi-structured interviews with a limited number of decision-makers. The interviews would provide information upon which to define the scope and language of the questionnaires. A budget of £12,000 to £15,000 should provide sufficient information for the study objectives.

The second approach to the examination of existing practice would link to the practitioner survey and would involve the detailed examination of a number of case study sites throughout the UK. These case studies **would** be identified through the earlier survey and literature review and would aim to understand how the approaches of individual towns to transport and urban design has impacted upon the accessibility of town centres and the relationship between arrival points and **key** attractors. **The** study **should** form views on the best practice, and identify promising initiatives that could be pursued to improve access. A budget of £10,000 might be considered appropriate for this stage of the study

All of the above recommendations focus on the roles of professional planners and decision takers in the town centre context. But of course it is individual shoppers who are the real potential beneficiaries of improvements in town centre access. We therefore recommend a fourth stage of the research, namely a social / market research study to better understand consumer and visitor attitudes and priorities on town centre design and accessibility. We believe there is some merit in undertaking this exercise only after the completion of the earlier stages of the study. **This would allow the comparative assessment of consumer** views, on the ground, of the various approaches to access arrangements and design that had been highlighted in the earlier **work. A combination of focus groups** and hall tests would be an appropriate approach. These would allow the surveys to concentrate on specific local features and issues relevant to the overall study objectives. The surveys would also allow the examination of novel approaches to urban design and arrival point accessibility. Importantly the focus groups would enable the examination of underlying issues and concerns, which must be taken account of to assure successful design and change in the town center, access arrangements. A budget of £50,000 - **£60,000 would be appropriate for this stage of** the work.

In conclusion the study team are not aware that any work to date has been carried out to investigate the issue of routes from arrival points to key trip attractors in the town centre. It is an issue, which should not be ignored. Towns and cities need to 'unpack' the issues they seek to address into 'manageable' strategies. For example having a policy to 'improve town centre accessibility' is very well and good, however this needs to be 'achievable' one method of doing this is prioritising several key areas to be tackled. The aim of future research should be to highlight the importance of prioritising routes from arrival points to town centres.

In summary, we recommend that the way forward for future research should include the following:

- **An in-depth literature review.**

- A survey of practitioners involved in the planning, development and transport. This should also include members of the Association of Town Centre Managers.
- A selection of 'casestudy' sites within towns/cities throughout the UK to understand a town/city's approach to transport and how this has an impact on the access of town centres, specifically from arrival points to key trip attractors. The outcome should aim to highlight best practice initiatives or measures.
- A survey of consumer attitudes on routes from arrival points should aim to tackle how to remedy the 'bad experiences'. Customer profiling data from major retailers should be sought.

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APPENDIX

A bout the Centre for Transport Policy

The Centre for Transport Policy is not a traditional transport consultancy, nor is it a traditional university research establishment, we have the unique ability of combining many areas of expertise. As the name suggests we have developed an expertise in much policy-orientated work. The Centre embraces the following areas consultancy, research and conferences. If awarded, the benefits The Centre for Transport Policy can bring to the project include;

- *Transport expertise and enthusiasm;* all our staff are actively involved in current transport policy development. Our Director, Professor David Begg is Chair of the Commission for Integrated Transport and was a member of the advisory panel on the Transport White Paper. The National Transport Forum for Scotland and several other DETR, Scottish Office and Professional/Institutional Working Groups.
- *Consuliancy;* this arm of The Centre is led by Professor George Hazel Current clients include The DETR, The European Commission, FirstGroup and Local Government.
- *Research;* The Centre is formally part of the Faculty of Management at the Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen. Dr Andrew Forster and Dr David Gray lead the Research arm of The Centre. Much of the project work undertaken by the research arm is jointly run with the consultancy. Current work includes research on School Transport for a major public transport operator.
- *Events/conferences/seminars;* The Centre organises several high profile transport and transport related conferences and seminars throughout the year including the UK Chairs of Transport Conference. The purpose of these events is to educate and inform decision-makers.
- *Contacts database;* consisting of a wide range of national and international contacts in central and local government, economic development agencies, transport providers and business in general.

In order to embrace the Government's vision of integration, The Centre is keen to work alongside industry, National Organisations, Government Departments and other private and public sector organisations. We recognise that in order to achieve change, we must look for solutions beyond the transport field. For example, current work we are undertaking on the 'children's transport to school' issue will involve the Department of Education.

The Centre for Transport Policy is based within Faculty of Management within the Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen. The Centre is located in Edinburgh.