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1. INTRODUCTION

The OPTIMUM² e-Newsletter has been restyled. The layout is now in line with the project's logo and look and feel. The e-Newsletter's accessibility has been improved as well. It will appear on your screen on the click of opening the email message with which you receive it.

This second issue features three topical articles.

Travel Management System

The County Council of Essex (UK) has designed and developed the web-based Hospital Travel Management System. The aim of the system, known as "Get There", is to provide improved access for hospital staff, patients and visitors by making them aware of all possible travel options to and from the hospital. Read more...

Note on Enforcement

The Note on Enforcement, a brief paper on the role of land use planning in the enforcement of mobility management, shows that to date the legal framework for land use planning has hardly been put to the test. The paper also provides a comparison of the Dutch and British situations. For a summary of the Note: Read more...

ETON

In October the first meeting of ETON (Extended Transnational OPTIMUM² Network) will be held. ETON consists of experts on mobility management from different authorities in North-West Europe. It gives organisations an opportunity to become involved in the developing and implementation of methods used in OPTIMUM². Read more...


2. ESSEX LAUNCHES TMS AT SEMINAR

Under the flag of OPTIMUM², Essex has developed "Get There", a step change in travel information provision for hospitals. In June 2005, the County Council of Essex organised a seminar for its watching partners to launch this Travel Management System.

The group of so-called watching partners has been formed earlier on. At the seminar, almost twenty hospitals and about five other county councils represented the watching partners' group. In total, more than 70 professionals in the field of mobility to hospitals gathered at the Anglia Polytechnic University in Chelmsford to hear about the "Get There" system and participate in a first try-out.

Get There

The Travel Management System (TMS) is an integrated information system designed to provide patients, staff and visitors to hospitals and medical centres with the information they need to make the best use of all transport options available to them.

The system can be accessed via the Internet, from the homepage of the hospital's own website, by mobile phone, or kiosks placed at bus/rail stations, public libraries and hospital reception areas.

The system's strength is that it brings together a range of information to assist in journey planning including:

- Public transport services
- Real time information
- Information on special fares
- Cycle and walk routes
- Car sharing schemes
- Alternative transport (by shuttle/taxi)
- Parking
- Park and ride
- Hospital site layout
- Outpatient booking

The Seminar

In the first part of the seminar, three hospital case studies were presented, highlighting the importance of marketing and of proper information and communication to the end user. In the second part the speakers focused on the new "Get There" system. After the presentations, the audience got the chance to experience the system hands on with the aid of 6 terminals in the room.

The seminar clearly showed that there is more to running a hospital than surgery and the care for patients. Hospitals are also responsible for offering an integrated package of mobility services. The provision of the type of information as shown in the "Get There" system for travel management is vital to adequate mobility services.

The seminar was a success. In conclusion, the OPTIMUM² project manager found the seminar a very encouraging example of how OPTIMUM² results can be put into practice and of how others outside OPTIMUM² may be informed.

Further Steps

Today, a business case is put together to facilitate the dissemination of "Get There" to all Essex hospitals. This work is going on alongside the OPTIMUM² project. Very recently, Essex has implemented phase one of the TMS in Colchester General Hospital. The system will be tried during the entire month of September 2005. After the September trial, experts will gather in a workshop meeting to pinpoint any remaining issues. In December 2005, "Get There" will go live.

A vast publicity campaign will further the December launch of "Get There". Essex plans on a local radio campaign, posters on buses, information leaflets and other promotional materials and more common printed materials.

The preliminary study has been finished. The information gathered is now collated and will be used later on to assess how the launch effects the use of the system and the choices of travellers. In 2006 a follow-up study will be carried out.

For the presentations, visit the website:
www.OPTIMUM2.org/en/the-projects/03-colchester-ziekenhuis-profile/03b-publications/


3. ENFORCEMENT RELATED TO MOBILITY MANAGEMENT

OPTIMUM² concerns the pursuit and implementation of mobility management through the land use planning system. A key element of land use planning is the legal framework by which it is bounded. There are clear differences in the legal framework for land use planning in the Netherlands and in the United Kingdom. These affect the way in which mobility management can be pursued through land use planning decisions in each country.

THE NETHERLANDS

In the Netherlands the public sector recoups the costs of infrastructure and services required for new development from the sale of the land and/or from the standard charge made for the building permit. In the Netherlands, as compared to the UK, a much greater proportion of the land is publicly owned. Transport infrastructure and services for a development have traditionally been funded entirely from the public purse.

Increasingly, though, private sector contributions are clearly ring-fenced for transport investment and there is great interest in developers and occupiers of larger business parks being involved in "park management". It includes transport initiatives and measures that are at least partly funded by the developers. However, there is no statutory mechanism to require participation and contributions by developers – it is all a negotiated matter.

The government has a direct and indirect means to force mobility management on companies, i.e.

- the Environmental Management Act;
- standard parking values.

The Environmental Management Act provides for the reduction of the adverse environmental effects of transporting people and goods. This act is therefore one of the instruments to regulate the environmental impact of traffic to and from companies. Through the granting and enforcement of the environmental permit or governmental decree, the local authority is able to force the individual company to make an assessment of the traffic and transport of the company. The local authority can also lay down additional requirements to reduce the number of traffic movements. However, the local authority cannot enforce concrete measures.

New land use plans set a standard parking value, which will specify the number of parking spaces per square metre office space. In some cases, it will allow fewer parking spaces near businesses in the future situation than there are now. This will result in more office space compared to the available parking space. Fewer parking spaces and heavy traffic provide opportunities for mobility management. By the way, it is not just local government which demands fewer parking spaces. The companies themselves also do this for reasons of business economics. The parking situation at the Gelre Hospitals illustrates this last instance.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

In the UK, two key legal mechanisms that are part of the planning process exist that permit local authorities to require developers to make financial and other contributions to transport at and to a new development. These are the planning condition and the planning obligation, also known as a Section 106 agreement.

The planning condition is a condition imposed by the local authority on a developer (e.g. the number of cycle parking spaces). If the condition is not met, the development may not go ahead. Conditions have to be related very closely to the nature of the development. Therefore they are less suitable for securing mobility management overall than are obligations.

The planning obligation is negotiated between authority and developer as an adjunct to the planning permission process. The nature of the obligation will vary from area to area and development to development. The developer is not required to accept an obligation. However, if they want to develop in an area they are often aware that their chances of securing planning permission will be enhanced if they are willing to agree to a planning obligation. The corollary of this is that if they have a number of possible sites in different local authority areas, then they may choose to go to the site where the obligation is the least onerous.

Conditions can be used to secure payments of money from the developer to the local authority to improve on- or off-site infrastructure and services. Increasingly, this is interpreted to mean mobility management measures. These should be related to the development. The case-by-case nature of planning obligations related to new development means that it is difficult to predict the scale and nature of the contribution that can possibly be secured from the private sector in each case. It shows that private developers in the UK are often willing to fund sustainable transport measures through the planning obligation process, but that there is also a limit to the amount that it is willing to contribute.

The law does allow sanctions to be taken against developers or the subsequent owners of land if conditions or obligations are not met. These sanctions must be judged to be reasonable. Such sanctions could include:

- payments to the Council to implement measures agreed in the condition or obligation;
- specified works to achieve what was supposed to have been achieved otherwise (e.g. reduction in numbers of car parking spaces if public transport improvements fail to bring about the pre-specified shift of transport mode);
- payments to the Council to achieve an agreed outcome (e.g. implementation of a controlled - residents' only - parking zone around a site);
- changes in the way the development is used, in order to achieve a specified outcome.

Some local authorities are very nervous of using planning obligations to impose outcome targets on developers, as they are not certain that the legality of so doing is proven. A test case is still awaited.

For the Note on Enforcement, visit the website: www.OPTIMUM2.org/en/measures/enforcement/


4. FIRST ETON MEETING OCTOBER 2005

On 7 October 2005, the first ETON meeting will take place in Edinburgh.

ETON (Extended Transnational OPTIMUM² Network) consists of experts from different authorities, scientific organisations and interest groups from countries in North-West Europe. ETON gives organisations an opportunity to become involved in the implementation and delivery of the project. It brings in knowledge from outside. And it makes it possible to test (parts of the) OPTIMUM² approach in other regions.

OPTIMUM² is especially focused on providing transferable results. It is important to assess whether certain tools or parts of the approach will work in certain countries. Because of differences in culture, behaviour, attitude, but also in legislation, transport systems and planning instruments, some tools that are successful in one country may fail in others. A transnational approach is needed in order to provide a really effective approach for the whole of North-West Europe. By introducing the extended network of ETON, OPTIMUM² will deliver the best innovative and transnationally transferable results.

The members of ETON can be regarded as extended partners of OPTIMUM². They will benefit from being a part of OPTIMUM² by having the opportunity to be involved in the process of developing mobility management and methods to prevent or contain the use of cars. Members will:

- contribute to the development of the outputs of OPTIMUM²;
- be informed on the progress of OPTIMUM² through direct access to the Member Area of the website.

The members will also attend relevant workshops and conferences that provide a range of information on mobility management and give access to a wide network of contacts across North-West Europe.

Activities

OPTIMUM² will organise the following ETON meetings:

- an annual ETON meeting focussing on the current results of the ten local projects
- international meetings with workshops (e.g. a mid-term event in 2006)
- a final project conference in 2008

The meetings take place at one of the ten local projects and will take one working day each.

The expert members of ETON will comment drafts of relevant outputs such as research reports, measures and policy guidance notes, sent to them by the Lead Partner and any other partner.

Future continuation

For the period after the project has ended, OPTIMUM² will continue to update and disseminate the Cookbook. This future continuation will mainly be organised by EPOMM. EPOMM will continue the ETON network, and will be testing, assessing and updating the Cookbook. If, for any reason, EPOMM is unable to perform this task, OPTIMUM², together with the UK and the Dutch Ministries and the parties involved in ETON, will endeavour to establish a similar organisation to ensure the use of the OPTIMUM² results.