

Social Equity and Social Impacts of Transport

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Aims of the programme:

- Link transport studies and social sciences
- Understand social challenges and potential social benefits of transport system
- Integrate wider policies relating to transport with transport thinking e.g. neighbourhood problems
- i.e. show why social / urban issues matter to transport as well as vice versa

Aims of this workshop:

- Learn about current transport research and policy in relation to equity
- Explore transport behaviour and developments in transport in relation to other social activity
- Discuss how to assess social aspects of transport systems and transport behaviour

Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods, The Built Environment and Transport:

- Physical mobility is as critical to urban systems as buildings are
- Transport organisation and accessibility are the life blood of modern communities
- Motorised transport is deeply embedded and dominates human activity
- The car dominates our environment and social relations

Communities can be 'locked out' of modern transport systems through:

- Location
- Lack of a car or functioning public transport links
- Intensity of traffic
- Low density development
- Smaller, more isolated households
- Lack of cash
- Imbalance between costs of different modes
- Ownership and design of 20th century Council estates
- Privatisation of bus services and impacts (mainly outside London)

Urban problems are intensified by current transport priorities:

- Cars v buses
- Cost of trains
- Children and elderly 'enclosed' by unfriendly streets
- Loss of mixed uses/shift to superstores etc
- Walking and cycling become more difficult
- Poorer inner areas become through routes to suburbs (for cars!)

Fear of wider environment obstruct social and economic equality:

- Children can't play out
- Not allowed to go to clubs
- Fear of travel to secondary schools
- Parents won't work far away
- Elderly won't go out
- Youth gather on streets - not allowed to travel
- Families and elderly fear 'youth gangs' on streets
- Youth don't access wider opportunities

But low income families and elderly rely heavily on local neighbourhoods:

- Walking and safe cycling extremely important
- 'Social survival' depends on safe public/social spaces
- Many poorer areas lack open space, buses, shops
- Local environments generate fear
- Problems become inter-locking
 - Poorer public transport = more traffic
 - Job access in poorer areas is harder
 - Density of people not households determines bus service
- Frequent local bus service only work if
 - every 10 minutes
 - not more than 500 yards to stop
 - reliable
 - safe

Communities work with a more rounded approach to transport:

- Integrated public transport
- Transport planning with land-use planning
- Understanding urban density and mixed use
- Environmental limits and social/public spaces
- Both favour public transport and traffic taming
- Low cost/low tech solutions
- High speed/high tech transport
- Both extremely useful in transport thinking
- Transport is changing fast
 - ‘crucial social/collective good’
- Families in low income areas are the ‘canary in the mine’