

Public Attitudes to Transport: Summary, June 2008

Public Attitudes to Transport - one page summary

- The importance of improving **public transport**, so that it offers a real alternative to the car was mentioned frequently across all 5 DfT goals by panel members, who conveyed challenging expectations of what public transport should provide^{CP}.
- Although a large majority reject the idea that **buses** are only for people who cannot afford any better, many people would themselves only use the bus if there were no alternative. Bus users are more positive about buses than non users.
- Key incentives for car ownership include independence and freedom. For some people car use becomes a matter of habit, the 'default' mode.

Goal 1: Climate change

- People appear, on the whole, to accept the need to address climate change, though some still see it as being about far away places and something for the future.
- Transport behaviours are perceived as being amongst the most challenging to change, particularly if they are deemed to compromise lifestyles. Research results due shortly will throw light on the nature of the barriers and how to overcome them.

Goal 2: Productivity and competitiveness

- People appreciate the importance of tackling road congestion, but this is seen mainly in terms of benefits to society (and economy) as a whole, and there is some scepticism as to whether congestion is a solvable problem. Whilst congestion does cause frustration to those who experience it, people have, to some degree, learnt to live with it.
- Congestion in towns and cities is seen as a more serious problem than congestion on motorways.
- Airport expansion and aviation growth are subject to strongly divided opinions with little consensus about the facts, or the policy consequences, of economic and environmental arguments.

Goal 3: Equality of opportunity

- The population embodies a diverse set of transport needs and constraints – one size does not fit all.
- Being able to get out and about is central to the well being of **older people** and transport is a key enabler of this.
- Significant minorities of people report difficulties in **accessing** key services and opportunities.

Goal 4: Health, safety and security

- There is high disapproval of **drink driving** and strong support for measures to tackle it.
- Although most people accept there is a link between **walking and cycling** and health, health has typically not been a top of the mind issue when making travel choices.

Goal 5: Quality of life

- Car owners tend to value the sense of control the car provides, and good public transport can contribute to the restful or tranquil passing of time.
- Less positively, about a quarter of people say that traffic has a serious impact on their quality of life. The worst impacts of road traffic - namely pedestrian accidents, air and noise pollution - are felt by those living in deprived areas.

^{CP} The text is marked as the entire bullet point is relying on panel evidence alone. Most of the evidence presented here is from the knowledge review. There are however, a small number of instances where the point is reliant on findings from the panel and these are marked accordingly

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Public Attitudes to Transport: A summary document

Helen Bullock, Gillian Smith and Judith Heller, Social Research and Evaluation Division, Department for Transport

Introduction

1. Towards a Sustainable Transport System (TaSTS) set out the five key policy goals: climate change; competitiveness and productivity; equality of opportunity; health safety and security; quality of life. The document highlighted the importance of understanding the needs and priorities of the public in recognition of the fact that the purpose of the transport system is to meet the needs of the end users.
2. In response DfT commissioned 2 pieces of research in March 2008:
 - We commissioned a team from the University of the West of England, Bristol, led by Professors Glenn Lyons and Phil Goodwin, to undertake the **Knowledge Review** in order to draw together and 'squeeze the juice' from the existing and emerging evidence on public attitudes to key transport issues.
 - We also commissioned GfK NOP to set up an online **Citizens' Panel**. Our panel involves over 600 members of the public drawn from across all regions who have agreed to take part in future waves of the panel. Panel members broadly represent the key characteristics of the population, but panel outputs are not statistically representative. The panel is a complementary source of evidence to the robust evidence examined in the knowledge review. An important benefit of the panel is that it allowed the public to provide feedback specifically in relation to the Department's five goals.
3. The findings from these studies have contributed to the development and definition of the challenges in relation to the five goals set out in TaSTS. Reports from both of these pieces of research are being published alongside this summary document: [Public Attitudes to Transport DfT's online Citizen's Panel](#) and [Public Attitudes to Transport Knowledge Review of Existing Evidence](#).
4. Reassuringly, there is a high degree of consistency between the findings from the knowledge review and what panel members have told us. A key advantage of the panel is that it adds to the evidence base by allowing panellists to express issues in their own words. In this respect it is important to note that although panel members were not asked explicitly to reflect on whether the five goals were the right ones, the feedback suggests that we have not missed anything really major in the minds of people.
5. This summary report is, in the main, structured around the 5 goals of transport policies as set out in the TaSTS document but the first section brings together evidence on attitudes to different modes of travel - particularly public transport. The importance of improving public transport so that it offers a real alternative to the car was mentioned by panel members in relation to all 5 goals. Each

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following section summarises the key findings from the knowledge review and adds in some of the colour provided by the panel¹.

Attitudes to individual transport modes

Car

- The evidence base demonstrates the highly complex nature of attitudes to the car. Attitudes to car use reflect attitudes to lifestyles and aspirations. Key incentives for car ownership include independence and freedom. For some people car use becomes a matter of habit, the 'default' mode.
- Many people consider that their car use is necessary, with a number of reasons provided, for example: the need to carry large objects, travelling with small children or a number of passengers, combining several journeys in one, as well as factors such as infrequent public transport and other modes perceived to be unsafe.
- Older drivers consider that driving enhances their independence, although a minority feel that driving cessation would relieve them of unwanted responsibility.
- Evidence demonstrates the importance of the car's flexibility to the hectic lifestyles that many women have due to the juggling of work and family responsibilities.
- Although positive about the car, drivers also express a range of irritations and frustrations about car use, such as congestion, road works, the poor quality of other road users' behaviour and parking. On balance, a substantial proportion of drivers say they would like to drive less than they do.
- Although attitudes to the cost of car use have not received much attention in research studies, some existing evidence suggests that fuel costs are considered as part of the household budget while insurance and other one-off costs are disregarded. There is a tendency for some people not to think in terms of the costs of individual car journeys when making decisions about whether to and how to travel and some want to get their money's worth out of the initial outlay of purchasing and insuring a car. Other studies however suggest there might be a greater sensitivity to the cost of driving.

Buses

- Between 2001 and 2007 bus patronage in London has increased by 29%, while in other metropolitan areas it has decreased by 6% and in non-metropolitan areas it has increased by 1%.
- Satisfaction with specific bus service attributes has remained relatively stable in recent years, although there are differences according to area type.
- Evidence suggests that attitudes to bus use might have improved in recent years, with large minorities rejecting the view that buses are only for people

¹ Please note that references to individual sources are not referenced here but full references are provided in the report of the knowledge review.

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who cannot afford any better. However, nearly half say they would only use buses if there was no other choice.

- Users of buses have a better perception of the quality of bus services than non-users.
- The main reasons for not using buses relate to the comparison of travel by car against the available bus services. This is reinforced by research findings, together with feedback from our panel, that people would travel more by bus if the services were better, if the fares were lower and/or car use was more expensive. Indeed, our panel suggests that some people have particularly challenging expectations of public transport.
- The evidence highlights that attitudes to bus use vary by age group. At primary and secondary school, the bus represents fun and independence, whereas young adults are more likely to see it as a practical necessity. For older travellers, a key advantage of the bus is its low or free cost, as well as the coverage of bus routes across many areas.
- As well as issues around quality and cost discussed above, other key barriers to bus use relate to problems with access for people with mobility impairments, to fear of crime, and the limited nature of bus networks in some places, particularly rural areas.

Rail

- Overall satisfaction with rail services has increased over the period since 2003. Over 80% of passengers are satisfied with rail service provision. Passengers on inter city services have higher levels of satisfaction than other rail users.
- Looking at individual service attributes, levels of satisfaction are lowest for 'value for money for the price of your ticket', availability of staff, and toilet facilities. Rail commuters are concerned about the apparent inability of rail services to cope with current demand. Our panel supports this evidence, and feedback suggests that the areas that panel members consider to be most in need of attention are the cost of fares, reliability and comfort.
- The most frequently mentioned reason people do not use trains for short distance journeys is the perceived convenience of travelling by car.

Air

- For many flying is an aspiration, with travelling abroad seen as a 'good' thing. Some people take for granted travel by plane. Overseas holidays and international business travel are seen as a way of life.
- Seventy percent of adults believe that air travel harms the environment, and this number has been increasing.
- However, the evidence is less certain on whether unrestricted air travel should be allowed, with figures varying enormously from 80% yes, to 80% no, depending on how the question is framed. The section below on competitiveness and productivity shows that attitudes to airport expansion are equally complex.

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- In-depth research suggests that the availability of cheap flights has made travelling overseas more affordable and that people are reluctant to give up the opportunities offered. However, a minority of panel members expressed strong views about the negative impact of air travel on the environment, and called for the promotion of rail and sea options where appropriate, and higher taxes for frequent fliers.

Walking:

- Over 90% of adults consider that everyone should be encouraged to walk to help their health, help the environment and to ease congestion.
- One third of adults indicate that their only form of exercise in a typical month is walking for more than 10 minutes at a time.
- Young people recognise walking as a healthy activity and are positive about it. There are also negative perceptions about it being slow, traffic danger and stranger danger.
- Around four in ten car users say they would walk more if the congestion charging was introduced, if it was more expensive to park, and if it was more difficult to park.

Cycling:

- Thirty seven per cent of adults agree that **Many of the short journeys I now make by car I could just as easily cycle if I had a bike'.**
- Around 3 in 10 car users say they would reduce their car use if there was better provision for cyclists, such as more cycle tracks, cycle lanes, and parking facilities.
- Substantial numbers of children aged 9-11 said they would like to cycle, but by secondary school cycling has a greater tendency to be seen as 'un-cool' if peers do not cycle.
- Parents and children feel frustrated that it is not felt safe for children to walk and cycle more.

Goal 1: Climate change

Awareness

- Awareness of the concept of climate change has reached almost everybody. It has become an issue that is increasingly ranked in the top three public policy issues facing Britain.
- Many people have a reasonable awareness of the link between climate change and transport although this is not universal. Two thirds identify transport as a contributor to climate change.
- However, while levels of awareness of the concept of climate change are high, an understanding of the impacts of specific behaviours is not as developed.
- Recent research has highlighted that there can be a belief that frequent, day-to-day behaviours have more of an impact on the environment than one-off event-driven behaviours. This can lead to the assumption that 'good' daily

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behaviours (such as recycling, not using plastic bags etc) legitimise or offset occasional 'bad' behaviour (e.g. long haul flight).

Levels of concern

- Four fifths (80%) of the population are concerned about climate change. Levels of concern differ across social groups. Younger age groups (16-24s) are less concerned about climate change compared to older age groups.
- The majority of the public believe that climate change is happening, and around two thirds of the population consider that human activity is a contributor.
- There is less consensus regarding the scale and urgency of the problem. Some people believe that climate change is a problem for future generations and 'far away places'. Furthermore, some people see little point in changing behaviour unless other individuals and countries follow.
- Research evidence, together with feedback from our panel, highlights that there is a small minority who are sceptical about climate change, either because they refuse to believe it is happening, or because they do not consider human activity to be a contributor.

Survey evidence highlights a willingness to change behaviour, but this willingness is very different for different types of behaviour. Willingness is not necessarily translated into action:

- There is a range of resistance to changing behaviour, from the very small numbers who say they would easily contemplate reducing their car trips by half, 25% to 40% who say they could easily change some short car journeys to bus or walking, up to 75% who would contemplate reducing some non-essential journeys.
- From the survey evidence it is apparent that quite large numbers of people express willingness to change travel behaviour in general terms, and say they would do so if public transport, walking and cycling conditions were improved, and/or car costs were higher.
- Willingness to change behaviour is a complex mixture of individual and social interests. The evidence highlights that people may be more prone to change if the benefit is a proximate one to the individual, his/her family or the local community - such as improving fitness, saving money or improving local air quality.

However, transport behaviours are amongst the most challenging behaviours to change:

- There are strong links between transport and people's lifestyles, so some changes in travel choices can also cause, or depend on, a wider change in lifestyle.
- In-depth research highlights a deep-seated reluctance to make drastic changes. Car use presents a significant challenge. Underpinning some people's attitudes is a belief that many or all of their car journeys are 'necessary' and a perception that viable alternatives to the car simply do not exist.

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- For reasons discussed in the 'Air policy' section, there is little or no unambiguous survey evidence on attitudes to changing behaviour regarding air travel.

Motivators and barriers in relation to behavioural change

- DfT is seeking to gain a better understanding of the motivators and barriers to changing travel behaviour and findings from a major piece of deliberative research will be available in the summer.
- DEFRA research highlights a number of motivators for sustaining behavioural change: 'a behaviour' results in the 'feel good factor'; new behaviours fit within current lifestyles; individual benefits accrue from taking up the behaviour; behaviours that are easy to do; people understand why they are being asked to act in a new way.
- DEFRA research has divided the population into a number of different segments according to their flexibility and willingness to change behaviour for environmental reasons, with different constraints and approaches being suitable for each of them. For some, quite large rapid changes are possible, but others are much more constrained or less willing to change. DfT plans to build on the DEFRA segmentation to focus specifically on travel behaviours.

Whose responsibility is it to tackle climate change and what should be done?

- Many people consider business and industry to be most influential in limiting the impact of climate change, followed by Government, the local community and the individual. At the same time there is a view that the Government should be taking the lead to address climate change, particularly in creating the conditions that would make environmentally positive choices more practical and attractive.
- The evidence base highlights that the public tend to be more supportive of the 'carrot' rather than the 'stick' approach to reducing emissions, and the feedback from the citizens panel reinforces this - for example, many people want Government to do more to encourage and promote the use of greener technologies.
- More contentiously, some panel members mentioned spontaneously the role for stringent and coercive measures aimed at discouraging private and business car use, which other groups in society would be likely to strongly oppose. Suggestions put forward by panel members included banning or penalising use of vehicles with the highest emissions (commonly identified as 4X4s)^{CP}.

Goal 2: Competitiveness and Productivity

- Although the knowledge review has thrown up very little direct evidence of public attitudes to this goal, this section focuses on indirect evidence in relation to congestion, as this is acknowledged to be an issue for economic competitiveness. We also discuss evidence on the acceptability of other

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policies which are described as having economic effects. However, it is important not to lose sight of how much importance our Citizens' Panel place on improving public transport and this is discussed in more detail above.

Experience of and attitudes to congestion as a problem

- A large majority of people say that congestion is a serious problem for **the country**. Some social groups and people in different areas perceive it to be more of an important issue than others.
- Congestion in towns and cities is viewed as more of a problem than congestion on motorways and rural areas.
- In terms of their personal experiences, although most people report that they have experienced congestion at some point, around a quarter of adults say that they experience congestion on their most frequent journey all or most of the time.
- Well under half of people report that congestion is a serious problem for themselves and there are indications that this has been decreasing² year on year
- People are concerned about the unpredictability of congestion, about being late for work, or for appointments which could result in lost business. In some cases congestion makes people feel ill. Even where congestion is predictable, people are worried about the time wasted in having to adapt behaviour such as setting out early to reach work on time. This is especially true of lower socio demographic groups who tend to have less flexibility over the time they start and finish work.

Perceived causes of congestion and possible solutions

- In-depth research for the DfT found that people see major causes of congestion as: poor public transport, badly managed road works, the school run, and the 'sheer volume of traffic'. Research highlighted in the chapters on safety and quality of life below suggests that bad driving is seen as a substantial problem including a cause of congestion.
- People are in some respects resigned to congestion and some see it as unsolvable. But in terms of possible **solutions**, top priorities to reduce congestion are:
 - Improve public transport: - support for doing this is **almost unanimous** at over 95%. Moreover two thirds of the Citizens' Panel stated spontaneously that they support improved public transport. It was the single most frequently mentioned transport issue that panel members felt Government should address.
 - There is a **broad measure of agreement** in favour of reducing speed limits in residential areas, reducing traffic, favouring spending on public transport over roads, rewarding people with low emission cars, priority

² (There were some survey design changes in 2001, but the decreasing trend is seen both before and after these changes, and is consistent with other sources)

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for buses and pedestrians, charging for road use in proportion to use (55%-80%).

- In terms of other possible solutions responses are **split down the middle**: e.g. building roads to reduce congestion is supported and opposed by 33% and 35% respectively, with the rest sitting on the fence.
- Solutions supported by **fairly substantial minorities** include: mileage charge on cars to improve public transport, unrestricted motoring, higher taxes for environmental damage, reduce new road spending (between 20%-30% supporting).
- Possible solutions supported by **small minorities** are: support public transport by: increasing petrol cost, reduce road maintenance, increase VAT (around 10%).
- The above results are consistent with the Citizens' Panel. In addition, a small number of panellists also suggested less environmentally damaging options such as: better use of existing rail and canal networks; sourcing more produce locally; encouraging the development of more energy efficient transport; promoting walking/cycling^{CP}.
- Specifically in relation to road pricing, recent research reported that many people are resistant to the idea of their 'freedom to drive' being compromised; and there is resistance to having pricing imposed on them. Nevertheless, some people did become more open to the idea of pricing as the research progressed – highlighting the potential, through engagement and information provision, to contribute to the public's thinking.

Air travel

- Public attitudes to air travel and airports are very complex indeed, with views on the economic and environmental arguments divided. There are no evident signs of a consensus either on the facts or on the policy consequences of the economic or environmental arguments. Specifically:
 - A large minority (up to 44%) felt unable to take either side, while a quarter support both propositions, i.e. supported airport expansion on economic grounds *and* felt that expansion should be limited for environmental reasons. A fifth opposed airport expansion in both scenarios, believing expansion should be limited for environmental reasons and there was no a case to expand for economic reasons.
 - Respondents in managerial/professional or intermediate occupations were more likely to *oppose* airport expansion on both economic and environmental grounds than those in routine/manual occupations.
 - Respondents whose nearest airport was in the South East were more likely to *oppose* airport expansion on *both* economic and environmental grounds, than those in other regions.
 - Those who mentioned advantages of local airport expansion suggested: increased job opportunities (36%) and improvements to the

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local economy (29%). Those who mentioned disadvantages suggested: noise from flights (46%), pollution (38%) and congestion on the local roads (33%).

- Turning to environmental taxes on aviation: 62% support this if revenue is hypothecated towards measures to reduce aviation damage (35% support if not hypothecated). Some panellists felt that aviation fuel should be taxed more than other transport modes and air travel should be subject to VAT.
- 84% agreed that improved transport links to the airport should be a condition for airport expansion. Improving regional planning around airports was also a key issue for panellists e.g. designated road lanes for airport traffic, improved and better integrated public transport links.

Goal 3: Equality of transport opportunity for all citizens

- Results from the Citizens' Panel suggest that equality issues are at the forefront of many peoples minds when asked about the transport system in general. About half of people spontaneously mentioned a wish to see public transport that is cheap and affordable for all^{CP}.

Poor accessibility is a significant problem for a significant proportion of people

- One survey suggests that up to one in ten adults experience difficulties accessing key services such as the GP, the nearest NHS hospital and food shopping. Those facing such difficulties point to inadequate public transport and services being located too far away as the main reasons. Overall, cost is mentioned less often, though other evidence specifically based on those on low incomes points to affordability being a significant issue for people on low incomes.
- Other evidence suggests there are problems with low travel horizons and fear of travelling amongst some people and this can be a key barrier to being able to access services and opportunities.
- There are particular problems in **rural areas** where lack of public transport can limit choice. Young people in rural areas with low levels of educational attainment appear to have very limited job opportunities.

Disabled people

- Better provision for disabled people, including the cost of travel and accessibility of transport was the most frequently mentioned issue by our Citizens' Panel when asked about the equality of opportunity goal. The need for better integration between different modes of transport was also mentioned fairly frequently^{CP}.

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- Transport issues are the single most prominent concern for disabled people at the local level. Key areas of concern and areas for improvement are:
 - the frequency of public transport;
 - ability to access public transport;
 - cost; and
 - repair of the roads and pavements.
- The needs of different disabled groups vary, for example, format of information provision is an issue for people with specific learning disabilities such as dyslexia. This is also an issue for people whose first language is not English.
- In terms of design reflecting the needs of disabled people, black cabs are seen as the best mode whereas trains are rated as the worst (though this evidence pre-dated the Disability Discrimination Act changes). Attitudes to buses are sharply divided with some rating them as good and a similar proportion rating them as bad. In terms of the attitudes of transport staff, bus drivers are seen as the most unhelpful compared with other transport staff.

Gender and age

- Women tend to have less access to the family car and yet often make quite complex multi-leg journeys. Making public transport journeys with children and / or shopping can be seen as problematic. Moreover, women are more likely than men to be fearful of crime when travelling by public transport.
- As noted in the section on quality of life, being able to get out and about was seen as important to the independence and quality of life of **older people**.

Policies designed specifically to address access problems

- Many people with experience of using community transport services had favourable attitudes, but others, including non users had more negative attitudes. This was because they perceived there to be stigma associated with these services and also a perceived loss of 'independence'.
- Older people have positive attitudes to concessionary fares.

Less advantaged groups/ areas also perceive more intense transport problems more generally

- The worst impacts of road traffic, namely pedestrian accidents, air and noise pollution and busy roads cutting through communities, disproportionately affect people living in deprived areas. This has damaging effects on individuals' quality of life and can also restrict access to local services by reducing the extent to which people walk and cycle (Social Exclusion Unit 2003).

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Goal 4: Health, safety and security

- The need for safe travel across all modes was acknowledged by panel members^{CP}.

Accidents

- People see walking as the 'safest' mode of transport in terms of traffic accidents, with motorcycles seen as the least safe but there is quite a bit of variation in the perceptions of different people.
- About a third of people say that concern about the risk of accidents influences their travel choices.

Personal Security

- In contrast 75% said the car was the safest mode in terms of personal safety whereas walking was rated the most unsafe mode by 52% of respondents.
- A majority of people feel safe travelling by bus, but 11% feel unsafe onboard buses, and 20% when waiting for a bus. As many as 27% of bus users reported they had seen someone subject to aggressive or intimidating behaviour in the previous year.
- Parents' attitudes and fears for their children significantly impact on the travel choices available to children.
- Women can have concerns about personal safety that hinder travelling at night by public transport or on foot, including getting to and waiting at bus stops.
- Disabled people are more fearful of travelling by public transport than the general public. Part of this is due to fear of falling or having an accident but there were also concerns about being subject to discrimination, abuse or violence.

Transport security

- Concerns about terrorist attacks led to support for stronger security measures from many members of the public, but fear of attacks is not reported as having caused lasting changes in travel behaviour.
- Panel members were asked to consider the most important issues that need to be addressed to ensure that people can travel in safety and are **adequately protected from crime and terrorist attacks**. A range of top-of-mind comments were given, with three areas emerging as identified as key themes^{CP}:
 - More police/security staff on transport - the majority thought this would make travel safer.
 - Transport routes monitored/more cameras/CCTV.

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- More checks/enhanced/targeted monitoring of potential suspects - though many disagreed and thought this would impinge on civil liberties.
- When specifically asked about air travel, safe transit was an important issue for panel members. Some emphasised the need for more streamlined and efficient airport security and check-in processes, providing safety was not compromised.

Health

- 97% of people agreed that people should be encouraged to walk more for health reasons.
- Children at primary school were very positive about both walking and cycling. As children get older, they tend to be less positive though attitudes are (strongly) influenced by peer pressure with girls tending to be accepting of walking, whilst boys tend to have more positive attitudes to cycling.
- But health is not a top of the mind issue when making travel choices.
- The Citizens' Panel was asked **what policy makers should be trying to achieve to encourage healthier forms of travel such as walking and cycling**. The main suggestions were^{CP}:
 - Improve provision for cyclists though safe lanes/facilities and separation from motor traffic and emissions.
 - Improve safety/lighting/reduce street crime - including more police patrols.
 - Promote/encourage/incentivise walking and cycling through information - target young people in particular.

Exhaust fumes

- 60% of people reported exhaust fumes a 'serious problem' for themselves in towns and cities, and nearly 50% reported air pollution caused by cars as 'very to extremely dangerous' to their own family. Visible exhaust emissions seem to be perceived as a greater risk than invisible ones.

Poor driving

- In discussing reasons for stress on the roads, a recurrent theme is the general standard of driving, e.g. 'poor standard of driving' (29%), aggressive driving (21%) and 'lack of consideration for other road users' (19%).
- 39% reported they had experienced poor driving on their most recent journey (an upward trend) and more women are bothered by this than men.
- Many panel members emphasised the need for higher driving standards, with significant support being expressed for improving training of drivers and for regular re-tests^{CP}.

CP This text is marked as the entire bullet point is relying on panel evidence alone

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Enforcement

- There is high disapproval of drink-driving and support for strong action to tackle it. Driving under the influence of drugs is seen as a lesser problem though there is some confusion around the issue of softer drugs.
- A very high proportion of people (92%) agree that people should drive within the speed limit. And as many as 76% support the idea of a 20 mile per hour speed limit in residential areas.
- But fewer people see speed as dangerous driving than not wearing a seatbelt. Many people tend to believe that there are certain circumstances when speeding is acceptable. This supports the view expressed by some panel members that dangerous driving rather than speeding, per se, is the problem. Moreover, 96% of people consider that penalties for dangerous driving should be greater but only 46% think that penalties for speeding should be higher.
- There are signs that acceptance of speed cameras is growing though the majority still regard them as a way of raising revenue.
- Only a small number of our panel were in favour of very tough restrictions and penalties / zero tolerance^{CP}.

Goal 5: Quality of life

- The evidence base, together with feedback from our panel, demonstrates the importance of this goal. Over half of all panel members mentioned spontaneously a quality of life issue in response to a question about what they wanted from the transport system, with many responses focused on the cleanliness and comfort of public transport^{CP}.

Positive ways in which transport enhances quality of life include:

- Both restful/tranquil passing of time, and a feeling of control over the situation, are contributors to quality of life while travelling. Generally good public transport (the best rail and bus services) contribute to tranquillity, but car driving can contribute to the sense of control.
- Car owners value the contribution of the car to meeting the needs of their busy complicated lives.
- Availability of transport plays a role in enabling young people's transition to independence.
- Transport is particularly important in helping **older people** to get out and about, maintaining independence and reducing social isolation and depression.
- There is high satisfaction with the services provided by HA and the Directgov website covering DVLA, DSA and VOSA.

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More negative impacts on quality of life include impact of traffic, and the ability to get to where people need to go³:

- 25% of all respondents to a 2005 survey reported that traffic had a serious impact on the quality of life. This was highest in London boroughs and metropolitan built-up areas, and least serious in rural areas, though even there over 20% reported a serious effect. And people with two or more children were more likely to report a serious effect of traffic on quality of life.
- Panel members identified numerous ways in which the quality of life in relation to road transport could be improved, including reduced noise pollution, reduced emissions/fumes, well maintained and repaired roads, improved traffic flow, and better town/transport planning^{CP}.

The street environment is an important aspect of the quality of life

- 87% think that it is important for their street to be somewhere pleasant to spend time in.
- When choosing a place to live, the three attributes looked for in a street by the largest proportion were: feeling safe when walking around, a good general environment, and a well maintained street. Priorities if the street were to be re-designed are: parking for residents; children playing, walking. These findings are confirmed by the panel.

Majorities report their area is good in terms of quality of life, but majorities also report serious problems on the same aspects.

- 78% of people rate their local area as good for getting about by car, 68% as good for air quality, 63% as good for traffic noise, 55% as good for ease of crossing roads.
- About a third of recent movers say that good transport links (public transport and roads⁴) were very important considerations in deciding where to live.
- Serious problems are seen as exhaust fumes in towns (74%), congestion in towns (73%), traffic noise in towns (51%), congestion on motorways (35%), and traffic on country roads (32%). Panel members also mentioned the need to reduce emissions from vehicles/improve air quality/ encourage cleaner fuel and vehicles and to reduce noise from traffic.

There is support for certain policy measures aimed at reducing the negative impacts of transport

- There is majority support for measures to reduce traffic impacts in residential areas to enable local streets to be used for a wider range of activities including resident parking, children playing, walking etc. The

³ Also see section on equality of opportunity, focussing on poor access where this is in danger of reinforcing inequalities and social exclusion.

^{CP} The text is marked as the entire bullet point is relying on panel evidence alone

⁴ Note that estate agents report closeness to good public transport, and being away from heavy traffic, commands the best selling prices. There is research supporting this.

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order of priorities is strongly influenced by whether people have a car and/or children.

- There are large majorities in favour of giving pedestrians and cyclists priority in towns and cities even if this makes things difficult for other road users.

Conclusions

The knowledge review concludes that transport attitudes and choices are integrally linked to the activities that individuals and households undertake but also to deeper values about how people want to lead their lives. Economic motivations are an important component of people's attitudes but these need to be viewed alongside a wider set of influences including stress, desire for tranquillity, control and independence.

There are significant variations between people in their underlying attitudes to different issues and individuals can sometimes appear to hold contradictory attitudes. Moreover, the linkages between underlying attitudes, stated intentions and actual behaviour are far from straightforward. This poses significant challenges for policy makers wishing to bring about changes in transport behaviours. DfT recognises this and the need to draw upon a range of research methodologies to gain as full an understanding as possible.

We also recognise that despite a considerable strengthening of the evidence base in recent years, gaps remain. We agree with the conclusion in the knowledge review that greater emphasis needs to be placed on understanding changes in the attitudes of individuals over time. If we had a better handle on the triggers that bring about changes we would be in a better position to design policies and communication strategies. DfT are taking a number of steps to improve the situation including planned co-funding of the new UK longitudinal household survey.