



**PACTS RESPONSE TO:  
COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT CONSULTATION 4  
'PLANNING FOR PROSPEROUS ECONOMIES'**

TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2009

## THE PARLIAMENTARY ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR TRANSPORT SAFETY (PACTS)

Response to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) planning policy statement consultation document: 4  
'Planning for Prosperous Economies'

The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) is a registered charity and an associate Parliamentary Group. Its charitable objective is **"To protect human life through the promotion of transport safety for the public benefit"**. Its aim is to advise and inform members of the House of Commons and of the House of Lords on air, rail and road safety issues.

In our 2007 report 'Beyond 2010 – a holistic approach to road safety in Great Britain', we made several recommendations which are strongly linked to proposals made in this DCLG consultation. PACTS acknowledges that the sedentary lifestyle we have in Britain will only be furthered, causing greater deterioration of key health and environmental policy targets, unless a holistic approach is taken to build activity into routine transport and encouraging a shift away from default car use. A key outcome of PACTS research was the recommendation that all new residential developments be subject to a 'pint of milk test' (can a resident reach a shop for a pint of milk in under ten minutes without using a vehicle?)<sup>1</sup>.

The consultation understandably touches on transport, and by association, the safety those being transported. We feel that in order to make and deploy plans for prosperous economies, it is important to have cross-sector participation. Accordingly, the comments below reflect our point of view based on both our charitable objective and on our experience within transport.

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<sup>1</sup> PACTS *Beyond 2010 – a holistic approach to road safety in Great Britain 2007*  
<http://www.pacts.org.uk/research.php?id=8>

PACTS recognizes the importance of the systematic approach proposed in *Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Prosperous Economies*, and is glad to see the department working towards taking a higher level approach to providing an integrated framework for all types of economic development.

## MODAL SHIFT

The government's objectives for prosperous economies are commendable, and sit within the remit of a number of other key government policy objectives thus reinforcing the strength of the holistic approach taken. In that sense, the consultation is, in our view, a thorough and useful precursor to the anticipated strategy. However, when developing policies which encourage modal shift, the safety of those individuals who then become the more vulnerable road users should be considered paramount.

Although exposure data is poor, particularly at a local level, we know that being a pedestrian and being a cyclist is more dangerous, per kilometer traveled, than traveling in a car and significantly more dangerous than traveling by bus or by rail. Yet whilst promoting public transport tackles environmental policy concerns, it does not have the significant health benefits brought about by increased levels of walking and cycling. As such, the promotion of active travel is a very important aspect of taking a systematic approach to meeting a number of different policy objectives – the safety of those encouraged and opting to make a modal change should be considered paramount.

An individual's perception of safety will affect their choices as road users; this is most easily seen in the case of cycling. Research shows that a large proportion of people choose not to cycle because they feel it would be unsafe.<sup>234</sup>

It is therefore vital that adequate research and provision be made to promote safety and reduce risk; there is evidence to suggest that safety in numbers is an important element.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.ctc.org.uk/resources/Campaigns/Barriers\\_to\\_Cycling\\_1997.pdf](http://www.ctc.org.uk/resources/Campaigns/Barriers_to_Cycling_1997.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cyclecardiff.org.uk/downloads/bwsurvey.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobe/pdf/165252/cyclingpolicyoverview>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.ctc.org.uk/resources/Campaigns/CTC\\_Safety\\_in\\_Numbers.pdf](http://www.ctc.org.uk/resources/Campaigns/CTC_Safety_in_Numbers.pdf)

Work done in the Sustainable Travel Towns demonstrates the importance of personal, individualized advice – the revenue costs for this sort of approach are high and budgets should reflect this.<sup>6</sup>

If designing to encourage modal choice, it must be remembered that a reduction in motorized traffic can lead to increased speeds of motorized traffic and therefore greater risk to more vulnerable road users. In such situations, there can be a need for additional measures of restraint.

## ACTIVE TRAVEL

When designing to encourage active travel, road user priority must support this. Local Transport Plans prioritise the most vulnerable road users, all departments involved should unite on this matter and measures must be taken to alter both driver behavior and road culture within the specified area. Although not within this scope, policy options such as strict liability could be considered in these cases.

The DfT's 'Mixed Priority Routes' scheme<sup>7</sup> could be a useful tool for the DCLG delivery strategy. The scheme showed that benefits to be gained from an integrated enhancement of the High Street include:

- Improved quality and stability for local traders.
- Improved street environment and livability.
- Significant road traffic casualty reductions.
- Improved facilities and safety for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Improved personal security.<sup>8</sup>

## REGENERATION AND DEPRIVATION

The promotion of regeneration and the tackling of deprivation are likely to be a positive move as far as safety of all road users is concerned, as research shows that areas of high deprivation are linked to areas of high casualty rates, particularly of children.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/demonstrationtowns/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/dpp/mpr/summaryscheme.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/dpp/mpr/>

It may be beneficial to both the DCLG and DfT to work collectively in this area to amplify the potential benefits of regeneration and to reduce expenses.

For any further information in the topics raised in this response, please contact:

Eleanor Besley

[eleanor.besley@pacts.org.uk](mailto:eleanor.besley@pacts.org.uk)

0207 222 7736

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<sup>9</sup> Christie N and Ward H (2002). From exclusion to inclusion: the interaction between social and injury prevention policies. Presentation at Trauma 2002, Montreal. Poster presentation, poster.

Christie N., Kimberlee R., Lyons R.A., Towner E.M.L., Ward H., (2008) Ethnicity, deprivation and road traffic injury risk: a survey of risk and road safety and implications for injury prevention. Accepted for publication in International Journal of Health Promotion and Education.