

# YHTAR Focus

## Newsletter of Yorkshire and the Humber Transport Activists' Roundtable

Issue 14, February 2004

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the way to go for transport  
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**YHTAR AGM &  
Trans Pennine Transport  
Seminar  
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SEE ENCLOSED LEAFLET  
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### Bingley By-Pass - The Aire Valley Motorway Reinvented?

*Vice-Chair, Colin Speakman, airs his views on a controversial new road.*

Just before Christmas our TV screens were filled with images of the MP for Shipley, Chris Lesley, at the unofficial "early" opening of an empty Bingley by-pass. These pictures were contrasted against archive footage of the Aire Valley Motorway Inquiry of the 1970's when environmentalists - some still active in YHTAR - and local residents, including a clergyman, were being ejected from the inquiry by burly policemen.

It's sobering to think that those protests were taking place in 1970 and the by-pass is a leftover from that 'predict and provide' scheme. No doubt Chris Lesley truly believes that the three mile long, £48 million urban highway, (costing exactly as much per mile as the "grossly overpriced" West Coast main railway line reconstruction) will indeed permanently remove pollution, accidents, and traffic congestion from Bingley Main Street. Unfortunately it will encourage the growth of these problems elsewhere in Airedale. With an election perhaps 18 months way, no doubt Chris hopes that his championing of the by-pass will influence voters in his constituency, even if people disillusioned with other transport and environment failures stay at home or vote for other parties.

Initially, of course, there has been a huge improvement. There will be euphoria as the traffic hell in Bingley town centre will, for the time being, disappear. So were the protesters wrong?

In fact the Bingley by-pass is a piece of disastrous 1960s "predict and provide" transport planning. It is essentially a high capacity, high speed radial road into a city centre which will be a major generator of new car and lorry traffic, both into Bradford or as a short cut for long distance car commuters and lorries between the Dales, the A65 and the M62. Drivers will be soon boasting that the M62 is now "only 20 minutes away" from Skipton.

As most people who travel down Airedale only ever drive down the valley, they will not be aware of the visual impact of the four lane carriageway on huge concrete stilts crossing the last few open spaces in the valley. They will believe the Highways Agency when told that Bingley South Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest will be "unaffected" by being under the shadow of a major road. They will be unaware that quiet conversation and birdsong will be a thing of the past, day or night, within several hundred metres of the new highway, including places such as Five Rise Locks and Hurst Woods, lost in a huge roaring traffic noise envelope that will echo

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*(Bingley By-Pass Continued from page 1)*

from each side of the valley. There will also be yet more ugly industrial warehousing and sheds as can already be seen around Crosshills and Skipton, with the massive loss of green belt.

But even if these subjective and emotional issues are swept aside, the brutal truth is that in transport terms the Bingley by-pass won't actually work.

In flat contradiction of the Government's own environmental and transport policies, the new road will, at least in the short term, result in modal switch away from rail and bus to car, as, instead of parking at Skipton or Steeton stations, a percentage of rail commuters, will drive rather than use the train because they will believe the major bottleneck has been removed. Car dependency will be increased as time savings are perceived. But within a year things will change as peak traffic tails back, as it inevitably will, from Cottingley Bar both along the new by-pass and onto the present A650 from Bingley town centre.

Safety? Expect within the next few months the first fatalities as speeding vehicles along the 80 mph road, especially motor cycles, shunt into traffic queues trying to creep get onto the A650 at Saltaire.

Environment? Expect total traffic along the by-pass to grow around 5%-6% per annum for the first few years - twice as fast as the national average - as long distance commuters buy properties around the edge of the Dales, and with rail fares rising faster than inflation, travel to work or shopping by car. Expect air quality throughout Airedale to decline as many more trucks and cars pound their way, day and night along the new highway through the narrow sided valley, a natural trap for polluting exhaust fumes and noise. Expect cases of asthma among Airedale children to increase significantly as overall air quality worsens.

Within a decade the word "notorious" will be attached to the Aire Valley Urban Motorway (the difference between an urban motorway and a "relief" road is mere semantics) as gridlock hits



Cottingley, Shipley and even back again into Bingley as cars and even lorries begin to rat-run back through the town centre, as they already do in

Skipton, Kendal and other "by-passed" towns. True there will be less heavy lorries through Bingley town centre (and that is to be welcomed), but only if weight restrictions are legally imposed. Already there is talk about a Saltaire by-pass. Fortunately, UNESCO has already declared Saltaire village and its surroundings to be a World Heritage Site.

This means that a four lane super highway across Roberts Park will not happen; cue for the brilliant concept of a Saltaire Tunnel, currently estimated to cost £125m. Aware of the controversy that will cause, even the Highways Agency admits that is at least ten years away - i.e. let's wait until the situation is a complete nightmare and we'll then get our own way.

And what happens to the traffic even then? A high level bridge and grade separated interchange over Shipley to avoid the inevitable grid lock? Demolish more of Shipley and Bradford to ensure that Jeremy Clarkson drive-a-likes can reach the new eight-lane M62 without a change of gear?

It is of course the transport equivalent of the mad-house, the car culture and its proponents transforming urban West Yorkshire into a mini-Los Angeles to permit ever faster car travel at whatever human or environmental cost. World energy shortages and global pollution, together with related economic fall-out resulting from our profligate obsession with personal mobility will rapidly bring new political and economic scenarios that young Chris Lesley cannot begin to comprehend.

Sustainable Future? Forget it. Among the popular press and most politicians the myopia is absolute. The environment doesn't even register in the current political debate. But one absolute truth is that in the fairly near future the environmental issues most certainly will. And what is happening along the Airedale corridor will be a fairly clear indicator of some of the disasters that lie ahead.

## An Aviation Policy Riddled with Inconsistencies

*Anthony Rae looks beneath the surface of the new, and completely unsustainable, air transport policy.*

In the week before 16th December 2003, civil servants in the Department for Transport pulled out of a drawer the Air Transport White Paper (ATWP) they had essentially written five years earlier, and sent it to the printers. Despite the intervening period of studies, consultations etc etc, they only needed to rearrange the order in which new runways in the South East are to be provided. Apart from that it was: expansion everywhere, with no restraint; and everything the industry asked for!

Seeing that the ATWP is meant to provide the long-term planning framework for the next 30 years, how sound is the analysis on which it is based? In fact at every level it seems full of inconsistencies.

For example, how do you reconcile the clear (and encouraging) statement that: "We have to recognise that simply building more and more capacity to meet potential demand would have major, and unacceptable, environmental impacts, and would not be a sustainable approach." [ATWP 2.14] with the fact that the ATWP is supporting increased capacity to provide for 470 million passengers per annum (mppa) by 2030, against a central demand forecast of 500mppa? That is, providing capacity for 94% of forecast demand.

The government have emphatically maintained that this approach is not 'predict and provide'; yet their own figures appear to contradict this. And if 'P and P' had been replaced by the newer concept of 'plan-monitor-manage', why did they sanction all the capacity increase at the very start of the planning period?

A planning framework is meant to provide stability, not just for the industry, but the communities affected by it as well. But the government's categorical rejection of applying the principle of demand management to air travel ("The Government does not accept that it should seek to manage demand beyond what is required by the principle that the polluter should pay and that aviation should meet its external costs, including environmental costs." [EAC], combined with their determination to leave the subsequent airport development process entirely in the hands of their owners and operators, means that there is virtually no restraint on their ability to bring forward a rolling programme of development proposals whenever they want.

One of Alistair Darling's objections to demand management, by the way, is that it would 'price people off' airplanes (this is not factually true, as it happens); but this does not stop him supporting rail and bus policies that do exactly that to genuinely deprived people (unlike air travellers) who have to use these modes every day.

It is when you combine the proposals of the ATWP with the provisions of the Planning Bill for regional spatial strategies and local development frameworks, and also for the treatment of major infrastructure projects, that the position becomes increasingly insidious. Despite recent reassurances in the House of Lords that objectors will still be able to question the principle of airport developments at public inquiries, it seems that the government have already created an unstoppable conveyor belt that will prevent airport proposals being challenged effectively at any stage of the planning process. So much for a reasonable and democratic planning system.

On climate change, the government position is extraordinary. Having finally conceded that soaring aircraft emissions "could amount to about a quarter of the UK's total contribution to global warming" by 2030 [ATWP 3.35] they then blithely assert that "reduction in greenhouse gas emissions across the economy does not, however, mean that every sector is expected to follow the same path" [3.37]. No attempt is made to explain why air transport needs to be privileged in this way; or why every other sector of the economy and society will need to face additional carbon restraint in order to permit air traffic growth. Some vague promises are made about including aviation in carbon trading schemes, but even non-environmental commentators have greeted these with scepticism.

In the end, this 'long-term' aviation policy and airport development programme will fall to pieces under the weight of its own contradictions and inconsistencies, in exactly the same way that the 1989 Roads programme had to be ignominiously withdrawn just 6 years later. But this will prove to be a much tougher fight for two reasons: the aviation industry is entrenched at every level of decision-making (including regionally and locally); and secondly because the government will not itself be paying for the airport development programme. Just the huge transport, housing and social infrastructure costs that will accompany it!

## **Leadership in Transport**

*Bus Campaign Coordinator Ray Wilkes reports from York's "Leadership in Transport" conference.*



York was awarded Centre of Excellence in Transport status by the government in 2001. The award recognises work in promoting cycling and developing Park & Ride services and comes with a duty to help other authorities learn from York's experiences in these areas.

Bill Woolley, Assistant Director, Transport and City Development, City of York welcomed and introduced the conference. Park-and-Ride has removed 1 million cars per annum out of the city centre. There has been a seventeen percent increase in bus use over two years and a 30 per cent increase in pedestrian travel in three years. There are now a hundred kilometres of cycleway. Car use is down through school travel plans. York transport funding has been increased by 900 per cent. It is a long-term project with good partners and a good team of transport planners with innovative ideas.

Martin Revill, Head of Transport Planning, talked about the development and delivery of an award-winning local transport plan. York has the biggest pedestrian zone in northern Europe. Cycling has a good history. Park-and-ride developed from small beginnings in the 1980s. Footways have been widened and they have had good partners, including Sustrans and First York. They have a pedestrian and cyclist training scheme. They have a constructive self-criticism process utilising staff from outside the LTP process. The local transport plan was about the quality of life.

Professor David Begg gave the keynote speech, 'the politics of delivering transport policy'. He pointed out that the politics of transport were very difficult even though the policy decisions needed were fairly simple. Planners needed to make policies easier

for politicians (and maybe transport campaigners need to do the same [RW]). He talked about the relentless pressure from the media, for example in London when traffic lights were changed to improve pedestrian safety, this was reported as a congestion charge scam. Safety cameras receive a bad press even though they save lives. Each year child road deaths are the equivalent of two primary schools being blown up, but the press continues to object to speed limit enforcement. Professor Begg suggested that Ken Livingstone's leadership and achievement showed the need for strong Metropolitan Authorities outside London. He commented that free travel for pensioners was politically popular, but cheaper travel for young people and single parents might achieve more modal shift.

Professor John Whitelegg of the Stockholm Environment Institute talked about intelligent travel—personalised journey planning. The policy context was a high level international agreement on the importance of demand management (OECD soft factors report) 'we cannot build our way out of congestion'. Individualised marketing included segmentation, direct contact, directly relevant information, incentives, targeting of resources, monitoring and reporting analysis. This was very labour intensive, more than one hour per person. However the benefit cost ratio was 30-1. He quoted schemes from Pert, Aus, Gloucester and Frome. He described the York project which involved 5,700 randomly selected households being approached and 240 participants switching away from car dependency. 'Intelligent Travel' was an umbrella for integration, park-and-ride, Travelwise, personal travel plans, travel plans, walking, cycling, road safety and car sharing.

Mr Jonathan May, MD, First York, talked about transforming bus travel in York. He described how up to 1988 York bus operation was indifferent but following the establishment of a quality bus partnership (which also includes Arriva, East Yorkshire and Yorkshire Coastliner) in 1999 £11 million was spent on a new Overground network and a hundred new buses. There is a strong brand image and soon there was a problem of fast growth which necessitated the purchase of nine extra articulated buses. He pointed out how York City Council had given the OK for articulated buses in six weeks, whereas Bradford City Council had taken a year! Bus operation was a people business and

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customer not operator solutions were required for problems. York had provided good infrastructure, including BLISS (Bus Location Information Sub System). There had been 1.2 million more trips, 11 per cent growth. He talked about the Yorkshire Bus Project, the hybrid diesel electric bus, which was demonstrated outside (see also page 15). He felt that the York's success could be the beginning of a blueprint for Europe.

Mr Richard Willis, Principal Transport Planner, talked about Park-and-Ride. He gave a history and described the sites now operating. The 2006 objective was

1.75 million users and 4,900 parking places, but they achieved this in 2002. The targets were updated to 2.25 million users and bus patronage to be up by 30 per cent. Users say that park-and-ride is quicker, cheaper, cleaner, an easy way to work and over half would drive if there was no park-and-ride

scheme. First York took the commercial risk. Rising bollards are used to enforce bus lanes and 68 bus-stops have been upgraded. The urban traffic management control and BLISS satellite navigation system gave extra benefits for all concerned. Two more P & R sites are being planned. Monks Cross and Designer Outlet are multi-use, so that two-way bus traffic is possible.

P & R is not stand alone and is part of a whole integrated transport policy. The P & R buses also serve non-car owners and social exclusion areas.

Julie Hurley, Principal Engineer, talked about high tech travel management. It could be used to close roads if air quality was poor or if roads were congested. Information can be sent to mobile phones and the Internet. Vehicle recognition, traffic data, virtual bus lanes, speed enforcement, personal travel information, road tolling are all

possible. Full roll-out is due in 2004.

Daniel Johnson, Principal Transport Planner, talked about leadership training in transport. He pointed out that British people worked long hours, but worked with low productivity. In York City Council leadership training has been used to maximise productivity. This was of great practical interest to LA's, but less so for YHTAR.

Helena Vergereau, Traffic Plan Promotion Officer, and James Harrison, Transport Planner talked about lessons from Odense (Denmark). The area, population and student size is similar to York. Their 20 per cent cycle to work compared with 13 per



cent in York. A slide show was given on their cycling infrastructure and their road rules described. 2,000 cyclists per day use the Millennium Bridge. York is intending to learn from Odense, but it would seem that Odense could also learn from York on caring for pedestrians.

Like the Oxford conference (see Issue 13 of *YHTAR Focus*), this was really inspiring for supporters of sustainable transport. It is a pity therefore that no-one from WYPTE came to learn how to achieve such great things in West Yorkshire.

I am old enough to remember when York was an unpleasant, congested and polluted city - what it lacked in mills it made up with steam locos! There is no reason why Leeds and Bradford should not be as attractive as York is now, sustainable cities with Victorian hearts instead of a medieval one.

## Speed Cameras: 10 Criticisms and Why they are Flawed

Since their introduction, speed cameras have consistently proven to be a remarkably cost effective and successful method of reducing casualties on the roads. In recent months, however, there have been a number of critical reports in the media branding speed cameras a 'failure'. This article, a summary of a research briefing prepared by the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety and the Slower Speeds Initiative, reviews 10 of these criticisms of cameras and examines the research evidence surrounding them. The results reveal that that many of the criticisms are either unfounded or seriously flawed and do not accurately represent the majority of research evidence.



### 1. CAMERAS COST LIVES

**Claim:** Autocar and others have claimed that 'speed cameras cost lives', by pointing to the declining rate of reducing fatalities on the roads in the past ten years, compared to the previous ten years. The Association of British Drivers (ABD) has claimed that 5,500 lives have been lost as a result of speed cameras in the past 10 years.

**Reality:** There is no evidence and no logical reason to suggest a correlation between the advent of speed cameras and the declining rate of road casualty reduction. Research has consistently shown that speed cameras have a major impact in reducing casualties. A major two-year DfT study of speed cameras across six areas found a 35% reduction in people killed and seriously injured at camera sites, compared to the long-term trend.

Some critics of cameras have disputed the DfT study, arguing that the 35% reduction in casualties at camera sites represents a 'regression to the mean' or a return to long-term casualty trends. However a study by Imperial College of the impacts of speed cameras over a twelve year period in Cambridgeshire enabled researchers to eliminate the effects of regression to the mean. It concluded that cameras can reduce collisions involving injury by 'an astounding 45.74%' with 'lower but still significant decreases' within a 2 kilometre radius of a camera. The results also demonstrated that speed cameras do not increase crashes by leading to abrupt braking in the vicinity of cameras.

Despite the positive impact of speed cameras on road casualty figures, however, the steep decline in road fatalities achieved in the 1980s has not

been matched by the more gradual drop in fatalities in recent years. This is a concern for everyone involved in road safety, and further action should be taken to reduce the number of road fatalities.

Sharp reductions in the number of road deaths were achieved between 1983 and 1993, and have been largely associated with the 1983 law making front seatbelt wearing mandatory, better car design and major reductions in drink driving fatalities. Factors likely to be responsible for the slowing rate of reduction between 1993 and 2003 include continued increases in traffic (up from 583 billion passenger km 1993 to 634 billion passenger km in 2002); sharp increases in motorcycle casualties (up from 427 in 1993 to 609 in 2002); a levelling-off of drink drive fatality numbers (up from 520 in 1993 to 560 in 2002); a decline in seatbelt-wearing and the increased use of mobile phones while driving. The factors contributing to the slowing rate of fatality reduction are currently under review as part of analysis of progress towards targets for 2010 casualty reduction set out in the road safety strategy.

Other indicators show a somewhat more positive picture of declining road casualties. The casualty rate – the number of people killed or seriously injured per million vehicle kilometres – has fallen from 74 in 1993 to 62 in 2002. The number of serious injuries per year has fallen by over 9,000 (or 20%) since 1993.



### 2. SPEED IS NOT A MAJOR FACTOR IN ROAD CASUALTIES

**Claim:** The ABD and other opponents of speed cameras claim that 'speed doesn't kill' and reject the relationship between speed and the frequency of road crashes.

**Reality:** Road safety literature overwhelmingly supports the relationship between speed and both the frequency and severity of crashes. Crash investigations have established that excessive or inappropriate speed is a major contributory factor in at least one-third of all road crashes, making it the single most important contributory factor to casualties on our roads.

Studies based on the crash history of 300 sections of road, 2,000,000 measurements of speed and the self reported crash history of 10,000 drivers conclusively demonstrated the correlation between speed and crash frequency. In a given situation, as

speed increases, the risk that a crash will occur also increases. The findings reflect the importance of drivers having time to respond to the unexpected. At higher speeds there is less time to react appropriately. Crash frequency is related to average speed, the spread of speeds and the percentage of drivers exceeding the speed limit.

Simple physics dictate that injury severity increases with speed; even slight decreases in speed are beneficial, especially for death and serious injury. Research by TRL has indicated that reducing the speeds of the fastest drivers would yield the greatest benefits in reducing death and injury on the roads.

Some critics of speed cameras use TRL Report 323 to argue that speed is a contributor to only 7% of road crashes. However, TRL 323 was not a study of crash causation or of the role of speed in crashes, but rather an evaluation of a crash reporting methodology. The 7.3% figure in the report refers not to a proportion of crashes but rather a proportion of factors recorded by police and since on average two factors were recorded for each crash for which the methodology was used, it shows that excessive speed was recorded as a factor in at least 15% of crashes.

Marie Taylor, head of TRL's programme of research on speed and accidents, has commented on the erroneous interpretation of TRL323. She points out that in addition to speed being specifically recorded as a factor, it will also have been 'part of the reason for other factors being recorded' such as failure to judge another's path or speed. It will compound factors such as following too close and aggressive driving. Finally, she notes that excessive speed was recorded as a factor in more than a third of the fatal crashes recorded and that the contribution from other speed-related factors 'will mean that the true effect of speed is likely to be even greater than this'.



### 3. RAISING SPEED LIMITS IN THE USA MADE NO DIFFERENCE TO CASUALTIES

Claim: In an article titled 'Motorists cry foul at rise in speed cameras', the *Daily Telegraph* argued that speed 'does not of itself cause accidents' and that 'when the 50mph national speed limit was lifted in America, there was no noticeable increase in accidents caused by speed'.

Reality: This would be very interesting if it were true. In 1987 the national speed limit in the United

States rose to 65 mph from the 55 mph limit imposed during the fuel crisis in the early 70's. From 1995 individual states were allowed to set their own limits. A recent report found that the post-1995 rise in speed limits in many American states has triggered a 35% increase in death rates. The report compared 22 states that raised interstate highway speed limits to 70 or 75 mph with 12 states where the limit stayed at 65 mph, and found that there were 1,880 more deaths on interstates between 1996 and 1999 in states with higher speed limits. The reverse effect is also evident: in 1974, when the national speed limit was lowered to 55 mph, fatality rates dropped by 50% on the interstate highways and by 70% on other four-lane rural highways. The US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is now advocating the adoption of speed camera laws similar to those in the UK to help counteract the rising death toll.



### 4. CAMERAS ARE NOT SITED ON THE MOST DANGEROUS ROADS

Claim: Autocar Magazine in association with the RAC Foundation has claimed that speed cameras are not sited on the most dangerous roads and 'the most lethal 10 roads in the country (as designated by Euro RAP) are covered by just four speed cameras'.

Reality: The European Road Assessment Programme (Euro RAP) is a system to compare the relative statistical risk of death and serious injury on European roads. An assessment of risk on Britain's primary road network was published in September 2003. The data used to assess the roads, however, covers the period from 1997 to 2001 when only one of the police force areas covering the list of 10 most dangerous roads was involved in a pilot safety camera partnership. Until the netting off scheme was available, speed cameras were only infrequently used because of the costs involved in installing and servicing them.

The Government has set stringent criteria for the siting of cameras by safety camera partnerships. These stipulate that for a new fixed camera to be installed there must have been at least four deaths or serious injuries on a given 1km stretch of road within the past three years. At least 20% of drivers must be exceeding the speed limit. Fixed cameras also require collisions to be clustered. Finally, camera policing of speed limits can only be introduced after all else has failed 'and there are no

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other obvious, practical measures to improve road safety along this stretch of road'. If rates of speeding on the roads identified by Euro RAP are not this high and there is evidence that the collisions are not speed-related, safety camera partnerships would be unable to install new cameras.



**5. CAMERAS DON'T CATCH THE MOST DANGEROUS DRIVERS**

**Claim:** The RAC Foundation has claimed that speed cameras tend to catch the safest drivers, rather than the most dangerous. According to its research, the drivers most likely to be caught by speed cameras are middle-aged male company car drivers who cover large mileage, rather than young drivers, despite the fact that young drivers are involved in more crashes when licence holding is taken into account.

**Reality:** The profile identified by the RAC Foundation - company car drivers and drivers with high mileage - are not only more likely to have a speeding conviction; they are also more likely to be involved in crashes than other drivers. Reports have consistently found that company car drivers and high-mileage drivers who drive for work are 50% more likely to be involved in injury accidents than other drivers, even after differences in exposure due to miles driven have been taken into account. Pressure to speed has been identified as a contributing factor to this figure, alongside fatigue and in-car distractions.

Research also shows that 'those drivers who had been stopped by the police for speeding or had been flashed by a speed camera had double the incidence of recent crash involvement'.



**6. CAMERAS ARE NOT POPULAR**

**Claim:** Opponents of speed cameras claim that they are 'deeply unpopular'.

The *Daily Telegraph* concluded from a recent opinion poll that 'seven in 10 motorists think speed cameras are mainly revenue-raising devices that do little to reduce car accidents'.

**Reality:** Opinion polls generally indicate widespread public support for speed cameras, although some polls (like that cited in The *Daily Telegraph*) do not. A recent 'poll of polls' by Transport 2000 - based on six different surveys - shows that support for the use of speed cameras averages 74 per cent.

Similarly, during trials of speed cameras, a DfT survey found that over 80 per cent of people living in pilot areas agreed that 'cameras are meant to encourage drivers to keep to the speed limit, not to punish them'.



**7. CAMERAS ARE A WASTE OF MONEY**

**Claim:** Some critics of speed cameras argue that 'cameras are a waste of money'.

**Reality:** Speed cameras are remarkably cost-effective. In the two-year pilot study of cameras in six counties, there were 280 fewer people killed or seriously injured at camera sites than would otherwise have been expected. This indicates that the total cost saving of casualties at camera sites over two years was around £58m. This figure is several times higher than both the amount spent on camera enforcement (£21 million) and the amount raised in fixed penalty income (£27 million). When the reduction in casualties across the pilot area (4% reduction in KSI) is taken into account, it is estimated that the total benefit to society over two years is approximately £112 million. A previous Home Office Police Research Group cost benefit analysis of speed cameras found that cameras generate a return of five times the investment after one year and 25 times the amount after five years.



**8. CAMERAS RAISE REVENUE FOR POLICE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

**Claim:** A *Daily Telegraph* article on speed cameras claimed, 'The cameras generate around £80 million a year in income ... Much of this money is retained by the police, something that critics believe merely encourages the proliferation of the cameras'.

**Reality:** Neither the police nor local authorities retain income from speed cameras. As a DfT briefing on safety cameras explains:

*Safety camera partnerships are not there to raise money and neither the police nor the local authority receive any money from the operation of safety cameras. Strict Treasury rules mean that any money from fines that is returned to the safety camera partnerships can only be spent on the operational costs of their camera network, including new cameras where the need can be identified. All remaining money goes to the Treasury; it does not stay with the Partnership.*

Of the £27 million raised in fines during DfT's two-

year camera pilot project, £21 million went to the safety camera partnerships to cover the costs of camera enforcement; the remaining £6 million went to the Treasury.



#### 9. CAMERAS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO A FALL IN TRAFFIC POLICING

**Claim:** An article in Autocar claims that speed cameras are a waste of police time and that policemen have been directed 'by authorities to abandon their duties in favour of flash-equipped grey boxes'.

**Reality:** There has been a gradual decline in the number of designated traffic police officers from 15-20% of constable strength in 1966 to approximately 7% of force strength in 1998, and this trend has continued recently. This is a worry for everyone concerned about road safety. There is little evidence, however, to suggest that speed cameras are responsible for this decline. Instead of speed cameras occupying police time, a Home Office Police Research Group paper noted that 'many forces had found that the use of camera technology released traffic officers for other duties'. Fixed speed cameras reduce the speed limit enforcement burden on traffic officers while speed limit enforcement reduces the time spent in dealing with collisions and their aftermath. Traffic policing and camera enforcement are mutually reinforcing, not mutually exclusive.

In a thematic inspection of 'Road Policing and Traffic', Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary concluded that the decline in the numbers of designated police officers is due to increasing demands on the police (particularly by more high-profile policing activity) and competing pressures on police time. The failure to sufficiently prioritise traffic policing is fuelled in part by policing indicators that largely exclude traffic enforcement and by a failure to include road traffic enforcement as a 'key priority' for policing. Of 31 indicators listed in the National Policing Plan 2004-2007, only one (a very general indicator of road casualties per vehicle kilometre) relates directly to traffic enforcement. Road traffic enforcement is excluded from the list of 'Key Priorities' in the National Policing Plan, but appears instead under 'Other Areas of Police Work'. PACTS and SSI believe that identifying road traffic enforcement and casualty reduction as a key policing priority would have a major effect in reversing the decline of traffic policing.



#### 10. THE NUMBER OF TRAFFIC OFFENCES DETECTED HAS FALLEN

**Claim:** Autocar Magazine in association with the RAC Foundation has claimed that speed cameras remove police from the roads, 'so thousands of serious driving offences now go undetected'.

**Reality:** Recorded incidence of many serious driving offences have risen in recent years, in contrast to these claims. Contrary to the figure of 'a fall of 50,000 in the number of dangerous driving offences detected', the Home Office statistical report 'Crime in England and Wales 2002/3' indicates an increase of 65% (from 4,589 to 7,551) in the number of dangerous driving offences recorded between 1998/9 and 2002/3 (earlier data is not available). Contrary to claims that fraudsters are not being detected, the same report shows recorded vehicle/driver forgery incidents increased from 6,028 to 8,553 – an increase of 42% – over the same period.

While the number of recorded dangerous driving incidents has risen, the number of successful prosecutions for dangerous driving has fallen (3,898 findings of guilt in 2001 compared to 6,849 in 1993). This may be partially explained by an earlier reluctance to prosecute by the Crown Prosecution Service. This is an area of particular concern for road safety organisations and is developed further in PACTS' Research Report Road Traffic Law and Enforcement: A driving force for casualty reduction.



#### CONCLUSION

As this review of research evidence indicates, excessive and inappropriate speed is a major contributing factor to road crashes and casualties.

Speed cameras have proven to be an extremely successful element of an integrated speed management strategy, and studies have consistently shown that deaths and serious injuries have been reduced by over a third at speed camera sites. In this context, it is important to dispel some of the myths about cameras. Rather than 'punishing motorists', speed cameras may instead save the lives of motorists and other road users.

For further information see:

Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety  
<http://www.pacts.org.uk/speedcamerabriefing.pdf>

## The Cost Effective Branch Line

*Peter Davies, Rail Campaign Coordinator reports on the recent TR&IN Regional Railway Conference in York*

Following an introduction to the proceedings of the day by the newly appointed Managing Director of Arriva Trains Northern, the Strategic Rail Authority was represented by Chris Austin, Executive Director, Community Rail Development.

Mr. Austin emphasised the need for value for money and affordability. A new report was to be published in December relating to Community Rail Development and the cost effective branch line. He stressed the fact that there would be no closures of lines or stations, and that there was a strong rural agenda for branch lines. Support was given for the White Paper on Transport.

He gave the definition by the Strategic Rail Authority of a rural branch line as being local and rural in character, with infrequent services and a line speed of seventy miles per hour or less. Rural branch lines were not seen as being segregated; but as having a relationship with the rest of the rail network which was encouraging.

A general appraisal was then given on how the Strategic Rail Authority saw the future of cost effective branch lines and the need for a simplified ticketing system was emphasised. However, there was a need for reducing costs and there was a need for local management to have a good relationship with the Train Operating Companies and their staff. Greater flexibility was emphasised and there was a need for a reduction in risk through a performance regime.

Safety was a number one priority and appropriate standards should be set. The provision of rolling stock was a dilemma for the Strategic Rail Authority in view of the high cost of new trains, and devolved powers in Scotland and Wales mean that micro-franchising based on the Merseyside model may be needed.

The emphasis on cost effectiveness was illustrated by the use of the Far North line for freight and the effect of this on the infrastructure, particularly in relation to the condition of the track and there was a need for simplified standards.

A further consultation paper is to be published early in 2004 relating to strategy development, pilot projects, regional planning assessments, refranchising opportunities, and the need to

emphasise the case for rail.

Dr. Paul Salveson then addressed the conference on the subject of microfranchising and emphasised the need for local and rural services to have improved frequencies, better rolling stock, integration with the local bus network and the inter-city national rail network. Improved station facilities, better use of stations, and lower unit costs were also key factors.

A comparison was made with rural rail services in Germany where two managers had taken over two hopelessly uneconomic branch lines in 1993, inheriting some ancient railbuses and an infrastructure which was very poor. Three hundred people per week were using the service; but the local management had managed to improve the rail service.

Reference was then made to rural rail routes in Britain and the need for a critical mass of community railways, with the station becoming a community centre. There was a need for more rolling stock and use should be made of redundant coaches and locomotives which are currently lying idle. Not all the existing surplus of locomotives and coaches may be suitable for rural lines, and if the rural rail network is to survive beyond the next decade new trains will have to be found.

Staffing levels were felt to be the most important issues and there was a need for staff to be dedicated to the rural line they served, and emphasis was placed on the need for negotiations with rail unions for greater flexibility in return for decent wages and conditions.

John Hummel gave a rather technical presentation based on organisational structure looking ahead to the future. His argument was that simplified group standards and local management would lead to reduced costs.

The afternoon session began with Pam Warhurst, Vice-Chair of the Countryside Agency, giving a presentation on Rural Rail; a 20-20 vision. Emphasis was placed on the need for rural rail lines to survive both operationally and financially.

Michael Whitehouse's presentation was entitled "Sir Topham Hat Returns: some of the legal issues to overcome." This amusing and rather entertaining presentation was given with regard to the legal issues involved in the operation of a rural railway

*(Continued on page 11)*

## Tell the Government the Way to Go for Transport

The Way to Go Campaign is a joint initiative by more than 25 environmental, transport and social justice organisations to influence Government transport policy, particularly through the Spending Review and Ten Year Transport Plan Review, due in July 2004. The campaign seeks to put sustainable transport – public transport, walking and cycling – at the top of the agenda to improve our environment and quality of life.



There's not much time! The Government is making decisions now, so log on to [www.waytogo.org.uk](http://www.waytogo.org.uk) to tell your MP the way to go for transport.

## Regional Transport Strategy about to be Debated

*An update from Anthony Rae*

In the last edition of *Focus* I wrote about the forthcoming debate - at the RPG Examination in Public - set for February 2004 concerning the regional transport strategy (RTS). Now that debate is imminent and - if this edition reaches you in time - you can attend the discussions about strategic demand management on the morning of Friday 20th February, and about regional transport investment priorities on Tuesday 24th (all day) and the morning of Wednesday 25th. There will also be consideration of the more technical topics of public transport accessibility - Thursday 19 February pm, and transport monitoring - Wednesday 25th pm. Proceedings start at 10am in the Novotel Hotel, York.

Apart from the overall direction of the RTS, the demand management and investment priorities topics are probably the most contentious issues, so it is good that these have been selected by the inspectors for discussion. 'Airports' will not be discussed at all - because the draft RPG policy

under consideration was drawn up before the White Paper was published in December - but surface access to airports will be (under investment priorities).

TAR organisations will be well represented round the table, and joining in the debate: CPRE (Gill Graham), FOE (Anthony Rae) and National Federation of Bus Users (Ray Wilkes) are there for every topic, and the TAR itself will be represented by Graham Collett for the Investment topic.

If you have the opportunity to attend, it should be worth coming along.

If you want to find out more, visit the websites for the EiP:

<http://www.goyh.gov.uk/RPG/publicexam.htm>

and of the Regional Assembly:

<http://www.yhassembly.gov.uk/index.cfm?routine=content&channel=RPG%20Selective%20Review>

*(The Cost Effective Branch Line Continued from page 10)*

line. An analogy was drawn with Thomas the Tank Engine.

Scott Handley, Chief Executive of the Wensleydale Railway Company outlined the success of the WRC in restoring rail services to the former North Eastern railway line between Northallerton and Garsdale. Reference was made to future aspirations for the reinstated rail service, and the achievements to date were outlined.

The final speaker was Tony Smare, Project Manager, Esk Valley Railway Development Company, describing "A vision for the future – The Esk Valley line." This presentation outlined the existing rail services on the rural branch line from

Middlesbrough to Whitby. Various problems had been experienced including a substitute bus service which had been provided from some of the more isolated stations on the line. This had been objected to by local people as the train provided a direct service to Whitby and local school children used the line in order to arrive at school in time.

Various ideas were put forward for improvements to the line including:-

- New track infrastructure at Battersby Junction avoiding the need to reverse at the station.
- An extension of the North York Moors Railway south from Pickering to Malton. This would involve the use of another operator beyond Pickering.

## The Bicycle Bells are Not Ringing

*Pam Ashton reports on national efforts to encourage cycling.*

For the last year the English Regions Cycling Development Team (ERC DT), hosted by the National Cycling Strategy Board, has been carrying out an assessment of the progress being made by local highway authorities to deliver significant increases in the amount of cycling. There is one member of the Team in each English region.

The National Cycling Strategy Board says on its website; "Individual assessments have now been sent in confidence to all local highway authorities in England, inviting their comments. The summary sheets that have been compiled are also being made available to the Department for Transport and the Government's regional offices, to help inform their judgments on this year's Annual Progress Reports." In other words the public, cyclists in general and taxpayers will not have this information shared with them. We had been told that the assessment would result in a score for each local authority, which had been referred to as the number of bicycle bells awarded.

The ERC DT has made recommendations to each local authority on how to make further progress in encouraging cycling, and after the exercise to assess each authority was completed, each member of the team consulted cyclists regarding their views on cycling provision in their area and their relationship with their local authority.

Commenting on the outcome of the assessment exercise, Steven Norris (Chairman of the NCS Board) said: "*We intend to publish summaries of the assessments for all the local highway authorities before the end of this year, after each authority has had a chance to comment and to work with the ERC DT coordinators in refining its proposed action plan. We will NOT be publishing detailed league tables of the scores that have been applied, and I want to emphasise that it is not our intention to name or shame particular authorities. Instead, we are prepared to work closely with them, to help them contribute positively to achieving the national targets for growth in cycling.*"

Some local authorities have been so pleased with the result of their audit that they have published it on their website. This includes Kirklees in this region. Others have no interest in cycling anyway and the audit has probably not impinged on Elected Members' consciousness.

The question remains as to whether this exercise will have any impact at all. Will cyclists no longer face the badly designed junctions that they must use, the parking on their cycle lanes and the bad driver behaviour? Perhaps it will generate a renewed interest in cycling as a means of improving the nation's health and reducing congestion on the roads.

One recommendation for Bradford Council was that they enhance their programme of cycle training for children by taking them on road for additional training. Recommendations notably absent were:

1. To complete National Cycle Route 66 in Bradford
2. To prepare a Bradford Council travel plan to act as a good example to other employers in the city.



*Blocked cycle lane in Bradford District*



*Illegal parking receives little attention*

## Cycle Training in Sheffield - the current state

*Polly Blacker, member of Pedal Pushers Sheffield reports.*

Two Cycling Proficiency Courses ran during the autumn, organised by Pedal Pushers members in conjunction with Mike Stanley, one of the City Council's Road Safety Officers. One was in Broomhall, organised by Tony Cornah and myself - 5 of the 8 children gained their certificates and all improved in their cycling ability considerably; and one at Westways School, organised by David Baillie, where 13 of the 20 children gained certificates.

Mike Stanley now considers us able to run future courses on our own, voluntarily, using the Council's equipment and covered by their insurance. We were not altogether comfortable with the Cycling Proficiency method however; it is off-road training and very prescriptive rather than encouraging the participants to think about and continuously appraise traffic situations. Therefore it does not seem to be very good preparation for riding on roads despite its focus on signalling at junctions, traffic lights etc. The pass/fail nature of the course is also not very encouraging for some children and creates an atmosphere that focuses on 'The Test' rather than on fun, skill and future cycling improvement.

Following this, Tony, David, Rodger Clark and I went up to York for one-day's training in adult cycling instruction (the "City of York Council Trainer Training Course at Advanced Level"), which was an excellent on-road course using a method aimed at developing cycling confidence and safety, traffic awareness and courteous riding. We all enjoyed the day very much. We have not given any adult training yet but I have had 2 enquiries from mothers of secondary school pupils (older than a Cycling Proficiency Course would be suitable for) and one from an adult; plus Dominic Watts' request for help with a Cycling Proficiency Course in the summer at St. Wilfrid's school in Millhouses (though we are wondering about setting up a different - 'York' - style of training for younger children now). We have yet to sort out insurance etc, which will be important from both sides.

Very recently, Tony and I have applied for 2 of 100 free training places nationally on a 4-day course due to happen in the next 3 months under the auspices of the CTC as part of the government's National Cycling Strategy. If we are successful we will need to ensure that we train 50 new regular cyclists each in the 12 months following this course, as well as needing to complete various evaluation procedures, and will receive a package of support including insurance. The Road Safety Officers and Pedal Pushers have supported our applications so we are hopeful that we can achieve this target. It feels to be a very exciting development with the potential to really put cycling training on the map in Sheffield. Whether we receive this additional training or not though, David, Rodger, Tony and I are keen to develop the York method in Sheffield and will be meeting to plan our way forward with these ideas.

Please do contact us, via Pedal Pushers, with any requests for advice and help at whatever level.



*Some of the Broomhall Cycling Proficiency participants and trainers (from left to right) Mathew Jennings, Tony Cornah, Stephanie Beech, Polly Blacker, Daniel Smart, Mike Stanley, Nissar Ahmed and James Keirle.*

**STOP PRESS!** Tony and Polly have heard that they have been successful in their application for Cycling Instructor training places and both David and Rodger have now applied too.

## **Yorkshire Bus Initiative**

Following a 'Bus Forum' in summer 2002, Metro and the authorities in West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and York together with bus operators have developed an initiative designed to generate a step change in the quality of bus services by accelerating and co-ordinating investment programmes as well as addressing social exclusion issues.

The overall objectives of the initiative are to:

- deliver a step change in the quality of bus travel within five years;
- generate a 30% increase in patronage (together with significant mode shift from the car);
- identify a 'fast track' programme of investment that can assist in delivering the patronage growth;
- identify the level of service that would address social exclusion objectives;
- identify 'soft' measures that would also be required to meet the patronage target (such as ticketing and promotions);
- develop a mechanism for implementing the above.

A key aim of the project is to accelerate current investment programmes by more clearly linking individual schemes to investment by bus operators in new vehicles and the overall project outcomes. The project will also build on the successes to date in Yorkshire (such as the guided busways in Leeds and Bradford, quality bus corridors in South Yorkshire) and seek to demonstrate what could be achieved by developing the successful partnership approach for individual projects in a more comprehensive manner.

The initiative will include the following elements:

- corridor improvements including bus priorities and bus stop improvements;
- urban centre improvements including additional priorities;
- traffic signal priorities for buses;
- new buses, incorporating new vehicle designs;
- ticketing improvements (to improve integration and reduce boarding times);
- a high profile marketing and promotion campaign.

Elements of the initiative will be delivered through the South and West Yorkshire RTPI and the proposed Yorcard smartcard ticketing scheme.

The accelerated investment will initially be focussed on the core networks of high frequency services (as this is where the greatest potential for patronage increases lie). In parallel with the work on core networks, work has been undertaken to define the complementary networks necessary to meet social exclusion objectives. For a number of pilot areas, revised networks have been developed to address the accessibility criteria. Proposed changes to services include a supplementary network of services (including orbital services) that link into the high frequency networks at interchange points as well as a number of flexible, demand responsive services.

The Yorkshire Bus project aims to provide the framework to facilitate the use of additional revenue generated through investment in the core networks to offset the cost of providing the additional 'social' networks.

While Metro is keen to develop current partnerships with projects such as Yorkshire Bus it also wants to see an integrated service for West Yorkshire where the less profitable routes are maintained through cross-subsidy. Metro and the other PTEs are looking at using Quality Contracts as a means of achieving the quality of services passengers require. Through a Quality Contract, Metro would be able to set minimum service standards for bus operators. These would include minimum frequencies and last bus times, as well as fare levels and integrated ticketing on all services. A reward and penalty regime would aim to ensure services were delivered according to the specified minimum.

## High-Tech Bus for Yorkshire

A high-tech bus that looks more like a tram is bound for Yorkshire, in a first for the country.

Commuters could be hopping onto a prototype of the "tram bus" within months and if trials prove successful, a batch of more than 100 vehicles will be built and initially run in Sheffield and Leeds.

The bus is being developed by First Group in an attempt to attract more people onto public transport. The whole scheme could cost over £30m. The company believes a more stylish tram-looking bus – similar to vehicles used in France – coupled with advanced passenger-friendly features will entice motorists out of their cars.

Ian Davies, the company's project director, said: "It looks very much like a tram. It is a very continental and futuristic type of vehicle. It will be the first of its type in the UK. We have carried out a lot of focus groups with bus users and car users. We have asked the questions to try and attract people out of their cars and use public transport. We have then gone away and designed this vehicle so it is a very customer-focused design. We are hoping the first prototype will be built by next spring."

Mr Davies said the bus – which will cost around £250,000 – was coming to Yorkshire first because of other successful regional projects, including guided busways in Leeds and Bradford. Prototype trials could last five months. "Depending on the feedback we get from the trials and prototype we would then start to build the initial batch. We

anticipate more than 100 being introduced into Yorkshire over the next year. They are being developed specifically for the market in Yorkshire. "Obviously if it is a successful design other people will want to follow suit," he said.

The single-decker bus will be easier to get onto than traditional buses thanks to its low flat floor. Inside, passengers will enjoy higher levels of comfort while electronic information boards will indicate where the bus is going. There are also plans to use smartcard tickets on the bus which can be charged up and do away with the need to give money to the driver.

While the prototype will use a diesel engine, future versions could be powered by batteries or a hybrid electric/diesel engine, making it as silent as trams and cutting inner-city pollution. The company intends to test a hybrid engine out on a bus in Leeds. It is also looking at developing an optical guided system using lasers.

Mr Davies said a bus network based on this technology would be cheaper than any tram system, with each tram coach costing £2m plus infrastructure costs, and more flexible. However, he acknowledged the success of the scheme hinged on the introduction of priority measures such as bus lanes, guided busways and timed traffic lights to ensure reliability and meet the company's target of increasing passenger numbers by 30 per cent over five years.

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## Dalesbus 2004 and beyond

Recent years have seen numerous improvements to the network of weekend leisure bus services into the Dales, although the network has still fallen somewhat short of the excellent "Moorsbus" network in the North Yorkshire Moors.

In 2004 visitor numbers to the Dales are likely to increase as a result of the publicity surrounding the popular Calendar Girls film, and the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The National Park's public statements about the anniversary have commendably encouraged people to use rail and bus services to visit the area.

One might therefore expect the weekend leisure bus network to be improved for summer 2004, or at the very least maintained at previous years' levels. Sadly it appears that this will not be the case.

North Yorkshire County Council's leisure bus service budget remains frozen, with no allowance being made for the rising cost of bus operation. The Yorkshire Dales National Park's contribution to the services in 2004 is planned to be just £20,000; which is actually a reduction over 2003 following the ending of Countryside Agency "Wider Welcome" grants. This means, simply, that insufficient public money has so far been made available to support the level of service that operated last year. The result of this is that there are likely to be significant cuts to services. The Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Users Group is currently arguing the case for more funding, to allow the continuation of the main services.

# Yorkshire and the Humber Transport Activists' Roundtable

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## [www.yhtar.org.uk](http://www.yhtar.org.uk)

Why not take a look at back issues of *YHTAR Focus* and our range of useful transport-related links next time you're online? If you spot any broken links or have any suggestions for new links, please contact the Co-ordinator.

## **YHTAR Focus**

*YHTAR Focus* is produced approximately quarterly on behalf of the YHTAR.

It is mailed to over 350 people, including M.P.s, councillors, officers, bus and rail management, and campaigners around the Y+H region.

*YHTAR Focus* is currently available free of charge,  
if you know of anyone who would be interested in receiving a copy please contact:  
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