

Living Streets is the national charity that stands up for pedestrians. With our supporters we work to create safe, attractive and enjoyable streets, where people want to walk.

Living Streets response to CIHT Call for Evidence Transport Mobility and Wellbeing

Introduction

We are the national charity that stands up for pedestrians. With our supporters we work to create safe, attractive and enjoyable streets, where people want to walk. We work with communities, professionals and politicians to make sure every community can enjoy vibrant streets and public spaces.

We started life in 1929 as the Pedestrians Association and have been the national voice for pedestrians throughout our history. In the early years, our campaigning led to the introduction of the driving test, pedestrian crossings and 30 mph speed limits. Since then our ambition has grown. Today we influence decision makers nationally and locally, run successful projects to encourage people to walk and provide specialist consultancy services to help reduce congestion and carbon emissions, improve public health, and make sure every community can enjoy the benefits of walking.

Response to the consultation questions:

1. Does direct investment in transport (either physical measures, e.g. the provision of cycle routes, or non-physical measures e.g. behaviour change programmes like personalised travel planning) lead to measureable health and wellbeing benefits? Please provide examples.

Living Streets have operated the national Walk to School (WtS) campaign since 1995 and aims to encourage all parents and young people to make walking to school part of their daily routine. In the last five years, our Walk to School message has reached over two million children across the UK and this year Living Streets will be working with over 650,000 children across more than 2,000 schools. The benefits of walk to school initiatives were recognised by the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) in its Walking and Cycling guidance in 2012.

Living Streets Walk to School outreach project began as a pilot project funded by the Department for Transport in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council to work intensively with a cluster of

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schools. At the end of the project, walking to school had increased from 46% to 53%. Living Streets Walk once a Week (WoW) extension project for the Department of Health saw Living Streets working with 736 schools and over 118,000 children in order to increase walking levels in schools across England. 61,567 children and 6,515 parents took part in surveys which revealed a 25% increase in numbers of children walking to school (during the project lifetime) and a 35% decrease in car use. Before the WoW intervention, schools had a 43% walking proportion, and following the WoW interventions schools reached a peak of 59% walking in 2011, levelling at 54% in 2012 (the final year).

In 2012, Living Streets - in partnership with Durham County Council - secured funding through the Government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund to roll out the outreach project in 11 local authority areas. At the end of year one, the project has already seen a 26% increase in the number of children walking at participating primary schools, equivalent to over 2 million new walking journeys by children and accompanying parents, the majority of which would otherwise have been made by car. We have also guided the investment of £140,000 worth of capital improvements to school routes, and new zebra crossings and pathways have already been completed as a result.

Living Streets' Fitter for Walking project involved approximately 150 communities, across 12 local authority areas and 5 regions of England, selected based on low reported levels of physical activity and high levels of obesity. The programme achieved a benefit cost ratio for decreased mortality as a result of more people walking of up to 46:1¹. Furthermore the project led to 78% of individuals who signed up reporting an increase in their day-to-day walking levels and 64% of these still reported an increase in walking six months later, showing long-term impact.

Living Streets' Walking Works project engages with adults in employment to encourage more walking to, from and at work. The project has raised awareness of the benefits of walking more to over 28,000 individuals so far, through walking pledges, regular digital campaigns and the annual Walk to Work Week challenge. Since participating in Walk to Work Week, 57% of respondents felt that their overall level of walking had increased and individuals achieving 30 minutes or more

¹ Adams *et al*, 2011

http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Evaluations/FFW_Economic_Evaluation_Final_Feb_2012.pdf

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physical activity on five or more days per week increased from 29% at registration to 50% at follow up².

2. Do you have any experience of measuring health and wellbeing and what measurements do you use?

3. Are you aware of Transport and Health professionals forming partnerships and working together which you can provide examples of?

4. Do you have an example of where health and wellbeing has been directly impacted by transport and mobility (either positively or negatively) in the work that you do, (e.g. change in levels of coronary disease or levels of depression due to changes in level of transport provision or mobility)?

Health and wellbeing can be directly impacted by the challenges to increasing the number of people walking in the UK. These can be broadly divided into environmental and behavioural barriers.

Environmental barriers - Environmental barriers include infrastructure or design barriers the impact of which can vary on a variety of factors depending on age and personal circumstances, however, there are some common barriers which impact on everyone.

20mph limits - Actual and perceived road speeds can be a barrier to walking. Whilst the latest road statistics from the Department of Transport revealed a 7% decrease in the number of pedestrian fatalities the number of pedestrians seriously injured increased by 2%³. The increased use of 20mph limits in the areas where we live, work and shop is a significant action in reducing such danger. Furthermore, a wider fear of traffic speed adversely affects how we use our streets. For example speeding traffic scares over a third (36%) of children and young people when

² Sustrans Monitoring and Evaluation Unit. 2011. *Living Streets – Walk to Work Week 2011 – Follow-up Survey Results*

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/245754/reported-road-casualties-in-great-britain-main-results-2012.pdf

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walking to school⁴. Significant numbers of councils across the UK are adopting 20mph speed limits but there is a need for a national default to break down road safety barriers to walking.

Pedestrian crossings - Well designed pedestrian crossings can benefit all road users. They can provide safe and direct routes for pedestrians leading to healthier, active and sociable lifestyles, and they enable vehicles to proceed when there is no longer a pedestrian demand. National statistics for 2012⁵ showed that 50% of pedestrian casualties occurred while they were crossing the road without using a pedestrian crossing. 14.2% occurred on a crossing and 9.4% occurred within 50m of a crossing. Living Streets research⁶ revealed over one in five children and young people are concerned about the lack of safe crossing points on their journey to school.

Inadequate crossing times are a major barrier to walking and research undertaken by University College London revealed that most older people are unable to cross the road in time. According to the research, 76% of men and 85% of women over the age of 65, have a walking speed slower than that needed to use a pedestrian crossing⁷. The current assumed walking speed in Department for Transport (DfT) guidance is 1.2m/s, which is used to calculate how much time pedestrians are given to cross the road. The current assumed walking speed does not take into account the major demographic changes which are taking place in the UK in terms of an increasingly older population. The DfT are currently reviewing pedestrian crossing guidance which includes reference to the current assumed walking speed. Given the evidence from UCL and a number of other researchers, over the years, we believe the Government should use this review to amend the current guidance to reduce the current assumed walking speed to 0.8m/s which, on an average road width, would increase the pedestrian crossing time by around three seconds.

Street clutter and pavement parking - Street clutter and a poorly maintained public realm can be a barrier to walking, for example, poorly parked vehicles can force pedestrians into the road. They can inhibit the independence of many vulnerable people and be particularly dangerous for older people, for families with pushchairs and for those with visual or mobility impairments. Research undertaken by Living Streets in 2011 revealed that cars parked on the pavement was the biggest issue (41%) when asked about clutter in the streets. The current policy regarding

⁴ Living Streets (2011) *Breaking down the barriers* -

<http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Reports/breakingdownthebarriers.pdf>

⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9280/rcgb2011-complete.pdf

⁶ <http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Reports/breakingdownthebarriers.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/news-articles/1206/14062012-Most-older-people-unable-to-cross-roads-in-time>

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pavement parking through the Traffic Regulation Order system is confusing and we would recommend that a national ban should be brought into place to tackle the problem across the UK.

Winter Maintenance - During times of severe winter weather trips and falls on icy pavements can have a serious impact on pedestrians – especially the elderly – and also significant costs to the economy in terms of health care. This is before any consideration of the physical and emotional impact of injuries. Amongst other actions we would like to see local authorities ensure paths are gritted so that people (including older, younger and disabled people) can walk to essential services and help is provided in order to organise teams of volunteer snow wardens. The Transport Select Committee’s report on winter maintenance supported our call that local authorities and the Government could do more to organise snow wardens⁸.

High quality public realm - High quality public realm in high streets and town centres can encourage increased levels of walking. Successful high streets and town centres are more than just a shopping destination. They provide important public space, civic facilities, transport, employment and leisure opportunities. The Living Streets’ Step Out in London project promoted a range of activities to complement and publicise public realm schemes, by encouraging people to spend more time walking in their local town centre. Surveys carried out after the activities found that people reported walking more (47%), shopping more (52%), feeling safer and more part of a community (both 58%)⁹. The importance of high quality public realm is considered further in our response to question 5.

Behavioural barriers - Behavioural barriers include the real and perceived barriers to walking. These perceptions are supported by research from Living Streets with regards to walking to school which reveals that one in five primary school children don’t walk to school because their parents state that they don’t have time to walk with them¹⁰ whilst an over reliance on the car by parents means that walking doesn’t even occur to them. Research reveals that just over one in five (21%) parents of children who travel to primary school never considered making sure their

⁸ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmtran/681/681.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/professionals/working-with-communities/step-out-in-london>

¹⁰ Living Streets (2011) Breaking down the barriers - <http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Reports/breakingdownthebarriers.pdf>

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child walks to school, and 27% say they tend to automatically drive their child to school rather than walking them there¹¹.

5. Do you have any examples of where transport infrastructure or services have been changed, or where changes are proposed due to the effects of changing demographics and travel trends in the UK?

The National Travel Survey (NTS) 2012 reveals that walking comprises 22% of all journeys and 20% of all journeys were less than a mile of which 77% of all trips under one mile were made on foot¹². With this evidence in mind there is a compelling case to utilise a range of economic, legislative and policy based tools to encourage people who undertake shorter journeys, of between zero and up to two miles, to shift their travel mode from car/van to walking.

However, the NTS has revealed a dramatic fall in walking trips by 8% compared to the previous year. This is part of a more rapid longer term decline in walking trips since the mid 1990s compared to other private travel modes which has seen walking journeys decrease by 28% compared to 1995/7. For example, in 2012, 47% of trips to and from school by primary school children (aged 5-10) were made on foot compared to 1995/97 when 53% of trips were made on foot whilst for secondary aged children (aged 11-16) 38% of school trips were on foot and 26% were by car, compared with 42% and 20% respectively in 1995/97¹³. However, there is a real opportunity increase the number of walking trips. Over 30% of primary aged children live less than half a mile from their school and a further 20% travel between 0.5 and 1 mile. 16% of school journeys under a mile are driven to school, a distance that could be walked within 20 minutes.

¹¹ *Must try harder: How school travel can make the grade -*

<http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Reports/Must%20try%20harder%20final.pdf>

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-travel-survey-2012>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-travel-survey-2012>

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6. What are the expected impacts of new local authority funding approaches (e.g. “single pot”, Local Enterprise Partnership directed funding) on transport, health and social services budgets?

The recent transfer of public health responsibilities in England to local authorities provides a unique opportunity to embed public health strategy with inter-related policy areas such as transport and planning. Furthermore, the Local Sustainable Transport Fund process for 2015/16¹⁴ requires Local Economic Partnerships to consider their role in supporting active travel such as walking in their Strategic Economic Plans. Therefore, the Single Growth Fund has a significant role to play in improving the public realm for walking which will deliver economic benefits for high streets as highlighted in Living Streets recent report the *Pedestrian Pound* which revealed that investment in high quality public realm for walking can deliver a commercial return and a much needed boost for our high streets and town centres. It suggests that making places better for walking can boost footfall and trading by up to 40 per cent¹⁵.

7. If there are any further comments you would like to make, and/or if you would be interested in being involved in the workshops to develop this work please let us know. We are happy to be involved in the workshops

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¹⁴ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270568/lstf-revenue-competition-guide.pdf

¹⁵ *The Pedestrian Pound* 2013 - <http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/make-a-change/library/the-pedestrian-pound-the-business-case-for-better-streets-and-places>