

**“Night-time Deliveries Seminar in South London:
A Sustainable Solution”**

**Croydon, Whitgift Centre
April 20th 2007**

A Night-time deliveries workshop was organised by the South London Freight Quality Partnership (www.southlondonfqp.com), in association with South London Business Ltd (www.southlondonbusiness.co.uk) in Croydon on 20th April.

Based on the Night-time “toolkit” published by the Freight Transport Association (FTA) in October 2006, the South London FQP is working with Borough planning officers and local businesses to identify sites suitable for a pilot Night Time Delivery Scheme. By running such a pilot scheme it will be possible to gauge if there are benefits to be gained by having night time deliveries, with a view to subsequent wider implementation in suitable locations, if successful.

28 people attended the workshop:

- Local authorities: 10
- Companies: 12
- Associations: 5
- Police: 1

Discussions took place between the delegates and with the 3 speakers (from the FTA, TfL Freight Unit and Sainsbury’s); it was a good opportunity for them to share their wishes and fears regarding Night-time delivery trials.

All speakers raised the key problems generated by the lack of night-time deliveries.

Speakers

- Peter Blaine – Freight Forum Coordinator – *TfL Freight Unit*
- Stephen Kelly – Head of Policy – *Freight Transport Association (Midlands, Wales & South West)*
- Morag Robertson – Environment Manager for Supply Chain – *Sainsbury’s*

General context

In previous studies, it was found that night-time deliveries were technically feasible and could achieve significant benefits at the local level, although care needed to be taken to respect the needs of other users in the vicinity of the trial, particularly local residents. However, it was agreed that the benefits achieved by night-time delivery trials were dependent upon the nature of the site in question and that such trials should be considered on a case by case basis.

In October 2006, the Department for Transport (DfT) published guidance for night-time deliveries. This was done in partnership with the FTA which published an associated “toolkit”. These reports can be found on the following websites:

- Department for Transport guidance:
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/freight/road/deliveringthegoodsguidanceon1163?page=2>
- Freight Transport Association toolkit:
<http://www.fta.co.uk/information/otherissues/urbanaccess/index.htm>

The following text summarises the presentations and discussions.

Transport for London / Freight Unit – Peter Blaine

The Freight Unit is a part of the Transport for London dedicated to the freight issues. It has been involved in the methodology developed by the FTA for the Night-time deliveries toolkit.

- **Potential impacts of the night-time deliveries.**

It is predicted that by 2026, freight movements may grow by as much as 15%, with road space availability decreasing by 10% in the same period.

Keeping those predictions in mind, TfL explained the benefits of the Night-time deliveries which could result in:

- Reduced congestion, emissions and CO₂
- Make best use of transport network capacity
- Increase freight transport efficiency.

It is worth noting that the peaks of Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) and cars appear at the same time (rush hours); therefore the use of LGVs has to be spread throughout the day/night to diminish congestion and increase the drivers’ quality of work and productivity.

A traffic impact assessment published in 2004 (*report Night-time delivery restriction relaxation*) puts in light that of 124 food retail stores in London surveyed, 31% had planning restrictions five years old or more and old planning restrictions could not be easily referred to as they were archived. In many cases, the planning officer was unaware of the original planning application.

- **Night-time delivery trials.**

There are various **key requirements** for night-time deliveries:

- Commercial factors (supply chain capability, business facilitation)
- Practical issues (staff available at night, safer work, security implications)
- Public amenities (voluntary restrictions, planning conditions, noise abatement notices)

In order to reduce noise, technical and behavioural solutions can be implemented: use of quieter roll cages, education of drivers and staff to reduce noise, use quieter vehicles (e.g. electric powertrain). The question which is raised is that: *if we use more light goods vehicles, what are the impacts on congestion?*

Some solutions are under development in the Continental Europe. For example, the PIEK-program started in 1999 in Netherlands with a survey regarding the noise levels due to deliveries. One of the main goals was to develop and introduce more quiet delivery products to the market. In 2001 it became clear that from a technical point, it was possible to meet the noise limits. The next issue was economic feasibility. Since the production numbers of silent product were far lower when compared with normal products the costs of silent products were about 20 percent higher.

According to TfL, there are barriers to change. Indeed, small stores may prefer morning deliveries because a lack of night time staff means it is economically infeasible, and larger stores are worried about laborious appeals process for the removal of planning conditions. All of that is linked to the local residents' claims: many stores have voluntary restrictions in place to appease local residents, removal of these runs risk of Noise Abatement Notices (NANs).

Freight Transport Association - Stephen Kelly

- **The historical context**

One of the first steps regarding the night-time deliveries curfew initiative was in 1997 with the FTA / CfIT project.

In 2003, a commitment was made by Government to investigate delivery curfews and in 2004 a "Local Regulatory Restrictions Working group" was established by FTA and the Cabinet Office. The roles of those surveys were mainly to understand better the process by which delivery restrictions are apply, to investigate the scope for relaxation of delivery restrictions in exchange for adoption of Industry Best practice and to undertake pilot trials.

According to a British Retail Consortium survey:

- 31% of the stores inherit delivery curfews as a result of planning policies
- 11% of curfews related to noise abatement orders
- 37% of retailers with rear access were affected by curfews.

- **Night-time delivery efficiency**

One of the most important key things to encourage night-time deliveries is the influences of the transport on climate change. Indeed, transport sector is responsible for 26% of the polluting emissions.

In order to gain a better knowledge regarding night-time deliveries, FTA made a case study with the major retailers (166 stores). Among them, 70 are subject to night-time deliveries curfews and only 14% of deliveries are currently made out of hours (22.00 to 7am).

In term of environmental impacts, the survey shows that if 50% of restrictions are removed then 150,000 vehicle miles would be saved, leading to 52,000 litres of fuel saved, a reduction of 140 tonnes of carbon dioxide and 45 kg of sulphur dioxide less.

- **Guidance and Toolkit**

To help local authorities to introduce night-time deliveries, the Department for Transport (DfT) published in 2006 a Night-time deliveries guidance which one of the aims are that local authorities put in place a legislation / regulations on delivery restrictions, to make them more responsible regarding enforcement of restrictions and to draw upon previous guidance documents.

In addition to this guidance, the FTA “toolkit” aims to pilot trial that would not adversely affect residents, benefit the environment, help to relieve traffic congestion, improve safety and make operations more efficient.

To reach those targets, the FTA Night-time deliveries toolkit firstly mentions that objectives need to be defined, and then specific focuses have to be made on noise and light issues, make a site investigation report and a technical monitoring.

Indeed, how to manage that with the original market?

The benefits are sustainable: environmental, community and commercial benefits.

A template is proposed at the end of the toolkit, mentioning:

- A letter from retailer to Local Authority
- A Market research questionnaire
- A retailer checklist
- A checklist for site investigation report
- Tasks / outputs / responsibilities
- Training manuals

Sainsbury’s – Morag Robertson

- **Sainsbury’s with its local partners**

Sainsbury’s aim is to provide a quality shopping experience and “*exceeding expectations*”. Their responsibilities to the community is about providing good quality food to local communities as well as ensuring we don’t have a negative impact.

That is the reason why Sainsbury’s wants to work with Boroughs; it is at the same time a question of respect and a question of and protecting reputation according Morag Robertson “*Sainsbury’s wants to be a good neighbor*”.

- **Night-time deliveries according Sainsbury’s**

Sainsbury’s mentioned that its strategy covers environmental objectives. The company thinks it is essential to deliver away from peak times. There are cost, environmental and service dimensions to the debate.

The company would like review restrictions but in the light of local conditions, being sensitive to local concerns etc. However the approach of local Councils varies, different problems arise and they need to potentially dealt with by different means.

But Sainsbury's is not interested in changing to deliveries 24 hours a day; a significant improvement would consist in working the restrictions. The company does not expect a time extension for the whole night, just 1 or 2 extra hours. For example, they would like to improve morning availability at stores by challenging the restrictions we have and working on local action plans to ensure a win-win.

Sainsbury's also mentions that lots of stores have deliveries every single day.

- **What Sainsbury's is doing about that?**

In order to improve night-time deliveries, Sainsbury's is focusing on communication, is investing to reduce noise (roll cages, etc.), and is trying a constructive challenge (planning permissions, reviewing/re-negotiating local agreements).

But Sainsbury's thinks that sometimes, local authorities are not supportive. For example, Sainsbury's would like a new pavement and the reaction of a local authority was to say "no", without taking time to discuss more, while the solution proposed by Sainsbury's could reduce the problems of noise for local residents. But Sainsbury's is also investing in new roll cages – as mentioned before – and they have implemented new plastic roll cages to stop the metal noise. But sometimes, complaints increase because residents did not receive responses from the local authorities.

Sainsbury's also does not forget that people trade on Sunday.

Questions & Answers / Reactions
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✓ Generally, private and public stakeholders think that Night-time deliveries are an **interesting solution** to reduce polluting emissions in urban areas.

They think they need a good partnership between all stakeholders, and create communication with local residents to make them aware of the environmental benefits.

✓ A police officer mentions that there are lots of problems due to congestion. An **educational process** would be useful.

In addition, a logistician mentioned that a publication to heighten awareness of the benefits of the NTD would be easy via newspaper.

✓ A member of a London BID thinks that the Night-time deliveries are a very good solution.

Some attendees also mentioned the problems to **coordinate planning processes**.

Every decision should be done with consultation (they would take to know more about consultation).

✓ A London Borough Town Centre Manager thinks that **CPZ** are a recent and good thing. It allows choosing the time to deliver.

Sainsbury's mentions that a recent system to follow the rounds exist.

According to a London Borough, some retailers and freight operators reveal they have problems with the PCNs issued when they deliver at night.

✓ A freight operator claims that there are poor restrictions on the **vehicle size**. There is more and more consolidation and it is easier to deliver with an artic per day than with small vehicles. In addition, according to a London Borough, a **consolidation centre** could be attractive. A policy is for everybody, so they need a policy approach. The same Borough also mentions the need of a strategic message to allow larger vehicles to circulate in the town centre. The problem of noise is due to rolls which are used back into the yard.

✓ **However, how would Night-time delivery schemes be policed?** What are the implications for the staff / security implications?

✓ The boundaries that are in place for the authorities as well as account to be taken on the effects to the residents need to be appreciated.

✓ Some delegates mentioned the idea to take into account the possibility of night-time deliveries and to factor in underground or semi-enclosed delivery areas.

Next steps

- Bring people interested in a NTD trial together
- Elaboration of the benefits / concerns of each other
- Borough / business combinations formalisation (we are looking for 5 or 6 combinations)
- Case by case solution study
- Then try to work these into little demonstrations (such as the Legal Loading Initiative projects).