

Volume 6, 23 January
2006

Issues Covered:

- **A628 Mottram Hollingworth Tintwistle Bypass**
- **Transport Innovation Fund**
- **Rural Accessibility Hubs Funding awarded**
- **Local Transport Plans**
- **Transpeak Bus Service Upgrade**
- **Northern Way**
- **Rural Transport Funding**

THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY PRESENT A628 FIGURES TO THE FORUM AS ORDER PUBLICATION IS IMMINENT

At the most recent meeting of the Peak Park Transport Forum on the 28th November 2005 Stephen Greenhalgh, Project Sponsor at the Highways Agency, presented proposals for the Mottram Hollingworth Tintwistle Bypass.

The Date for the publication of Orders for the scheme is now 26th January 2006. Following this there will be a period of 13 weeks in which members of the public can comment on the plans. It looks certain that there will be a Public Inquiry. This is timed to take place later in 2006. Construction is expected to take about two years, so a possible date for completion is 2009-10.

As well as the Bypass, the Glossop Spur Link Road is being developed. This is being promoted by Tameside Council and is dependent upon the Bypass being built. Recently planning permission was granted for this scheme, passed unanimously in Tameside and by majority in High Peak Borough Council.

The proposed bypass runs between the Roundabout at the end of the M67 at Hattersley, and Townhead Farm, East of Tintwistle. It is proposed that the road is dual carriageway between Hattersley and a proposed junction at Mottram Showground and single carriageway beyond this point.

From the roundabout at Mottram Showground a link road to Mottram Moor is proposed. The proposed Glossop Spur route will continue on from this junction to Woolley Bridge. The Spur will only go ahead if the Bypass is built and be subject to public scrutiny via a separate but linked Public Inquiry.

The main bypass scheme will feature a cut-and-cover tunnel under Roe Cross at Mottram, and three viaducts at Thorncliffe Valley, Swallows Wood and Arnfield Brook. The Highways agency recognise that the scheme will increase the flow of traffic on the route and includes route restraint at three junctions: The M67 Roundabout at Hattersley, Townhead Farm Junction at Tintwistle and Flouch Junction further east on the A628(T) to limit traffic growth in the National Park.

TRANSPORT INNOVATION FUND

It is expected that the Government will invite a second round of bids during 2006 for the Transport Innovation Fund, designed to help introduce innovative ways of reducing travel demand and providing transport alternatives. The Peak Park Transport Forum has asked its Officer Working Group to consider the possibility of a bid in the light of Government's refusal of Derbyshire County Council's 2005 proposal to examine demand management options for an area based on the National Park. The Forum is likely to draw its conclusions during the summer over whether to submit a bid.

FUNDING GRANTED FOR THE SPITS HUBS PROJECT

Funding has been granted for the SPITS Village Accessibility Hubs Project from both SPITS Funds and from the Peak District National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund to develop a demonstration project.

In 2001, SPITS unsuccessfully tried to develop a public transport hubs project. This project aims to go further than this by creating hubs that go beyond public transport and tackle the whole rural accessibility agenda.

Creating sustainable accessibility involves the following:

- 1. Improved sustainable access to services not available locally**
- 2. Improved provision of services locally**
- 3. Addressing the accessibility needs of everybody**
- 4. Developing new methods and new technology to improve accessibility**

As part of this passenger facilities can be improved. Improved travel information, ticket sales and a weather protected waiting environment can be supplied. Transport facilities could extend to other modes of transport, for example via car share, car clubs, cycle storage, and links to community transport and taxis. A high proportion of the income of low income households in rural areas is spent on car ownership.

In order to address the provision of services locally, the transport facility can be combined with local village services, such as a village hall, café or shop, thus ensuring that the viable usage of facilities is achieved.

To address the needs of all users disabled facilities can be improved and services can be developed to meet the needs of both local residents and visitors. Technology can be utilised also. Each hub can have a website.

A study will investigate if a Hub would be an appropriate development in a number of locations around the National Park and test if the necessary resources can be combined effectively.

From the findings of this study it is hoped that a demonstration project can be launched, and from this, that funding through the Local Transport Plan, Transport Innovation Fund and from Regional Development Agencies can be combined to deliver further hubs across the whole region.

Already this has generated some interest. Derbyshire CC, Derwent Rural Transport Partnership and High Peak and Hope Valley Rural Transport Partnership are awaiting news of funding from the East Midlands Tourism Public Realm Challenge Fund Bid towards the development of 5 hubs at Tourist locations in the Peak District and surrounding area.

TRANSPEAK BUS SERVICE UPGRADED

From 23 October 2005 the Transpeak Bus Service has been upgraded to an hourly frequency through the National Park.

This follows a successful bid by Derbyshire County Council on behalf of the SPITS partnership to the Rural Bus Challenge Fund back in 2002.

From the previous two hour frequency between Derby and Manchester, the service becomes hourly between Nottingham and Buxton and remains two hourly between Buxton and Manchester. Services every other hour that terminate at Buxton use low floor buses. Services continuing to Manchester use coach-style vehicles.

This upgrade addresses a key element of SPITS, to improve long distance bus and coach services.

PERSONNEL CHANGES...

Peter Johnston is retiring from GMPTE. Their new interim representative is **Bob Woolvin**, though reorganisation is ongoing. The SPITS Officer Working Group would like to send out a big thank you to Peter for his contribution to SPITS over the years, and we are pleased to see he intends to continue his work as Secretary for the Trans Pennine Rail Group.

Emily Davies has been appointed as Transport Planning Manager at the Peak District National Park Authority, taking over from **Peter Stubbs**, who has retired. Emily previously worked at Cambridgeshire.

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS INCORPORATE SPITS OBJECTIVES

The six Local Transport Plan Authorities covering the South Pennines Area are currently in the process of compiling their final Local Transport Plan Submissions.

The Local Transport Plan sets out the programme for expenditure and implementation for 2006-11. Within the SPITS area there are six of these: Cheshire, Derbyshire, Greater Manchester (which covers Oldham, Stockport and Tameside MBCs), South Yorkshire (which covers Sheffield CC and Barnsley MBC), Staffordshire and West Yorkshire covering Kirklees MBC.

These have incorporated measures that contribute positively to the development of the South Pennines Integrated Transport Strategy, including utilising the Transport Innovation Fund to address traffic management issues facing the National Park and surrounding areas, Safety issues on High level routes, public transport, and rural accessibility.

SPITS was also acknowledged by the Department for Transport as making a positive contribution to cross-border linkages between the four Regions covered in the SPITS area.

The final documents are due for publication in March 2006.

SPITS PRIORITIES ARE RAISED IN THE NORTHERN WAY GROWTH STRATEGY

A letter detailing the concerns of the Northern Way Growth Strategy from the Peak Park Transport Forum has been sent to the Deputy Prime Minister, whilst at the same time SPITS participation is taking place in the Northern Way Transport Workshop.

The letter reminds the Deputy Prime Minister that the quality environment of the Peak District and the North of England's other national parks create a quality environment that will help attract inward investment into the North of England and, as part of the Northern Way, help redress the £30billion annual deficit in the economy of the three northern regions.

The letter acknowledges that the Northern Way could create opportunities for the delivery of SPITS but also create challenges. Improved transport facilities could improve lead to economic and environmental benefits, but also place added environmental pressure on protected landscapes.

Meanwhile, transport elements of the Northern Way are being developed. Six Northern Way Outcomes have been established:

- 1, Enhanced road and rail access to the major northern ports
- 2, Enhanced surface access to Manchester Airport, particularly by rail as well as securing growth of all major northern airports.
- 3, Maintain and enhance the capacity, speed and reliability of passenger services on strategic Trans-Pennine rail routes to improve connectivity between the North's City Regions
- 4, Maintain and enhance City Region connectivity through efficient and reliable east-west road links
- 5, Maintain and enhance City Region connectivity through efficient and reliable north-south strategic rail links
- 6, Maintain and enhance City Region connectivity through efficient and reliable north-south strategic road links

A challenge for SPITS will be ensuring that these primarily economically focussed outcomes deliver economic benefits without adverse environmental impact.

THE FORUM RESPONDS ON RURAL TRANSPORT FUNDING

Uncertainty following the repercussions of change to rural transport funding prompted by the Haskins Report in October 2003 have prompted the Peak Park Transport Forum to raise the issue with the relevant Government Ministers.

The Forum have advised regional and government bodies as to the difficulties encountered regarding the Peak Connections Project and other rural transport partnerships

Within the revised structure the responsibility for funding rural transport initiatives has moved from the Countryside Agency, which has been restructured, to the Regional Development Agencies. Under the RDA's the priorities have shifted from a mix of social, environmental and economic priorities to a more economic focus. At the same time, funding for core costs of projects such as employing project officers is much less likely

to secure funding.

It is thought that this will have an adverse effect on transport projects which will struggle to score as high as previously.

This has an adverse effect on Rural Transport Partnerships, which are looking around for alternative sources of funding, as well as Peak Connections, a project established though SPITS, to focus on marketing public transport to visitors.

FUTURE DATES FOR THE Peak Park Transport Forum...

Forum meetings are planned at 2pm on 24 April and 25 September 2006 at County Hall, Matlock.