Travel, transport, mobility and health

Ageing, the Environment and Sustainability
Lancaster University Centre for Ageing Research Town and Gown Event

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The desire to get out and about does not diminish in older age, nor does the variety of activities people like to do outdoors.

- More older people, who are more mobile and more likely to drive than ever before.
- Mobility is important for health but reduced mobility and in particular giving up driving is related to:
  - a decrease in wellbeing
  - an increase in depression and related health problems, including feelings of stress, isolation and increased mortality
- A major life event
- Why?

1 in 10 over the age of 70 years ‘feel trapped’ in their own homes through lack of suitable transport after giving-up driving.

12% can’t easily access supermarket,
14% can’t access the post-office,
12% can’t easily access the GP surgery and;
25% can’t easily access hospital.
Why is mobility important in later life?

More than just A to B

- Psychosocial and aesthetic reasons
- Places are not just utilitarian, the journey and destination is important
- Infrastructure is important
- Beyond infrastructural provision
- Ageist transport environment?
- Is the journey really necessary?

Towards a solution

- Remembering transport is about people

Conclusion
Mobility is about getting from A to B but it’s also about psychosocial and aesthetic purposes.
Hierarchy of mobility needs

**PRIMARY TRAVEL NEEDS**
Practical and utilitarian Needs
- e.g. The need to get from A to B as safely, reliably, cheaply and comfortably as possible.

**SECONDARY TRAVEL NEEDS**
Social or affective Needs
- e.g. The need for independence, control, to be seen as normal. Linked to status, roles, identity, self-esteem. Impression management

**TERTIARY TRAVEL NEEDS**
Aesthetic Needs
1. kinaesthetic mobility; mobility for its own sake
2. immersive mobility; to visit and travel through and immerse oneself in beautiful surroundings;
3. imaginative mobility, for example, watching and observing movement


Hierarchy of mobility needs


Mobility is about getting from A to B but **B is not just utilitarian in nature**
Tertiary mobility: The need for discretionary travel

End product is discretionary and
The journey itself is discretionary

Intrinsic

Third space

“Sometimes I take the long way round to drive past the forest and see the trees, especially in Autumn” (Male, driver, aged 75) (Musselwhite and Haddad, 2008; 2010)

“That’s what the car does you see. Takes you where you don’t need to go, you see. And for me that’s life”. (male, driver, interview) (Musselwhite & Haddad, 2010)

“I enjoy going on the bus to the shops. They are fun. You get to go out, see people, chat to people, see the world going round” (female, gave-up driving at 72) (Musselwhite & Shergold, 2013)

“I have no social life since my widowhood ... and would like reasonable transport evenings to go out to theatre, or dances, ... or going to pub to meet friends and socialise” (Parkhurst et al., 2014;)

View
A-B outside of a car is poorly constructed


Lack of benches and toilets
For crossing the road participants preferred controlled crossings such as a **pelican crossing**. Pedestrians take their cues from the ‘red’ or ‘green man’ on the opposite side of the street.

Only 12% walk as fast or faster than DfT recommendations for pedestrian crossing time. Only 6% of females are faster if higher socio-economic background,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>GB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>22.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian miles</td>
<td>19.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killed as a pedestrian</td>
<td>42.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious injury as a pedestrian</td>
<td>21.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight injury as a pedestrian</td>
<td>12.23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percentage of Casualties Aged 80 and Over – Britain

- **Deaths**: 4.86% population aged 80 and over
- **Deaths and Serious Injuries**: 5.16%
- **All Injuries**: 6.06%
- **All Injuries except Slight Injuries**: 7.34%
- **Slight Injuries only**: 4.45%

### Rates per Journey for Casualties Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) as Pedestrians and Car Drivers - Men and Women - Britain

- **Male pedestrian**
- **Female pedestrian**
- **Male car driver**
- **Female car driver**

Source: DfT
Mobility is about getting from A to B but A-B is not just about provision of infrastructure.
Mobility capital

Different types of mobility capital can be traded to get the desired mobility

- **Infrastructure capital** (finance, physical infrastructure – roads, vehicles, bridges, pavements etc.)
- **Cultural capital** (expectations, norms, laws, rules)
- **Social capital** (social norms, family and friends support)
- **Individual capital** (health, resilience, capabilities, skills)
- **Older people’s mobility**


Solution:
Transport & mobility is about people, not just about machines, infrastructure and technologies.
Issues with public buses

1. Driver awareness

2. Service inconveniences
   (Having to change buses; early finish of buses in afternoon; need free bus all day long not just after peak time).

3. Service performance
   (Buses being cancelled altogether or reduced in number; the unreliability of the service)

4. Poor bus stops
   (Poor signage, information, seating and shelter; safety and security issues at bus stop; the bus stop not being near the main residential areas)

5. Poor quality buses
   (do not lower to kerb / grab rails missing)

“Some drivers can’t wait for you to get in the bus and they’re going...for me it’s intimidating. You’re frightened of falling”
• Outdoor environments to support walking

HUMAN SPACES
• Spaces to pause
• Spaces for social interaction
• Spaces for happenstance
• Spaces to people watch
• Spaces to watch the world go by
People connect to place through

- Meaningful social interactions in the past

- Through anchors to the past and history. Distinctive...
  - Buildings
  - Names
  - Events

- But far more... places of personal significance/distinction
  - Home
  - Work
  - School
  - Leisure

They lamented that anchors and significant buildings are destroyed, for example, by bad planning and by road building.
People and social capital

- Issues are people based
  - Overlooked or ignored in service delivery, policy and practice

- To mobilise change need to mobilise people
  - Move from resilience and individual to collective and structural

- Give older people more of a role in their transport provision
  - Auditing and demanding change to their transport (e.g. Graffiti Grannies)
  - Designing solutions to issues
  - Getting involved in governance, policy and practice
Conclusions
- Transport is partly about getting from A to B
  - But it is ultimately a social endeavour
  - Involves psychosocial aspects of mobility
  - Involves aesthetic aspects of mobility
  - Happiness is the road!

• Remember transport isn’t just functional...
  • Yet in making spaces and services fun you improve the functionality

- Transport is about people
  - This is overlooked
  - Solutions need to understand how people act and behaviour
  - Need to involve older people in decision-making about their transport needs

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