



----- MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT 10 -----

### NORFOLK - SMILE IN NORWICH

The city of Norwich is running a number of initiatives to deliver cleaner and better transport within SMILE, a CIVITAS project running from 2005 until 2009. This east of England city is implementing measures across all CIVITAS areas although there is particular emphasis on the goods delivery sector, which is reflected in Norwich's successful bid to jointly lead of the promotion and exchange of experience of innovative freight measures within the CIVITAS initiative as a whole.

Norwich is the administrative centre of the county of Norfolk, covering some 50 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 120 000, which rises to 250 000 if the suburban area is included. Car-based travel is very high, particularly beyond the urban area, despite the fact that a significant proportion of the urban population has access to a 20-minute (or better) public transport service. Promoting safe and sustainable travel whilst maintaining individual mobility and the economic health of the city are therefore key aims of the Norwich Area Transport Strategy.

#### **The SMILE measures**

Seventeen different measures are being implemented as part of the SMILE project in Norwich including:

- anti-pollution actions through: alternatively fuelled vehicle fleets (public fleets and public transport vehicles); the promotion of smaller private vehicles; and, a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in an area of Norwich that has poor air quality due to vehicle emissions. The LEZ requires all bus and taxi drivers to switch off their engine when stationary or face a €90 on-the-spot fine. As from January 2008, 50% of all buses operating in the area must comply with strict emission standards, rising to 100% in 2010;
- actions to enhance the attractiveness of public transport such as improvements to the design of and access to the rail station interchange as well as improved rail and bus timetable coordination, on-street ticket vending machines and provision of real-time passenger information;
- the promotion of less-car intensive travel through car pooling and car sharing;

With regards to freight, the SMILE project is building on the many years of work and experience gained in this area. Norwich is implementing four measures in this area including the Consolidation centre, Heavy Goods Vehicles in Bus Lanes, customised traffic and travel information for freight operators together with a freight users club.

#### **Norwich freight consolidation centre**

The objective of the Norwich freight consolidation centre is to reduce the numbers of trips into the city made by HGVs. The centre is now up and running and based to the southwest of the city at Snetterton. This is an innovative project from a UK perspective in that it is the only Consolidation centre that has the ambition to run on an unsupported basis upon completion of SMILE in January 2009.

Due to the nature of the management of retail stores, particularly national and international companies, it has taken a while to reach decision makers and forge agreements. However, in recent months significant success has been achieved with smaller retailers, and the consolidation centre now has many customers on board with more in the pipeline.

It has also received backing from a major shopping mall and national carrier which have entered into sponsorship arrangements.

## Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) in bus lanes

The HGVs in bus lanes is an innovative measure in that due to the nature of the bus lanes in Norwich, many of a narrower width, it was not considered appropriate to allow all HGVs to use bus lanes, but rather restrict use to the consolidation centre vehicles only.

This decision has two main benefits: firstly, it encourages retailers to use the centre because deliveries during congested periods can be guaranteed at a given time rather than longer distance arrivals getting stuck in peak hour traffic; and secondly, it means that the users, the consolidation centre vehicles, can meet an agreement on how they will use the bus lanes.

The use of bus lanes by consolidation centre vehicles only will involve between just 2 and 5 vehicles per day, thereby reducing conflicts with other bus lane user (buses, cyclist and taxis). The restricted use also means that agreement on how these vehicles should run on the bus lanes has been easier to secure. The operator of the Consolidation centre has signed up to a code of conduct that will mean training for drivers, 30 miles per hour speeds in the higher speed limited sections and many other 'share with care' initiatives.

## Customised traffic and travel advice

The customised traffic and travel advice initiative is aimed at providing HGV fleet operators with specific traffic and travel information in exchange for them reducing their carbon footprint.

Norwich is currently working with two haulage companies where it has installed software enabling them to receive "real time" travel information from Norfolk County Council. Linked to the Streetworks Register, all notified planned and unplanned works occupying the highway network of Norwich is provided electronically on a map-based system. This allows the Hauliers to optimise their delivery routes in and around the City to avoid delays and unnecessary diversions. In exchange they have committed to engage their drivers in eco-driving, which will not only reduce their impact on the environment but also decrease the amount of fuel they use.

## Freight user club

The freight user club was set up at the beginning of the project in order to help achieve the three other freight measures. The club makes use of modern technology, in that it is internet based, with the initial consultation to companies wishing to join the initiative being shown by a virtual exhibition on the county councils website to which they were directed. This resulted in companies coming forward to bid for the consolidation centre measure as well as the traffic and travel advice measure. It also continues to be used in a publicity mode for these measures, but the intention is that this will in the longer term provide a forum for freight operators to provide feedback on other projects. Norwich opted for a virtual meeting space primarily due to the fact that freight companies are traditionally very difficult to engage through direct face-to-face consultation.



Official launch of the Priority Goods Vehicle as part of the Norwich Freight Measures



Delivery at the Freight Distribution Centre

**Contact:** For more information on the freight measures or any other measure within SMILE in Norwich, please contact: Chris Mitchell, tel: +44 (0) 1603 223194 or email: [chris.mitchell@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:chris.mitchell@norfolk.gov.uk)

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