



## Cardiff Futures Forum Think Piece Transport and Connectivity Author: Robin Coombes - B3 Burgess

### Aims:

This paper aims to provide a solution to some of the transport and connectivity issues which will be faced by Cardiff in the immediate future. With private car ownership continuing to rise, and traffic congestion an ongoing issue in Cardiff, it is clear that Cardiff must develop a truly integrated and energy-efficient transport system if it is to continue to develop as a modern capital city. Furthermore, with transport being one of the greatest generators of global warming gases, it is essential that Cardiff play its part in achieving reductions in carbon emissions.

### Issues Discussed:

The paper begins by noting the apparent intractability of the problem, and states that 'the car, and transport in general, has provided more personal freedom and economic prosperity than almost anything else'.

There is also an acceptance that - in terms of the emissions issue at least - Cardiff is to some extent limited in what it can achieve. The solutions, it is stated, 'lie beyond Cardiff's boundaries and are dependent on advances in technology or political and cultural change'. However, the author points out that this should not be used as an excuse to ignore the problem. It is claimed that if change continues 'as normal', the prospect for improving accessibility, lowering emissions and reducing congestion is 'bleak'.

The 'big question' for Cardiff is defined as: 'do we bring back trams?' The complexity of the debate is noted, as is its 'emotive and passionate' nature. The paper argues that Cardiff Council must kick-start a serious debate with a view to reaching a decision within two years on the next generation of public transport within the city and region. 'Clear direction' on the issue is seen as paramount, and 'firm' support is offered for the development of the existing rail network into a light rail system, with street trams in the city centre.

The author gives support to an extension of cycle-lane routes and an improvement of the walking environment (wider and covered pavements, pedestrianised streets), coupled with a campaign to encourage walking and cycling in the city.

The paradox that Cardiff will continue to market itself as a place to study, visit and do business despite the fact that all of these activities encouraged travel is noted. It is also accepted that 'cars will be around for the foreseeable future and have to be accommodated'. The completion of the



## Cardiff Futures Forum

southern extension of the PDR to link to the M4, and improved airport links, are, therefore, seen as important.

### **Recommendations for Cardiff:**

The paper recommends that Cardiff continue current transport management improvements; complete outstanding planned road links; extend a dedicated cycle network and make improvements to walking facilities; link all future building development planning decisions to 'green transport plans'; and, in the medium term, undertake a study on the transport implications and opportunities of the proposed Severn Barrage. In addition to this, Cardiff must be capable of measuring improvements in a real and meaningful way, with significant achievements being used to provide a marketing edge for the city. Cardiff Council is asked to initiate studies and debate on a new public transport infrastructure for the city and region, with a final actionable decision within two years.