



Submission of Oral Evidence to Enterprise and Business Committee

Summary of Evidence in Support of Main Arguments:

- **Retailers over-estimate the importance of car-borne trade.**

Often where car parking is said to benefit retail areas, it is based on evidence relating to car park occupancy data, rather than the link between parking charges and retail vitality.

Bristol

[Sustrans: Shoppers and How They Travel \(2006\)](#)

In a study conducted by Sustrans involving 126 retailers and 840 customers, retailers were found to have overestimated the importance of car-borne trade by almost 100%. This misperception can lead traders to push for transport planning decisions which are not in their best interest and creates the risk of mistakes being made in transport and planning policy.

In the same study, researchers analysed how many businesses a shopper will visit, according to their mode of travel. Cyclists and car users were found to make four times as many single-shop visits as pedestrians. Four out of five pedestrian shopping trips were found to take in two to five shops, compared with three fifths of car and bicycle trips.

This research is further supported in other areas across the UK and internationally:

London (Town Centre Studies - 2004, [2009](#), [2011](#))

Three independent reports commissioned by Transport for London (in 2004, 2009 and 2011) further support Sustrans' findings.

- *Pedestrians and users of public transport were found to out number car drivers by nearly five to one.*

Mode of transport used to access area (comparison over time):

Comparison over time			
There has been a steady decrease in car use over time. The largest change since 2009 is an increase in walking.			
	2011	2009	2004
Bus	36%	38%	34%
Walk	28%	25%	29%
Car	14%	16%	20%
Train/Tube	17%	17%	14%
Bicycle	2%	2%	1%

- *Pedestrians/users of public transport were found to consistently spend more than car drivers.*

Frequently car users spend more per visit, but visit less often. When these figures are then averaged over a month, pedestrians and users of public transport are shown to spend considerably more than car drivers.

The average monthly spend of shoppers by mode of transport (comparison over time) was found to be as follows:

	2011	2009	2004
Total	£290	£276	£276
Bus	£282	£265	£252
Walk	£373	£360	£364
Car	£226	£243	£256
Train/Tube	£239	£201	£184
Bicycle	£188	£258	.

New York (2006)

[Schaller Consulting: Curbing Cars: Shopping, Parking and Pedestrian Space in Soho \(2006\)](#)

A study of Prince Street, a commercial street in SoHo, New York City found that:

- 89% of Prince Street users arrive by subway, bus, walking or bicycle. Only 9% arrive by car.
- By a ratio of 5:1 shoppers said they would come to Prince Street more often if they had more space to walk, even if it meant eliminating parking spaces. This ratio was nearly identical for visitors and those who live and work in the area.
- Most shoppers would rather see space taken away from parked cars rather than street vendors.
- The shoppers who value wider sidewalks over parking spent about five times as much money, in aggregate, as those who value parking over sidewalks.

San Francisco (2006)

[Modal Choices and Spending Patterns of Travellers to Downtown San Francisco: Impacts of Congestion Pricing on Retail Trade](#)

A study of San Francisco shoppers, conducted by their own transportation authority, found less than one-fifth drive to shop, and that they spend less money in aggregate than shoppers using other modes of transport (Bent 2006).

The study indicates drivers spend more each trip than public transport users, but visit less often and account for far fewer total visits and therefore spend less in total. Walkers average eight downtown shopping trips a month, spending \$36 per trip and \$291 per month. Motorists average four downtown shopping trips a month, spending \$88 per trip and \$259 per month. Public transport users average seven shopping trips per month, spending \$40 per trip and \$274 per month.

Overall, 60% of shoppers were found to arrive by public transport, 20% arrive by walking, 19% by automobile and 1% by bicycle, yet retailers surveyed in the study estimated that 90% of their customers arrive by car.

Graz, Austria (2000)

Shopkeepers in the Austrian city of Graz were asked how their customers reached the shop. Their estimates and the actual figures are shown below:

Mode	Retailers' Estimate	Actual
Walking	25%	44%
Cycling	5%	8%
Public Transport	12%	16%
Car	58%	32%

- **Shoppers want less traffic:**

Retail vitality and increased footfall are frequently linked to the provision of an attractive shopping environment.¹ Whilst it is traditional for retailers to pursue more car access and parking, and to resist measures to promote walking, cycling and public transport use, research suggests that retail vitality and regeneration would be best served by traffic restraint, public transport improvements and a range of measures to improve the walking environment.²

People enjoy shopping in a more human environment where they navigate traffic-free spaces at their leisure instead of having to negotiate busy roads. Major investment in the walking environment, such as wider pavements and traffic restraint measures, should therefore result in attracting more regular, dedicated custom to the area and have a positive impact on retailers and customers alike.

London

Town Centre Study 2011 – Transport for London

TfL's Town Centres Survey (2011) showed that 21% of shoppers thought the town centres could be improved by less traffic (beaten only by 'a better range of shops' – 30%, and to 'make the streets cleaner' – 26%).

· **Wales Online (2009)** Capital Investment Pushes Cardiff Up Retail Rankings
· **Sustrans (2006)** Shoppers and How They Travel

Table 15: Priorities for improvements to the area

	All respondents	
	All mentions %	Most important %
Nothing	14	-
Better range of shops	30	15
Cleaner streets	26	10
Less traffic	21	9
Improve shops/better quality shops	18	7
More leisure facilities	17	6
More pleasant/greener environment	17	7
Remove undesirable element/more policing	17	9
Longer shop opening hours	15	6
More public spaces	13	3
Reduce pollution	12	3
More/easier parking	12	5
More shops	10	4
Better bus service	8	3
Improve cycle facilities	8	2
High street should be pedestrianised	7	2
Improve pedestrian environment	7	2
Improve access to bus stop locations	3	1
Other	4	4
Don't know	2	3
Weighted base	4,745	4,097

When shoppers were asked to identify their **main priority**, less traffic was listed as the main priority in central London, and remained high on the list of priorities in Inner (2nd) and Outer London (3rd).

Table 16: Main priority for improvements in each area by type of centre

	Total %	Central London %	Inner London %	Outer London %
Better range of shops	15	2	17	16
Cleaner streets	10	6	10	11
Less traffic	9	19	10	6
Remove undesirable element/more policing	9	2	8	10
Improve shops / better quality shops	7	2	7	7
More pleasant/greener environment	7	9	6	7
More leisure facilities	6	7	6	7
Longer shop opening hours	6	8	4	8
More/easier parking	5	2	4	6
More shops	4	2	5	3
More public spaces	3	6	3	3
Better bus service	3	1	4	3
Reduce pollution	3	8	3	2
High street should be pedestrianised	2	7	3	2
Improve pedestrian environment	2	6	2	2
Improve cycle facilities	2	3	2	1
Weighted base	4097	254	1736	2107

All aspects mentioned by 2% or more

Shaded boxes indicate top mentions in each type of centre

- **Anecdotal evidence for the retail benefits of pedestrianisation:**

Cardiff

In the first month since opening the St David's Centre and the surrounding pedestrianised shopping area in Cardiff City Centre, weekly footfall figures soared to over one million visitors. As a result, Cardiff rose from being the 10th most successful shopping destination to sixth most successful in Experians Retail Centre Rankings (2009).

York

Pedestrianisation of York city center was found to help trade. BhS noted that three months after pedestrianisation their turnover had increased by 30% and M&S's increase was in excess of 20%. It was found that people in pedestrianised areas had more time to stop, look and spend. *These figures were given in a presentation by York Civic Trust on 'The Impact of Pedestrian Priority on Local Tourism'.*

Oxford

Oxford was one of the first UK cities to introduce pedestrianisation. Although vehicle access restrictions reduced some types of city center business activity (such as retail of bulk goods), it increased others (such as retail of specialized goods, food services and tourist activities) and shops on one pedestrianised street experienced a 20% increase in business after the change.

- **Walking, Cycling and Public Transport have been found to bring wider regeneration benefits.**
- **The Value of Walking, Cycling and Public Transport in Deprived Areas**

[The Value of New Transport in Deprived Areas - Who benefits, how and why? Lucas et al. \(2008\) - Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)

This Joseph Rowntree Foundation study assessed what happened in four deprived areas of the UK when new public transport initiatives were introduced. The report found that the new public transport services created the opportunity for people to undertake wholly new activities through improved accessibility.

Table 1 Gross number of trips undertaken in one week to wholly new activities resulting from each service

	Employment	Health	Shopping and Leisure
Braunstone Bus	72	430	420
Trevithick Link	100	25	37
Wythenshawe Local Link	2	82	158

On the basis of the findings, the study concluded that public transport services are a vital component in the social inclusion of individuals and for maintaining the vitality and vibrancy of low-income neighbourhoods and recommended that more is needed to be done at a local and national level to support socially necessary bus services across the UK.

[Mixed Tenure, Twenty Years On – Nothing Out of the Ordinary](#) - Allen et al. (2005)

In areas facing issues of social deprivation that are deliberately organised to favour walking and cycling, these routes have been found to be an important component of interaction and to be fundamental to children's enjoyment of these areas.

[Making the Connections: Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion \(2003\) – Social Exclusion Unit](#)

In 2003, the UK Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) reported that transport is 'a significant contributing factor' in the exclusion of many low-income groups and communities (SEU, 2003). It acts as a barrier to the take-up of employment, is also linked with low participation in post-16 education and college dropouts, and can lead to failed health appointments and associated delays in medical intervention. The problem is particularly acute in rural areas but is also prevalent in the urban periphery on low-income estates.

- **Walking and cycling routes and tools for economic regeneration through attracting tourism to an area**

[The Economic Impact of Cycling and Walking on the Celtic and Taff Trails – The Institute of Transport & Tourism & The University of Central Lancashire \(Commissioned by Sustrans\)](#)

This study used a methodology developed by the Institute of Transport and Tourism.

The Celtic and Taff Trails are multi-user trails that attract mainly cyclists and walkers. The total demand for the Celtic Trail is estimated to be over 1.5million user trips per annum; in comparison the Taff Trail attracts an estimated 628,000 user trips per annum.

The level of expenditure by users estimated in the study is over £54 million on the Celtic Trail and £21 million on the Taff Trail each year. This includes direct expenditure and indirect expenditure by businesses that benefit from the existence of the trails. **This gives a total impact of £75 million per year in the local economies of South Wales.**

Of the total economic impact the element generated by tourists using the trails amounts to **£8.3 million per annum on the Celtic Trail and £1.6 million on the Taff Trail, i.e. this is additional income to Wales from inbound visitors.**

The overall economic impact brings employment. It generates or safeguards 1,002 jobs on the Celtic Trail of which 153 can be attributed to inbound tourism. In terms of the Taff Trail the figures are 367 jobs in total of which 30 are generated by inbound tourism. **This gives an overall employment figure of 1,399 in the South Wales economy that can be directly attributed to the existence of the trails.**

- **The positive impact of cycling on property prices**

[TfL – Cycling Revolution London: End of Year Review 2010](#)

In 2010, the positive impact of cycling on property prices was highlighted, a trend usually associated with homes close to train stations. Estate agents reported a surge in demand for properties which offered easy access to the Barclays Cycle Hire Scheme, and development brochures have begun to feature their close proximity to Barclays Cycle Superhighways, indicating that developers see the value and importance of housing developments being accessible by bicycle.

Stephen Ludlow, director of Ludlow Thompson, said:

“Demand for properties for rent around docking stations and cycle routes has done up by about a third in the past year, and has been soaring since the launch of the cycle hire scheme. Our agents have been inundated with questions from prospective tenants about the

nearest docking station. They have been asking for properties with one on the street or just around the corner.”

- Improving the quality of our streets can add value

[CABE \(2007\) Paved with Gold](#)

Research from CABE demonstrates a direct link between street quality and property prices. It shows that the quality of a high street can add at least 5 per cent to the price of homes and to the level of retail rents. This is the first study to connect economic benefits directly with the quality of street design, management and maintenance, and shows that the design quality of a street affects prices on its own, regardless of any other factors – **simply improving street design can make a major difference to market values.**

The study used the pedestrian environment review system (PERS), a tool for measuring the quality of the pedestrian environment, which defines what makes a high quality street as the following:

- Dropped kerbs
- Tactile paving and colour contrast
- Smooth, clean, well-drained surfaces
- High-quality materials
- High standards of maintenance
- **Pavements wide enough to accommodate all users**
- **No pinch points**
- Potential obstructions placed out of the way
- Enough crossing points, in the right places
- **Traffic levels not excessive**
- Good lighting
- Sense of security
- No graffiti or litter
- No signs of anti-social behaviour
- Signage, landmarks and good sightlines
- Public spaces along the street
- A street that is a pleasant place to be.

[Seeing Issues Clearly: Valuing Urban Realm](#) (2008) MVA Consulting

This report found that there is positive, significant and consistent value added to private business by maintaining and improving the urban realm.

To consider quality and value the report used measurements of urban realm quality in London taken from TfL’s programme of PERS (Pedestrian Environment Review System) audits conducted from 2005-2008. This provided quality assessments of over 600 street sections in London.

The research then compared quality with data on the sale prices of flats and the rental value of retail property on the same streets using a sample of over 28,000 flat sales and nearly 7,000 shops.

To allow for other things that may affect property values data was also analysed on other factors including public transport accessibility; school performance; land-use type; deprivation; average income and household spend.

The analysis found that, all other things being equal, **properties on high quality streets are more valuable than those on poorer streets.** The level of increased value is proportional to the difference in quality.

The elements of streets that were found to most clearly add value to private property were:

- Personal security
- Lighting
- Quality of Environment
- Maintenance

For each measurable improvement in quality (using increments in PERS) in any of these aspects of a street, the sale price of flats increased by 1.62% and shop rental values increase by 1.22%. Based on the average prices of property in our sample, these percentages represent increases of £5,096 and £5.41/m respectively for each quality improvement.

These values were then applied to a recent improvement scheme in The Cut, in Southwark, which has been subject to a number of changes in 2007/08 at a cost of £3m, including:

- Widening and resurfacing of footways
- Improved lighting
- Planting trees
- New Pedestrian signs

The analysis found that as a result of these changes, only valuing changes to the four elements that add most value, around £9.5m had been added to the value of private property in the area.

This example suggests that a publicly funded scheme can add significant value to the owners of private property.

- Conversely, higher levels of traffic can lead to a greater number of vacant properties

[Leicester – note this is an old study \(1992\).](#)

A study in Leicester (1992) found a strong positive relationship between percentage vacancy rates and motorized traffic flow. The study measured traffic volumes (vehicles per day passing shop premises) and compared these to retail property vacancies. The results demonstrated that shop vacancy rates increase as the level of traffic increases:

Traffic Level	Percentage of Shops Vacant
No traffic	3.1%
Up to 200 vehicles passing per day	6.4%
200-500 vehicles passing per day	10.4%
Over 500 vehicles passing per day	15.1%