



# Better transport, better lives

A review of activities for the year ending 31 March 2009

# As a result of our work in 2008/09, people will find it easier to get around without a car

## Bus services to get better

We influenced the Local Transport Act for the better. It's now easier to improve bus services. Since buses were deregulated and privatised in 1986 it has been very hard for councils to co-ordinate competing services or get a good network, not least because cooperation amongst companies was seen as going against competition rules. Our work to change this, which included securing a legal review of the competition laws, paid off: the Act allows bus operators to work together in the interest of the public to provide a better service. These changes will cut the real cost of bus travel for some of the poorest and give councils new powers to improve services.

The Act also set up a bus passenger watchdog – which we called for – bringing another campaign to a successful conclusion.

## Rail line protection and reopening moves a step closer

Our efforts to protect rail lines included working with local campaigners and MPs to protect the Woodhead Tunnel in the Peak District for future reopening. We helped hundreds of people to write to their MP – turning what might have been considered a local issue into a very

important national issue to ensure that rail is a real alternative to the car. As a result of our pressure, the transport secretary and others agreed to work to protect the tunnel and look at safeguarding other lines for future reopening.

## Government hears that high train fares are a big problem

We began a major campaign to make public transport more affordable and change transport prices so that using low-carbon transport costs less than driving or flying. We began by highlighting the scandal that walk-on train tickets cost up to seven times more than advance tickets. Thousands of people got involved by writing to their MPs, joining a Facebook group or watching and sharing a campaign video we produced of Mystic Peg, who tells people their travel futures.

## Cycling and public transport more likely to get approval

We persuaded the Government to improve how it assesses if a transport project is good value for money. The appraisal framework is supposed to weigh up which transport solutions might offer the best value but it was flawed in several ways which resulted in big road schemes being seen to have great value. Through research, lobbying



Our campaigns are innovative, cost-effective and grabbing the attention of both the public and the media. We bring issues to life in a way that creates a significant impact – and that's great news: more and more people are taking positive action for better transport.

and a public letter-writing campaign, we got the framework changed. The changes we secured should make it easier to demonstrate how much better public transport and small-scale, demand-management projects are at tackling transport problems than building more roads.

## Politicians took seriously our ideas for reducing emissions

We come up with realistic, practical ideas – and the Government listens. This year the Government began producing a carbon reduction strategy for transport, making good on a promise we secured last year. We sponsored research to help inform the strategy.

The research sets out a comprehensive package of measures which, taken together, would cut overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from transport by 26% by 2020 on 2006 figures (in line with the general targets in the Climate Change Act). This work is being taken seriously by Government and researchers: several of our recommendations are being developed for the Government's carbon reduction strategy.

One of our ideas gaining ground is a carbon reduction fund. The fund would allocate money to low-carbon initiatives and all manner of innovations to help people get around without a car. The fund would be created by reallocating £5 billion from existing transport budgets. In a

# Through this year's successes, communities and local environments are better protected

speech we hosted, Theresa Villiers, the shadow secretary of state for transport, said that the Conservatives back the principle of a carbon reduction fund.

## The Government dropped plans to build many damaging roads

For the last 20 years, successive Governments have been planning major widening of the motorway network. We have campaigned against this. Not only is widening very expensive, but it increases traffic and pollution and attracts new car-based development so adding to dependence on the car and further isolating those without access to one. In 2008/09, our campaigning paid off. The transport secretary announced that nearly all motorway widening would not go ahead.

We also helped to stop the Mottram-Tintwistle bypass, which would have gone through the Peak District National Park, and saw the final demise of the Thames Gateway road bridge proposed for London.

## Big lorries get a big 'no'

Our pressure – including research, polling and coordinated joint lobbying work – helped to convince the Government to reject the idea of

a trial of bigger lorries in the UK. At 25 metres long and weighing 60 tonnes, these lorries – which are already in some parts of Europe – would have resulted in more traffic, pollution and accidents on our roads.

## Alternatives to aviation shown

Research we produced revealed that businesses support alternatives to flying such as train travel and teleconferencing. The research suggested that by improving these alternatives the Government would cut the demand for short-haul flights, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, cut noise and avoid the supposed need to expand Heathrow. This research, and other work, enabled us to secure a full-page advert in *The Times* against the expansion of Heathrow signed by major unions, environmental groups and other concerned organisations.

## Local transport decisions to become greener

As part of our work to influence local and regional decisions about transport, we promoted an amendment to the Local Transport Bill which, in its final form in the Act, requires councils to pay attention to climate change as part of their local transport plans in accordance with Government guidance.

Right: Michael Palin, our president, entertained a sell-out crowd at Queen Elizabeth Hall in November 2008. Around the World in 80 Ways raised funds and increased our public profile. The event marked our 35th year campaigning for the best ways to get around our world – whether it be by bus, train, tram, cycle or foot.



## The year in numbers

**Just 15** staff members (some part time)

**Scores** of meetings held with Government ministers and officials

**Hundreds** of local campaigners supported

**Thousands** of media articles highlighted our work

**Thousands** of letters submitted to Government decision-makers

**Tens of thousands** of visits to our website

**One goal: More travel choices that contribute less to climate change**

## A diverse funding base

In 2008/2009 income came from companies and unions (38%), grant-making trusts (28%), government bodies (26%), and individuals (6%). In 2008/09 we gained new supporters in each income stream, allowing us to maintain a diverse funding base. Our overall income was £824,249 and our expenditure £840,363. The expenditure includes spending commitments paid for by income received last year, brought forward into this year; overall, we ended the year in a stronger financial position. Through tight budgeting we were able to add a small amount to our reserves, increasing our financial stability. We thank the many people whose financial support helped to make our work possible this year.

**Income over £10,000:** Arriva, Aslef, City Bridge Trust, Co-operative Bank, Department for Transport, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, First, Freshfield Foundation, London Councils, Lush Cosmetics, Merseytravel, National Express, Network Rail, Peter Miller, Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation, Passenger Transport Executive Group, Railway Industry Association, Stagecoach, The Ecology Trust, Transdev, Transport for London and TSSA.



## Our work is improving public transport, reducing traffic and tackling climate change

### Join in today

On our website ([bettertransport.org.uk](http://bettertransport.org.uk)) you can:

- Push for change: Write direct to the Government or tell us about poor transport services
- Get advice: Use our guides to solve local transport problems and search a directory of local activists
- Have a bit of fun: Watch videos, enter competitions or have your fortune told
- Make a donation: We rely on the generous financial support of thousands of people; with your help we can do even more. Please support us through a quick, online donation today

Campaign for  
Better Transport 



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