

Getting out and about easily: Developing a Movement and Access Plan for Newcastle

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Our brief guide to why “Getting out and about easily” matters.

It matters for social wellbeing and inclusion

- For some people taking a journey is harder - for example, if you are very young, very old, have a mobility problem or have less access to money.
- Local work on children's experiences of poverty has shown one of the most important impacts of poverty on children is being unable to get to a wide range of leisure opportunities around the city and region.
- At the other end of the age spectrum, we know that restricted mobility reduces possibilities for older people to use facilities in the city.
- The notion of an age-friendly city includes designing our environment and our transport so that all people – whatever their age or level of mobility – can get out and about.
- We know from evidence across the world that the more traffic there is in an area – the less likely people are to have social relationships with their neighbours.
- Cars tend to insulate people from each other but other forms of travel stimulate social interaction.
- Social isolation and lack of community interaction are strongly associated with poorer health.

It matters for physical wellbeing

- The travel choices we make, can allow us to build exercise into our lives – offsetting the problems caused by our sedentary lifestyles.
- Regular exercise protects against heart disease and, by limiting obesity, reduces the onset of diabetes.
- Road traffic creates a toll of road deaths and serious accidents – the more road traffic, the greater the risk.
- If we plan our environment well we can increase the safety of travel options such as cycling and walking.



It matters for emotional wellbeing

- We all know how stressful it can be when we feel we aren't in control of our lives and sometimes public transport and congestion adds to that frustration.
- Whether it is not knowing when the bus will come or how long you will be sitting in traffic, these experiences are not a great way to start a day and can have a knock-on effect on other areas of our lives.
- Active travel not only helps avoid stresses associated with congestion but the exercise promotes a sense of emotional wellbeing and protects from depression, cognitive decline and dementia.

It matters for financial wellbeing

- There are a number of ways in which getting out and about impacts on our finances – both as individuals and as a society...
- The choice we make about how we travel has a financial cost.
- Work by East Devon has shown that it costs 33p per mile for 10,000 miles a year in a small, new car. Buses cost 17p per mile. Cycling costs a fraction of 1p per mile and walking is virtually free.
- We have anecdotal evidence that suggests people may restrict their job outlooks because of their perception of the travel options available to them and their willingness to use public transport.
- The standard and quality of our transport infrastructure and the ability to move about the city can have significant effects on the wider economy. An easy and comprehensive transport system will encourage new development and enhance our growing tourism sector.

It matters to environmental wellbeing

- Changing our travel habits is an area where we can make a real difference to our environmental impact.
- High levels of road traffic causes harmful pollution from exhaust fumes – this affects air quality – which in turn affects our wellbeing.
- Our travel choices also make different levels of impact on carbon production and contributing to global warming.

