

Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP5):

OCS response to the topic paper questions May 2020

Oxfordshire County Council invited residents and all interested parties to contribute to a survey in advance of formal consultation on a new transport Plan later in 2020. The survey covered 28 topics. This document gives an OCS response to every question. A second document, Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP5): OCS narrative response to the survey May 2020 provides an overview of the key issues raised by the survey.

Details of the survey can be found on the County Council's website:

<https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/ltcp.engagement/consultationHome>

1. Active & Healthy Travel: Cycle streets - What do you think?

Q: Can we make cycling safer through cycle street ideas?

A: Yes – but implementation maybe difficult in some locations; all new development should embed Cycle Streets concepts some ideas need amended legislation. consideration needs to be given to residential car/ motorcycle ownership levels and parking facilities.

Q: What else could we do to make cycling more attractive to everyone across the county?

A: Genuinely prioritise cycling in **all new and existing** transport and residential developments, with safe, direct cycling routes built in.

Q: What might make you cycle more often, and for different types of journey?

A: Segregated, convenient, well-maintained cycled routes, lit at night.

2. Active & Healthy Travel: Greenways - What do you think?

Q: Do Greenways sound like a good idea?

A: 'Greenways' need to be much better defined. For work use (as opposed to leisure) they need to link hubs and be well maintained. But the paper ignores existing national cycle network (NCN), and greenways are not a priority for effecting mode shift as usage is likely to be low, except for leisure, unless they are direct, hard-surfaced and drained, and lit. As with the NCN, **maintenance** is critical – ignored in this paper. Many of these routes were or are "unpaved roads" or Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATS) and used by all forms of transport. Labelling these as "Greenways" does not make them traffic free.

Q: Would you or people you know, use them?

A: For recreational purposes, mainly. Possibly not practical in severe weather conditions. Good for tourism routes away from main roads.

Q: Could they help mitigate the effects of private car ownership upon the environment, congestion and people's health?

A: Probably, though not greatly, in view of the likely low level of usage.

3. Active and Healthy Travel: LCWIPs - What do you think?

Q: Where else should have an LCWIP?

A: As indicated by the NPPF, all locations where walking and cycling are to be prioritised. Abingdon? Witney? Banbury? Inter-town and village connections.

Q: What improvements would you like to see to your cycling or walking network?

A: All the proposals of the Oxford LCWIP. No potholes, roads properly designed to drain rainwater, properly constructed, with much better quality control, and much better maintained, including to drainage to avoid puddles.

Q: How can cycling and walking be made safer and more attractive for all?

A: By implementing the Oxford LCWIP, but it should be recognised that a dual system as advocated here is not regarded as the most appropriate solution by all parties.

4. Active & Healthy Travel: Low Traffic Neighbourhoods - What do you think?

Q: What do you think the benefits of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods could be for your community?

A: Better environment – improved air quality, less noise pollution, improved safety, fewer injuries, better mental health, greater biodiversity, more attractive appearance.

Q: How do you think they could be best introduced?

A: As part of modern sustainable developments, by limiting through routes for motorised vehicles, and by learning lessons from elsewhere – e.g. Waltham Forest, Houten (NI), Freiburg (D). But recognition should be given to likely vociferous opposition, hence widespread explanation and promotion will be required.

Q: What objections do you think there might be, and how could they be mitigated?

A: Less convenient car use, congestion on alternative routes, longer mileages – more emissions; mitigate by showing successful examples elsewhere. Security of vehicles if parked away from owner's property. Recharging of electric vehicles if away from owners' electric supply. If properties do not have garages, loss of secure storage for expensive e-cycles, motorcycles, mobility scooters and cars.

5. SHIFT - What do you think?

Q: Do you agree with our approach to progressing the SHIFT proposal?

A: Partly: feasibility is dependent on housing/employment site disposition; alternative modes such as motorcycles ignored. No thought given to tourism requirements. Public transport routes and services may need to be modified to serve the hubs where modal shift from walking, cycling, other public transport takes place. SHIFT needs to be designed into all new developments.

Q: What types of measures do you think would help you to combine walking, cycling and public transport to make your daily journeys?

A: Proper integration of transport planning with development planning; proper coordination of transport solutions – public transport of all kinds, active travel of all kinds, and consideration of novel modes, ignored in this consultation. The paper refers to 'evidence of need' – but the objective is to change behaviour, so changes must be based on predictions, not current evidence.

Q: Which locations should be a priority for any SHIFT network investment?

A: To be determined by careful examination of current and future patterns of urban development, and consideration of current and future journeys – where from? where to? when? how? why?

6. Active and Healthy Travel: Parklets - What do you think?

Q: How do you think parklets could be implemented?

A: In conjunction with road, cycleway and footpath improvement or maintenance activities or whenever the opportunity arises – not necessarily only as part of a major project. Safety and security must be designed in and proper maintenance arrangements instituted.

Q: What kind of places across the county do you think they could work well?

A: Urban & suburban situations, including the huge numbers of new housing developments in the various District Local Plans that run up to at least 2031. County towns and especially the larger villages.

Q: As part of our commitment to tackling the climate emergency how do you think they could contribute to supporting an increase in active and healthy travel (i.e. cycling and walking)?

A: By improving the environment (visual appearance, biodiversity, opportunity to rest) they make the prospect of making a journey by an active mode more attractive; they convey the message to motor transport that it does not have priority, but is present (if at all) as guests.

Q: What kind of things would you have in a parklet if you were given free rein to design your own?
A: Trees & wildlife-friendly (birds & insects) vegetation, seating, play equipment (depending on size).
Secure cycle parking racks

7. Active & Healthy Travel: Strategic Active Travel Network - What do you think?

Q: What do you think should be considered and included in developing the Strategic Active Travel Network?

A: Focus on access routes to travel hubs, nearby employment, sports, leisure facilities and schools, development of existing route network, including NCN & other (City Council) routes, **but make them proper routes, with priority everywhere (i.e. at junctions) to active travellers.**

Q: What else could be done to promote active travel?

A: Network must be well designed and specified, signed, maintained, well drained, swept frequently, kept ice free in winter. The benefits must be continuously promoted and the economic case for active travel needs to be made - ignored in this consultation.

Q: What uses could it have, once developed?

A: Part or all of journeys for all purposes - access to sports, leisure and tourism, enabling much more active travel – improvements in public health and environmental conditions, encouraging biodiversity (connecting habitats), increasing cycle tourism. It should be used not just as a work-to-home system but an opportunity for leisure pursuits and to promote cycling to youngsters.

8. Equestrians - What do you think?

Q: Do you think that horse riders and equestrian issues need consideration in OCC strategy, policies and practice?

A: It is unlikely that horses will represent any significant transport (as opposed to recreational) mode option; if it did, consideration needs to be given to waste disposal and fuelling facilities – water troughs and manure removal, and equal consideration given to other recreational activities such as motorcycling, mountain biking & hang gliding. Relevant principally only to rural areas of the County

Q: How do you think equestrian use of the highway network could be made safer?

A: Better signage on routes used by equestrians, and education as part of a more comprehensive driving / riding test. By providing shared use with properly-segregated active travel facilities.

9. Bus Strategy: What do you think?

Q: Could you do more of your journeys by bus if something changed? If so, what?

A: Yes: Current constraints resulting from entirely commercially-driven bus operations need to be removed. Quicker and more reliable journeys through proposed investment to tackle congestion and reallocate road space, especially in the form of a comprehensive rapid transit network for the Oxford area, as in LTP4. Better comfort through improved road maintenance, especially in bus lanes in towns and city.

Q: Are there other areas that would help to make the bus network better for you, given our current constraints?

A: Current constraints need to be removed, and the climate emergency provides the imperative. Public transport needs to be sustainable with consideration of societal (e.g. good services to key destinations such as hospitals) and environmental values, as well as capital and revenue considerations. An Oyster card-type system should be established for all transport to cut boarding and journey times. New developments should have designed-in public transport (and walking and cycling) provision, i.e. direct routes to avoid long and unattractive journey times.

Q: What else could our bus strategy consider?

A: Replacement of buses on key routes in Oxford by trams, with potential explored for interchange from external coach and bus services at P&R sites and mini-hubs, to improve pollution and congestion in the centre, making more space for walking cycling and low-performance two-wheeled e-vehicles. Creation of a Central Oxfordshire Transport Authority to enable planning and implementation of all transport and intermodal exchanges, and development of a genuine vision for

2050; serious consideration should be given to innovative modes (guided busways, light rail, trams, cable cars, boats).

Q: Most bus routes go in and out of Oxford; would you use the buses to go to other places, instead of Oxford, if it were possible/easier?

A: Yes. There are too many buses in Oxford. Tourist traffic (coaches must be managed; tourists visit destinations besides Oxford City. Residents require convenient and well-timed buses to travel between the county towns and villages as well as tourist sites.

10. Rail Corridor Study - What do you think?

Q: If capacity and connectivity were improved, how much more could you use the rail network in Oxfordshire?

A: The capacity and connectivity improvements recommended in Stage 1 of the Rail Study represent a significant advance in capitalising on the potential of the local rail network to contribute to sustainable travel within the Oxford city region. There is scope for further enhancement through new stations linked to current and future development (additional to the possibilities at Begbroke and Grove) which the Civic Society has identified and which remain to be explored in the context of Stage 2 of the Rail Study and Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The principle of focussing enhanced services on rail stations as transport hubs needs to be complemented by improved coordination with other modes as part of a wider strategy for a properly integrated 'metro' system for the city region. Consideration of rail should also include freight strategy, especially on the East / West route and rail and rail connections to Southampton docks to take freight and HGVs off the roads and thereby reduce demands for the OxCam expressway. The east / west line should be electrified from inception, and the opportunities for a freight/rail interchange at Bicester explored.

11. Park and Ride - What do you think?

Q: What role do you think Park and Ride should have in our future transport strategy development?

A: P&R should be one component of the strategy, but use should be encouraged by improvement of safe and fast cycling routes both to and from the P&R, and convenient and fast bus routes, i.e. they should be genuine modal interchanges. The possibility of using them for tourist coaches (and therefore providing toilet and other facilities) should be seriously investigated. Locations should be carefully judged with regard to locations and characteristics of future housing and employment developments.

Q: How do you think Park and Ride could be developed or changed to contribute to reducing carbon emissions and improving health and well-being?

A: By making them key stops/modal transfer stations on Rapid Transit/tram lines. If increased parking is needed, extra levels should be added, not further extension in Green Belt or flood plain.

Q: What else should future Park and Ride strategy consider?

A: Good locations without needing to restrict existing highways, and with consideration of future development (proactive, not reactive); a charging regime which discourages non-active and higher-carbon transport solutions.

12. Climate Emergency and Transport: What do you think?

Q: We know that doing nothing is not an option. What could you do, and the Council realistically support you to do, to help you make a long-term change to a much less polluting/carbon emitting mode of transport?

A: Reduce the need to travel (implement high-speed broadband everywhere); ensure all travel (including freight) is by zero-emissions transport; prioritise walking and cycling in urban areas; promote urban development only at sites which can be actively travelled to; provide excellent facilities for active travel (safe, fast, properly designed in detail and properly maintained). Provide or enable a county-wide rapid electric vehicle recharging network including proper multi-unit recharging stations. Ensure traffic light-controlled junctions are synchronised to improve traffic flow.

13. Air Quality - What do you think?

Q: What more could you do about air pollution where you live or work?

A: Install better home insulation, PV electricity generation on all buildings, heat pumps for heating and cooling; make all vehicles zero-emissions; avoid flying; ban waste incinerators that don't use plasma for burning.

Q: In what ways could we get the message across more strongly, when pollution is an invisible issue and easily ignored?

A: Covid-19 experience may help here: it has demonstrated the benefits of fewer emissions, and a more pleasant environment, significant improvements to health. The point should be made by advertising, including the number of deaths from air pollution and opposition from the motor industry should be countered. The benefits of reducing pollution should be publicised much more strongly – e.g. on bus shelters, local press, radio, TV. More information on NEVFMA should be provided. Lower emission transport systems should be encouraged using a carrot and stick approach: tax advantages/penalties for zero emissions/ICE vehicles. Incentivise modes shift to active travel and zero-emissions public transport.

14. Green Infrastructure - What do you think?

Q: Your views on how best to incorporate green infrastructure into the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan would be welcomed. For example: what do you like most / least about the existing transport and connectivity of GI in the county?

A: Like: reduction in unnecessary mowing; dislike: use of lay-by verges as toilets, and litter. Proper lavatory facilities should be provided for travellers, properly maintained. More publicity and enforcement resources should be given to discouragement of litter, and to clean-up. The construction of new roads should be minimised and major investment made in segregated and hedge-lined footways and cycle ways, with proper maintenance of existing country footpaths and provision of new ones to link villages, towns and new developments.

Q: What sorts of green infrastructure benefits would you particularly like to see and where?

Consideration should be given to siting of PV on/adjacent to road and rail transport corridors. Measures to reduce light pollution should be adopted. GI should link to that of adjacent Counties.

Q: Are there any particularly important routes that you think could be identified as strategic green routes for additional investment?

A: GI could be incorporated in town streets, without too grossly reducing pavement or circulating space (e.g. as in Spain), thus reducing summer heat reflected from buildings by providing shading and transpiration effects.

15. School Streets - What do you think?

Q: How do you think School Streets could work in your community?

A: Streets outside schools could be 100% traffic-free for specific periods, with permits for school buses and for children unable to attend by any mode except a car. All School Streets could be Cycle Streets. Most children are at least as able-bodied as parents, so walking or cycling (with secure cycle parking on school premises) should be the preferred default. School Streets should be zero-emission zones. These measures should reduce accidents, and improve health, as well as the environment.

Q: Given climate emergency, air quality problems and public health issues, how important a priority should School Streets be for all Councils and Local Communities?

A: Given the correlation between traffic congestion and school opening, significant priority should be given to encouraging mode-shift for school traffic. This would not only resolve current problems but would promote in children the concept of active travel as the preferred default mode of travel. Restrictions applied only for short periods should not be problematic. Introduction of zero-emission status might have to be more gradual.

Q: What do you think needs to change to make School Streets happen?

A: Parents and children need education to accept that walking and cycling are the responsible and preferred mode of travel to and from school. 'No stopping zones' (enforced) except for school buses should be designated. Streets and footways should be maintained properly and kept clear of ice in

winter to promote attractiveness and safety. School streets should be considered as part of the active travel network.

Q: What else could schools and parents change to help tackle climate emergency, and improve air quality?

A: Education for both parents and children with practical example days, to promote public perception that the private car should not be the default transport mode in developed areas.

16. Did you comment on the Connecting Oxford proposals?

Yes/No. Yes.

Q. Please enter any additional comments.

A. The concepts are applauded; the detail requires development, including modelling of effects. However, this deals only with one aspect of the Oxfordshire transport/congestion/pollution problems and should not be considered in isolation of a comprehensive, integrated transport plan.

17. Area Transport Strategies - What do you think?

Q: This paper has used Science Vale as an example. Your area will also need a transport strategy. What are your views on a strategy for your area?

A: This document is supposed to be an integrated transport strategy for Oxfordshire therefore this question is unnecessary; if this is not the case, the document fails to answer its own reason for producing it! Area transport strategies should be set in the context of an integrated city-regional and county development and transport plan, which should be set up first. It is important that transport strategies are consistent across the boundaries between different areas. The transport strategies need to be in place before any stages of planning applications (e.g. preliminary consultations) so that they are designed in from the beginning, not as a later attempt at shoe-horning transport solutions into what is all too often inflexible planning design.

Q: What would make it easier for you to choose more sustainable and active modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport for some journeys instead of opting for your car?

A: Walking & cycling: much better planned, implemented and maintained routes – Oxford LCWIP is a step forward; cycle routes and footways must be segregated from other traffic, including buses, properly maintained, with much better surfaces and level utility covers, and cleared of ice and snow in winter. Public transport: better, coordinated services, better ticketing arrangements, better (more reliable & across all providers) information systems, better comfort (road maintenance).

18. Transport Corridor Connectivity - What do you think?

Q: What approaches to managing transport and movement should be developed on major corridors such as the A420?

A: Where possible, light or heavy rail should be required to take more of the load. Where this is not possible, more attention should be given to means for modal interchange between, for example, direct bus services along major corridors and access by active and other sustainable travel modes from smaller settlements, by providing shelter and secure parking at bus stops (which become small transport hubs), with good public transport information and simple ticketing.

Q: What changes do you think would be realistic and effective?

A: See answer to previous question. Provision of attractive (segregated routes, secure cycle facilities, public transport information) conditions for active travel modes. encouragement of alternative freight transport modes (trains, drones?).

Q: What would encourage you to switch to using the bus on the major routes through the county - A40, A44, A420, A4074? (A34???)

A: All the ideas suggested above.

Q: If you live near or on a major transport corridor what would you like to see changed?

A: Pressure to remove freight to rail, plus ideas as above.

19. Regional Transport Network - What do you think?

Q: How do you think Oxfordshire should ensure it remains a significant authority across the region?

A: A Regional Transport Authority is needed, on which Oxfordshire County Council, other Councils and representative bodies (including public organisations such as Oxford Civic Society) would be represented. It must be a major participant in consideration of any proposals to introduce strategic national roads such as the OxCam Expressway and the upgrade to the A34 by Highways England. It must have sufficient authority to influence proposed changes to existing such roads that are currently failing, such as junction 9 of the M40 / A34. It should be separately funded and insulated from the pressures on local Councils to cut funding and thus competence and experience of local human resources. Setting up a **sustainable** transport network will require changes over 10-20 years, so needs to be relatively immune from political changes over this period. The RTA would play a key role in determining the locations of housing and employment development.

Q: How might the schemes above play a role in mitigating climate emergency, improving air quality or supporting healthy place shaping?

A: All the schemes outlined in this consultation represent many small pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, but they do not amount to a comprehensive, coordinated and integrated plan for the overall development of the county. As transport authority, OCC currently appears to have little or no control over implementation of any major highways, rail-based transport, or buses, or the ability to promote alternative or innovative modes, such as tram systems, or cable cars, or coordinated freight delivery, thus the effects in mitigating the climate emergency are constrained. The schemes outlined should all be subject to the Regional Transport Authority, so that they form a comprehensive and integrated plan. This needs to include freight movements as well as people movements. The Ox-Cam Arc should only contain sustainable developments, which means co-locating housing and employment with sustainable travel modes, excluding the car as far as possible. The England Economic Heartland (EEH) strategy probably covers too large an area to be workable except for long-distance travel modes. East-West Rail should be an electrified railway from the outset, with provision for freight trains. The currently-unsubstantiated need for the proposed Oxford-Cambridge Expressway must be re-examined in the light of the Climate Change Emergency. The major road network should only be modified to increase its use by sustainable means (e.g. by provision of cycle paths where appropriate).

Q: How beneficial do you think it might be for Oxfordshire to be better linked to Cambridge by new transport links?

A: The need for improved links specifically to Cambridge seem questionable; the obvious potential beneficiaries would be the universities, but none of these seem particularly keen. New transport links (apart from east-west rail) should not be a priority, though smaller improvements to connect nodes on the rail link should be investigated. Provision of a station at Calvert to allow east/west rail passengers to access HS2 and vice versa should be investigated.

20. Will you be responding to the forthcoming consultation on the Zero Emission Zone?

Yes/No/Maybe. Yes

Please enter any additional comments:

1. The zero-emission zone (ZEM) is in fact only a reduced emission zone and extremely limited in area.
2. The reduced emissions should come naturally as a result of a wider movement to sustainable transport modes, e.g. trams, e-bicycles, e-motorcycles and cycling, which should have greater priority. This will mean that reduced or zero emissions are spread over a much wider area. The planned ZEM will have limited effects, since it is so small; the current second-stage zone should be implemented from the outset.

21. Local Community Action on Transport - What do you think?

Q: What can you do for your community to make it a better/nicer/safer place to live?

A: Avoid using a car or parking a car on the street; lobby for or support introduction of more "Home Zones" where people have priority over vehicles; agitate for better bus services (turn-up-and-go frequencies), possibly including electric vehicles to access bus stops/hubs; stop parking on verges and pavements.

Q: What type of small interventions would you see as a priority for funding?

A: Measures proposed in the Oxford LCWIP; much improved maintenance to eliminate potholes and dropped ironwork; segregation of cycles and buses; low traffic neighbourhoods; cycle streets. Support appointment of walking and cycling 'tsars' on Councils. Institute better enforcement against obstructive, irresponsible and intimidatory behaviour.

Q: How might other organisations support you?

A: By taking more notice of Neighbourhood Plan proposals; by promoting the benefits of proposals; by producing outline concept designs, and realistic costings; by advising on multi-factor benefit analysis; by lobbying authorities. By being part of the development process for producing the Strategies

Q: What would you find useful?

A: More local (e.g. through neighbourhood forums) pro-active involvement in introducing and developing ideas.

Q: Can we frame the issue in a way that will help you as a resident to engage and come up with your own sustainable solutions for your community?

A: Yes, by providing resources and initiating possibilities. By being more supportive of Neighbourhood Plans.

Q: Are there current schemes that need help expanding to benefit more of the community?

A: Road reconstruction/major repairs are often an opportunity to introduce minor changes that can benefit cyclists and pedestrians at minimal or zero extra cost. Early local consultation would enable such improvements to be made. A major flaw with most current or recent schemes has been poor implementation, either in micro-design issues (e.g. level differences in road surfaces, elimination of ponding or signage on cycle routes), or in construction quality (e.g. smoothness and longevity of surfacing, or failure to level ironwork).

22. Digital infrastructure strategy: What do you think?

Q: How could you be better connected?

A: High speed broadband should be considered as an essential, like electricity and water and sewerage networks. Much of the County is severely lagging behind in real high-speed broadband, especially the villages, and even in Oxford, some areas are poorly served. Likewise, cellphone coverage is even more patchy; the roll-out of 5G should be managed to ensure universal availability.

Q: How would easier access to information, services and transport be good for you?

A: By facilitating discovery of optimum solutions, including travel options, across all available modes, between all destinations; but it is essential that such services are accurate and reliable - currently, this is not the case.

Q: Would it reduce your need to travel?

A: On-line meetings/consultations are becoming more frequent, and can replace some travel, and it would make public transport, and multi-mode travel much more useable, and attractive.

23. Network Management and Coordination - What do you think?

Q: How do you think Network Management should balance the transport needs of the county as whole (and indeed the wider region) with those of local communities?

A: Network Management appears to refer to roads only; this limits its effectiveness. NM should not be used as a tool to make travel by private car more attractive, but to minimise emissions and pollution e.g. by prioritising sustainable transport modes - walking, cycling and public transport, since electric vehicles cause congestion just like petrol and diesel ones. Rapid Transit/trams should have priority at junctions, as should pedestrians and cyclists at traffic lights. Alternative routes should be designated when congestion or road works close or obstruct roads

Q: What do you like about these proposals or think needs to change?

A: They appear to be too car-based. Modal change to walking, cycling and (electric) public transport needs to be prioritised, rather than simply focussing on replacement of every fossil-fuelled vehicle with an electric one.

24. Highways Asset Management Plan - What do you think?

Q: Does Oxfordshire's Asset Management approach sound like a good idea to you?

A: HAMP sounds sensible, but experience tells us that outcomes of most plans are governed not by systems, but by funding, e.g. of road maintenance. HAMP should prioritise adaptation to more sustainable travel modes recognising that the need to mitigate Climate Change must lead to a reduction in traffic demand and motorised vehicle road space; planned maintenance should take the opportunity to introduce more road space and genuinely improved facilities for sustainable travel.

Q: Do you think it could be a good solution to ensuring the transport network is maintained?

A: Yes, but if funding is the ultimate determinant, it is pointless spending limited resources on developing hypothetical solutions.

Q: What else might you want to know about HAMP?

A: Why it is not already in place – it should be normal business?

25. Freight Strategy - What do you think?

Q: Do you have any ideas about how to better move and manage freight through and within Oxfordshire?

A: Encourage more cross-county freight to use rail; promote freight consolidation for Oxford; promote zero-emissions 'last mile' delivery systems in towns and cities. Rail freight services need to be electrified e.g. From Didcot and East-West Rail. Modern AI techniques would provide a revolution in efficiency of freight services. Oxford University is already looking at how freight consolidation can reduce the number of deliveries to its buildings.

Q: How do you think improvements could be made?

A: By applying a 'carrot & stick' approach – prioritising low/zero energy modes, e.g. cargo bikes; restricting specific types of vehicle in specific locations; making use of the rail/freight interchange at Graven Hill, Bicester; terminating development of massive storage and distribution sheds built in the open countryside.

26. A Smart County - What do you think?

Q: What are your views on Smart Cities and a Smart County?

A: The track record of 'Smart' solutions is not great e.g. Smart energy meters, Smart Motorways, or bus arrival information systems. Many IT solutions have proved enormously (more) costly and less effective than anticipated. The Internet of Things is not yet established and may introduce undesirable hacking and privacy issues that outweigh any possible advantages.

Q: What advantages do you think connectivity could bring?

A: Better connectivity could reduce the need to travel, improve business efficiency, facilitate travel by public transport, and improve health (e.g. by contact tracking for epidemic control).

Q: What else should or could be put in place through a Smart County approach?

A: There needs to be an integrated approach, not just application to selected cases, and lessons need to be learned from previous failures, and successes.

27. Living Labs - What do you think?

Q: How do you think new technologies can best be employed?

A: Using those that have been successfully demonstrated elsewhere, so little need for innovation. The idea of being in a living lab - of being a laboratory rat, may be controversial. If the changes are to be limited to new communities, it will be a long time before any significant change occurs overall. It is questionable if this should be a priority for investment, in times of severely constrained resources.

Q: How do you feel about Oxfordshire being at the forefront of improvement?

A: This is hubris, and oversold. Many of the issues are already being trialled or implemented elsewhere, and we should take full advantage of outside experience. It is not obvious that Oxfordshire leads in societal development (we still have so many disadvantaged areas), as opposed to in purely technical and scientific areas. Other authorities (e.g. Cambridge) seem to be ahead in this endeavour; Oxfordshire should learn from outcomes elsewhere.

Q: Would you like to be more involved in Living Labs?

A: We need a lot more real detail, and specific issues.

28. Motorcycles - What do you think?

Q: Should the approach to motorbikes and motorbike riders in the new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan be reviewed?

A: Yes – motorcycles could make a significant contribution to the reduction in congestion and emissions, especially in view of the development of electric models. The current topic paper should be scrapped; it is entirely negative and ignores the positive attributes of motorcycles. It fails to discriminate between motorcycles of different energy sources (electric) or performance levels, or to acknowledge that accident statistics reflect *inter alia* inappropriate road designs, or very poor standards of maintenance.

Q: How could any approach affect active and healthy travel opportunities?

A: By encouraging the take-up a mode which is less causing of congestion, requires less road space, and is potentially less polluting (electric models), and attractive as a component of active travel (e-assist bicycles).

Q: Could there be better and clearer parking, as distinct from cycle parking and car parking?

A: Yes

Q: Could road safety campaigns on motorcycles be extended?

A: Yes.

Q: What angle/s should this cover?

A: Better training, better consideration in design standards, better recognition that poor road maintenance affects two-wheeled transport disproportionately.

29. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about improving transport and travel?

A: Improving transport and travel includes reducing the need or inclination for it. The Climate Change emergency dictates that the greatest priority should be given to measures which reduce emissions, in envisioning or developing solutions. Travel and transport solutions are inextricably associated with housing and employment site development and should play a much bigger part in determining the geographic distribution of the latter. These papers, neither individually nor collectively, consider planning of transport as an integrated, multi-mode system, coordinated with accurate data on current and predicted needs, like that operated by Transport for London. Its likely efficacy is therefore in question.

Q: How could you contribute to making Oxfordshire a thriving county?

A: By providing its citizens with a better understanding of planning issues, encouraging them to become more involved and by better training for elected representatives.