

Sustainable Transport & Active Travel Summit-

Transcript from session 3: Making waves in sustainable transport

November 17, 2023, 1:37PM

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Tom Neville talking to Sam Keam, Tom Druitt and Councillor Jim Murray

Sam Keam, founder of Zedify:

Good afternoon

So Zedify, in a nutshell is about using the right vehicle in cities electric cargo bikes. In our case, about 1/3 of packages can be delivered in cities on cargo bikes, and we do that with a local micro hub and well trained locally employed riders.

And it's all electric, and there's no emissions.

So that certifying a nutshell, we're currently in 10 cities and rolling out a national last mile and First mile logistics network.

Thank you.

Tom Druitt, Founder of the Big Lemon Buses: Good afternoon everyone.

Lovely to be here.

Uh, my name is Tom Druitt.

I'm the founder of the Big Lemon buses.

I don't know if anyone's seen Big Lemon buses.

Give us a wave!.

And so the big Lemon was a response a little bit like Sam's just described to a kind of social and environmental ill that I observed.

And it was a number of things.

Essentially, it's a local response to climate change and also an attempt to engage communities in the delivery of their own services.

So what I kind of my experience and growing up and also as a young man was that public transport had I felt it, kind of lost its way a bit.

It gone all about profit and not about the people and the passengers and the communities.

So, uh, we had a public meeting in Brighton and uh, try to envisage what at the what public transport should look like in the 21st century and.

What?

What would be the kind of perfect service that would?

I am really.

Uh, you know, we tried to envisage what, what the kind of model service should be for communities and what people's priorities were.

So a number of threads came out of that meeting and those are the values that we've.

Been holding there ever since, and those are essentially that people felt disengaged and they wanted to be engaged in, in the their public transport services.

So and community is at the heart of everything we do and looking forward, people wanted their public transport to be sustainable and as a result, sustainability is one of our kind of core themes that have been guiding us the whole way.

We started running the buses on waste cooking oil and more recently we've been transitioning to electric vehicles powered by renewable energy.

And then the third thing really which I think is equally as important is the experience on the bus.

Uh, because, UM, you know, public transporters had kind of various reviews.

Sometimes it's really good, sometimes it's terrible and I felt very strongly that if public transport is going to play the role it needs to play in the transition to a sustainable future.

Uh, we need to make the service really, really good so that people enjoy using it and choose to use it in preference to other modes of transport.

So that's really what the big lemon is all about.

And we've recently started services in Bristol and Bath as well and looking at helping communities wherever we can to transition to more sustainable transport.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Councillor Jim Murray, EBC: And uh, I'm here representing the car clubs and EV charging points in these born.

So we've got some car clubs that almost ready to go in, in the town, and we've also got some EV charging points which were putting around at least Borough council. So any car parks that we have that we own that we have control of, we're trying to get car park.

We're trying to get charge charging points into them.

One of the biggest problems with charging cars is that we need to be able to provide the service that the people need.

So the slow charging that you'd have outside your house doesn't really work for somebody who wants to come and visit the town for a couple of hours and then drive back up to London or whatever.

So what we're trying to do is we're trying to make sure that they're charging points that we have are suitable for those short term visitors and people who might be after a fast charge as well.

So we can't do the fast charging at the moment.

We haven't got the infrastructure in place, but these slots, the sort of in between charging points we have.

So the ones that we have in Hyde Gardens and will be appearing in some of our other car parks across the town will charge your car in sort of two or three hours.

But they do need to be quite close to a power source.

So if you think of an electric cable, the further away from the from the power source you are, the less power you're getting from it.

Umm, so we need to be quite close to the power source to be able to charge the cars successfully and that's one of our main concerns that we have in in, in town but the infrastructure is being looked at has been looked at for the last two or three years and there are plans in place to sort of improve all of that going forward.

So that's what we can do as these borough council, and we're also be talking to Sussex County Council about getting more on street charges up and running as soon as we possibly can.

And I think that's gonna be sort of action fairly soon from what I'm hearing.

So over to you Tom.

Tom Neville, student & transport activist: UM, so I started campaigning since the age of 14 on kind of transport initiatives, looking at how we can get people out of their cars.

Uhm, I then was tasked with the project to bring about change through something called Car Free Eastbourne and Car Free Day.

Me.

So far, it's been an amazing journey in in kind of involved with transport UM and you know the bus industry is great and I'm just gonna ask a few questions really today just to establish what the big lemon have been doing, etcetera.

So Tom, straight over to you actually

Q. why do you believe public transport should prioritize community needs over profit?

Your mic should be working now.

Thank you.

Tom Drutt: Does that work as well.

Yeah, right.

Like I haven't.

Yeah, that's a really good question and not that's basically why the big lemon exists. And I think there's, I mean there's loads of reasons I could talk about this all day, but just to choose a few reasons.

I mean one of the.

One of the things that you lose when you your motivator is balance sheets and spreadsheets and marginal revenue.

At the end of the year, and so on.

And you lose the bigger picture.

You know what is public transport actually for it's to provide freedom to people to travel.

It's to provide.

It means out of isolation and loneliness for older people.

It's to provide young people with opportunities for school, college and work.

It's to provide families, uh, opportunities to get to the shops, the dentist, the doctor, the hospital and if and why should some people be deprived of those opportunities just because they don't happen to live on a profitable route and maybe they can't afford to live on a profitable route because they're all the routes kind of on the main? Yeah, the main drag into the city centre or something so.

It's, you know, if the services are, if the community is engaged and if services are informed by the priorities of the Community and by and acknowledgement of the social needs of the Community, then the services will deliver for the needs of those communities and yes, they do need to cover their costs.

Of course they do, because that's the only way they're going to be sustainable in the long term.

But we've always worked on the basis that, you know, we run a basket of services and

as long as the basket covers its costs, it doesn't matter if all the services within there that baskets within that basket don't necessarily.

And so we, we have a you know we do a number of things.

We do Council contracts.

We do private contracts, we do private hire, we do all sorts of Community events and socially necessary services, school services and so on.

And it doesn't matter to us whether each one we don't, I mean we do analyze each one, but they don't have to all be profitable as long as the whole thing together works.

So I think that's what you lose when you move to a, you know, a purely profit driven system.

You end up and this this happens.

We've all seen it, you know, Stagecoach and devices.

Sorry, I beg your pardon.

You're the sponsor today, but yeah.

I'll.

I'll name all of them say that nobody's singled out, but the big groups like go ahead, National Express and Arriva and so on.

They all you know, they're huge organizations and they are fundamentally owned by shareholders and those shareholders want to maximize profits.

And to be fair, it's not Stagecoach or go ahead or anybody else's fault, it's the.

It's the way the system works.

It's the way the system's been designed.

Designed set up and we are all responsible because we all choose the best interest rates for our pensions.

We all choose the cheapest mortgage.

We all choose these things that yeah, on the basis of a nought .1% interest differential and the end result of that.

Is that those corporations have to deliver, otherwise they don't get invested in and so and the market moves its money to the ones that do deliver.

Nought .1% better.

So it's not anyone's particular fault.

It's just the nature of the system that we that we have in corporate land and that's why the big lemon chooses not to be in corporate land and to work for the community instead.



Tom Neville - Q: What kind of thing needs to be taken to achieve your vision in every kind of UK community?

Yeah.

Tom Druitt: That's a good question.

And so the big lemons kind of vision for 2030 is that every community in the country has access to affordable public transport delivered by zero emission vehicles powered by renewable energy.

Now obviously that's not going to be us running all of that, but we hope that we can share our experience with people and take opportunities where we can to grow our own services, but also share what we've been doing and try and inspire other people and give other people the tools that they need.

The experience that we've had to help them on their journey and so that this, this uh this can be achieved and uh yeah, it's a big it.

It's a big vision.

It's a big goal, but UM, I think the power, you know everyone now is getting much more conscious of the challenges of climate change and also social challenges like increasing isolation and loneliness and so on in in communities.

So we do think that the appetite for this is, is growing and the at the kind of technological means of also becoming easier.

So a combination of those things and good communication, I think is the key to, to enabling it alter to happen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you for everything you do as well with your bus company.

That's great.

Tom Neville: I'm just ask you a few questions, Sam if that's alright,

Q why are both electric and diesel powered vans considered problematic according to your key messages?.

Sam Keam: Well, in the electric van is still a van.

I think one of the one of the challenges that we're facing as we try and grow and scale in the business and having logistics is that all the incumbents or the big parcel carriers are finally getting the message on carbon.

So they're just looking at the at their delivery models, which are around regional hub

and spoke models with large fleets of banding going what can we do?

We're going to just transition to electric vehicles.

That's fine partially, although I've got some stats I've noted down before I came.

So based on our calculations, the diesel delivery in a city of Last Mile diesel delivery about 350.

Be about 250 grams.

I'll go bike about 10, so it's partly a cardinal situation, but also an Evie coming into a city is just the wrong vehicle for the job and that's why.

Like need to get vans off our streets?

The transition to E commerce, a multibillion # councillor from the High Street to online retail, has resulted in an enormous increased pressure streets to get those deliveries to our daughters and we can't do that using vans that just isn't so.

We have to right size, we have to consolidate and we have to use last mile consolidation hubs and remoting onto cargo bikes or whichever other vehicle might work.

But I'm not wedded to cargo bikes, we have to use ultralight, highly efficient, low carbon, low impact vehicles for all sorts of reasons, because a diesel van or an electric fan is still gonna run someone over, you can still go far too fast.

It's got far too much mass and momentum for pedestrians.

It's not that much lower emission because of the embodied emissions of producing it.

And yeah, it solves air pollution, which is, which is great, and it's slightly lower carbon.

But we need to aim a bit higher than that to do with all the things we've heard today around alignment with liveable streets and public realm, and trying to make our cities healthier places.

So yeah, that's one of my key messages is don't just accept a transition to electric vehicles.

And we can we can do a lot better

Tom Neville: Leads me into my next question.

Q How does designing the public realm around people, not cars, positively impact health?

Well, being an urban economies.

Big question.

I probably not when I'm the best place to answer.

You know, I don't have a background in planning and understanding public realm.

I think one when we look at what when we look to evaluate whether to open a service in a new city and there are broadly 3 things that we consider.

The first is, is there a thriving market opportunity?

Is it thriving?

Local business economy is there.

Of consumers who are buying where we can tap into that market and provide delivery service and the second.

Is around alignment.

So is there an alignment in terms of principles and ambition for what we're trying to do from the local authority and local business community?

And then the third really is around geography and I think geography plays a role here in terms of we are both an enabler of better public realm - We're freeing up space that can be removed or given back to green spaces, wider pavements, better pedestrianisation. We are a lubricating business productivity for retailers who might be concerned about how they're going to get deliveries in and out on high streets, if there are vehicle restrictions being put in place and then obviously they're geographical factors that should just physical ones such as hilliness and whether there's a big river with no bridges and things like that.

So umm, I think public realm and the quality of infrastructure is definitely one of the key just sort of pillars of a decision making process for the logistics space.

Yeah.

Tom Neville: Thank you, Sam.

And so we just had the town centre redevelopment plan.

Phase One is it's phase one completed.

Yeah, I think two or three years ago now, and now the Council are starting to install these electric charging points.

How do you think obviously that will be implemented in the town centre or has been sorry?

Q: How do you think we could we could do that a bit more with more kind of EV charging infrastructure, not just in Hyde Gardens?

Jim Murray: So, the aim is to sort of get charging points out in terms of many places as we can.

About three years ago, I turned around to the officers.

I said come and find me 2000 charging points that we can set up around the town.

They came back and gave me 8 because these are the only ones that we can use.

Because of what I was talking about around the infrastructure, we haven't got the power sources at the points where we need them to be able to deliver all the charge to all the car parking spaces that we want.

We are improving on that.

We know that we can improve on that because we've been talking to the power network and they've been working on this for two or three years and we'll be starting to improve the infrastructure for us anyway.

Any of the car parks that we've got, we're putting charging points into, excuse me, the car park that we've got at the Hampden Park Retail Park that's just been refurbished.

We've put in the infrastructure for there for 18 fast charge points and if we can get some solar panels in that car park and some battery storage that we can put those fast charges into action straight away.

All we gotta do is sort of collect them up.

So we are thinking about it, we're thinking about the long term plans for what we're trying to do within the town and we're working with Essex County Council who will be the big players in this.

We can only do it in the car parks that we own, East Sussex County Council can do it on all the streets in the town and I came across another new innovation the other day, which was one of the problems is my house, my front door opens straight onto the pathway and then my car will be parked in front of me and I can't charge my car there because I form a trip hazard.

There's a very simple system now which is literally a little metal trough that, you cut a little trench into the pathway, stick the trough in there and it's got a lockable lid on it.

So when you want to charge up your car, you drop your lead into the charge in into this trough plug it into your house, plug it into your car.

No trip hazard.

You could charge directly from your own house.

Very simple fix.

We just need to get planning permission from East Sussex County Council to allow

this sort of across the town.

Absolutely brand new innovation and stuff.

That's only come out in the last week or so, but that's the sort of thing that we're looking at trying to do as well across the town.

Tom Neville: Brilliant.

You said you're gonna connect it up to the network, and you've been speaking to is it UK Power Networks?

Jim Murray: Yes.

Tom Neville: Is there any kind of scope for renewable energy?

Jim Murray: We're looking at, renewable energy across the town, we've got the solar farm that we're looking at, at the moment on the Eastbourne Park.

Controversial.

But you know we we we can't be saying that we want lots of green energy in the town and then sort of say, well, not on our patch actually.

You know, So once that goes through the due planning process and if everybody's happy with it, then there's possibility that will end up with nice large solar farm there and there's possibilities of that of doing that in other parts of the town like I say with the car park at the hospital is an excellent example that car park used to be sort of just a gravel graveyard where all the cars for the workers were using it.

It's now a solar farm which is powering 60% of the hospitals needs.

We're looking to try and do that across some of our car parks in town as well.

So we're looking at the Hamden part one.

We're also looking at the sports park in in Hampden Park as well, and anywhere else that we could put this sort of new solar innovational work and the addition the additional support for that would also be that we've powering up and providing better, cheaper, greener energy to the local surrounding buildings and things as well as well as charging that those AP points and we're out of time.

Thank you.

Thank you so much everybody.

Thank you.

transcription