

News Release



FAO:

TTR Working in Partnership to Tackle Congestion in Town Centres

Transport & Travel Research Ltd (<http://www.ttr-ltd.co.uk>), has been working on two projects to tackle congestion on roads and improve town centres in the UK and Europe. TTR's Principal Consultant Dr Chris Humphrey has been project manager for two high profile initiatives on the controversial concept of road pricing.

On 15 July 2008 Dr Humphrey gave a presentation to the annual Transport Practitioners Meeting in Reading. The subject was how local councils can better engage with local business leaders to tackle



congestion issues affecting town centre businesses. Dr Humphrey's presentation was the result of a recent project which TTR completed for the British Retail Consortium (BRC), the UK's leading trade association representing the retail industry. The project produced an innovative resource pack for retailers called *Getting into Town: A Guide for Improving Town Centre Accessibility* in April 2008. It was sent to all BRC members and every local council in England and Wales. The Guide can be downloaded from the BRC's website at

www.brc.org.uk/policymaster04.asp?id=51&sPolicy=TRANSPORT.

Drawing on his experience of working with retailers and retail policy makers, Dr Humphrey outlined three golden rules for transport officers to overcome congestion and pollution issues in town centres:

- 1. Get business on board** – be proactive and engage the business community early, to gain their support when the scheme goes out to consultation.
- 2. Work with the key players** - Town Centre Managers can represent the views of many retailers. They have a good perspective on parking issues and access for goods deliveries.
- 3. Focus on improving accessibility** – retailers may support congestion charging or parking levies if balanced by other measures, such as better public transport and park and ride facilities.

TTR also co-ordinates the €1.5million European Commission-funded CURACAO project. This aims to coordinate research and monitor the



results of the implementation of road pricing as a demand management tool in urban areas. In July 2008, the project published the second annual 'State-of-the-Art Review' of road pricing research and good practice. This draws on real-life examples of implemented schemes in London, Stockholm and Rome, as well as on the latest academic research from around the world.

The Review is available to read online or for download from the CURACAO project website at www.curacaoproject.eu/state-of-the-art-report.php. A final version of the Review will be published in early 2009.

TTR Chairman David Blackledge said 'Both of these projects have shown how the public and the business community can be receptive to the idea of road pricing, if charging is implemented as part of a comprehensive package of transport improvements. An access charge is more acceptable to people if it can deliver reductions in congestion and harmful emissions, and if attractive alternatives to the car are provided, such as high-quality public transport

services. TTR is pleased to be working with local councils and businesses in the UK in order to improve access to our town centres, which remain at the heart of many communities.'

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Note to Editors:

Transport & Travel Research Ltd (TTR) was formed in 1991, is accredited to ISO9001 and currently employs 30 staff. TTR provides consultancy services to both the UK and Europe, in the fields of:

- Market & Social Research
- Policy Advice
- Public & Stakeholder Consultation
- Travel Plan Preparation
- Energy & the Environment
- Freight Transport Policy
- European Bid Preparation
- Social Exclusion & Transport
- Transport & Disability
- ITS
- Road User Charging
- Vehicle Access Control

TTR Ltd has worked on Road User Charging proposals for Belfast, Nottingham, and other cities, and undertakes a wide range of evaluation work for the Department for Transport. TTR has also provided consultation services to the East Midlands and West Midlands TIF Pilot projects.

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