

Dear reader

One of the most 'legendary' mobility management measures is undoubtedly the personalised travel planning (PTP) approach, where a team of interviewers goes from door to door to change people's travel habits. It is a time- and cost-intensive method but if done wisely, it can have a significant impact on the modal split. For this e-update, the [PTP-Cycle](#) project gives us an overview of the history of PTP and the most important components that make a PTP project successful.

What is personalised travel planning?



PTP conversation in Burgos, Spain. Photo courtesy of PTP-Cycle

[Werner Brög](#), founder of Socialdata, the consultancy that was a pioneer in developing PTP, once said in an interview:

"There's an alternative there," says Mr. Brög, pointing outside to buses, cycle lanes and metro stations, "but not there," he says, jabbing at his head. "Transport planners want to fix that (pointing out of the window again) but we'd say it's much easier to fix the head."

Personalised travel planning addresses just this: providing information, incentives and motivation to change the opinion inside one's head. PTP thus encourages people to think about the way they currently travel, and shows the options and benefits of sustainable travel – in a very individual and thus motivating way.

PTP has been developed and implemented on a large scale since the 1990s, first in Germany and Australia (see detailed description in this [paper](#)). Whilst PTP is the most commonly-used term in the UK, it has been referred to as 'Travel Blending' in Australia, 'Travel Feedback Programmes' in Japan and as 'individualised travel marketing' in the USA. The terminology is further extended by the registered brand names given to particular PTP methods in certain countries, such as Indimark® and TravelSmart®.

How does it work?



Door-to-door fieldwork in Haringey, UK. Photo courtesy of PTP-Cycle

PTP is typically delivered across large residential areas, comprising several thousands of households. The main interaction in a residential PTP scheme is when a travel advisor knocks on a door to have a conversation. The travel advisor encourages the beneficiary to identify any barriers they have to using sustainable transport for their regular journeys and offers information and support exactly tailored to their needs. By identifying their own barriers and solutions, the beneficiary is in control of the situation and feels empowered to make the change: that's what makes it personal! Travel advisers bring materials to help them make that change, for example local network bus maps, travel guides, walking and cycling routes and free test tickets. A tailored travel pack is delivered a few days later directly into the recipient's hand.

In recent years the approach has been applied in other settings such as workplaces, schools, colleges, etc. The European project [PTP-Cycle](#) has gathered these different approaches and looked at how to further promote the uptake of cycling in cities through PTP.

PTP methodology

The main steps to set up a PTP project are described in the [PTP-Cycle Planning Guide](#) and the [Implementation Template](#). Some highlights:



Field office in Greenwich, UK. Photo courtesy of PTP-Cycle

- A scoping phase of 6-8 weeks defines policy objectives, project scale and project area, and analyses what level of information on sustainable transport is easily accessible, and what is missing or hard to access. It also analyses any baseline data on travel behaviour and the knowledge of the target group on sustainable transport options.
- Then pre-fieldwork involves setting up a person database and reporting routines.
- Marketing involves gathering and developing the information materials and incentives as well as announcing and promoting the PTP project.
- The next step is to set up a field office and recruiting and training staff, especially travel advisers. A field office provides the project with a presence in the area, a hub for fieldwork staff to work from, and a place for all the marketing materials to be stored. This is crucial to the success of the project.



PTP-Cycle materials in Riga, Latvia. Photo courtesy of PTP-Cycle

The [PTP-Cycle project](#) has developed a comprehensive [set of training materials and handbooks](#) a [travel advise training manual](#), [checklist templates](#) to help cities develop a PTP project in [residential](#), [workplaces](#) and [university](#) settings. Cities who would like to learn more about this approach, can join the free [PTP-Cycle training](#) on 18 November.

Giving Travel Advice



PTP conversations in Haringey, UK. Photo courtesy of PTP-Cycle

How does travel advice work on the ground? What are the rules for conducting good travel advice conversations? How can travel advisers get the interviewee to be more interested in the question and open up more? Thorough training of the travel advisers is essential to the success of the PTP scheme. The travel advice conversation is based on [Motivational Interviewing Techniques](#) which train the travel advisor to ask open questions, be non-judgemental and allow the beneficiary to find their own solutions. Watch the YouTube videos where Jenn and Chris of Sustrans conduct [good](#) and [bad](#) travel advice conversations.

Concrete examples of PTP schemes



Source: www.eltis.org

In 2003 the Department for Transport (DfT) in England part-funded 14 pilot projects to examine how PTP can reduce reliance upon the private car. Useful recommendations, hints and tips from these first pilots are summarised in [Making Personal Travel Planning Work: Practitioners' Guide](#).

Other examples:

- **Brighton and Hove council, UK**, has talked to around 100,000 people since 2006 and their [PTP project](#) will be continued into 2015. Read the [Eltis case study](#).
- In **South Dublin County, Ireland**, the first PTP project was held in [Adamstown](#) in 2009. [More PTP initiatives](#) were developed in 2011 and 2012.
- **Liftshare** in the UK developed a [web-based PTP tool](#). [Pilots in three workplaces](#) show that personal social interaction is a crucial element in any PTP scheme.
- In **Gothenburg, Sweden**, a PTP programme 'New Travel Habits in the Region' was delivered between from 2012-2014

Experiences of the PTP-Cycle project cities:

- As part of their [Smarter Travel campaign](#) (video in English), **London Borough of Haringey, UK**, has held [PTP conversations with over 3,500 citizens](#) in 2014, and tested the use of tablets to get more accurate data and to reduce data entry costs.
- **Royal Borough of Greenwich, UK**, has developed a new Local Travel Map incorporating cycle routes, walking routes, public transport links and local facilities. The

map also contained basic information about the advantages of active travel and how to get started. Read the [Eltis case study](#).

- To tackle congestion arising from major road construction works in **Antwerp, Belgium**, the city's Mobility Department has developed [tailored mobility guides](#) (link in Dutch) for six workplaces, and travel advisers have engaged in [PTP conversations with nearly 3,200 persons](#).
- A [Facebook page](#) and a [lottery draw](#) (links in Spanish) offering an electric bicycle gave a positive boost to PTP delivery in **Burgos, Spain**, where 15 enthusiastic university students trained up by experts have engaged with thousands of citizens. Read the [Eltis case study](#) or [watch the video](#).
- **University PTPs** were delivered to some 1,000 employees of the **University of Ljubljana, Slovenia**.
- Travel behaviour change approaches are rarely implemented in new Member States. However, two districts in **Riga, Latvia**, piloted PTP in 2014. Nearly 2,030 households and some 1,130 visitors to public events had personalised travel planning conversations.

How effective is PTP?



Data entry in Greenwich. Photo courtesy of PTP-Cycle



Cover picture of the Antwerp mobility guide.

There is a lot of positive evidence of the impact of PTP, both short- and long-term:

- The first large-scale trial in Perth, Australia, showed a 14% reduction in car trips. For a very detailed analysis (also on segmented target groups with different travel behaviours), see [Smarter Choices – Changing the Way We Travel](#), and for a more easily readable report see [this report](#).
- In 2008, PTP projects reaching 300,000 UK households achieved an 11% reduction in car trips ([Summary report](#)). [Sustrans](#) targeted 400,000 households and also achieved an average of 11% reduction in car driver trips, and increases in walking, cycling and public transport between 14% and 33%. The benefit to cost ratio was 7.6 to 1.
- **Antwerp's presentation at ECOMM 2015** showed intermediate PTP-Cycle results where people positively changed their attitudes as measured by the [MaxSem](#) stages. At the company Den Bell the modal share for cycling increased from 28 to 35%, while solo car use dropped from 28 to 15%.
- **Steer Davies Gleave** recently revisited two of its [PTP projects, in Thurrock and Cheltenham, UK](#). Two thirds of the participants had sustained the change they had made during the project (of travelling more sustainably) even 30 months after the project finished. Most of the drop-off happened within the first three months.
- **Donostia – San Sebastian, Spain**, developed [personalised travel plans](#) in two districts of the city during their CIVITAS project. One year later, 77% maintained the change to sustainable travel they had made.
- A review of the Japanese [travel feedback programmes](#) demonstrates that the interventions' effectiveness increased when participants were asked to make behavioural plans to change their travel behaviour.
- Similarly, the [One-less-car programme](#) in **Seattle, USA**, obtained good results with households who formulated the intention to stop using one of their cars for either six or nine weeks.

Monitoring and evaluation of PTP is essential, but it has considerable costs. Contemporary PTP projects are increasingly utilising technology platforms, combined with innovative use of incentives to help obtain real-time performance data and reduce costs.

Evidence for MM: the case for PTP



The [EVIDENCE project](#) has recently reviewed the credibility of evaluations undertaken for the 23 main categories of sustainable urban mobility measures – including PTP. The researchers identified a considerable range of evidence documenting the positive impact of PTP. However, they do criticise the reliability of some of the evaluations and note that reports of ineffective PTP projects are rarely released. In fact, it is a concern that PTP can easily be designed poorly and delivered ineffectively. There is a pressing need to educate professionals on effective PTP programme development, learning from best practice. Indeed, the [short-term intermediate results of PTP-Cycle](#) show a lot of variation in the level of impact that the different cities have generated so far, and the final project results in spring 2016 will undoubtedly shed some more light on the success factors of a good PTP scheme.



EPOMM's advice



Source: www.eltis.org

PTP is a cost-effective approach to address those people who both have the opportunity and the willingness to change, and uses innovative and compelling engagement techniques to support continued travel behaviour change.

The PTP literature identifies a range of critical success factors: effectiveness and experience of the consultants who run the fieldwork, media planning, systems to manage information requests, engagement of public transport providers, repeated attempts to contact householders at different times of the day, personal engagement with household members, setting behavioural goals such as making a pledge to reduce car use, possibly combined with financial incentives.

A PTP project can achieve a substantial modal shift, but needs to be well designed. The best advice we can give is to use PTP as part of a well-balanced sustainable urban mobility strategy, rather than considering it as a stand-alone mass activity. For example, use PTP to support the launch of new cycle or public transport infrastructure.

Upcoming events

- **Free PTP-Cycle training for cities**
18 November 2015 – Brussels, Belgium
<http://ptpcycle-europe.eu/events/personalised-travel-planning-training-workshop/>
- **Joint Final conference of PTP-Cycle, STARS, MOBI projects**
18 February 2016 – Brussels, Belgium
<http://ptpcycle-europe.eu/events/final-conference-18-february-2106-brussels-2/>

