

Executive Summary

Liberal Democrats believe that the transport system should empower individuals to make sustainable choices about the way in which they live, whilst offering modern, affordable, accessible and reliable means of travelling around Britain.

This paper addresses the key challenges facing transport in 21st century Britain: those of reducing carbon emissions and increasing capacity. It seeks to price behaviour according to its impact on the environment, whilst creating real sustainable alternatives for passengers through a step change in the provision and performance of public transport.

Liberal Democrats will aim for a carbon-neutral Britain by 2050: this paper empowers both the transport system and individuals to reduce emissions, whilst ensuring there is fair access to an improved transport system for all.

National

Liberal Democrats would commit to building a national transport system fit for the 21st century by:

- Setting up a Future Transport Fund to provide an investment stream for improvements to the public transport system. The income for this Fund would be generated from the proceeds from national lorry road user charging and the domestic flights surcharge to Aviation Duty (excluding lifeline flights).
- Introducing motorway and trunk road pricing within ten years but in the meantime reduce carbon emissions by introducing more steeply graduated VED and national lorry road user charging and investing in public transport; in the second phase road pricing on motorways and trunk roads will be cost neutral for the motorists as we reduce fuel duty and abolish VED.
- More steeply graduating the Government's 'showroom' tax, to financially reward those purchase cars with low emission engines. Bands G and F will carry a higher tax burden at the point of purchase, whilst those who purchase cars in bands A or B will receive a substantial subsidy.
- Building an extensive high speed rail network to significantly increase the capacity and capabilities of Britain's rail network.
- Closing gaps in the electrified rail service and committing to full electrification by 2050.
- Establishing rolling franchises for train operators with performance targets at key renewal points. The increased franchise security would encourage investment in the rail network and improve standards.
- Introducing a track damage charge on the ROSCOs, to be paid to Network Rail (a not-for-profit company) and thereby re-invested in the railways.
- Creating a regulator for car parks, applying national standards on issues such as appeals procedures and safety.
- Being the passengers' champion: investing in better public transport and better access to information for passengers.

Fast Track Britain: Building a Transport System for the 21st Century

- Expanding the role of Passenger Focus to include all public transport and highways matters and to act as an arbitrator for all parties. A petition with an agreed number of signatories would require Passenger Focus to formally respond.
- Including aviation in the UK and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emissions inventories, and ensuring that the UK emissions target in the Climate Change Bill includes aviation and shipping.
- Introduce a domestic flights surcharge to Aviation Duty, excluding lifeline flights.
- Substantially amending the 'New Approach to Appraisal' criteria to more accurately reflect the impact of different transport options on the environment and society.
- Introducing mandatory EU average vehicle emissions targets and supporting British research and development into low-carbon technologies.
- Ensuring transport plays its full part in Britain becoming carbon neutral by 2050.
- Creating a Department for the Environment, Energy and Transport to enhance policy coordination.

Local

Liberal Democrats would support local communities by:

- Funding 'smart measures' to promote local choice and sustainability in travel.
- Enhancing the powers of Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) to control local bus matters.
- Empowering local communities to find innovative solutions to the transport problems they face. This would involve removing unnecessarily restrictive regulation and providing funding streams for community transport projects.
- Making all major public service changes subject to an accessibility audit as part of the planning process.
- Introducing a cycling 'Gold Standard' award for all rail and bus stations that meet acceptable facility standards.
- Using the planning system to reduce the need to travel, designing in low-travel, low-carbon living to all new developments.

Freight

Liberal Democrats would encourage more sustainable methods of moving freight by:

- Actively promoting a switch from road and air freight, to rail and water freight.
- Closing strategic gaps in the rail freight network to increase reliability and speed.
- Introducing lorry road user charging for all domestic and foreign lorries using British roads.
- Facilitating the maximum use of inland and coastal waterways.
- Encouraging research and development into low-carbon technologies for road freight vehicles.

CONTENTS

	Page
Executive Summary	1
1. Introduction	4
1.1 The Situation	4
1.2 Principles	4
1.3 Our Vision	5
2. Joining up communities - national & international transport	7
2.1 Railways strategy to 2050	7
2.2 Immediate Rail Improvements	9
2.3 Aviation	10
2.4 A fair deal for motorists	11
2.5 Safety and governance	13
2.6 Lower carbon motoring	14
2.7 Coaches	15
2.8 Motorcycles	15
3. Enhancing communities – local transport	16
3.1 Improving local accountability	16
3.2 Buses	17
3.3 Tram-trains, trams and ultra-light rail	18
3.4 Smarter travel	19
3.5 Planning system	19
3.6 Cycling and walking	20
4. Rural transport and dealing with social exclusion	22
4.1 Supporting community transport	22
4.2 Accessibility audit	23
4.3 Rural motoring	23
5. Sustainable freight	24
5.1 Promoting a switch	24
5.2 Enhancing sustainable freight modes	24
6. Conclusion	26

Printed on 100% Recycled Paper

ISBN: 978-1-85187-784-3

1. Introduction

1.1 The situation

- 1.1.1 Improvements in transport over the last 50 years have brought many benefits to society including increased personal mobility and greater choice and availability of goods. However, these benefits have come at a cost.
- 1.1.2 Labour has not committed to or delivered on its 1997 manifesto promise to “lead the fight against global warming, through...a 20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2010.” Emissions from road transport have increased by 4.6% since 1997, whilst emissions from aircraft are up by 23% and are set to rise ever higher with a 56% increase in the number of air passengers since 1997. Given the serious threat posed by climate change it is vital that the transport system plays its part in reducing, not increasing, emissions.
- 1.1.3 Under the predict and provide system, the Labour Government has built 405 miles of new trunk road but just 27 miles of railway, yet still congestion on Britain’s roads has continued to grow. It is clear that Labour’s plans for Britain’s transport system have failed.
- 1.1.4 The price of oil is now over \$100 a barrel and predicted by many to increase steeply in future. The days of cheap oil appear long behind us. This in itself is an argument for a step change in the research and development of viable alternatives, aside from environmental concerns.
- 1.1.5 Public transport has become more expensive, with the cost of travelling by bus or train rising in real terms since 1997 while the cost of motoring has fallen 10%. As a consequence, Britain has become ever more dependent on the private motor vehicle, with its damaging knock-on effects for the environment.

1.2 Principles

- 1.2.1 A Liberal Democrat government would create a transport system fit for modern Britain following the principles of:
- 1.2.2 Choice
 - Citizens should be empowered by the transport network to choose how they will travel, knowing what effect they will have on the environment and how much their travel will cost.
 - The planning system should reduce the necessity for travel.
- 1.2.3 Fairness
 - Individuals should pay according to the damage they do to the environment and the choices they make – a level playing field for all on a mutually beneficial basis.
 - There should be equality of opportunity in the ability of individuals to access transport options, including disabled people.
- 1.2.4 Freedom
 - The freedom to travel needs to be balanced with the freedom to enjoy life without negative impacts from others.

- Decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level – different areas require radically different solutions according to their specific needs.

1.2.5 Responsibility

- Transport must substantially reduce its carbon footprint, supporting the aim for Britain to be carbon neutral by 2050.
- Individuals should be aware of their responsibilities towards the environment and each other.
- Ensure transport contributes positively towards building and sustaining communities.
- Transport should contribute to maintaining and increasing Britain's competitiveness and developing all Britain's regions.

1.2.6 Quality:

- The transport experience should be comfortable, efficient, reliable, affordable and environmentally sustainable.

1.3 Our Vision

1.3.1 The Liberal Democrat vision for 2050 is a transport system which:

- Is Zero Carbon: Britain needs to lose its dependence on oil. Cars and other vehicles will run on electricity (from green sources under our energy proposals), hydrogen or 100% sustainable biofuels.
- Uses High Speed Rail: A network of high speed rail lines will promote travel by train rather than plane, with rapid transfers possible between British cities and the Continent.
- Promotes a fair deal for British people: Our proposals for a Motorway and Trunk Road User Charging scheme will ensure that motorists are charged fairly, whilst providing viable public transport alternatives.
- Encourages more sustainable freight: Capacity for freight will be increased on the rail network, we will encourage the use of inland waterways and short-distance shipping, and promote greater use of freight interchange hubs.
- Empowers individuals to live sustainable lives: We will facilitate an increase in levels of cycling and walking, through investment, information and innovation.
- Enables bigger and better local transport: We aim to bring public transport up to the highest European standards by 2050, through sustained investment.

1.3.2 Our proposals are supported by full and extensive costings, which detail where we will make savings and where we will commit to additional investment. Our Future Transport Fund – raised using income from lorry road user charging and the domestic surcharge to Aviation Duty – will be used directly to support investment in key national projects such as rail improvements and high speed rail, and will be available for Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) and Local Authorities (LAs) to draw on to improve local buses or invest in local sustainable transport facilities.

1.3.3 This policy paper builds on the proposals from *Zero Carbon Britain* and reaffirms the need for a Green Tax Switch from taxing work to taxing pollution.

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1.3.4 Liberal Democrats support innovative methods of raising additional funds locally including:

- Sharing any rise in commercial property value along High Speed Rail routes.
- Prudential borrowing against fare box revenue.
- Use of supplementary business rates (as in the Crossrail funding model) to reflect benefits to businesses local to any investment through the normal business taxation regime.
- Utilising contributions from developers under s.106 funding.
- The issuing of bonds.

2. Joining up communities - national & international transport

- 2.0.1 At the heart of transport policy is the Department for Transport (DfT), a body which expects the price of oil to be just \$70 in 2020, that has approved £1bn of overspends on major road projects in just one year and which continues to insist that bus passengers', cyclists' and pedestrians' time is worth less than that of motorists.¹
- 2.0.2 A Liberal Democrat government would encourage innovation at the highest level of transport planning, using local examples of success within ITAs and LAs to drive innovative policies from beneath. We will set up a Future Transport Fund, available for ITAs to bid for funding for new and sustainable transport projects without the need to conform to a central view.
- 2.0.3 Liberal Democrats would create a new Department of Environment, Energy and Transport (DEET), taking in all of Defra's current environmental responsibilities, energy from the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform and all the roles of the Department for Transport. This will lead to more integrated thinking on climate change and transport issues, and will encourage civil servants to think about the broader impacts of their individual decisions.

2.1 Railways strategy to 2050

- 2.1.1 The railways have been through major upheaval over the last 15 years but have begun to stabilise since Network Rail was established. Liberal Democrats do not believe that the industry needs any further major restructuring and would work with the existing bodies to build a modern railway capable of delivering for 21st century Britain.
- 2.1.2 Railway passenger numbers have reached record levels at 1.2bn passengers per annum, in spite rather than because of Labour's policies. Rail fares have risen 6% in real terms since 1997 and remain amongst the most expensive in Europe. Nearly one in eight trains are late and passengers have wasted more than 15,000 years of their lives due to delayed trains since 1997.
- 2.1.3 Overcrowding has increased year on year, particularly on major commuter routes into cities. Demand for rail travel is growing each year, with a 40% increase in passenger miles travelled by rail since 1996, a 66% increase in rail freight in the last decade and a forecast 30% growth in demand for rail passenger miles by 2016. The existing network will reach 'capacity' within 10-15 years and we need to plan now to avoid this.
- 2.1.4 The Government has failed to present a long term strategy for the railways. The Railways White Paper of 2007 claimed to be a 30 year strategy but contained no plans for the network beyond 2014. This failure of long-term vision was equally evident in the conclusions of the Eddington Study in 2006, which neglected to analyse future transport needs in terms of wider social and environmental benefits, thus missing the opportunity to plan in real terms for the future.

¹ The New Approach to Appraisal, which the Government are currently proposing to review, suggests that every minute saved for a car driver is worth 44p, a bus-users time is worth 33p per minute and a minute of cyclists' time is worth 28p.

2.1.5 Liberal Democrats would create a vision for the railways to 2050 and beyond, assessing the potential of rail to deliver maximum socio-economic and environmental benefits. Liberal Democrats would:

- Achieve the electrification over the long term of the entire mainline network, in particular the Great Western Mainline and Midland mainline routes. Electrification has double benefits in terms of lowering emissions, and also allowing a greater number of services to be run on lines (through more rapid acceleration and deceleration). Currently, just 39% of the railway network is electrified.
- Commit to building a high speed rail network in Britain, with an initial link from St Pancras to Heathrow with onward through travel to Birmingham and Manchester. This would be done in stages: building one section, acquiring a revenue stream, and then resuming building work. High speed rail has been demonstrated as the transport mode of preference in comparison with short haul flights – for example, rail on the Paris-Lyon route now holds a staggering 91% market share. Carbon emissions from rail are 1/10th of that from air, making the potential emissions savings through high speed rail significant. The broader benefits of high speed rail include regeneration, economic benefits and freeing up ‘classic’ space for freight and local passenger services. Our priority programme for high speed rail would commence immediately, to be rolled out over approximately 15 years. Much of the high speed network, stretching west and further north to Scotland, could be part financed by developers.
- Close the bottlenecks in the existing freight infrastructure. We would concentrate especially on improving links between ports and the rail network to promote direct transfer of loads and would encourage the use of s.106 money from developers of new or expanded ports to invest in rail access. If a commercially viable plan came forward we would support the building of a dedicated rail freight line.
- Encourage procurement of ultra-light rail trains in rural areas as existing stock is replaced. This would reduce costs, improve reliability, the speed of services, and efficiency, and reduce track damage. Ultra-light rail is capable of more rapid acceleration and deceleration, whilst inflicting less infrastructure damage.
- Make it possible for local authorities and community rail partnerships to draw down funds from the Future Transport Fund to re-open viable rail lines, working in partnership with Train Operating Companies (TOCs).

2.1.6 At a strategic level, Liberal Democrats would:

- Make Network Rail more accountable with greater incentives to innovate. The board should be significantly streamlined, and include representatives from Passenger Focus.
- Introduce a system of rolling franchises with major review points every five years.² Franchises would be renewed subject to the attainment of pre-agreed standards (e.g. improved facilities at stations, reliability and fare levels). In return for longer franchises TOCs would be expected to invest significantly in their franchise area including upgrading track, rolling stock, providing additional carriages, upgrading

² Between major review points the DEET will retain the power to remove a franchise, after a warning, when the franchisee has reneged on franchise terms. In February 2008 First Great Western were issued with a Remedial Plan and Breach Notice, meaning that if the company fails to meet its new targets it could lose its franchise.

stations including improving disabled access, improving safety at stations and increasing car parking provision, and lengthening platforms. This would provide much-needed increases in capacity on the rail network.

- Redress the balance in relation to Rolling Stock Companies (ROSCOs), which have been widely criticised for earning excessive profits since being established.
 - A new annual Rolling Stock 'track damage charge' would be introduced on ROSCOs, based on the weight of the rolling stock. The proceeds from this would go directly to Network Rail for re-investment into the railways.
 - Competition would be widened to encourage other stakeholders to own rolling stock. Our commitment to longer, rolling franchises would encourage TOCs to invest directly in their own rolling stock. Upon termination of the franchise, the Office of the Rail Regulator (ORR) would ensure the transfer of rolling stock to another TOC at a fair rate.
- Propose a wholesale review of standards across the network.
- Ensure that the emissions standards of all new vehicles are at the highest achievable levels in order to encourage manufacturers to make use of the Best Available Technology.
- Use the planning system to safeguard former and potential transport corridors.
- Change the appraisal mechanism on which major transport projects are assessed, to include broader socio-economic benefits and the full cost of carbon.

2.2 Immediate Rail Improvements

2.2.1 A Liberal Democrat government would immediately introduce measures to improve the experience of rail passengers:

- Fill in the gaps in electrified services to enhance services.
- Facilitate the purchase of much-needed new rolling stock by providing residual guarantees to the ROSCOs.
- Use the Future Transport Fund to invest in key rail and light rail improvements and extensions.
- Introduce a rolling programme of small-scale rail expansion schemes. We would re-introduce a genuine partnership approach to line and station re-openings.
- Work with the rail industry to create a 24 hour, 365 day railway. Achieving this would include measures such as reintroducing single line working and using new technologies which allow for rapid maintenance of the railways.
- Encourage the use of 'modular' stations and easily-laid new lines to reduce the time and cost of improvements. This would be achieved by guaranteeing the purchase of bulk-buy 'kit' railways by the government, removing the need for multiple tendering processes.
- Encourage the use of 'tram trains' to allow capacity expansion in areas where conventional rail stations cannot be expanded.

2.2.2 Liberal Democrats will act as the passengers' champion, and put forward the following proposals:

Fast Track Britain: Building a Transport System for the 21st Century

- Allow passengers to petition Passenger Focus where they feel a service has not reached an adequate standard.
- Place an obligation on Passenger Focus to make a full investigation into submitted claims of service inadequacy attracting a specified number of signatures.
- Extend the remit of Transport Direct (the existing integrated journey planner) to include information on UK-Europe through ticketing and market Transport Direct more effectively to increase usage.
- Increase the use of smart and integrated ticketing.

2.3 Aviation

2.3.1 Since 1990, the proportion of total UK carbon emissions from aviation has more than doubled, from 2.5% to 5.8%. The Government's Aviation White Paper allows and encourages expansion of major airports. As a result, emissions from air travel are due to rise by 83% on 2002 levels by 2020 and could amount to a quarter of the UK's total contribution to global warming by 2038.

2.3.2 Liberal Democrats have been at the forefront in pressing for change in the aviation industry by ensuring that the real costs in terms of climate change and air pollution are included in the actual cost of air travel. We recognise that long haul flights are the only viable method of travelling such distances, but dispute whether short haul flights (such as domestic British flights) are really necessary. Our policies are laid out in policy paper 82 *Zero Carbon Britain* (2007) and policy paper 71 *A Soft Landing* (2006).

2.3.3 We would:

- Draw aviation into the UK and IPCC emissions inventories, and ensure that the UK emissions target in the Climate Change Bill includes aviation and shipping.
- Promote new global developments and mechanisms such as internationally agreed aviation fuel duty, if necessary renegotiating bilateral treaties.
- Back EU action on aviation (as a forerunner to possible international agreements) by putting aviation into the EU emissions trading system at a level that reflects the higher impact of emissions at altitude.
- Work with the EU to set a minimum tax rate on aviation fuel (kerosene) to be collected by member states and also to apply value added tax to air tickets and charges.
- Introduce domestic flight surcharge to Aviation Duty, excluding lifeline flights, payable as part of the endowment of the Future Transport Fund. This could raise around £500m per year for the fund and provide a disincentive to take internal flights. This would replace the Climate Change Charge proposal in *Zero Carbon Britain*.
- Maintain total runway capacity in Britain at the existing level. We would work with the EU to permit the auctioning and secondary trading of airport slots to encourage greater competition and optimise the use of slots for long-haul travel; we oppose any expansion of capacity at the five London airports.
- Clamp down on the regulation that effectively means retail rents subsidise the charge an airline operator pays to land at the busiest airports.

- Improve public transport links to airports including the development of dedicated, strategic rail links.

2.3.4 The Chancellor has announced plans to introduce (from 1 November 2009) Aviation Duty levied per-flight instead of air passenger duty. This is to be welcomed, but needs to take much more account of aircraft emissions and double the overall tax take.

2.4 A fair deal for motorists

2.4.1 Despite Labour's promise to reduce traffic levels, road traffic has risen 12% since they came to power and congestion is forecast to rise by up to 30% by 2025, costing the economy £24bn. Despite years of evidence to the contrary the Government continues to attempt to build their way out of congestion, building 15 times more miles of trunk road than railway since coming into power.

2.4.2 This strategy has failed. The 'New Approach to Transport Appraisal' has been discredited and requires substantial amendment to more accurately reflect the impact of different transport options on the environment and society. There would be a presumption against major road-building projects unless they meet stringent environmental, social and safety criteria.

2.4.3 We propose a package of measures to cut transport emissions and give a fair deal to Britain's motorists. We will work towards a motorway and trunk road pricing scheme but believe that this should only be introduced after significant improvements to public transport. In order to facilitate this, we would introduce Lorry Road User Charging and the domestic flights surcharge to Aviation Duty on domestic British flights, allowing for investment in public transport. As an interim measure to reduce emissions, during our first parliament we will more steeply graduate Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) on the basis of emissions as part of our 'Green Tax Switch'. After improvements have been made in public transport, we will introduce an emissions-based road user charge on motorways and trunk roads, ensuring that there is no additional charge to the motorist by abolishing Vehicle Excise Duty and reducing fuel duty.

First steps

2.4.4 In the first phase we would:

2.4.5 Reward owners of less polluting new cars with lower taxes by reforming VED. This would cut tax altogether on cars that pollute least, while increasing it steeply on the most polluting. In the 2008 Budget, the Chancellor proposed increasing the number of bands of VED. This will still not achieve the behavioural shift needed, and we restate the need for the most polluting new cars to be subject to £2,000 VED.

2.4.6 Increase the graduation of the proposed 'showroom' tax on the purchase of new cars, reducing the cost of purchasing low-emission vehicles (bands A and B) by increasing the tax on the highest bands (bands F and G). Under our 'Green Tax Switch' proposals, any additional revenue raised will be used to reduce taxes on income. Discourage companies from using polluting vehicles by more steeply graduating corporate car tax.

2.4.7 Index fuel duty to GDP growth, except in periods of oil price spikes. Fuel duty should rise in line with rising incomes to maintain incentives for economy.

2.4.8 Increase the graduation of tax on lorries and trailers to give a real incentive to use more fuel efficient vehicles. We would change the way in which such taxes are calculated,

Fast Track Britain: Building a Transport System for the 21st Century

taking into account emissions as well as weight. Tax on older vehicles would gradually be increased to encourage the disposal of more polluting vehicles.

2.4.9 Support proposals to make the 'lifetime costs' of a vehicle clearer to consumers at the point of purchase and for VED discs to be colour-coded by emissions band to ensure peer-awareness of a vehicle's environmental impact. Consumers should receive sufficient information on lifetime environment impacts in order to make informed and responsible purchasing decisions.

2.4.10 Introduce lorry road user charging on a pay per mile basis, varying according to emissions. This would be similar to schemes currently operating in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the Czech Republic, would provide endowment for the Future Transport Fund and would operate using existing technology.

Motorway and Trunk Road Pricing

2.4.11 Liberal Democrats propose a motorway and trunk road pricing scheme covering all motorways and major trunk roads in Britain.³

2.4.12 During our first parliament we would undertake preparatory work:

- Detailed consultation on the design of the scheme, including levels of charging and data privacy issues.
- Invest significantly in public transport through our Future Transport Fund.

2.4.13 The key aspects of our proposal are:

- Road pricing should be seen as part of a package of measures – it is not a solution on its own.
- To tax differently, not more. Our scheme will be revenue neutral for the average motorist, with the revenue from road pricing used to remove VED entirely and reduce fuel duty.
- Significant investment would be injected into public transport prior to introducing any charging, providing a viable alternative to the private motor vehicle, where possible.
- Pricing would be linked to car emissions, benefiting lower emission vehicles.
- A 'Privacy Guarantee' would be provided to motorists, by separating any personal details held from journey details.⁴ This would include the option of using an anonymous pre-pay system and would establish robust legal guidelines around the use of data collected (i.e. data would not be passed on to other organisations).
- Exemptions and discounts would be introduced for emergency vehicles, NHS vehicles, public transport vehicles, and vehicles used by disabled drivers who rely on their car for transport (following the disability exemptions for VED).
- We would make a firm commitment to provide political leadership in tackling emissions from the transport sector.

³ Roads operated by the Highways Agency in England, Transport Scotland in Scotland and the Welsh Assembly Government in Wales.

⁴ In continental Europe, where road pricing operates in Austria, the Czech Republic and Switzerland among others, it has proved possible to protect transaction details using cryptographic signatures and a range of other security measures.

- 2.4.15 A number of locations have already implemented forms of road pricing including London, Stockholm and Singapore, and the Netherlands are currently considering a national scheme.
- 2.4.16 The benefits we would expect to see include:
- Fairer charges for using roads according to the polluting effect of each vehicle.
 - Financial benefits for drivers who have no public transport alternatives and are dependent on the car (particularly in rural areas).
 - An increase in the certainty of journey times (vital for the freight and services sectors) due to an incidental reduction in congestion levels.
 - A commensurate improvement in viable public transport alternatives to the car.
- 2.4.17 We envisage that our motorway and trunk road user charging scheme would operate using the 'tag and beacon' scheme, covering motorways and trunk roads. To avoid a plague of 'rat running', the technology chosen must allow for penalties to be enforced on drivers who 'rat run' in order to avoid payment.

2.5 Safety and governance

- 2.5.1 The Government's road safety target stops at 2010. Liberal Democrats would put in place a road safety strategy through to 2020 aimed at improving the safety of all road users, reducing casualty rates over each parliament.
- 2.5.2 We will make it easier for local authorities to introduce 20mph zones in residential areas, without the need for a police evaluation or consent from the government. British studies found 20mph zones reduced traffic speed and accidents, with child pedestrian injuries falling by 70% and child cyclist injuries by 48%. The research found 'no migration of accidents...to other areas as a result of the introduction of the zones'.
- 2.5.3 To further reduce the impact of alcohol on drivers, Liberal Democrats would lower the maximum permitted blood alcohol level from 0.8mg per 100ml to 0.5mg. Recent reports suggest that 65 lives per year could be saved by such a move and there is strong support in Britain for a decrease in the legal limit.
- 2.5.4 The Government has yet to tackle the growing issue of drug driving. Between 1996 and 2000, 18% of drivers who died on the roads had illegal drugs in their system, compared with just 3% for the period 1985–1988. Almost one third of drivers who tested positive for illegal drugs were able to pass the roadside 'sobriety' tests. Liberal Democrats would trial new testing equipment amongst police forces in England and Wales. Any tests used would have the same legal basis as roadside testing equipment for drink-driving.
- 2.5.5 It is estimated that 6% of all vehicles on Britain's roads are driven by uninsured drivers. Just one-in-five uninsured drivers is caught and fined, with other motorists suffering higher premiums as a result. Since 1997 there has been an 11% increase in the number of prosecutions but a 25% drop in the average fine, to just £169 in the most recent year reported (2004) – less than half the average annual cost of insurance itself. Liberal Democrats would ensure there was an effective deterrent in place by working with the Sentencing Guidelines Council to ensure that courts take into account the price of an appropriate policy of insurance in the case of the defendant concerned when sentencing. It would not be acceptable for sentencing policy to make it financially worthwhile to keep an uninsured vehicle. We would also provide for the option of car confiscation in cases of repeat offenders.

2.5.6 We will tackle abuses of power, poor standards and unfair appeals procedures in relation to car parking. We will regulate the parking system and increase confidence in Local Authority Parking Enforcement by creating an 'Independent Parking Complaints Authority' (IPCA) to act as regulator for all car parks over 10 spaces and be responsible for policing the standards for all parking facilities and decriminalised parking enforcement – including appeals processes,⁵ adequate lighting and public safety provision, disabled parking provision and adequate signage of fines. The IPCA remit will include applications for the Blue Badge scheme and the implementation and management of this scheme. The IPCA will recognise those car parks meeting the required standards by awarding a 'kite mark' status. The IPCA will replace the Traffic Penalty Tribunal, which does not tackle private car parks, and will be funded by a levy on all car park operators.

2.6 Lower carbon motoring

2.6.1 We propose a programme of measures to encourage the shift to low carbon technologies and promote innovation to prepare for the future.

2.6.2 There are several technologies which can have an immediate short-term impact on reducing vehicle emissions; however there are a number of barriers to entry, including limited initial demand and high capital costs of emerging technologies. Any commitment to renewable fuels will require safeguards to ensure that fuels do not come from crops which have displaced rainforest and other valuable natural habitats and carbon sinks. We therefore fully support sustainability criteria for biofuels used to meet EU renewable energy targets. These would exclude from use any that are produced on land cleared of natural habitats or fail to save 50% more carbon emissions in comparison to conventional fuels. The sustainability protocols should be drawn up in such a way as to avoid accusations of protectionism. We would oppose any move towards differential subsidy of first-generation biofuels similar to those introduced in the United States. In the longer-term, second generation biofuels which do not have these concerns may be able to play a role and we would investigate the most appropriate future market mechanisms.

2.6.3 The King Review concluded that "in five to ten years' time we could be driving equivalent cars to those we choose today, but emitting 30% less CO₂ per kilometre. Towards 2030, reductions of around 50% are achievable, with the largest contribution likely to come from vehicle technologies, including battery-electric hybrids, and small reductions from both lower carbon fuels and more environmentally aware consumer behaviour." Liberal Democrats would promote and support British research and development into new low-carbon technologies.

2.6.4 In addition, Liberal Democrats would:

- Introduce mandatory EU average vehicle emissions targets – 120g/km by 2015, 95g/km by 2020 and zero carbon for all new cars by 2040 by technical means alone – backed up by an effective system of penalties and incentives.
- Support a mandatory system of colour-coded fuel efficiency labelling to be required in car advertising.
- Extend emissions targets to all other vehicles, so that by 2050 all freight vehicles in 2050 are running on electricity, sustainable biofuels or other renewable fuels.
- We will introduce engine efficiency standards in to the Certificate of Initial Fitness required by Public Service Vehicles.

⁵ For example, ensuring that car park operators are not allowed to increase fines during an appeals process.

2.7 Coaches

- 2.7.1 Express or limited-stop coaches can provide relatively rapid public transport on orbital journeys between local town centres where it would be prohibitively expensive to build new rail or heavy tram links. Liberal Democrats would encourage ITAs to consider letting concessions to operate such routes on a trial basis.
- 2.7.2 Another innovative proposal is to establish 'parkway' coach stations on motorway-side locations on the edge of major cities to provide rapid and affordable inter-city express coach services. Passengers would reach the 'parkway' by local bus or their own car – in effect a 'park-and-ride' facility in much the same way people drive to rail stations.

2.8 Motorcycles

- 2.8.1 Powered two wheeled (P2W) motor vehicles (motorcycles, scooters and mopeds) can contribute significantly to reducing congestion by requiring less road space, however their efficiencies in engine design have not kept pace with cars and emissions can be high. We therefore advocate the following policy measures:
- Setting VED in accordance with CO₂ emissions, which will encourage motorcycle manufacturers to improve engine efficiency.
 - Ensuring dedicated and secure parking provision for P2Ws in car parks, encouraging the provision of on-street secure parking for two wheelers, and improving safety in car parks, for example through CCTV.
 - Introduce a reduced rate of motorway and trunk road pricing for P2Ws.

SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS HAVE ALREADY MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN GOVERNMENT

- Liberal Democrat Transport Ministers made record levels of investment in public transport to meet the commitments in our transport long-term investment plan - over 70% of the £1.8 billion budget.
- We invested in public and rural transport, including the funding of nearly 60 projects to better connect rural Scotland.
- We radically changed the way that Scotland's transport needs will be determined in the future through the creation of Transport Scotland and the National Transport Strategy based around three key strategic outcomes: improving journey times and connections, reducing emissions and improving quality, affordability and accessibility.

3. Enhancing communities – local transport

- 3.0.1 As two-thirds of trips and over half of car journeys in Britain are less than five miles long, measures to change travel behaviour and reduce the need to travel over shorter distances could bring significant benefits environmentally, socially and in terms of the nation's health.
- 3.0.2 It is estimated that a third of the reduction in carbon emissions from transport by 2050 could come from a switch to public transport, walking and cycling, as well as measures to reduce the need to travel by car.

3.1 Improving local accountability

- 3.1.1 In recent years, responsibility for running Britain's transport network has become increasingly centralised with the Department for Transport now directly responsible for rail franchising as well as aviation, planning guidance, and decisions on regional infrastructure such as new roads or rail improvements.
- 3.1.2 As a guiding principle, Liberal Democrats believe that only functions which have to be managed nationally should be centralised and that all other responsibility should be devolved to local bodies. The following competencies will be transferred directly from the DfT to DEET:
- Ports.
 - Civil aviation.
 - Trunk roads.
 - Motorways.
 - Letting and managing rail franchises.
 - Planning and delivering major infrastructure upgrades/new developments (e.g. High Speed Rail).
 - Developing a vision for the transport network for the next 20-30 years.
- 3.1.3 We support the establishment of ITAs responsible for coordinating the delivery of public transport in a sub-region⁶ and would give them greater powers than currently proposed. Where ITAs are established, they would:
- Have control over the local strategic highway network, enabling ITA-wide bus priority assignment, traffic control systems, etc.
 - Have responsibility for regional transport plans, drawing powers down from Regional Development Agencies, where ITAs in a region collaborate.
 - Have the power – if required and where the deregulated bus system has failed to increase local bus patronage – to license and regulate bus services under a franchise or concession model, allowing the ITA to specify core bus routes and service levels. Service providers would be able to introduce services above and beyond this agreement to earn additional revenue, where agreed with the ITA.

⁶ It is assumed that existing PTEs will become ITAs and assume the same powers.

- Have the option to receive the income from the fare box directly, using this to borrow against future revenue streams to invest in public transport.
- Be given the right to agree Quality Contracts with the Approvals Board acting in a purely advisory capacity.
- Have the opportunity to use the expanded Passenger Focus as an arbitrator when drawing up Quality Partnerships.
- Have the right to operate local transport services (e.g. bus services), as the operator of last resort.
- Be required to ensure first class information for passengers (e.g. real time information systems) and safeguard possible infrastructure and land for future transport use.
- Encourage integrated smart ticketing, multi-modal and multi-operator tickets under the ITSO smart-card system.
- Have greater control over local light and community rail. ITAs would be able to use the Future Transport Fund to provide bus and rail service improvements in their area, working in partnership with local operators, as well as to invest in walking, cycling and 'Smarter Travel'.
- Have the right to be consulted by the DEET when rail franchises that affect their area are drawn up. The ITA will be engaged in setting standards of service and route requirements.
- Be made up of elected representatives from each local authority covered by the area of the ITA and could appoint non-voting members with specific interest or expertise.⁷ Non-voting members could include specialists, passenger and disability groups
- Receive core revenue funding from an annual levy from the ITA's constituent Councils.
- Could be synonymous with an urban area, a county or another grouping decided by local councils.
- Where ITAs are not introduced we will support local authorities to carry out these functions within their own boundaries.

3.2 Buses

3.2.1 The legacy of Tory deregulation of the bus network has left many routes with poor provision.

3.2.2 The regulated bus provision in Greater London has been successful in generating increased and more diverse ridership (a 32% increase since 2000/01 compared with a 7% decrease nationally). London uses a 'concession' model whereby the Mayor and Transport for London (TfL) set the bus service levels in terms of route, frequency, and reliability, also specifying the type, condition and performance of vehicle. This means buses are emission-efficient (hybrid vehicles are already being introduced), fully accessible to wheelchair users and operators are required to provide approved levels of

⁷ LTE membership to be allocated between local authorities according to population, and nominees within each District selected according to the political balance within that authority.

driver training. TfL pays an annual service charge to operators which can be performance-related, but takes the income generated from fares. This creates a reliable income stream independent of central government funding against which TfL can prudentially borrow to fund transport projects.

3.2.3 The franchise and concession models have advantages for all areas due to the potential to provide 'cross-funding' for social routes from profitable routes in a region. Liberal Democrats fully support the 'cross-funding' method and would ensure that community organisations were provided with the support to bid for such franchise arrangements.

3.2.4 Previous legislation introduced the option of Quality Contracts under which the local transport authority can require a certain service level from operators; in practice, none are operational. Some local authorities have excellent relations with their key bus operators and would prefer to continue developing an effective partnership. Such enterprise should not be jeopardised and Liberal Democrats would support ITAs regaining control over service levels in their area through the Quality Contract or Quality Partnership models.

3.2.5 Liberal Democrats would:

- Introduce legislation empowering ITAs to introduce regulatory regimes based on the Quality Contract model where they wish to do so, with an Approvals Board acting in an advisory capacity.
- Support ITAs that prefer to use Quality Partnerships on a co-operative model with bus operators.
- Encourage the adoption of the 'concession' model in order to provide ITAs with an income stream against which to borrow and finance future improvements.
- Support cross-subsidy where appropriate to enable profitable routes to support non-profitable routes.
- Support ITAs to enable rural communities and parish councils to source and operate vehicles to provide public transport for villages.
- Ensure local authorities demonstrate that they are taking effective measures to deal with congestion on bus routes.

3.2.6 We would expand the role of Passenger Focus to include all public transport and highways matters. Regional Passenger Focus representatives would hold both ITAs and operators to account for poor service to passengers. A petition with an agreed number of signatories would require Passenger Focus to investigate and formally respond. Bus operators would also have the opportunity to appeal to Passenger Focus in the case of dispute.

3.2.7 We welcome the introduction of free off-peak bus travel to those over the age of 60 and disabled people. However the implementation has left almost half of local authorities severely under-funded, bringing about damaging cuts to other services. We would reform the formula for funding national concessionary bus fares to ensure that local authorities are not out of pocket.

3.3 Tram-trains, trams and ultra-light rail

3.3.1 Tram-trains are a hybrid running on both existing railway lines and rails set into the highway, sharing the route with other road traffic. Usually powered by overhead electric

cables, they can also be powered by diesel engines. This hybrid capacity has the advantage that a tram-train running as a metro rail service could be taken on tracks along streets beyond a rail terminus, freeing up station platforms needed for regular trains.

- 3.3.2 Modern trams – like the system in Greater Manchester – have been successful and popular, although very expensive to build. Trams make extensive use of existing railway track but also have sections through town or city centres. As in continental cities, trams have priority over other road users, and provide zero-emission, high capacity, swift and silent public transport.
- 3.3.3 Ultra-light rail (ULR) has been trialled successfully in Bristol and Stourbridge and is now being commissioned for Southport. Essentially a lightweight bus on rails, it carries its power source on board thus avoiding the need for overhead wiring, and its light weight means that expensive excavations to re-site utilities are avoided. Pre-formed track can be sited as easily as kerbs. Using a hybrid engine, ULR could be low although not zero emission.
- 3.3.4 Liberal Democrats will encourage ITAs to promote tram or ULR schemes suitable to their locality using capital raised through innovative local funding mechanisms.

3.4 Smarter travel

- 3.4.1 Liberal Democrat councils have been at the forefront of adopting ‘Smarter Travel’ measures including in Richmond and Sutton. Personal Travel Planning⁸ has been reported to reduce car driver trips typically by 9-14% and reduce the distance travelled by car by up to 15%. Additional benefits include increased walking and cycling, increased public transport use, increased viability of local shops and businesses, more sociable neighbourhoods, improved local air quality and a reduction in carbon emissions. Liberal Democrats would promote greater use of ‘Smarter Travel’ methods as a proven, cost effective way of reducing car travel. The Future Transport Fund is a potential funding source for ITAs wishing to invest in ‘Smarter Travel’ schemes.
- 3.4.2 We would use local transport planning to promote the adoption of sustainable transport methods, including cycling, walking, innovative ways to reduce congestion and pollution, and to vigorously promote alternatives to the need to travel.
- 3.4.3 We would encourage the proliferation of Car Clubs in both urban and non-urban areas, allowing them dedicated parking spaces. This would reduce the need to own a car and could consist of clubs offering a range of low-emissions vehicles.

3.5 Planning system

- 3.5.1 The planning system is integral to the role of transport in our lives, including both the need to travel and how we fulfil those needs. Liberal Democrats would:
 - Ensure new developments are planned to reduce the need to travel, through more intelligent location of houses, shops, decentralised public services, places of work, and leisure facilities.
 - Encourage Local Authorities to make full use of the s.106 system and the future Community Infrastructure Levy to ensure that developers make a substantial contribution to providing a decent public transport system.

⁸ Personal Travel Planning is a technique that delivers information, incentives and motivation to individuals to help them voluntarily make sustainable travel choices. It seeks to overcome habitual use of the car, enabling more journeys to be made on foot, by bike, bus, train or in shared cars.

- Ensure that there is an obligation on developers to plan for the provision of excellent public transport links where possible, as well as walking and cycling facilities. More detail is provided in Policy Paper 77 *Green and Prosperous Communities: Local Regeneration for the 21st Century*.
- Expand the Sustrans 'DIY street' programme, where individual streets receive a dedicated budget to develop low cost capital works that make them safer and more attractive, creating a greater sense of community by creating valued 'resident friendly' spaces, e.g. introducing traffic calming, more green space, pedestrian friendly wider pavements, etc.⁹
- Welcome the introduction of National Policy Statements on planning, which the Liberal Democrats have long supported. This should speed up the planning process for major infrastructure proposals such as High Speed Rail.

3.6 Cycling and walking

3.6.1 Between 1975/76 and 2005 the total walking mileage per person per year fell 21%, whilst cycling fell 29%. This has in part contributed to the fact that in England, around 2/3 of the population does not achieve the recommended physical activity targets.

3.6.2 In order to boost cycling and walking and help improve the health of our nation, Liberal Democrats would:

- Promote an expansion of the National Cycle Network, particularly off-road routes. Research shows that cycle routes when separated from roads have far higher usage levels than those that form part of roads.
- Through our commitment to improving road safety, road quality and reducing traffic levels, on-road cycling will be made easier, safer and more accessible to all. The majority of cycle trips (65%) are commuter trips to work or school with the road network providing the best resource. We will promote cycling competency schemes and encourage better facilities for cyclists.
- Introduce a cycling 'Gold Standard' award for all rail and bus stations meeting minimum cycle facility standards, including adequate provision of secure cycle parking and information on local cycle routes.
- Support the adoption of large scale bicycle rental programmes such as the 'Cyclocity' scheme running successfully in Paris, and for many years in Germany.
- Ensure that road traffic law is enforced with equal vigour in relation to cyclists in order to secure the safety of all road users.
- Promote the introduction of nationally standardised 'walking time' signposts (as in Switzerland) indicating how long it takes to walk to nearby places, and encourage online information similar to TfL's London journey planner.

⁹ Such projects would be restricted to residential side streets where the impact of through traffic did not present a problem to any of the measures.

SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS HAVE ALREADY MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN GOVERNMENT

- Liberal Democrats introduced the highly successful and well-funded Scotland-wide free bus travel for older people and disabled people and generous discounts on fares for young people.
- Thanks to the Liberal Democrats' record investment in public transport infrastructure, rail and bus passenger numbers in Scotland continue to rise exponentially.
- We massively increased investment in cycling and walking, including £8 million in 2006/07 to expand the National Cycle Network and £5 million to reduce the environmental impact of the school run, improve road safety and increase active travel by children.

WELSH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS HAVE MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- A more sustainable Cardiff: We are investing in opening 'Pont y Werin' to provide a bridge link between Cardiff and Penarth to facilitate walking and cycling into the city.
- A safer Swansea: We are committed to improving road safety in the city and are setting up 20mph zones around schools. We aim to have 20pmh areas around all the city's schools within 2 years.
- A greener Powys: Liberal Democrats are pushing to roll out a trial to run the Council's vehicle fleet on bio diesel and to clean the fleet using rain water.

4. Rural transport and dealing with social exclusion

4.0.1 Just over 50% of households living in villages are not within easy reach of a GP and nearly 233,000 people live in areas without a Post Office within 2km, or a bank, building society or ATM within 4km. Increased centralisation of services such as the Post Office, the closure of community hospitals and the death of many local shops means that accessibility to services is an increasingly serious issue. In rural areas just 54% of households are within a 13 minute walk of an hourly or better bus service, compared to 86% in urban areas.

4.1 Supporting community transport

- 4.1.1 Community organisations – many of them supplying demand-responsive transport – are often able to fill the gaps left by the market. We welcome the loosening of restrictions in the Local Transport Bill but we would go further to integrate community transport into the range of rural transport provision.
- 4.1.2 Complex regulatory regimes stand in the way of a flourishing community transport sector. We will relax regulations for not-for-profit transport organisations. Small bus operators will be allowed to use paid or volunteer drivers and offer services to members of the public.¹⁰ Newly trained community transport drivers will require PCV licences in order to undertake paid work, and a minimum level of driver assessment and training will be required.¹¹
- 4.1.3 Where possible community transport should be encouraged to work with social services, local schools and councils to make best use of their vehicles and avoid duplication of services.

CASE STUDY

Collaboration between East Midlands Ambulance Service and Nottinghamshire County Council allowed social services vehicles, which had been underused during the day, to provide transport for non-emergency patients. This improved services, provided a revenue source for the Council and saved money for the ambulance service.

NICE, *Accessibility Planning and the NHS: Improving patient access to health services*, March 2006.

http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/pdf/Accessibility_planning_and_the_NHS_improving_patient_access_to_health_services.pdf

4.1.4 Liberal Democrats support community transport operators' right to tender for local transport contracts. We would relax section 19 regulations, allowing community

¹⁰ At the moment minibuses can operate under Section 19 permits allowing them to charge passengers without having to comply with the full passenger carrying vehicle operating licensing requirements. However these services can only be used for specific groups and the service cannot be offered to members of the general public. Community bus permits are issued under Section 22 and allow the service to be offered to the general public. Section 22 permit holders must use volunteer drivers while Section 19 permits allow the organisation to pay the drivers.

¹¹ Such as the training provided by the Community Transport Association's MiDAS scheme.

transport operators to provide services as long as they are doing so “without a view to profit on the part of that body or anybody else”.¹²

- 4.1.5 Wider use of bus franchising by ITAs will make it easier for buses and community transport to integrate with other bus services, trains, or with services such as local post office opening hours. Franchises can be designed so that profitable routes can cross-subsidise ‘social’ services.
- 4.1.6 We will provide a Rural Transport Access Fund (RTAF) to support innovation in sustainable local transport. Unlike the Rural Bus Challenge scheme, community groups and social enterprise organisations will be able to bid directly for funding, whilst any local authority applying must work in partnership with a community group or parish council. This would support bottom-up initiatives and would be open to all modes of transport.

4.2 Accessibility audit

- 4.2.1 The questionable trend in public service delivery towards larger, more centralised services often has the knock on consequence of introducing additional ‘accessibility’ barriers to service users, meaning additional travel is required to access the same services as before.
- 4.2.2 We propose that all major public service changes¹³ should require an accessibility audit as part of the planning process. Public services will have a responsibility to safeguard access to healthcare, education and basic financial services, with the ITA having power to insist that this responsibility is taken seriously. If an audit finds that service changes will compromise accessibility, the service provider and ITA will be obliged to examine alternative provision. At the moment although some decisions on closures take account of the possibility of reduced access, there is not always action to correct the situation. Joint working and funding will be encouraged, facilitated by the ITA to ensure that major changes in public services do not leave people isolated.

4.3 Rural motoring

- 4.3.1 We will encourage a more integrated transport system and ensure that there are facilities for modal interchange at bus and train stations. We will encourage the provision of car clubs in rural communities where public transport can be difficult to access.
- 4.3.2 Cars will remain essential to accessing public services in many very rural areas, where drivers often pay more to run their car because of the higher cost of fuel in rural petrol stations. Our move to a motorway and trunk road pricing scheme would decrease the cost of essential rural motoring, as fuel tax is reduced in favour of variable road pricing.
- 4.3.3 In sparsely populated rural areas, the first car for a household would benefit from a 50% discount in VED for vehicles in all but the top VED Band. We will examine the viability of obtaining a derogation to permit variable rates of fuel duty for specified remote rural areas, as currently happens in remote areas of France, Portugal and Greece. These would be used to bring the price of fuel at the pump down to that available in other parts of Britain.

¹² Section 19 regulations currently prevent community transport organisations using this permit to provide services to profit-making businesses hindering cooperation with commercial care homes or nurseries.

¹³ Including the National Health Service, the Department for Work and Pensions (including proposed Job Centre Plus closures) and local education services.

5. Sustainable freight

5.0.1 The aim for a zero-carbon Britain by 2050 necessitates a shift from road haulage to more sustainable methods of transporting freight. Of the total amount of CO₂ per tonne-kilometre emitted within the EC, water transport accounts for 25g, rail 41g and road 160g.

5.1 Promoting a switch

5.1.1 Liberal Democrats will promote a switch from road and air freight, to more sustainable methods including rail and water.

5.1.2 Liberal Democrats would implement a lorry road user charge in the first parliament, as proposed in policy paper 82 *Zero Carbon Britain* (2007). This would apply to British-registered and overseas lorries, thus levelling the playing field between domestic and foreign haulage firms.

5.1.3 We would increase the graduation of road tax on lorries and trailers to give a real incentive to use smaller and more fuel efficient vehicles. We would also change the basis on which this tax is calculated – bringing emissions as well as weight into the equation.

5.1.4 Lorries and larger vehicles unloading in urban areas often cause congestion and an increase in air pollution. We would encourage the creation of ‘freight consolidation centres’ outside of towns and cities, where goods could be switched from one mode (e.g. rail or large lorries) into smaller vans.

5.1.5 We will aim to develop a labelling system to reflect the environmental cost of all goods, allowing consumers to make informed choices at the point of purchase.

5.1.6 We recognise that road freight will never disappear entirely, and encourage commercial use of green technologies to reduce the environmental impact of this mode.

CASE STUDY

To make their supply chain more sustainable, Sainsbury’s is developing its online business with electric delivery vans and other initiatives. They have set the following targets:

- 20% of online shopping deliveries delivered by electric vans by the end of 2008.
- 100% of online shopping deliveries in urban areas delivered by electric vans in 2010.
- The distance travelled by its fleet and suppliers to be reduced by 5 million kilometres by 2010.
- To reduce carbon emissions per case of bulk by 5% by March 2009.

J Sainsbury plc 2007, *Corporate Responsibility Report 2007*, London

5.2 Enhancing sustainable freight modes

5.2.1 Capacity on the current rail network for freight is limited by the size of the network, the lack of 7 day a week access, gauge restrictions, limited interchange facilities between rail, road and other transport modes, and the priority for passenger transport. Liberal Democrats would review the current working practices of Network Rail and inject investment to remove the identifiable pinch points in the network, creating in effect a

'dedicated' freight rail system. This would create greater predictability for commercial services and make them more attractive.

- 5.2.2 We will improve rail freight facilities from major ports.
- 5.2.3 Britain currently relies heavily on ports such as Southampton and Felixstowe, whilst places such as Bristol are underused. We will encourage the development and growth of ports around Britain; enabling regeneration in those areas, achieving a better regional spread of imports, and providing for shorter transport distances on land.
- 5.2.4 In the longer term, our planned high speed network would reduce pressure on the 'classic' rail network, allowing greater scope for expansion in rail freight volumes.
- 5.2.5 We would re-invigorate the use of the 'Waterborne Freight Facilities Grant' to encourage road freight onto water where possible.
- 5.2.6 The industry is making changes of its own accord, with inland water shipping becoming one of the fastest growing methods of transporting freight. Liberal Democrats praise existing examples of commercial initiatives and will encourage continued innovation in freight movement. Liberal Democrats would:
- Use the 'freight facilities grant' to increase the use of small ports, short sea and coastal shipping.
 - Make the maximum use of inland waterways, especially for bulk loads (e.g. aggregates) and small loads (e.g. involving SMEs).
 - Ensure that key wharves and landing piers are safeguarded.

CASE STUDY

In October 2007 Tesco began transporting its new world wine imports by sea to Liverpool and then via the Manchester Ship Canal to their bottling plant for onward distribution. Around 600,000 litres of wine have been moved along the Ship Canal from Liverpool to Manchester. This initiative takes 50 lorries off British roads every week and cuts the retailer's carbon emissions by 80%.[1] The scheme has been so successful that volume will be increased in 2008, saving 3,500 lorry movements by the end of this year.

[1] Compared with before the scheme.

6. Conclusion

- 6.0.1 Britain's transport system is fundamental to ensuring Britain remains competitive in a global economy. It also has a vital role in enhancing the quality of life for both individuals and communities as a whole.
- 6.0.2 This paper prioritises Liberal Democrats' support for our public transport network and commits investment specifically to improving these facilities.
- 6.0.3 Our policies also make use of innovative and cost-effective 'smart measures' in transport to empower citizens to make sustainable and healthy transport choices.
- 6.0.4 We set out in this paper new thinking which we believe will lead to a lower-carbon transport system and encourage sustainable individual behaviour, providing financial incentives to live with the environment in mind.
- 6.0.5 This paper provides the leadership that the transport system requires in dealing with the challenges of congestion, social inclusion and pollution. We believe that the adoption of the policies contained in this paper will deliver a transport system fit for the 21st century and ensure that transport plays its full part in Britain becoming carbon neutral by 2050.

This paper has been approved for debate by the Federal Conference by the Federal Policy Committee under the terms of Article 5.4 of the Federal Constitution. Within the policy-making procedure of the Liberal Democrats, the Federal Party determines the policy of the Party in those areas which might reasonably be expected to fall within the remit of the federal institutions in the context of a federal United Kingdom. The Party in England, the Scottish Liberal Democrats, the Welsh Liberal Democrats and the Northern Ireland Local Party determine the policy of the Party on all other issues, except that any or all of them may confer this power upon the Federal Party in any specified area or areas. The Party in England has chosen to pass up policy-making to the Federal level. If approved by Conference, this paper will therefore form the policy of the Federal Party on federal issues and the Party in England on English issues. In appropriate policy areas, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland party policy would take precedence.

Many of the policy papers published by the Liberal Democrats imply modifications to existing government public expenditure priorities. We recognise that it may not be possible to achieve all these proposals in the lifetime of one Parliament. We intend to publish a costings programme, setting out our priorities across all policy areas, closer to the next general election.

Working Group on Transport

Note: Membership of the Working Group should not be taken to indicate that every member necessarily agrees with every statement or every proposal in this Paper.

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ISBN: 978-1-85187-784-3 © June 2008

Further copies of this paper may be obtained, priced £5, from:
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Tel: 01252 510 005 Email: info@libdemimage.co.uk
Printed by Contract Printing, 1 St James Road, St James Industrial Estate, Corby, NN18 8AL

Cover design by Mike Cooper