

Department for Transport
Home Zones Challenge Programme
Consultants (PPAD 9/99/49)

Progress Report - March 2003

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Department for Transport
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Babbie (Ross Silcock) was appointed on 05 February 2002 to act as Programme Management Consultant on the Home Zone Challenge being undertaken by the Department for Transport (DfT).

1.2 This report provides a summary of the work undertaken during the quarter ending 28th February 2003 in providing those services.

1.3 Following this introduction there is a review of the main activities during the period under each of the headings identified in the Inception Report. This is then followed by a review of the progress achieved by the local authorities participating in the scheme and the report concludes with a section identifying the issues raised this quarter and the main activities for the coming quarter.

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2.0 Progress Against Contract

2.1 Meetings

2.1.1 The third progress meeting was held in the Pall Mall office of Babtie Group on 10th December 2002. Minutes were subsequently agreed and distributed.

2.2 Establish Local Authority Contacts

2.2.1 The Babtie team of regional contacts has maintained regular contact with their assigned authorities.

2.2.2 From a review of the quarterly proformas submitted in November, a number of authorities were identified for a visit. However in the meantime the need to hold Regional Meetings arose. Nine Regional Meetings were held in total as follows :

- 29th January at Plymouth (South West Authorities)
- 30th January at London (Eastern Authorities)
- 31st January at London (London Authorities)
- 31st January at London (South East Authorities)
- 3rd February at Newcastle (North East Authorities)
- 5th February at Manchester (North West 1 Authorities)
- 5th February at Manchester (North West 2 Authorities)
- 6th February at Wakefield (Yorkshire & Humberside Authorities)
- 7th February at Birmingham (West and East Midlands Authorities)

2.2.3 These meetings were deemed a success by all who attended. They gave the Department and Babtie Group the opportunity to pass on important information, the Authorities to hear how each other was getting on and most importantly all were able to network and share experiences.

2.2.4 In addition to those Authorities who did not attend a Regional Meeting (identified with a * below), a number of Authorities have been identified for a visit as a result of the Regional Meetings and the March review of Progress Updates, as follows:

- Wiltshire County Council*
- London Borough of Haringey*
- London Borough of Southwark*
- London Borough of Newham*
- Luton Borough Council*
- Peterborough City Council*

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- London Borough of Camden
- Northumberland County Council
- Birmingham City Council

2.2.5 Derby City Council did not attend a Regional Meeting but as satisfactory returns have been received and as John Barrell has previously visited the Authority, reassurance has already been obtained that the scheme is progressing.

2.3 Website Set-up

2.3.1 The project website has now been fully established.

2.4 Website Maintenance

2.4.1 The website was re-launched in January. The layout has been simplified, the structure has been extended and information from the Authorities included. Each scheme page has been extended to include a 'Progress Update' which will be added to on a quarterly basis and an archive of updates maintained for each zone. Where information has been provided by a Local Authority, such as consultation leaflets and photos of events, these have been added to each scheme's section. Under 'Information and Guidance' are a number of sub-sections including 'Legislation' which now provides a link to The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 in addition to The Transport Act 2000. As The Highways Act 1980 is not available on line a link has been provided to a page providing details of how to purchase the document. Within the Local Authority area, the FAQ's have been updated and some 'Top Tips' from the Regional Meetings included.

2.5 Internal Reporting

2.5.1 This is the 13th 'report' so far produced. Reports in this sense also include the minutes of all meetings. With the exception of the Inception Report, all these have been submitted in electronic format and include:

Inception Report	submitted	25 March 2002
Minutes of Inception Meeting	submitted	01 March 2002
Minutes of Inaugural Meeting	submitted	14 June 2002
Minutes of First Progress Meeting	submitted	24 May 2002
Financial Analysis May 2002	submitted	11 June 2002
Progress Report May 2002	submitted	11 June 2002
Minutes of Second Progress Meeting	submitted	06 September 2002
Progress Report August 2002	submitted	09 September 2002
Financial Analysis August 2002	submitted	09 September 2002
Progress Report November 2002	submitted	09 December 2002
Financial Analysis November 2002	submitted	10 January 2003

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Minutes of Third Progress Meeting

submitted

10 January 2003

2.6 Conferences

2.6.1 Arrangements are progressing for the first project conference being organised by Social Research Associates, on our behalf, for Thursday 13th March 2003 at The Guildhall, York. Wayne Hemmingway has accepted and will be the keynote speaker along with Adrian Trim and Judith Devismes. The fee for delegates is £190 (£75 for members of community groups). Advertisements appeared in Local Transport Today and other relevant publications before and after Christmas and direct mailshots were sent out to all authorities and interested parties. All places have now been booked.

2.7 Publications

2.7.1 No publications have yet been identified or produced.

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3 Local Authority Progress

3.1 Reporting, despite now being well established and explained again to the Authorities at the Regional Meetings (to which all but seven of the Authorities attended), remains varied in content. Of the 61 schemes selected, four authorities responsible for five schemes have not submitted either financial information or progress update forms. Those Authorities who either do not submit information or the information submitted is considered to be unsatisfactory due to either a lack of quantity or quality are being contacted by their Bابتie Team contact to rectify the situation.

3.2 Over the last quarter the majority of Authorities have continued to be involved with consultation aspects associated with their Home Zone schemes. Most have now distributed Newsletters and held initial Public Meetings whilst some have held Fun Days and scheme mock-ups. Other Authorities are more advanced with the Nottingham scheme continue to progress on site, the scheme by the London Borough of Kingston upon Thames at the tender stage and the Plymouth scheme now complete.

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4 Issues and Future Activities

4.1 A number of the issues identified over the previous two quarters remain outstanding as follows:

- Consistency of financial submissions – a number of the Local Authorities are not updating their Financial profiles to take into account the invoices raised. This is being pointed out and rectification requested.
- Consistency of Reporting – it is evident that some authorities are still not sure as to the extent of work or programming that will be involved in the ultimate implementation and this is shown in the level of detail provided.
- Local Authority Contacts – despite the meetings held the content of a few returns are still a little sparse. This is being pointed out and rectification requested.

4.2 A number of the issues identified in the previous quarter appear to have been resolved :

- Many Authorities were concerned about resident apathy. A Working Note was produced which identified 15 Authorities mentioning the issue in their Progress Updates. From the Regional Meetings it became apparent that the issue was not at the level of concern previously suspected. The issue was discussed at these meetings and some good practice was passed on. The level of reported apathy will continue to be monitored closely.
- A number of Authorities mentioned their concern at the lack of payment by the DfT of invoices to support their spend of Challenge funds. It was suggested that in some instances this may affect their future programme. This issue has now been resolved with the commencement of payments by the Department.

4.3 Over the coming quarter, the conference will be held and a number of Authorities visited. Overall progress is being maintained, but a number of schemes are becoming subject to outside pressures which will be monitored closely.