

Written evidence submitted by Transition Bath - Transport & Built Environment Group

Transition Bath - Transport & Built Environment Group is active in promoting the positive benefits of a sustainable, active and low carbon transport system.

1. **Urban congestion could be seen as a simple question of traffic management, or it could be seen as a question about the very fabric of our society, we suggest that it is the latter.**
2. The issues of urban congestion runs very deep, it is far more than just managing large numbers of motor-vehicle on our roads, it has a huge impact on the health & well-being of individuals, affects the social cohesion of society and quality of the natural environment.
3. Our health service is in crisis overwhelmed by preventable illnesses. Many people live isolated and lonely lives, while our local shops and town centres struggles to survive. Our environment is being polluted.
4. **What connects all these?**
5. Motor transport dominating our towns and cities.
6. **How did we get here?**
7. First is worth considering how we got here, back in the 1930, 40, 50, 60's there was a vision that motor transport would be good, a sign of success, would mean development & sophistication. It has achieved a lot, 35 million cars on the UK's roads, 245,000 miles of road in total, 29,000 miles of A roads, 2200 miles of motorway. This is an incredible achievement and has taken hundreds of billions of pounds, took over 60 years of very determined investment, planning and building, along with huge political commitment, and it has taken committed deafness to the wishes of communities, campaigners and the destruction of the environment.
8. But it has come as a terrible cost, on individual's lives, on local communities, and on the environment.
9. **How do these costs affect individuals, society and the environment?**
10. Too many individuals are affected by not taking enough regular exercises and poor air quality, leading to obesity and preventable illnesses, such as type 2 Diabetes, heart disease, strokes and repository illness's. All this has hugely detrimental affect on the lives of all those affected and is burdening our health service, costing the country huge amounts of money for treatments and in lost working hours.
11. Our health and wellbeing is hugely influenced by our transport patterns. Regular daily exercise is, as the New Scientist says, a 'wonder drug' for both physical and mental health.
12. Walking, cycling or getting the bus/tram all take physical exercise and if used as forms of transport mean that regular exercise is incorporated into daily life.
13. Regular exercise is very beneficial for mental wellbeing, another crisis in our society.
14. Filling our towns & cities with motor traffic, both moving and parked, affect our communities, many children do not walk or cycle to school even though they live within a couple of miles of their schools, local shops struggle to compete with edge of town superstores, and neighbours get disconnected from each other in streets full of parked cars and along busy road. [See page 3].
15. The government says it is committed to signing the COP21 agreement on climate change and that the country will take serious steps to limit our green house gas emissions. Over a quarter of our CO2 emissions come from the transport sector, mostly from motor vehicles.

17. Why do we not use walking, cycling and catching the bus/tram more as transport?

- 18. Because at present the importance of transport is usually considered in relation to the length of the journey, the longer the journey the more important it is considered to be.
- 19. Yet DfT figures show that the journeys that most people take most of the time are short journeys, 2in3 [66%] of journeys are under 5 miles, nearly 40% under 2 miles and around 1in5 is less than 1 mile, so most journeys are short or very short. This is not surprising considering over 80% of the population of England & Wales live in urban areas.
- 20. To put this in perspective a 1-mile journey takes only around 20 minutes to walk, a 2-mile journey takes only 12 minutes to cycle, and even 5 miles can be done on a sit-up-right style bicycle in ½ hour.

21. What are the benefits?

- 22. Fortunately there are many documented benefits of walking and cycling, huge benefits to health both physical & mental from taking regular exercise, to the local economy with people going to more shops when they walk and cycle to them, children achieving higher academically when they walk to school, higher productivity, the list of potential benefits goes on, with improvements to air quality and reduced CO2 emissions.
- 23. It is not surprising therefore that the return on investment in walking and cycling is on average £13 for every £1 invested.

24. Where do these solutions exist?

- 25. Many countries have already demonstrated the solutions, Copenhagen in Denmark, Freiburg in Germany, Groningen in Netherlands are some examples.
- 26. Often the solution is to reallocating road space for walking and cycling, planning so that local shops and services are near by and supporting high quality local public transport ie buses and trams, removing through routes for motor vehicles while allowing pedestrians, cyclists and PT through.
- 27. The solutions exist and have been shown to work.

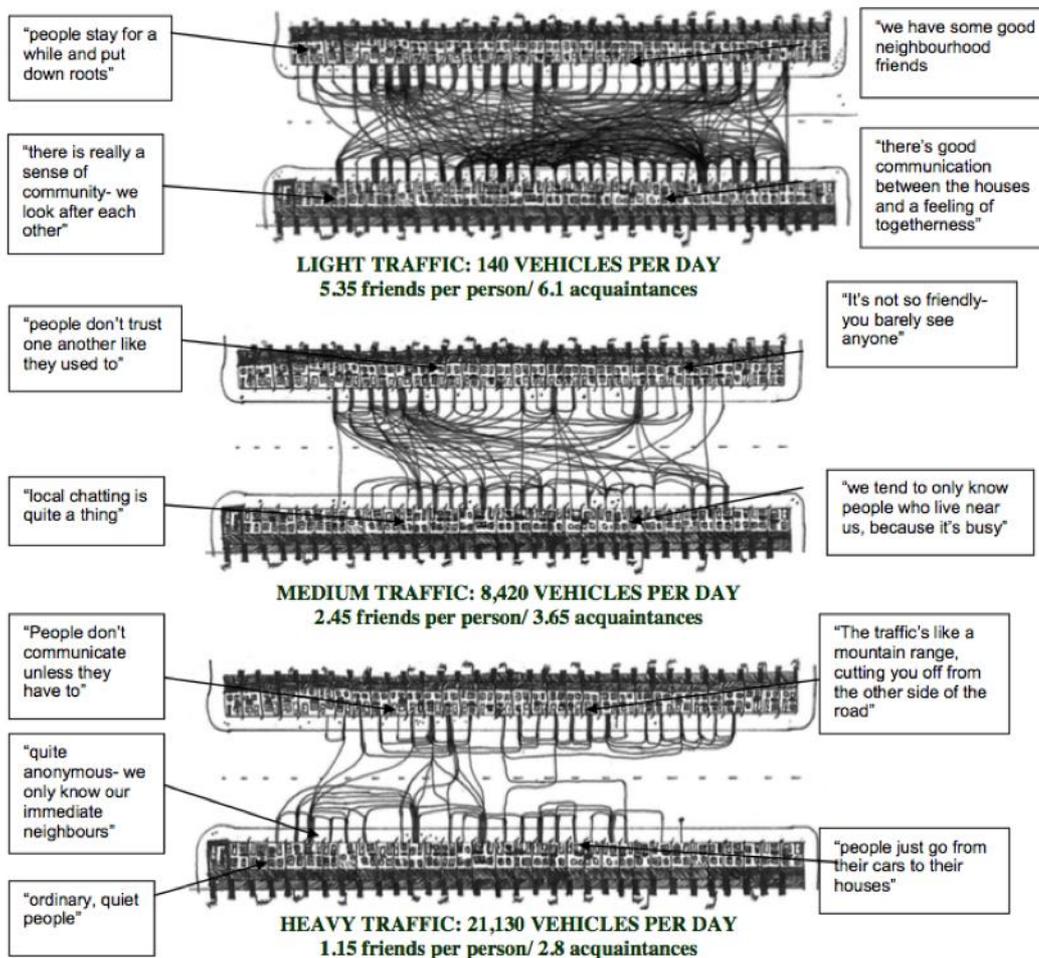
28. How can this change be instigated in the UK?

- 29. Change usually comes with strong leadership from the top; the present structure of the DfT [see page 5] does not represent short and very short journeys as important. The Board of the DfT lacks direct representation for both walking and cycling, or bus & trams, it is therefor no surprise that investment is disproportionately put into providing for those best represented on the DfT Board.

30. Recommendation

- 31. Have walking and cycling, and separately buses & trams, represented at the most senior level on the Board of the DfT.
- 32. 'People centred' towns and cities are better to live in, healthier and have vibrant local economy's, people want to live in them.

Figure 4 Community interaction on three Bristol streets



From:- **Driven To Excess: Impacts of Motor Vehicles on the Quality of Life of Residents of Three Streets in Bristol UK**

Joshua Hart and Prof. Graham Parkhurst

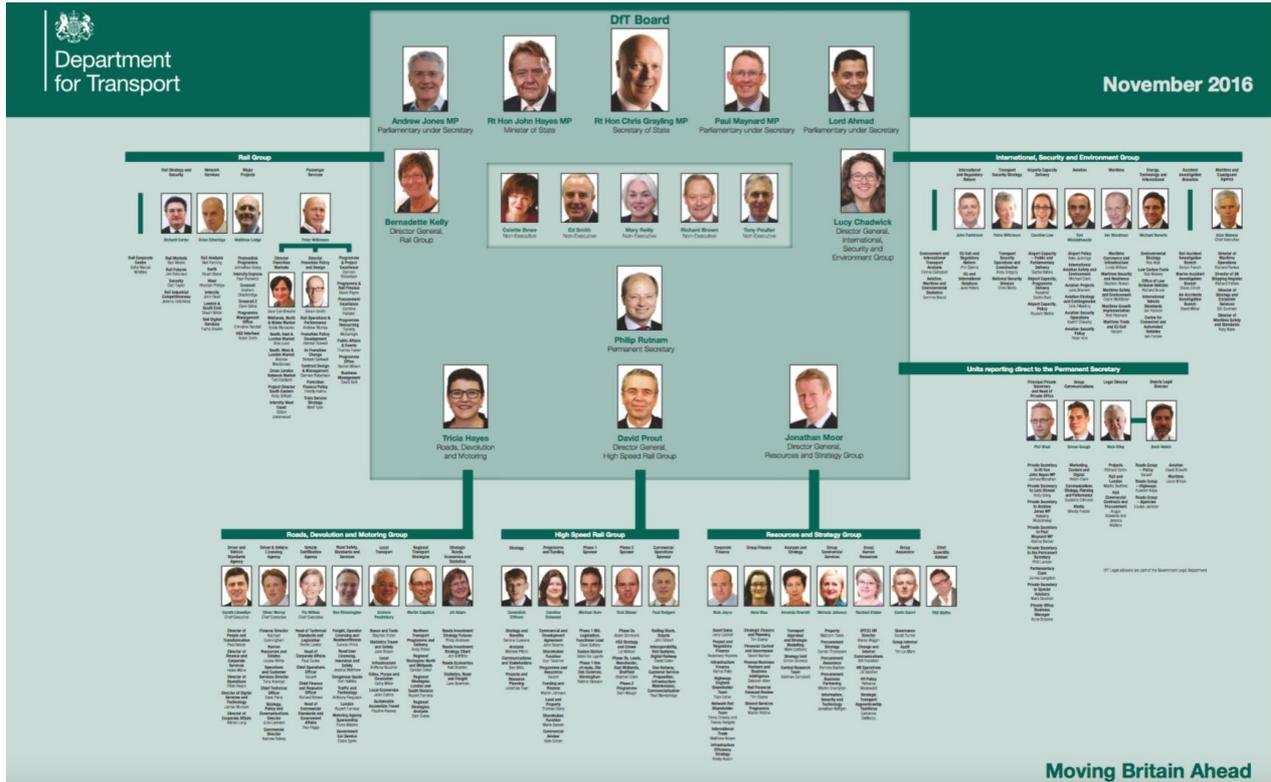
'In essence the study replicated Appleyard's (1969) research on traffic and neighbourhood social interaction.'

'The results confirmed that Appleyard's findings are applicable to the UK in the 21st century; specifically that the number of friends and acquaintances reported by residents was significantly lower on streets with higher volumes of motor traffic.'

http://eprints.uwe.ac.uk/15513/1/WTPP_Hart_ParkhurstJan2011prepub.pdf

A Small Selection of Relevant Facts & Research

| Date | Fact / Research | Source | Link / Document |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| 30 th June 2014 | Regular walking has been shown to reduce the risk of chronic illnesses, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma, stroke and some cancers. | NHS Walking for health | http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/getting-started-guides/Pages/getting-started-walking.aspx |
| 9 th June 2015 | Cities with physically active residents more productive as well as healthier | The Guardian | http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jun/09/cities-physically-active-residents-more-productive-healthier-walking-cycling-economic-benefits |
| 27 th Sept 2013 | Children who walk to school are calmer and more focused in lessons - and may be less likely to need drugs for ADHD | Mail Online | http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2434771/Children-walk-school-calmer-focused-lessons--likely-need-drugs-ADHD.html |
| 14 th May 2015 | Cyclists are 40 per cent less stressed than other commuters | The Telegraph | http://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/active/recreational-cycling/11603491/Cyclists-are-40-per-cent-less-stressed-than-other-commuters.html |
| 15 th Jan 2015 | Inactivity 'kills more than obesity' | BBC News | http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-30812439 |
| 2010 | One study shows that mortality is reduced by 30% in adults who cycle to and from their workplace on a daily basis. Page 16 Since the total health benefit of Copenhagen residents' healthy cycling habits is DKK 5.51 per km, the annual benefit is worth the equivalent of approx. DKK 2.0 billion. When accident costs are deducted the total health impact of 4.72 DKK per km is worth the equivalent of a total of 1.7 billion. Page 19 [= £174,000,000 benefit] | Copenhagen City of Cyclists - Bicycle Account 2010 [1.7 billion DKK x €0.13 = €221,000,000 = £174,000,000] | http://www.cycling-embassy.dk/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Bicycle-account-2010-Copenhagen.pdf |
| 16 th March 2016 | Denmark regains title of 'world's happiest country' | The Telegraph | http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/news/denmark-regains-title-of-happiest-country/ |
| 27 March 2014 | Walking and cycling – Safety for pedestrians and cyclists must be improved if we are to encourage people to walk and cycle more and reap the associated health benefits. The risk of serious injury for each kilometre travelled on a bike is 21 times higher than by car. | Chief Medical Officer - annual report on state of the public's health Department of Health | https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chief-medical-officer-publishes-annual-report-on-state-of-the-publics-health |
| 2014 | 24% of house holds in England do not have a car | National Travel Survey: England 2014 | https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/457752/nts2014-01.pdf |
| 2006 | Retailers overestimated the importance of car-borne trade by almost 100%; they estimated that 41% of their customers arrived by car, whereas only 22% had done so. In fact, more than half of shoppers walked to the shops. | Shoppers and how they travel Sustrans / Vivaldi | http://www.tut.fi/verne/wp-content/uploads/Shoppers-and-how-they-travel.pdf |
| 9 th June 2015 | Encouraging walking and cycling delivers a great return on investment. Studies on the economic benefits of walking and cycling interventions revealed an average return of £13 on every £1 invested. In the UK, the return is as high as £19 for every £1 invested. | Active Living Research, University of California | http://www.sustrans.org.uk/news/new-report-economic-advantage-walking-and-cycling |
| 26 th March 2015 | In 2014, carbon dioxide emissions from the transport sector, at 116.9 Mt, accounted for just over a quarter of all carbon dioxide emissions. | Dept of Energy & Climate Change | https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416810/2014_stats_release.pdf |
| 28 th June 2011 | Glasgow's new £692m M74 extension opens. The five-mile (8km) route, which could cost up to £692m, links the M74 at Carmyle with the M8 southwest of the Kingston Bridge in central Glasgow. | BBC News Scotland | http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-13931242 |



The DfT Board

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/569182/dft-organisation-chart.pdf