



## Planning for shorter distances

**Ensure that planning policy and practice reduce the need to travel**

- ***Grant planning permission only to mixed use developments, where high quality sustainable transport and restricted parking already exist***

Though the types of destination we need to get to have remained constant for decades (to work, to friends, to shops and to reach services), we now frequently need to travel further and faster to reach them.

***Grant planning permission only to mixed use developments, where high quality sustainable transport and restricted parking already exist***

### ***Questions and Answers***

**Q. Why should the economic growth potential offered by out of town retail developments be sidelined?**

Economic prosperity is vital for all regions of the UK. Investment must be placed into initiatives that add to prosperity and improve quality of life. The majority of current transport investments already incurs wider UK costs to society of some £24 billion each year, just in obesity and congestion alone. Out of town shopping centres have also been shown to generate traffic and are rarely cited near to existing public transport links.

**Q. How important is access to sustainable travel choices for people?**

Access to high quality and safe environments in which to walk and cycle is vital to encourage their use. [Sustrans' work to reconnect people living in communities will enable 60 million more journeys by foot and bike every year](#), potentially saving nearly 80 million tonnes of CO2 annually. 60% of the population in England live within a 15 minute cycle ride from a rail station.

**Q. Isn't travel a right that we should enjoy in the UK, so why should we be reducing the amount of travel that we do?**

Much of our travel is for essential journeys to work, schools and the shops. Over time many of these destinations have disappeared from our local communities resulting in more travel.

**Q. What role does parking play in encouraging car use?**

Parking has a significant role in encouraging car use. Car-free residential and mixed use developments can achieve significantly lower levels of car use than any other form of development and has been a key element in the successful strategy of cities such as Freiburg in Germany and Groningen in the Netherlands.



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### **Q. What effect does the layout of our residential streets have on travel patterns and our communities?**

The design of our streets and neighborhoods safety is often of a barrier to children playing outside. An ICM survey commissioned by Play England for Playday shows that 71 per cent of adults played outside in the street or area close to their homes every day when they were children, compared to only 21 per cent of children today. Also the more attractive the street is to people, the higher levels of walking are. People living in walking friendly communities are more likely to know their neighbours. The US Appleyard study found that residents living where traffic volumes were light had significantly more friends and acquaintances, than those living where traffic was heavy.

### ***Evidence***

#### **Dargay & Hanley, 2004 Land Use and Mobility, Centre for Transport Studies, UCL. For a presentation at World Conference on Transport Research**

This paper analyses the effects of land use characteristics on mode choice and car ownership. The study is based on a large sample of individuals from the National Travel Survey of Great Britain for the years 1989-91 and 1999-2001. Land use characteristics are defined as population density, size of the municipality, accessibility to public transport and local amenities, such as shops and services. In summary, the results indicate that land use characteristics – population density, municipality size, local access to shopping and other facilities and accessibility of public transport - do play a significant role on car ownership and mode use. Car ownership and use increases and public transport use and walking decline as population density decreases.

#### **Stead, 2001 Relationships between land use, socioeconomic factors, and travel patterns in Britain, Environmental and Planning B: Planning and Design, 28**

This UK-focussed paper extends the debate about land use and urban form and contends that many empirical studies that have examined the relationships between land use and travel patterns have omitted to consider the socioeconomic dimension, leading to simplistic views about land use and travel. The results of a study into the relationships between land use, socioeconomic characteristics, and travel patterns are reported by using data from national and local travel surveys in Britain. The results of the study show that the variation in travel patterns often owes more to socioeconomic reasons than to land-use characteristics. However, land-use planning may still have a significant effect on influencing travel patterns.

#### **Newman & Kenworthy, 2006 Urban design to reduce automobile dependence, Opolis, 2**

Long-term data from cities around the world appear to show that there is a fundamental threshold of urban intensity (residents and jobs) of around 35 per hectare 1 where automobile dependence is significantly reduced. This article seeks to determine a theoretical base for what the data show. It suggests that below the threshold intensity of urban activity, the physical constraints of distance and time enforce car use as the norm. The basis of these physical constraints is outlined and the link between density and access to services that provide amenity is established, including the service levels of



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public transport. A design technique for viability of centres is suggested as well as how a city can restructure itself to overcome automobile dependence. The paper supports the call for high density mixed use development with a high quality sustainable transport service in place.

### **Ryan & Throgmorton, 2003 Sustainable transportation and land development on the periphery: a case study of Freiburg, Germany and Chula Vista, California, Transportation Research Part D, 8**

This paper examines two land developments in the cities of Freiburg (Germany) and Chula Vista (California) with the purpose of comparing their transportation and land use planning institutions, processes, and actions for the importance placed on achieving sustainability. The paper concludes that both cities could be considered sustainable in the local sense, although once global considerations are introduced, it appears Freiburg is ahead of Chula Vista. The study provides a reasonable description of the outcomes of different strategies which lead to high carbon/low physical activity and low carbon/high physical activity.

### **Heath et al, 2006 The effectiveness of urban design and land use and transport policies and practices to increase physical activity: A systematic review, Journal of Physical Activity and Health, 3**

Although a number of environmental and policy interventions to promote physical activity are being widely used, there is sparse systematic information on the most effective approaches to guide population-wide interventions. In this paper, studies that addressed the following environmental and policy strategies to promote physical activity were reviewed: community-scale urban design and land use policies and practices to increase physical activity; street-scale urban design and land use policies to increase physical activity; and transportation and travel policies and practices. The paper concludes that because community- and street-scale urban design and land-use policies and practices met the Community Guide criteria for being effective physical activity interventions, implementing these policies and practices at the community-level should be a priority of public health practitioners and community decision makers.

### ***Sustrans information***

#### **Sustrans, 2007 Creating the environment for active travel**

This evidence-based information sheet looks at how the built environment and public space can facilitate healthy living

### ***Policies from other organisations***

#### **National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, 2008 Promoting and creating built environments that encourage and support physical activity**

The guidance offers the first national, evidence-based recommendations on how to improve the physical environment to encourage physical activity. It demonstrates the importance of such improvements and the need to evaluate how they impact on the public's health.



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### **Communities and Local Government, 2009 Planning Policy Statement: Eco-towns - A supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1**

This Planning Policy Statement provides the standards any eco-town will have to adhere to and the list of locations identified with the potential for an eco-town.

#### ***Further reading***

### **Department for Transport, 2008 Building Sustainable Transport into New Developments: A menu of options for growth points and eco-towns**

This document is aimed at all those involved in the planning, design and construction of new housing developments. It sets out advice on how to build an effective sustainable transport system in new developments, from the planning to the implementation stage. It recommends a variety of transport options to integrate and adopt according to the location and needs of the individual development.

### **Town and Country Planning Association, 2005 Planning for Accessible & Sustainable Transport**

In this policy statement the Town and Country Planning Association identifies how national and local transport networks can be improved to create well served accessible communities, enhance quality of life, stimulate the economy and protect the environment.

### **Commission for Integrated Transport, 2009 Planning for Sustainable Travel**

The summary guide provides an overview of the key research findings from the study, and also introduces practitioners to the more detailed coverage found on this website and in the background technical report. It explains the broad challenges involved in using spatial planning to achieve sustainable travel, with a focus on strategic issues and solutions.

### **Campaign to Protect Rural England & The Countryside Agency, 2006 Beyond transport infrastructure; lessons for the future from recent road projects**

This research has explored the consequences arising from road schemes in terms of traffic growth, landscape impact and related development pressure. It has also assessed the effectiveness of current post-construction evaluation methods used by the Highways Agency in handling such issues. Its conclusions and recommendations are highly relevant to local highway authorities as well.

### **Taylor & Sloman (Transport for quality of life), 2008 Masterplanning Checklist for Sustainable Transport in New Developments**

This report looks at the possibility of achieving greater sustainability in the UK's house building proposals. It examines the evidence on the different factors which affect car use by residents of new developments, including: location, density, land-use mix, street layout and design, public transport provision, parking, car restraint, and the existence of smart travel behaviour change programmes. The report also looks at national and regional policy on new housing and sustainable transport, reviewing current government policy and outside opinion, and summarizing the findings into recommendations.