

# SCPHRP

Scottish Collaboration for  
Public Health Research and Policy

## **ACTIVE TRAVEL MAGAZINE**

**2015**



## **FEATURING**

**HOW DO WE ENCOURAGE ACTIVE TRAVEL IN  
EDINBURGH & THE LOTHIANS**

**FACILITATING ACTIVE TRAVEL FOR PEOPLE WITH  
VISUAL IMPAIRMENT**

**THE BIKE STATION**

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# ACTIVE TRAVEL ACTIVE TRAVEL

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Bodies*

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## STOCKY BODIES

The 'Stocky Bodies' image  
library was created in  
response to the stigmatised  
representations of over-  
weight and obese people  
in the media and popular  
culture.





**Andrew is a research fellow with SCPHRP and the Farr Institute @ Scotland, with a background in public health and statistics. His role is to undertake natural experimental evaluations of policies. Andrew is currently evaluating whether abolishing prescription fees in Scotland reduced hospital admissions and has also undertaken research on schools and childhood obesity.**

# From the Editor

I can imagine your disappointment already: they have let a statistician edit the magazine, but I couldn't manage to persuade them to make this special issue all about statistics. Don't worry, there is plenty of interesting things to read ahead.

As ever, SCPHRP is keeping busy with exciting and innovative projects and partnerships. Teaching has been a prominent part of 2015, we have successfully taught our course on 'Developing and Evaluating Complex Health Interventions' to our first cohort of Masters of Public Health Students. In the next issue of the magazine we hope to hear from some of the students. Ruth Jepson has taught her short course on '*Summarising Qualitative Research*', which for the second year running had a waiting list. One recent really exciting development was when we reached 5,500 followers on Twitter. The lucky 5,500th follower (Harry Rutter) won a felted cat and carrot. We have all been busy planning the 6th Annual Conference of the UK Clinical Research Collaboration Public Health Research Centres of Excellence. I am sure you will hear more about this in future issues of this magazine.

Earlier this year Ruth and I facilitated an event with a colleague at the University of Edinburgh (Mhairi Aitken) on how to encourage more active travel and so have decided to devote the majority of this issue to the topic of active travel.

In November 2014 Transport Scotland launched a long term vision for active travel in Scotland. Beside sustainability, the vision reported that increased active travel would improve health and reduce inequalities, which caught our interest and was a key topic during the meeting. Together with the meeting report there are two feature articles from people who face challenges in walking or cycling for transport. We have also taken this opportunity to shine a spotlight on a few of the charities working on active transport including those with whom we have collaborated.

Edinburgh and Bristol are the only UK cities to have signed up to the European Charter of Brussels to increase cycling. Scotland is a beautiful and fascinating country whether you are walking or cycling. Even, if like me, active travel means getting off the bus a stop early, we hope you take every opportunity to make the most of the summer.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the magazine, but please don't hesitate to send us any feedback. And finally, for one of those rare rainy days there is the next exciting instalment of Statistical Ambassador at Large in which we consider the link between umbrellas and wet clothes.

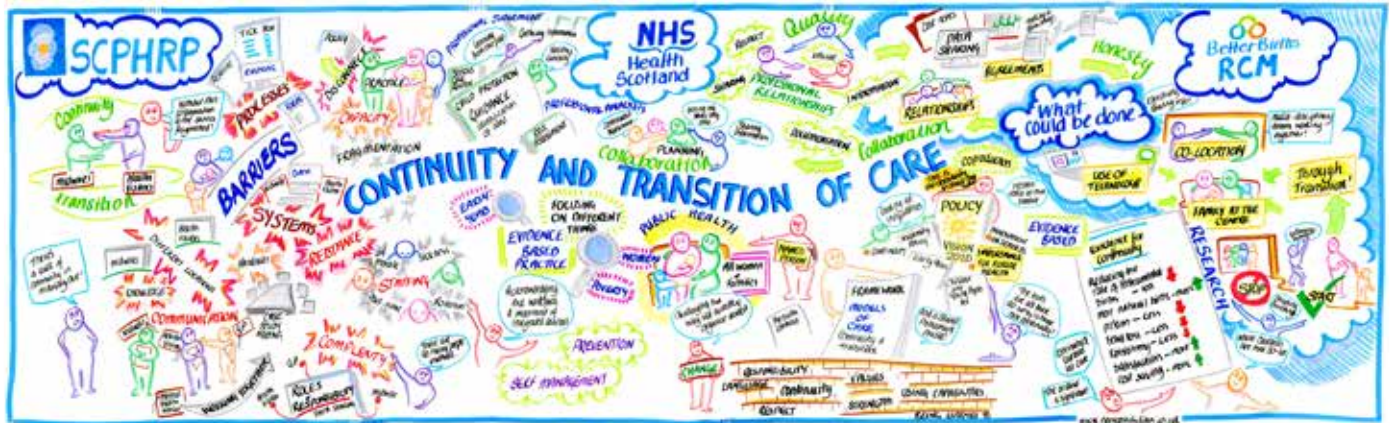
*Andrew James Williams*



# SCPHRP WG UPDATE

**W**e have recently published a Working Group (WG) remit document and implemented a registration system for group membership. This has allowed us to clarify and formalise how the groups work, what people's roles and responsibilities are and the benefits of becoming a member. Using the registration system, we are promoting the work of our members through profiles that are now being hosted on the SCPHRP website (with more to follow). *If you would like any further information about the Working Groups and their events or about joining any of the groups please visit our website at [www.scpgrp.ac.uk](http://www.scpgrp.ac.uk)*

## EARLY YEARS update



The WG, together with Better Births Initiative (Royal College of Midwives) and the Evidence for Action Team (NHS Health Scotland) recently organised a free, half-day event at the University of Edinburgh to promote effective continuity and transition of care throughout maternity and to health visiting services. The event brought together about thirty-five participants from midwifery, health visiting, academia, policy and the voluntary sector working across the UK.

As part of the programme, participants initially identified

the key barriers to continuity and transition of care in practice. They were then given opportunity to hear from four different speakers. **Dr Mary Ross-Davie** (NHS Education for Scotland) gave an overview of the research evidence for continuity of care. **Professor Mary Renfrew** (University of Dundee) talked about continuity of care in midwifery and its contribution to quality of care of women and newborn infants. **Wendy Mitchell** (NHS Lanarkshire) then presented on continuity and seamless transition of care from midwifery to health visitor, focussing on child protection. Finally, **Ann**

**Holmes** (Scottish Government) spoke about the Scottish policy context of continuity and transition of care. At this stage, participants were given the opportunity to discuss proceedings of the day and identified ways in which continuity and transition of care could be further improved both within and between midwifery and health visiting services. The day was captured by the brilliant Graphic Recorder, Anna Geyer (see the above illustration).

*Email [larry.doi@ed.ac.uk](mailto:larry.doi@ed.ac.uk) for further information.*

## ADOLESCENCE & YOUNG ADULTHOOD update

We recently facilitated a workshop with a view to developing a research agenda around youth work. The workshop was conducted with the Edinburgh Youth Work Consortium and brought together key stakeholders working in the topic area. Youth work impacts upon health and wellbeing outcomes, educational attainment and employment for young people. Attendees developed a prioritised list of potential research areas.

We are conducting a review of adolescent physiological development and its impact upon health behaviours, collaborating with NHS Health Scotland and the Scottish Government. We are also developing a parenting intervention, with a key focus upon kinship carers, funded by the Robertson Trust. Finally, we are working with YMCA Scotland to evaluate an intervention currently being implemented at six sites across Scotland.

*Email [john.mcateer@ed.ac.uk](mailto:john.mcateer@ed.ac.uk) for further information.*



## WORKING AGE/ADULT LIFE update

Recently, the WG organised an **Open Space** event in Edinburgh hosted by lead Tony Robertson, with the theme of *“what you think health inequalities in Scotland will look like in the next decade and beyond”*. The discussions from the day have been summarised in a short report available from the SCPHRP website, as well as through the above illustration. Tony also co-hosted

a workshop on ‘Generating Evidence in Public Health: A Case-Study of Welfare Reform & Health’ at the 2015 Trauma Conference, Stirling, alongside SCPHRP’s Ruth Jepson. The group is due to meet again in September to discuss further events and upcoming research projects.

Email [tony.robertson@ed.ac.uk](mailto:tony.robertson@ed.ac.uk) for further information.

## LATER LIFE update

The current project is a collaboration between the WG and The Conservation Volunteers funded by a University of Edinburgh Innovation Grant. This project will run training sessions and evaluate a ‘Green Gym’ for older residents of the Wyndford estate in Maryhill, Glasgow.

A further collaboration with The Conservation Volunteers is planned and a funding bid has been submitted to the Life Changes Trust (Bright Ideas competition) to set up and evaluate a network of ‘Life Changes Green Gyms’, supporting health and wellbeing for people living with dementia and their carers in central Scotland.

Work is also ongoing with a link-up with the Primary Palliative Care Research Group at the University of Edinburgh to undertake a scoping review on Health

Promotion approaches to Palliative Care.

Other projects planned for the near future include collaborations with:

- NHS Lothian (Mental Health Services) and Carr-Gomm to evaluate the health and well-being impacts of attending Men’s Shed projects for older men.
- HIV Scotland to understand more about the experiences of people ageing with HIV in Scotland and the challenges this population face within social care services.

In other news, Daryll’s rapid review of the health impacts of volunteering for older people has been published by Evaluation Support Scotland and can be accessed here: <http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/286/>

Email [daryll.archibald@ed.ac.uk](mailto:daryll.archibald@ed.ac.uk) for further information.



image: stock vector ©Hong Li

# Like riding a bike...



**T**he phrase ‘Like riding a bike...’ implies that there is something second-nature about the act of cycling: that once you’ve awakened this innate ability to find a center of gravity on two wheels, you’re forevermore equipped for riding a bike. Or so SCPHRP’s Michelle assumed until arriving in Edinburgh. Actually, she found, there was still a lot to learn...





Image used with permission from Michelle Estrade

I was a casual cyclist for the first twenty years of my life, and though it wasn't an activity I engaged in often, I thoroughly enjoyed the occasional bike ride. In the rural US where I grew up, cycling is regarded as a form of leisure rather than transportation. I fondly remember family holidays as a child that included cycle adventures through the woods, and prolonging the last days of summer with impromptu after-dinner bike rides to the local ice cream parlor.

Before moving to the UK I spent several years in Germany, where, for the first time in my life, I didn't need to rely on a car for daily activities. I had never cycled on busy city streets or used bike lanes before, but I instantly fell in love with the ease and convenience of cycle transportation. The infrastructure seemed designed with cyclists in mind, and getting seamlessly from door to door, no matter what the destination, was as simple as following an un-interrupted cycle path. When necessary, buses, trains, and trams were there to help out too, with special carriages designated for cyclists and all their gear. There was nothing I didn't do on my bike in Germany, and it had me convinced that I would forevermore be a cyclist. That was before my first bike ride in Edinburgh.

I had decided to explore my new city on two wheels and was already a bit annoyed at having to play leapfrog with the busses, in their lane. I didn't realise it was about to get much worse, as the bus/cycle lane abruptly ended and I found myself in a busy roundabout with cars that seemed to regard me as invisible. It wasn't a joy to ride; it was a

jungle. That first unnerving experience wasn't enough to put me off altogether, though. I'm a strong supporter of active transport, so I made the effort to cycle to work and wherever else I could, but little things began to wear me down. I was somewhat self-conscious that I didn't dress like most cyclists here (indeed, the day you catch me wearing Lycra, you'll know I've been blackmailed). And I can deal with a bit of weather, but being constantly pelted with wind and rain isn't a pleasure. Edinburgh is also full of hills (especially the cheeky kind you didn't even know were hills until you tried cycling up them) that always leave me wondering, "*Am I really this unfit?!*". I'll never forget the first time I conquered a steep slope, head bowed in strenuous effort, and looked up just in time to swerve around a lorry parked in the bike lane. That was the day I began to reconsider whether I'm really cut out for cycling in Edinburgh.

For the last two years, my wheels have remained largely motionless. I'm still a big believer in active travel, but the options in my mind have narrowed exclusively to walking. I plan ahead for the extra time it takes to get everywhere, and I am resigned to using a bus for journeys that would last more than an hour on foot. Ironically there's a parallel lesson in my cycling misadventures which fits well with the broader mantra of SCPHRP's public health work: **CONTEXT MATTERS!** I was not equipped to handle the complex ecosystem that is cycling here. For me, it wasn't like riding a bike; it was like riding a bike *in Edinburgh*".



## Paths for All: supporting active travel for Everyone, Everyday, Everywhere

Paths for All, a Scottish charity, aims to significantly increase the number of people who choose to walk in Scotland - whether that's leisure walking or active-choice walking to work, school or shops. Paths for All want to create a happier, healthier Scotland, where increased physical activity improves quality of life and wellbeing for all. They work to create more opportunities and better environments not just for walking, but also for cycling and other activities, to help make Scotland a more active, more prosperous, greener country.

The Paths for All website offers a comprehensive range of information on active travel including general information, supporting policy and evidence, active travel case studies and issue specific briefings.

Additionally, Paths for All manage the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places programme on behalf of Transport Scotland. In 2015/16 this £5m matched grant fund will support local authorities and their partners to deliver over 160 behaviour change projects, aimed at encouraging increased active and sustainable travel choices.

With their partners Living Streets Scotland, Sustrans Scotland and Cycling Scotland, Paths for All provides the Walking, Cycling, Connecting Communities annual national active travel conference. Over 135 delegates attended the 7th conference in May 2015.



[WWW.PATHSFORALL.ORG.UK](http://WWW.PATHSFORALL.ORG.UK)



## Spokes: the Lothian Cycle Campaign

SPOKES, a non-party political voluntary organisation, founded in 1977, and now with a membership of over 1000, has a long history of effective campaigning for better conditions for cyclists, especially in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

### Spokes objectives are;

- To promote cycling, as part of a sustainable transport and access strategy, and to ensure that councils and government actively do the same.
- To publicise the benefits of cycling for the community and individuals – like walking, it is cheap, efficient, enjoyable, healthy, non-polluting and intrinsically safe.

In our first decades the needs of motorists were the overwhelming priority for government public expenditure on transport. Although public transport investment has improved substantially, investment to provide safe and welcoming conditions for cycling and walking still trails woefully behind. **SPOKES** believes that councils and government should have an overall transport strategy in which cyclists, pedestrians and public transport genuinely come first – and that includes both funding and roadscape.



[WWW.SPOKES.ORG.UK](http://WWW.SPOKES.ORG.UK)



# HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE MORE ACTIVE TRAVEL

IN EDINBURGH & THE  
LOTHIANS



Image used with permission from Sustrans

A workshop report by  
Dr Mhairi Aitken, Dr Ruth Jepson  
& Dr Andrew J. Williams





**BETTER HEALTH,  
HAVING ATTRACTIVE,  
SAFE COMMUNITIES  
AND INCREASED  
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**



# BACKGROUND

The Scottish Government has set out its 'Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030'\* which lists a number of benefits anticipated through increasing uptake of active travel including: 'better health, having attractive, safe communities and increased economic activity'. It is however noted that achieving this vision '*will require many disciplines to work together such as planning, regeneration, economic development, transport, climate change and education, involving a wide range of partners from local authorities, NHS, local businesses and volunteers*'.

Recognising the importance of such interdisciplinary, cross-sector working a deliberative workshop was held on Friday 23rd January 2015 to bring together a range of stakeholders working in the area of active travel to facilitate dialogue and explore experiences in different sectors. Through the workshop we aimed to reach a shared understanding of the key issues as well as barriers and potential facilitators relating to active travel in Edinburgh and the Lothians. The workshop enabled sharing of experiences across sectoral boundaries in order to facilitate mutual understandings of the challenges faced and the approaches taken in promoting and supporting active travel.

The workshop was well attended with 24 participants representing a broad range of organisations including: Sustrans; SPOKES; Keep Scotland Beautiful; City of Edinburgh Council; NHS Health Scotland; Age Scotland; NHS Lothian and; Living Streets.

\*For a copy of the 'Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland for 2030' report go to [www.transportscotland.gsi.go.uk](http://www.transportscotland.gsi.go.uk)



# What does 'Active Travel' mean?

The workshop began with a discussion of what participants' understood the term 'Active Travel' to mean. Participants were asked to anonymously write on post-it notes a concise statement that summarised how they understood 'Active Travel'. There was broad agreement that this meant self-powered, non-motorised travel and was mostly understood as walking, cycling and scooting.

There was some discussion as to whether the purpose of travel mattered. One participant noted on their post-it note that active travel meant '*use of cycling/walking to work*' however the majority of participants argued that active travel did not necessarily need to be related to commuting. There was, however, some discussion on whether active travel needs to be 'purposeful' (as opposed to recreational). Here there appeared to be a disjuncture between the views of participants from sustainability backgrounds who typically considered that active travel journeys should replace a motorised journey (i.e. reduce emissions) and those from health backgrounds who typically considered that the purpose of active travel was not important so long as the individual was engaging in physical exercise. Thus, from a health perspective one could include a recreational cycle ride under the heading of active travel even if this involved a car journey to get to the place where the cycle ride took place. From a sustainability perspective such an activity would not fit with how active travel was conceived.

There was also some discussion regarding the relationship between use of public transport and active travel. Public transport was mentioned on two of the post-it notes and in discussion it was noted that using public transport can encourage active travel (i.e. walking



Image used with permission from Sustrans



Image used with permission from Sustrans

to/from bus stops or train stations). However, the majority of participants felt that public transport should not be considered part of active travel. An important distinction was made between 'Sustainable Travel' and 'Active Travel', with it being noted that the former did not necessarily imply the latter.

Whilst there were some – generally subtle – differences of perspective between participants from health and sustainability backgrounds, it was widely agreed that there were no conflicts between the agendas of these sectors.

There was some discussion about whether or not it was important to define what 'Active Travel' means and it was generally argued that there was a shared understanding of what this means even if this was not explicitly defined. In general, participants felt that a broad, and somewhat general definition of the term was most helpful but that there may be subcategories within this. It was also contended that currently boundaries

between policy areas and funding streams shape how active travel is understood. As such it was felt that there was some value 'stepping above' these narrow approaches and adopting a broad overview.

One reason for not feeling the need to over-define the term 'active travel' was that participants felt that this was a term which was only salient amongst those working in this area and it was argued that this would be perceived as jargon by members of the general public. As such, the term active travel would not be used in public discourse.

“  
*self-powered,  
 non-motorised  
 travel*  
 ”

# Reflections on ‘A Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland for 2030’

Participants were asked for their reflections on Transport Scotland’s recently published ‘Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland for 2030’.

In general participants felt that whilst the content of this document was reasonable, it lacked clear guidance on how this vision would be realised. It was generally felt that it is important for a document such as this to be backed up with a clear implementation plan including committed funds.

Participants raised the point that the document lacked images or case studies of exemplar projects, and that this was a reflection of the current absence of such projects. This was also connected to a perceived lack of role models in the area of active travel (e.g. it was stated that there are no senior politicians in Scotland who are visibly cycling).

Another critical comment on the document related to the actors listed as needing to be involved to realise the vision. Sectors listed are: ‘planning, regeneration, economic development, transport, climate change and education, involving a wide range of partners from local authorities, NHS, local businesses and volunteers’ – participants noted the lack of mention of the third sector and also of the Scottish Government and/or Transport Scotland. The latter omission was taken as a deflection of responsibility.

Participants also commented that there are numerous other concurrent documents from different policy areas and that these are not joined up. Indicating that policy on active travel is being driven from different policy areas with no clear joined up action plan to make this happen. It was however noted that the Transport Scotland document is intended as a vision not a plan and as such that it identifies what needs to be done but not *how*. Thus the emphasis in discussions was on how this vision would be realised and what needs to be put in place to bring this about.



# OBJECTIVES OF ACTIVE TRAVEL



The Transport Scotland Vision document notes the following as key objectives of active travel:

- Improving health;
- Improving safety of travel;
- Reducing inequalities;
- Cutting carbon emissions and other pollution;
- Delivering happier, more pleasant communities;
- Supporting sustainable economic growth.

Participants were asked for their reflections on these.

## Reducing Inequalities

The role of active travel in potentially reducing inequalities was a significant focus of discussion and about which there were varied opinions. Some participants questioned '*why would active travel reduce inequalities?*' whilst others felt that reducing inequalities could be a by-product of policies enabling active travel. For example, it was suggested that if land planning priorities were re-focussed to facilitate active travel

through measures such as creating work places which were accessible without a car, this could change job opportunities reducing inequalities.

There was also some discussion of the relevance of active travel to people living in deprived areas who are typically more likely to travel actively already (i.e. walking being a necessity rather than a choice). However, it was noted that increasing active travel of '*the masses*' would have benefits in terms of reducing air pollution and improving road safety which would then improve conditions for existing pedestrians with implications for health. It was noted that currently there are clear trends in cycling patterns with cycling being most common in more affluent areas. There were a number of potential explanations given for this, for example that children at schools in more affluent areas were more likely to benefit from volunteers supporting cycle training, and also that cycling might be perceived as aspirational in affluent areas whereas it might be viewed as '*poor person's transport*' in more deprived areas.

cont.

# OBJECTIVES OF ACTIVE TRAVEL

## cont..

Improvement to, or redesign of infrastructure was considered to be very relevant. It was noted that planning and policy has long prioritised car-users and that cities are not well- designed for pedestrians or cyclists. This had particular relevance for accessibility of active travel for people with disabilities. It was noted that in order to make active travel feasible and attractive to people with disabilities infrastructure needed to be improved (e.g. segregation between pedestrians and traffic, tactile functions at crossings for visually impaired people).

Thus, in this regard, if active travel was to be successful in reducing inequalities it necessitated being genuinely inclusive and opening up active travel to everyone.

### Happier, More Pleasant Communities

This objective was described by one participant as *'wonderful but vague'*. As such it was clearly felt that improving communities was an important and relevant driver for active travel; however the description of

*'happier, more pleasant communities'* was widely regarded as lacking clear definition. Suggested refinements of this included *'vibrant, thriving communities'* and *'economically and socially integrated communities'*. It was also felt that this outcome could be better articulated as creating *'a better quality of life for all'*.

### Improving Health

It was stressed that health benefits arising from active travel should not be conceived purely in terms of physical health but also in relation to wider health (including mental health) and wellbeing. This was also connected to the notion of creating vibrant, connected communities.

### Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth

It was argued that emphasising benefits to the economy would strengthen policy support for active travel by *'giving it teeth'*.



# Ranking of Objectives

Following discussion of the objectives listed in the Transport Scotland Vision document a refined list of objectives was produced and participants were asked to rank these according to relevance/importance by placing sticky dots next to the objectives (*each participant was given seven sticky dots to allocate across the objectives*). These included objectives in the Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland for 2030, plus others produced through discussions.

### Table 1: Ranking of Objectives of Active Travel

[illegible]

***\*objectives in the Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland for 2030***

The next session of the workshop focussed on hypothetical case studies of individuals who faced challenges in taking up active travel. Participants were asked to reflect on the case studies and think of ways in which the individuals might be encouraged and/or supported to incorporate active travel in their lives.





# CASE STUDIES



**NAME:** Susan (32 yrs old)

**OCCUPATION:** University Lecturer

**LIVES:** 4 miles from Bathgate train station

**WORKS:** University of Edinburgh (George Square)

**OTHER FACTORS:** *Has a two year old child who attends the University nursery (at King's Buildings). Commute involves dropping child at nursery before arriving from nursery at the end of the day before travelling home.*

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Workshop participants asked questions relating to Susan's circumstances, for example, why she had chosen to live in the area where she lived; why she had chosen the particular nursery for her child (rather than one which was local to where she lived or nearer the train station in Edinburgh) and whether there flexible working arrangements which could be put in place by her employer.

Susan's responses were that she lived between Edinburgh and Glasgow because her husband worked in Glasgow and that she had chosen to send her child to nursery in Edinburgh as most nurseries levied fines for collecting children after 6pm and it would be difficult for her to get back to Bathgate before 6pm on most work days. Flexible working arrangements were possible except on days with teaching commitments.

**SUGGESTIONS:** Possible solutions suggested by workshop participants included driving to the child's nursery and then walking or cycling to the office thus reducing though not eliminating the car drive and increasing physical activity. A second suggestion was finding an alternative nursery near the train station and taking the train to Edinburgh Waverley. However it was noted that rush hour commuter trains are not child-friendly. It was also noted that more flexible childcare would help to facilitate active travel (i.e. a nursery local to Susan's house which was open from 7am to 7pm).



**NAME:** Tom (28 years old)

**OCCUPATION:** Call Handler

**LIVES:** Cloverstone, Edinburgh

**WORKS:** Royal Bank of Scotland Gogarburn, Gogar, Edinburgh

**OTHER FACTORS:** *Works shifts which could start at 7am or finish at 11pm. Spends a couple nights a week at his girlfriends in Roseburn. Each Sunday goes to his parents for lunch in Balerno.*

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Participants asked Tom a number of questions which mostly focussed on his current level of physical activity, e.g.: 'Do you want to be more active?', 'Do you go to the gym?' 'Do you like cycling?'. Tom's responses generally indicated a lack of enthusiasm for physical activity. Additionally, Tom described his enthusiasm for cars and his love of driving, leading some participants to characterise him as a 'motor-head'.

**SUGGESTIONS:** It was widely felt that the major barrier to Tom engaging in active travel was a lack of motivation or interest. Therefore, suggested solutions centred on ways of gradually introducing active travel into his life. It was suggested that he could begin with small cycle rides or walks a few times a week (e.g. to his parents' house for Sunday lunch) and to build up to more regular cycling / walking. It was also suggested that he could benefit from an active travel 'buddy' to help him build up confidence.

A further suggestion was that Tom's workplace could incentivise active travel through charging for car parking or providing bikes for hire.



**NAME:** Fatima (52 years old)

**OCCUPATION:** Housewife and part-time homebased worker

**LIVES:** Bingham, Duddingston, Edinburgh

**WORKS:** Part-time home worker

**OTHER FACTORS:** *Fatima has three teenage children, one of who is disabled. She has diabetes and suffers from anxiety. She is Muslim.*

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Questions to Fatima related to where her children's school was and how they got there and whether she had friends or family nearby. A picture developed of Fatima as being socially isolated and suffering from severe anxiety which made her reluctant to leave the house. Additionally, Fatima described her fear of walking in the local area due to poor lighting and perception of the area as being dangerous.

**SUGGESTIONS:** Fatima's case generally appeared more problematic and complex than the previous two. It was widely felt that the key issues which needed to be resolved were her social isolation and anxiety. As such suggested solutions centred on identifying ways of connecting Fatima with support networks (e.g. through the Mosque or community outreach groups). Participants felt that if Fatima had a 'buddy' who could accompany her on walks she could be encouraged to use 'nice' routes in safe areas in order to build up her confidence.

As Fatima had already been advised that she needed to increase her levels of physical activity due to her diabetes it was suggested that she might benefit from an exercise referral scheme. However, it was noted that such 'prescription models' have limitations and

that there needs to be support in place to ensure / facilitate their uptake. It was also suggested that given that physical exercise was a primary focus in this instance suggesting home-based exercises might be relevant (though this did not relate to active travel).

One participant spoke from the perspective of planning active travel initiatives and said that if one is concerned with maximising impact from limited time and resources it is most likely that easier to reach individuals would be targeted first. Fatima was deemed to be a difficult case and someone who would be hard to reach. As such it was felt that while she may benefit from wider positive impacts of increasing active travel (e.g. creating more pleasant communities and improving infrastructure) she would be unlikely to be a direct beneficiary of active travel policies/initiatives.

bike track image: stock vector © jamie farrant

# STUDIES



# SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO CASE STUDIES

The discussions relating to the three fictional characters highlighted the range of obstacles to encouraging individuals to take up active travel. For example, suggested responses to the three characters identified individual, organisational, social, structural and policy dimensions.

- **Individual dimensions** focussed on ways of motivating people to take up active forms of travel and considered personal lifestyle choices (e.g. place of residence, choice of nursery etc);
- **Organisational dimensions** focussed on the role of employers in encouraging active travel (e.g. through charging for car parking, enabling flexible working arrangements etc);
- **Social dimensions** related to importance of social connectedness (as exemplified in the case of Fatima) and support (e.g. active travel buddies) to encourage active travel. Social dimensions also related to the importance of normalising active travel;
- **Structural dimensions** highlighted the role of social structures in facilitating or inhibiting active travel (e.g. through restricted childcare provision and non-child-friendly commuter trains);
- **Policy dimensions** related to the focus of policy on easy-to-reach individuals or initiatives which are seen to be cost-effective providing maximum impact and value.



Image used with permission from Sustrans



# What are the key barriers to encouraging more active travel?

The workshop discussion then moved on to explore what participants' perceived to be the main barriers to encouraging more active travel. Participants were given post-it notes and asked to write what they felt were the main barriers and then stick this anonymously on a flip chart. The responses given highlighted a range of factors, including:

- **Car culture** - participants described our society as dominated by the interests of car-owners/drivers. Moreover, it was suggested that 'politicians are afraid of offending motorists'. It was felt that this dominance was a key barrier to active travel. Additionally, it was stated that many people are very emotionally attached to their cars and/or perceive their car to have involved considerable investment and would therefore be reluctant to give them up or reduce using them.
- **All or nothing** - relatedly it was felt that too often active travel is portrayed as 'all or nothing' and that individuals might feel they must commit to being either a car-driver or a cyclist, which is unhelpful for encouraging uptake of active travel.
- **Image of cycling** - this was identified by several participants and elaborated to mean that cycling is perceived to be 'scruffy, sweaty, unsafe and masculine'.
- **Perceptions of safety** - it was noted that many people worry about the safety of cycling or walking, and this was particularly related to a fear of motorised traffic. However it was noted that this lack of safety is largely a perception rather than a reality.
- **Cost** - high costs of public transport and the availability of cheap petrol were perceived to be barriers to active travel.
- **Infrastructure** - existing infrastructure was regarded by many participants to be inadequate
- **Cultural norms** - a major barrier was perceived to be long-established habits relating to personal car use. It was noted that active travel is not currently the norm and greater efforts need to be directed at promoting active travel and changing mindsets.
- **Lack of political will** - participants felt that there was inadequate funding allocated to supporting active travel and a lack of real political will in this area.
- **Geography** - perceptions of the local weather and hilly topography were said to put people off engaging in active forms of travel in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

# What is needed as facilitators of more active travel?

Following the discussion of barriers workshop participants were then asked to consider what is needed to overcome these barriers and facilitate more active travel. Once again participants were given post-it notes and asked to write what they felt were needed as facilitators and then stick this anonymously on a flip chart. The responses given are summarised here:

- **Public spending** – there was consensus amongst participants that more money needs to be spent on supporting active travel. It was suggested that a fixed percentage of the Scottish Government's travel budget should be dedicated for active travel. It was also noted that this should be targeted at improving infrastructure but also at encouraging behaviour change and bringing about the normalisation of active travel.
- **Infrastructure** – it was stated that current infrastructure (e.g. footpaths and cycleways) need to be improved. In particular it was felt that there should be more routes which are separated from motorised traffic including adequate illumination ensuring the routes are safe to use after dark.
- **Culture change** – many of the post-it note comments related to the importance of changing attitudes towards active travel, questioning and challenging accepted norms. This related to changing attitudes amongst the general public but also to culture change amongst planners and policy-makers so that active travel becomes seen as the norm and as a priority for planning and policy.
- **Joined-up policy** – it was felt that public policy relating to active travel needs to be better joined up. This implies better integrated approaches across sectors including transport, the environment, education and public health.
- **Training** – in order to build up confidence it was felt that training (e.g. cycle training) could be an important facilitator. This was discussed for both adults and children and it was stated that this could be facilitated through schools and workplaces.
- **Role models** – champions of active travel and high profile role models (e.g. senior politicians who are visible cyclists) were considered important for normalising and encouraging active travel.
- **Targeted support** – it was felt that some individuals or groups within society would need more support than others (e.g. older adults, people with disabilities, young children).
- **Strong commitment** – some participants expressed significant optimism about current progress with active travel, however it was noted that in order to bring about the necessary change a long term ambitious vision was needed and that this needed to be backed up by brave and committed policy-makers and politicians.

# SUMMARY

The workshop highlighted the salience of active travel across a range of sectors and policy areas. The high turn-out at the workshop and the enthusiasm with which individuals engaged in discussions clearly demonstrated that this is a topic of much interest and relevance. It has also demonstrated a widespread recognition of the importance of joined up, cross-sector working relating to active travel. Indeed, feedback after the workshop included comments that individuals valued the opportunity to engage in discussions with others working in this area from different disciplines and sectors.

The workshop also highlighted the complexity of the subject matter and the range of diverse factors impacting on current experiences of active travel. In particular

barriers and potential facilitators of active travel were noted at individual, organisational, social, structural and policy levels. Thus, addressing challenges of active travel was seen to necessitate a holistic approach recognising the multi-faceted nature of the task.

However, despite recognition of the challenges associated with encouraging more active travel, workshop participants expressed optimism and enthusiasm in this area and suggested that *'things are moving in the right direction'*.

It is hoped that this summary report will act as a catalyst for further discussions and we welcome comments or feedback on it.



*discussions clearly demonstrated that this is a topic of much interest and relevance*





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# ACTIVE TRAVEL REPORT 2015



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*For further information about the report please contact*

Mhairi Aitken at [mhairi.aitken@ed.ac.uk](mailto:mhairi.aitken@ed.ac.uk)

Ruth Jepson at [ruth.jepson@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ruth.jepson@ed.ac.uk)

Andrew J. Williams at [a.j.williams@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.j.williams@ed.ac.uk)

## Sustrans Scotland: start making more sustainable journeys by walking and cycling.

Cecilia Oram, Project Officer for the School Travel Programme at Sustrans, explains about how Sustrans can support us to all start making more sustainable journeys by walking and cycling.

"I work on three main areas for Sustrans Scotland. Promoting more children and young people to walk, scoot and cycle to school. I support, co-ordinate and provide funding for all those officers based in Scotland's local authorities who promote walking and cycling to school. I organise a programme of regular best practice sharing field-trips and seminars. We also collect data from the local authorities and provide a number of free resources for schools to use.

I promote innovation within Sustrans, whole programme of work and on community engagement. In order to make sure Sustrans continues to improve how and what we do I also organise innovation events which get the whole Sustrans team thinking creatively. My colleague and I have tried a number of different approaches to these events in order to inspire and stimulate the team to come up with new innovative ideas for projects and ways of engaging people in walking and cycling. I have also been involved in the whole spectrum of community engagement activities from looking at Scottish Government policy to hands-on community engagement in our projects re-design residential streets with the community in Kirkcaldy."

## Keep Scotland Beautiful: Sustainable Scotland Network

*"It's not normal to ride a bike in a suit, you have to wear lycra!" "I need the car to drop off/collect the kids as part of my daily commute." "It's scary riding a bike in traffic!"* These are just some of the barriers to cycling and other forms of active travel identified in ISM (Individual, Social, Material) workshops run by Keep Scotland Beautiful. ISM is a simple framework to help inform the development of interventions on sustainable behaviour change, such as local authority and community planning partnership actions to encourage active travel. Keep Scotland Beautiful is funded by the Scottish Government to support public sector organisations in applying ISM to stimulate innovative ideas for improving plans and designing effective policies and proposals to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet Scotland's climate change targets.

Support in the form of ISM workshop facilitation, capacity building and general awareness raising is provided through KSB's Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) activities.

To find out more please contact June Graham on 01786 468785, [june.graham@ksbscotland.org.uk](mailto:june.graham@ksbscotland.org.uk) or visit our Low Carbon Behaviours website [keepscotlandbeautiful.org/lcb](http://keepscotlandbeautiful.org/lcb).  
Download a copy of our year one report "Stimulating Change" at <http://tinyurl.com/nc7ayvd>.



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Michael with friends at the Peddle for Scotland event in 2014

# Facilitating active travel for people with visual impairment

**t**he environmental and population health benefits of active travel are frequently articulated (Sustrans, 2008). Walking and cycling are often described as being inclusive and accessible forms of physical activity with the potential to reduce the gap in activity levels between the most and least physically active, and in turn reduce health inequalities associated with sedentary behaviour.

Environmental factors can both positively and negatively impact on active travel choices for all people irrespective of ability. Disabled people however encounter particular restrictions to active travel resulting from environmental design which is not inclusive, or due to adjustments not being made to existing environments (Kirchner et al, 2008).

In this article I share some reflections about facilitators and barriers I encounter to active travel as a blind guide dog owner living in central Glasgow.

Barriers include, environments designed to prioritise traffic where multiple crossings exist and lights phased so that the road can only be crossed in timely laborious stages. Pavement parking as well as poor segregation between cars/cyclists and pavements/pedestrians are also barriers. The greatest restriction I encounter is the abundance of pedestrian crossings with no tactile adaptations. Frequently at pedestrian crossings there is no provision of tactile paving or tactile devices (revolving cones) indicating when it's safe to cross the road. Facilitators to active travel therefore are accessible





With a friend on a tandem cycling in the Peddle for Scotland event.

pedestrian crossings meeting government standards (HMSO, 1995), roads with clear delineation between the pavement and street (with no flat kerbs except at crossing points) and pavements free from parked cars and other street furniture/obstacles.

I do take up active travel modes, using a mix of walking and public transport. I do believe that the definition of what is active travel should include public transport use as well as walking and cycling. If the definition of active travel did not include public transport, then active travel may exclude disabled people. This is because while a route combining walking to and from the bus stop might be accessible, an end-to-end route completed by walking alone may not be.

Only once environments become fully accessible will I, as a visually impaired person, choose to walk for the whole journey instead of only part of it.

Michael Tornow  
michael.tornow@nhs.net

*“ Only once environments become fully accessible will I, as a visually impaired person, choose to walk for the whole journey instead of only part of it.*

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# THE BIKE STATION



**The Bike Station started in Edinburgh 15 years ago, and now has branches in Glasgow and Perth. Over these years The Bike Station has grown to become Scotland's largest bicycle recycling organisation - in 2014 Edinburgh's Bike Station reached a milestone of recycling its 40,000th bike. We take in over 10,000 old and discarded bikes a year, refurbishing viable ones and giving them a new lease of life; often providing affordable bikes to people who would not otherwise have bought one.**

All Bike Station activities and actions are focused on encouraging good mental and physical health through cycling, helping people learn to ride their bicycles safely, promoting independence through individuals being able to repair their own bikes, preserving our environment by

recycling and by making cycling an easy choice to make as a sustainable means of transport.

The Bike Station works in partnership with a wide variety of organisations such as the Venture Trust providing cycle training, guided bike rides, workshop sessions, Build Your Own Bike courses, mountain bike tuition, certified mechanical training and supply of tools and equipment, all using qualified and experienced staff.

As well as selling and repairing bikes, the Bike Station works in partnership with Transport Scotland, Stirling Bike Hub, Velocity Cafe in Inverness, Nestrans in Aberdeen, Dundee University and Dundee Council, helping people learn to ride safely, by providing cycle training during free bike safety checks and route advice at public locations in all of the 7 Scottish Cities.





The Bike Station runs Fix Your Own Bike sessions where cyclists hire workstands, gain access to tools and re-used parts to maintain their own bikes. This reduces the cost of repairs, keeping bikes on the road longer.

The Bike Station provides maintenance courses for anyone who is keen to learn more about their bike and develop the mechanical skills needed to keep the bike road-worthy and safe.

To help promote cycling and make cycling more accessible, we also deliver a Dr Bike service, a mobile mechanic service working at workplaces, universities, and community events. Our Dr Bike team also provide fleet servicing for organisations and in Glasgow we have the maintenance contract for the city wide bike hire scheme.

The Bike Station works in partnership with the Scottish Prison Service with workshops in 6 prisons. Officers and prisoners train as cycle mechanics receiving industry recognised qualifications. The workshops are supplied with donated bikes and carry

out some of the refurbishment work for us. All three branches of the Bike Station are involved in this project and work with their local prisons. At least one prisoner has successfully secured work within the industry since being released.

The Bike Station will celebrate its 15th birthday this year, 15 years of getting people onto bikes. We hope that in the next 15 years our organisation develops further, and supports the movement toward a Cycle Friendly Scotland and a new generation of cycle enthusiasts, for whom cycling will be a first choice for transport, where every child will learn how to ride a bike in nursery, where families feel safe making journeys together to and from home, to school, to work, as well as for leisure.



**Please find more details about our organisation and our activities at [www.thebikestation.org.uk](http://www.thebikestation.org.uk) or contact us by email [info@thebikestation.org.uk](mailto:info@thebikestation.org.uk) Please follow us on Twitter and Facebook.**





image: stock vector © doodlemachine

# Statistical Ambassador at Large Instalment 2: **CAUSATION VS. CORRELATION**

**I**n this instalment we consider dangerous associations, but we are not talking about peer pressure. Every day, in every news outlet, there are reports that claim that something we eat, breath, put on our skin or do is killing us or going to help us live forever. If you wait a month you quite often find that the same thing that was killing you, now helps you live longer and vice versa. These reports are due to the nuanced use of the verb 'associate' in statistics and epidemiology.

To illustrate this we take a fictional example; my belief that umbrellas cause wet clothes. In order to test this belief, I collect some data counting the number of umbrellas and the number of people with wet clothes I see outside my office window each day over the course of a month. At the end of the month I compare the two sets of data to see if the number of people in wet clothes was higher when I saw more umbrellas. One statistic which can be calculated is the correlation coefficient; it takes a value between -1 and +1 with values closer to 0 indicating that umbrellas and people with wet clothes are not associated. The result in my study is close to +1 suggesting that umbrellas are associated with wet clothes. But that is silly isn't it, umbrellas are designed to prevent your clothes getting wet, the umbrellas can't be causing wet clothes.

The reason that I identified an association between umbrellas and wet clothes, is that there is a common cause to umbrellas and wet clothes; rain. This is an obvious scenario, but statistics themselves without a properly designed experiment, cannot distinguish between an association and a causal link, both of which could have the same correlation coefficient. In research it is not as easy to see the implausibility of something we eat shortening or extending our lives, without a very comprehensive knowledge of our biology and the chemical content of the food. Therefore, there are a set of criteria against which we judge causality, which are attributed to Austin Bradford-Hill, who helped prove that smoking causes lung cancer. These criteria are too complex to cover in this brief article, but can be read here; <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/83/10/792.pdf>.

However, the take home message is that proving something causes something else is complicated and not just the result of a statistical test. Next time you read one of those news reports, check whether they are talking about causes instead of associations or correlation or relationships before you change what you do.

**If you have any general statistical questions or would like Andrew's advice, feel free to contact him at [a.j.williams@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.j.williams@ed.ac.uk).**

*..my belief that umbrellas cause  
wet clothes!*

# INCORPORATING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO YOUR DAILY ROUTINE



## THANKS!

MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO  
CONTRIBUTED TO THIS MAGAZINE.

If you would like to contribute to our next magazine  
please get in touch with Sam at  
[samantha.bain@ed.ac.uk](mailto:samantha.bain@ed.ac.uk)