

The Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber submission to the Yorkshire and Humber Strategy Evidence Gathering

The Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber

The CRC has three aims: to represent the churches to regional bodies, to raise the profile of faiths, and to be partners in regeneration.

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Workstream 3 Transport

Key lines of Inquiry

T5: regeneration through transport

CRC believes this is vitally important, and schemes like the Leeds light rail scheme would have really helped this. The Conservatives have promised to look again at this scheme. The region is becoming increasingly choked by car use, where congestion is a real issue. For evidence on this see the transport section of the last Progress in the Region report. Transport congestion is identified as one of the key ten challenges.

Access to services, employment opportunities, cultural facilities, sport, and places of worship can be difficult for groups and communities especially those without cars. Much recent planning and design has been done on the premise of car ownership. This is especially very true for those living on outer estates, who find public transport a huge financial burden, and rural areas where public transport is patchy or scarce. The ageing population of rural areas will mean this is going to be a growing issue. It is also relevant to growing youth unemployment. How are young people in rural areas to access jobs without cars? To tackle this, Wheels 2 Work is a moped leasing scheme aimed at helping people get over the initial problem of getting to work or training where no suitable alternative transport exists in the Hambleton, Richmondshire, Craven and Harrogate Districts of North Yorkshire. The Wheels 2 Work scheme was visited by the Minister for Transport Rosie Winterton MP who said “Wheels 2 Work is a real success story based around the hard work and commitment of local people. As Minister for Yorkshire & Humber, I believe that one of the ways we can make the region stronger is to give people the chance to take advantage of the employment, training and education opportunities that exist and Wheels 2 Work is helping to do that”. See www.wheels2work.co.uk

Schemes like this need to be supported and expanded.

The recent report by the Commission for Rural Communities, where the government’s rural advocate has warned that young people’s needs must be urgently addressed to avoid a major threat to the long-term viability of country life, argues deep concerns over housing, work, transport, training and social exclusion are prompting an exodus of young people from the countryside. In a report delivered directly to the prime minister, Dr Burgess says: ‘Without young

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people to provide a work force, rural economies are unable to fulfil their full potential and rural communities can go into a decline. The Commission for Rural Communities, which Dr Burgess chairs, has also published a *State of the countryside* update, setting out the statistical facts of rural life for children and young people. Just 23 of England's 573 Job Centre Plus outlets are located in rural areas. More than a fifth of urban children can reach where they want to be on foot but this drops to 7% for rural residents.

The report puts forward practical solutions, including:

- Flexible planning to create more affordable rural housing
 - New ways to meet employment and training needs in more isolated areas
 - A renewed integrated public transport focus
- <http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/events/ruraladvocatereport2010launched>

Integrated transport, park and ride and transport interchanges must be encouraged and the kind of Oyster-style card in South Yorkshire which can be used on trains, buses and trams. The combined travel tickets available in South Yorkshire are 1] the TravelMaster ticket (£7.00) and 2] The South Yorkshire Day Tripper ticket (£5.80). Both enable unlimited travel by bus, train or tram during one day, the former at any time, the latter after 9.30 a.m. This scheme should be expanded across Yorkshire and Humber.

Careful planning and co-location of services, along with a fresh approach to public transport, can make it possible for those without cars – including the elderly, the young and the poor - to be included, and be able to access services and jobs. Regeneration schemes must focus on sustainable transport and be located, for example, near train routes. New developments of housing and communities and regeneration schemes must bear transport issues in mind and encourage communities where travel to shops, leisure, work is minimised by creating diverse communities which contain supermarkets, health centres, places of worship, opportunities for employment and so on. We must create sustainable local communities where there is no need to drive a car because there is no need to travel. Our definition of a high quality place to live are not simply well built houses with gardens but where there are homes and communities.

Sports facilities, green spaces, culture and leisure opportunities are all vital in creating high quality places to live – see The Marmot review - commissioned by the Dept of Health (2010), and the DCMS Taking Part survey.

Further, sustainable transport infrastructure is vital for people to access these facilities, especially those on outer estates, and those in rural areas.