



Recently completed projects

Development of Accessibility Modelling in Cheshire

Review of Travelwise Activities in Merseyside

Zebra Crossing Assessments in West Lothian

Transport and Rural Economies

Developing Demand Responsive Transport on Merseyside

Edinburgh Airport Rail Link Economic and Location Impact Appraisal, and Accessibility and Social Inclusion Appraisal

Scottish Household Survey Topic Report - Accessibility

Review of Patient Transport Works Project

Public Transport Accessibility Mapping for Forresterhill Interchange

Review of Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) for Community Transport

Making Connections

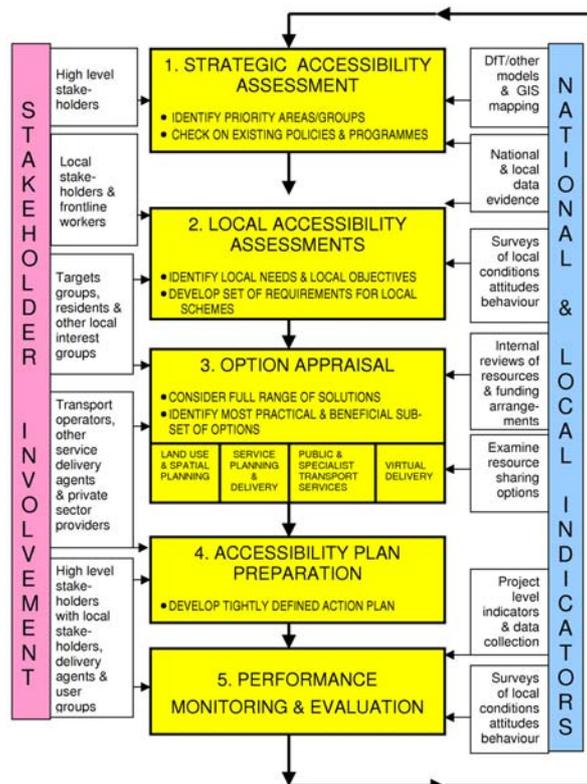
In this newsletter we focus on integration and what it really means to users of public transport. Recent DHC projects have dealt with different aspects of integration, including: personalised support for travellers through multi-agency working; joint delivery of transport and economic development; closing gaps in networks through demand responsive transport delivery; and building a better evidence base for integrated decision making. The clear message from all these projects is that integration becomes achievable if the focus is on the needs of people and businesses, with projects receiving funding from multiple sources. The projects demonstrate practical ways to make the connections.

Partnership Culture for Accessibility Planning

Although the focus for transport planners has historically been on financial and operational aspects of integration, delivery has been weak. Much more promising delivery is now being achieved on policy integration often through new joint working frameworks such as accessibility planning, health improvement programmes, and social inclusion partnerships. By overcoming the policy barriers, the new partnership structures are also helping to facilitate more effective delivery of integration between modes and with land uses.

To discuss these issues, 50 people from Local Authorities, Transport Partnerships, Strathclyde Passenger Transport, Scottish Executive, Universities and Consultants attended a briefing session by DHC, MVA and Steer Davies Gleave at Langs Hotel in Glasgow in April. The presentations explained the development of accessibility planning and the current challenges in Scotland.

Although accessibility planning as a concept is not new, in the past it has proved to be too difficult to overcome joint working barriers. Best practice is underpinned by partnership working, and experience shows that a strong evidence base and joint resourcing can deliver improvements on difficult agendas such as integrated socially necessary transport services and planning the locations of new hospitals.



New transport planning approaches require new ways of working, and delegates discussed current challenges resourcing accessibility planning and new ways of engagement with partnerships between consultants and public authorities.

The presentations can be down loaded from www.dhc1.co.uk.

Guidance on accessibility planning is at www.accessibilityplanning.gov.uk and www.within-reach.org.uk.

Transport and the Economy

There have been many conceptual reviews of the relationship between transport and the economy, but it is not always clear to decision makers, within economic development agencies and transport authorities, how they can best invest in transport to support economic development. For major schemes, national guidance on economic impact reporting and locational impacts increasingly emphasises the need to look at each sector separately and ensure that both positive and negative impacts are considered. For small schemes there is often little appraisal, yet the cumulative effect of many small schemes often exceeds that of the major infrastructure projects.

Recent work for the Countryside Agency by DHC in association with Napier University sought to identify a more comprehensive framework for considering relationships between transport and economic development in rural areas. Using case studies across England, in conjunction with relevant data and literature, a framework was identified for considering economic impacts from small schemes such as Wheels to Work to large projects including major road improvements.

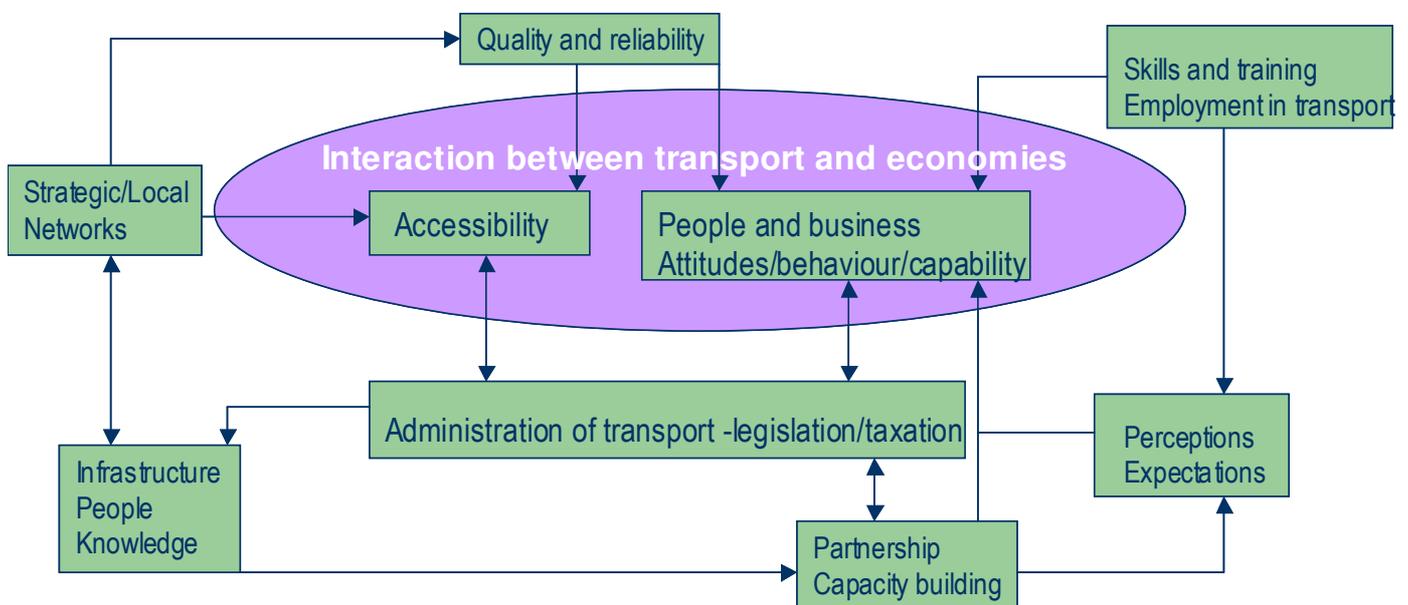
The work concluded that relationships between transport and rural economies are defined both by accessibility and by the capacity and skills of people and businesses. Key factors influencing these relationships are:

- Infrastructure, people and knowledge networks
- Quality and reliability of service provision
- Skills and training
- Culture and expectations
- Legislation, administration and taxation.

Whilst efficiency in urban areas can more often benefit from economies of scale, in rural areas there are relatively greater benefits from widening the scope of service delivery. However this requires better joint working between firms, and public agencies than has been common practice in the past.

The research identified that there are key challenges to resolve in rural areas that are not necessarily receiving the attention they deserve. These include:

- More Freight Quality Partnerships are needed to raise quality and reliability standards for couriers, which is of crucial importance to many of the small and cottage businesses that define the growing economy of rural areas.
- Local road congestion problems need to be taken seriously. Local authorities often perceive that urban congestion is greater and focus attention there, but this is distorting the balance between local and strategic accessibility.
- The balance between transport investment and rural development should recognise changing patterns of activity and ensure consistency between land use patterns and infrastructure supply. Quiet roads and attractive environments in rural areas can be perceived as underutilised economic resources to exploit, but this can undermine rural economies if new development does not cover its full internal and external costs, including those for transport infrastructure.
- More and better partnership approaches are needed to improve the quality and reliability of transport services.
- Spreading best practice: Innovative initiatives have often been funded on an experimental project basis but the transfer of these into widespread mainstream practice remains slow. Action is needed to provide incentives for cross-sectoral projects.
- New people, knowledge and training networks are needed in rural areas which are relevant to the modern national and global economy, and there is a need to recognise changing patterns of service delivery and link into developing economic structures and supply chains.



How Much Demand Responsive Transport is Needed?

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) is increasingly being viewed as a way to serve journeys and market niches that are not currently well served by conventional public transport. Many high profile DRT 'pilot projects' have been introduced across the UK in recent years, often receiving significant start up funding from the national government, with aims to reduce social exclusion and develop more sustainable modes of transport. Although some schemes involve innovative approaches there is nothing new about DRT as a concept. Non-emergency patient transport by the ambulance service; provision by local authority social services and education departments; and the community transport (CT) sector have a long history of operating services on a demand responsive basis. In addition, taxis and community car schemes are also part of the wide spectrum of DRT services.

So how does an authority decide how much DRT is needed and do we know what services are running at present? Questions such as these have been at the centre of recent projects which DHC has undertaken for clients such as the Scottish Executive, DfT and Merseytravel. Existing DRT services meet a wide variety of needs and markets, and it is important to build from the wealth of experience already in existence in operating DRT services. However there are also new opportunities from increasingly sophisticated technology and within new administrative frameworks to increase joint working. The Audit Commission report Going Places identified many opportunities for joint delivery of DRT to yield considerable cost savings in service delivery and DRT can allow significantly better accessibility and network coverage than fixed time and route public transport services.

In Merseyside, the accessibility planning process was a key driver towards joint working. By looking at the coverage of the supported bus service network, jointly with existing DRT services such as the Joblink service for access to work and door to door services for persons with a mobility impairment, integrated service delivery options could be identified. In Scotland the Scottish Executive has funded many pilot DRT schemes that involve different aspects of innovation. Some of these are provided in the community transport sector and one of the problems across the UK is that current CT provision is patchy with patterns of service operation not often known by the transport planners seeking to achieve wider integration.

A particular challenge is to maintain public transport provision in rural areas as car ownership continues to grow, and DRT can provide a better value approach than continuing to increase levels of support for fixed route services. However managing the culture change that this



involves for users is important for successful DRT delivery.

Procurement methods for DRT can also help to support integration aims. Existing schemes are run in house by local



authorities or other public agencies or by bus companies, taxi operators and community transport operators. New DRT services have helped taxi firms to enter into public transport market, with Highland, Midlothian, Aberdeenshire and Fife Councils all contracting DRT services to taxi companies.

A clear understanding is required of the purpose and market that needs to be served in advance of introducing a DRT service. Experience shows that if DRT is provided in inappropriate locations then major problems can arise. DRT usually has longer journey times and lower capacities than fixed route services, but this is balanced by higher frequencies and wider network coverage. Some high profile DRT services have failed when the balance between these parameters has not been stable.

The costs of service operation need to be considered in relation to the needs of the people being served and the geographical location of operation. Transport costs for people with high care needs are greater as are costs for remote areas. DRT can be the best value solution in many situations, delivering wider network coverage, social inclusion and integration aims. It is important also to consider the costs of a call centre to manage trip requests.

There is now sufficient experience to ensure that well planned DRT services can play an increasing role. However the market niches for DRT cannot be defined without looking at transport provision as a whole.

DHC is preparing detailed guidance on DRT provision for the Scottish Executive and this should be published later in the year.

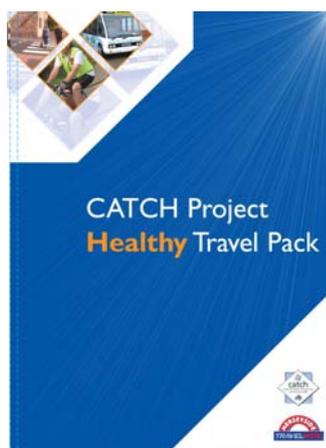
How Much does Personalised Travel Planning and Individualised Marketing Cost?

There is increasingly widespread application of personalised travel planning within the UK but these approaches can be very expensive to administer and it is important to ensure that value for money is optimised within delivery. DHC research for DfT in 2004 noted that partnership building was an essential component in building trust, developing and effective dialogue and ensuring value for money and sustainability.

For example Jobcentreplus and health practitioners already work at an individual level with their clients, and the marginal additional cost of personalised travel planning is small. However partnership working to deliver joint goals can also be expensive, so in some instances it is more efficient for single sector engagement between transport providers and users.

Since the autumn of 2004 DHC has been helping Merseytravel deliver a major individualised marketing pilot scheme. The pilot has support from the EU, and Merseytravel has assembled a consortium within the CATCH (Clean Accessible Transport for Community Health) project which has an air quality and health focus. The work is:

- ◆ Promoting sustainability by working with local people at a one to one and group level starting from their current understanding of the issues and seeking personal solutions to build lasting behaviour change.
- ◆ Adopting a partnership based approach in Liverpool, including with transport operators Arriva and Merseyrail, to help tackle the problems currently faced by travellers.
- ◆ Targeting action at air quality improvements by looking at the travel patterns of individuals and their "environmental footprint" on the local environment.
- ◆ Improving local health by providing local people with information on the health impacts of their travel choices including stress and exercise levels.



The work has sought to target car users that already have public transport choices available, and to manage behaviour change through a developing "dialogue". Delivery of integrated transport depends on users identifying the benefits of more walking, cycling and public transport use on themselves and their local environment so the work is seeking to assess what types of information are perceived as relevant within the new dialogue.

Diversity within the population means that there are some people who are already looking to make better choices and simply need prompting and support to help them achieve this. Therefore the individualised approach can be inexpensive or very expensive to implement depending on the target groups and the choice of interventions.

Pedestrian Crossing Assessments

Between January and March 2005 DHC surveyed a number of pedestrian crossings in West Lothian to:

- Assess road safety problems
- Survey vehicle speeds
- Measure delays to pedestrians and vehicles
- Review implications for future pedestrian crossing provision at the surveyed locations and for pedestrian crossing policy.

Using video surveys of each crossing, driver and pedestrian behaviour was analysed. This has allowed the Council to clarify the benefits and disbenefits of each type of crossing.

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New DHC Office

With continuing expansion of DHC we have moved to new offices in Edinburgh's West End. By centralising staff within one office we are able to ensure effective project management of multi-disciplinary teams at a location two minutes walk from Haymarket station.

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