

**MAKING PERSONAL
TRAVEL PLANNING WORK
SUMMARY REPORT**

“Why did nobody think of putting all this information together in such a user-friendly fashion before now? Keep it up!”

INTRODUCTION

Personal Travel Planning (PTP) 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. PTP forms an important part of UK national and local transport policy, contributing to the suite of tools promoted under the general heading of ‘smarter choices’.

This summary report outlines the scope and benefits of the PTP process. It summarises the growing evidence base on the effectiveness of this relatively new area of travel management, drawing on UK experience to date. A detailed research report providing further background has also been produced to accompany this summary report.

Background to PTP

PTP has been implemented overseas since the 1980s (most notably in Australia, where it has now become a mainstream transport planning activity) and was first introduced in the UK in the late 1990s. In 2003, the Department for Transport (DfT) part-funded 14 pilot projects to examine how effective PTP could be in reducing reliance upon the private car. These pilot projects targeted households, schools and employers, with the results from the household projects in particular showing significant reductions in overall car use in urban areas.



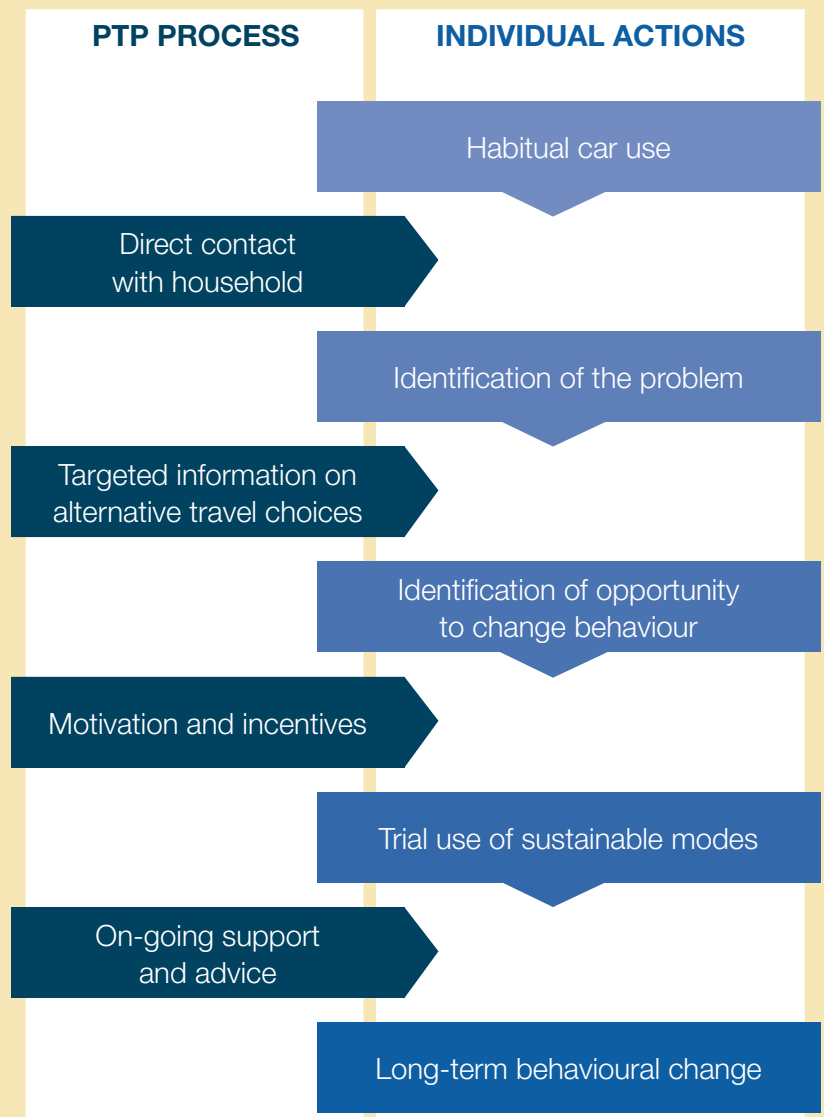
“My wife caught the bus back from town the other day, and this is our first step towards changing slowly. I haven’t caught the bus in years and years, and now I will again!”

What is involved in a typical PTP project?

PTP is typically delivered across large residential areas. Each person within the targeted area is encouraged to think about how they currently travel for each of the trips they make, and to consider how they might make those trips in more sustainable ways. The tools and techniques to encourage people to travel sustainably differ from project to project, and include:

- one to one conversations, either at the doorstep or by telephone, between individuals and trained travel advisors to encourage and motivate a change in behaviour;
- the provision of information on how to travel sustainably (for example, local bus network maps, travel guides, walking and cycling routes);
- the offer of gifts and incentives to encourage the use of sustainable modes (for example pedometers, water bottles, free bus tickets).

The following diagram summarises how the PTP process interacts with personal decisions on trip making.



Smarter Travel Sutton



LOCATIONS OF RESIDENTIAL PTP PROJECTS

“We all have to consider the alternatives – I usually drive, but I am now walking and cycling... I’ve even started to use the buses.”

‘PTP intuitively added value to the roll-out of improved bus services across the targeted areas’ (Nottingham case study)

Where has it been applied?

Despite PTP being a relatively new transport planning tool, there is a large and growing evidence base of PTP projects across the UK. To date, over 300,000 households have been targeted by PTP projects.

How effective is PTP in reducing car travel?

Within the UK, PTP has been reported to reduce car driver trips typically by 11% (amongst the targeted population) and reduce the distance travelled by car by 12%.

Are there any other benefits?

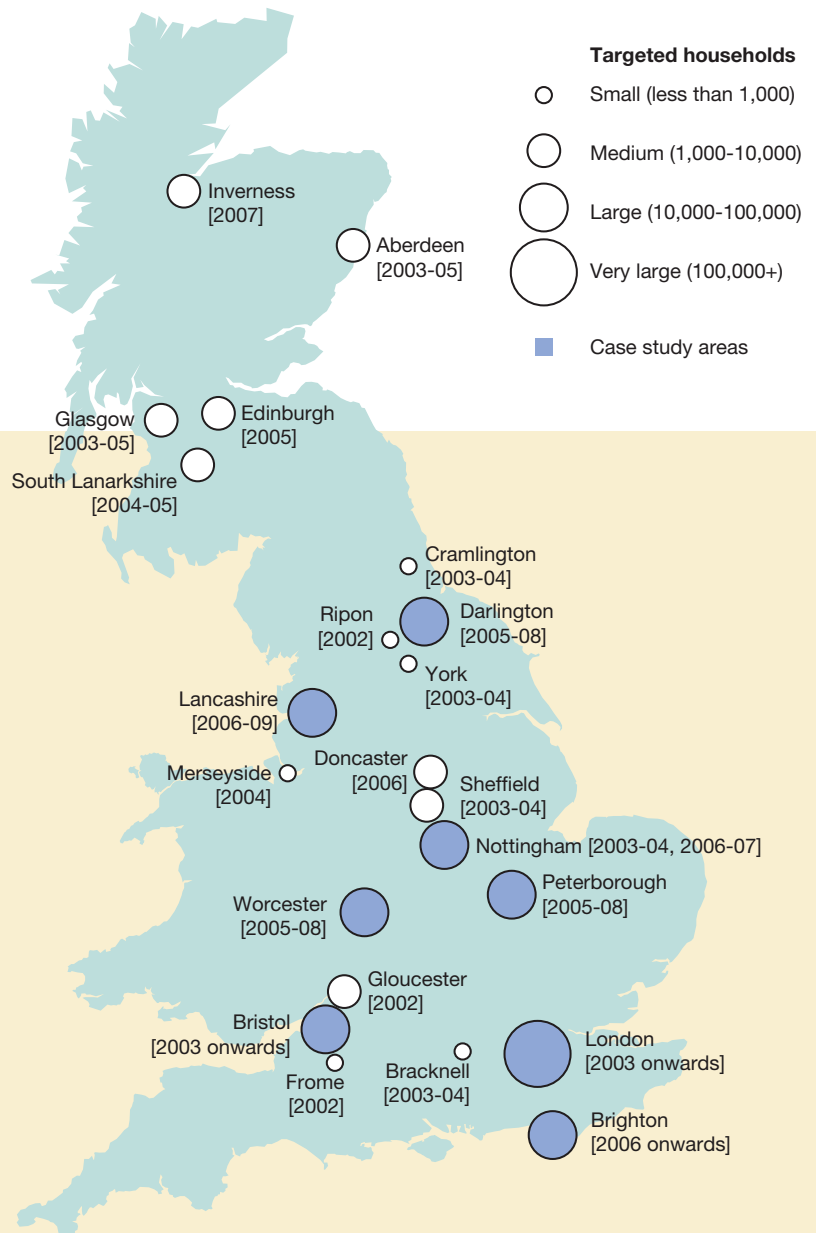
As a result of, and in addition to, reduced car use successful PTP projects also contribute to:

- increased walking and cycling, with associated health benefits;
- increased public transport use, making services more feasible and profitable;

- increased viability of local shops and businesses;
- more sociable and ‘liveable’ neighbourhoods;
- stronger partnerships between the agencies and organisations involved;
- improved local air quality;
- reduction in carbon emissions.

How much does it cost?

PTP programmes typically cost between £20 and £38 per targeted household, or in the order of £0.02 to £0.13 for each vehicle kilometre travelled reduced in the first year. International experience of cost–benefit analysis of PTP has demonstrated that, over a 10-year period, PTP offers a £30 return for every £1 invested. Increasing the scale of a project makes it more cost-effective.



‘evidence that personal travel planning can reduce car use by a significant amount is accepted by those who challenge the technique as well as its supporters’ (Cairns et al., 2004).

“Great! Now we’ve got the maps, we can get out more in the fresh air!”

Where does the funding come from?

Most of the UK projects to date have used one-off grant support to cover PTP project costs. However, as the evidence base grows, which is providing greater certainty upon the outcomes of PTP, there is likely to be an increasing use of developer funding and internal authority funding being used to support PTP.

In Bristol an annual budget of £70,000 has been secured from the capital programme to deliver PTP to households each year.

Where does PTP fit in?

Embedding PTP within the Local Transport Plan process is the obvious way to ensure that all elements of the sustainable transport strategy work in harmony. This enables the scheduling of PTP across different neighbourhoods to be tied in with specific sustainable transport investment programmes.

In Peterborough, the strength of the supporting partnerships has been important in maintaining momentum and widening the dissemination of results.

What are the prerequisite conditions for a successful PTP project?

Whilst evidence suggests that PTP can be applied to any community (as reductions in car use are generally consistent across all project areas), the greatest success is likely to be delivered in areas where there is or are:

- plentiful and diverse local facilities (shops, employment centres, leisure facilities etc.);
- good community networks;
- high levels of accessibility (by all sustainable transport modes);
- excess capacity on the public transport system;
- a stable (non transient) population;
- local recognition of congestion-related problems;
- recent investment in the local sustainable transport network.

How much time does PTP take?

PTP projects are typically delivered in stages, making them more manageable, as well as enabling the project team to learn from 'what works' and improving the process for future stages. Stages are generally scheduled to run during the spring, summer and autumn periods, and typically cover 5,000 to 10,000 households during each of the seasons.

In Worcester, the phasing of the PTP programme, known locally as 'individualised travel marketing' (ITM), was coordinated with specific improvements to the cycle and bus networks across the city, to maximise the use made of the sustainable transport capital spend programme.





Smarter Travel Sutton

“I got all the information I needed, and now I know which buses to catch, I think I can do something to help the environment.”

How is PTP delivered?

Local authorities have a number of options available to them in delivering a PTP project. These can be broadly summarised as:

Approach	Description
Outsourced	All aspects of delivery are contracted out to an external supplier.
In-house	Local authority is responsible for all aspects of the PTP project.
Partnering	Local authority works together with consultancy partner(s), both parties performing separate tasks.
Partner support	Majority of work is undertaken by the local authority, with discrete tasks outsourced (typically: staff training, recruitment of travel advisors, and programme management).
Developer-led	Housing developer is responsible for the cost and delivery of the programme, the latter often outsourced to consultants.

The evaluation findings that underpinned the headline results were predominantly informed by projects undertaken through outsourced contracts, with the main service providers being Sustrans/Socialdata and Steer Davies Gleave.

For those local authorities seeking consultancy support (either for the entire project or discrete tasks), it is important to understand and appreciate the PTP process in order to be certain of commissioning what they need from external suppliers.

What does the PTP process involve?

Commercial providers of PTP services offer different techniques and approaches to suit the needs of local circumstances and client requirements. In most cases, however, there are four key stages to the process:

Stage	Key tasks
1. Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree the scope of the project. • Establish objectives and targets. • Consider whether a pilot is required. • Agree evaluation procedures.
2. Pre-implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemble project resources. • Identify target households. • Arrange pre-contact publicity. • Implement a pre-intervention survey.
3. Contact/ advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone/door-to-door contact with households. • Receive request for materials from participating households. • Deliver the requested materials. • Follow-up advice and support.
4. Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-project surveys. • Corroborative data analysis. • Reporting and feedback.



J. Bewley/Sustrans

“I’m really pleased that the Council is taking such a healthy interest in local people AND the environment globally.”

Following on from delivery of its initial PTP programme, Darlington Borough Council is considering the potential for follow-on PTP activity targeted at specific groups, for example home movers.

How is PTP evaluated?

The evaluation of PTP provides two functions: first, to provide feedback on the overall effectiveness of the process, and, second, to inform modifications to the design of future PTP projects. Spending some time and energy undertaking a robust evaluation will therefore pay dividends in

ensuring future programmes continue to adapt to what works best in the local area.

A key challenge for PTP to date has been how best to validly and reliably determine the success of a project against a background of wider influences affecting day-to-day travel.

There are many different ways to evaluate PTP, ranging from extensive before-and-after household surveys (based on travel diaries of participants and non-participants), through to qualitative assessments of attitudes towards the information provided.

As the evidence base continues to grow, it should be increasingly

possible to streamline the evaluation process whilst maintaining an insight into travel behaviour change. Well-constructed before-and-after surveys, combined with targeted corroborative data (such as bus boardings or cycle counts) should provide suitable evidence at the local level.

What about the longer term?

Evidence from Australia has suggested that PTP interventions can provide long-term changes in travel behaviour. However, as the make-up of a residential community will change over time, it is wise to establish funding for ‘top-up’ PTP in future years.



J. Bewley/Sustrans

Acknowledgements

This summary report has been produced for the Department for Transport by a research team led by Integrated Transport Planning Ltd, which included Richard Armitage Transport Consultancy, Cleary Stevens Consulting and the University of the West of England, Bristol. Special thanks go to the members of the steering group, which comprised representatives of the DfT, Transport for London, Worcestershire County Council, Sustrans and Steer Davies Gleave, and to Socialdata for their contributions throughout the project. Thanks also go to the practitioners who were interviewed during the case studies, and the specialists who provided input as members of the study expert panel.

Contacts

Jacqui Wilkinson, Sustainable Travel Initiatives, Department for Transport, Zone 3/27, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR.
Tel: 0207 944 4898, e-mail jacqui.wilkinson@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Jon Parker, Integrated Transport Planning Ltd, 32a Stoney Street, The Lace Market, Nottingham NG1 1LL.
Tel: 0115 988 6904, e-mail parker@itpworld.net

Additional copies of this leaflet are available quoting ref 78CRN02906 from:

DfT Publications,
PO Box 236,
Wetherby LS23 7NB

Tel: 0870 1226 236
Fax: 0870 1226 237
Textphone: 0870 1207 405
E-mail: DFTINF@capita.co.uk
or online via www.publications.dft.gov.uk

Produced by the
Department for Transport
© Crown Copyright 2007
Product Code 78CRN02906

75% recycled
When you have finished with
this leaflet please recycle it