

Factors affecting the mobility of older residents, and implications for well-being, in Staple Hill, Bristol

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Introduction

This presentation is about:

How mobility and accessibility can affect older people's **happiness**

Wider understanding of mobility and accessibility in the lives of older people.

Walkable accessible neighbourhoods have benefits for environment, health **and happiness**

Project

Urban ID - four challenge themes

Staple Hill case study – neighbourhood features.

Methodology

Qualitative - Open ended

Workshop – created definitions- used maps

13 Walking interviews with older residents (60+) in Staple Hill.

Definitions of Mobility and Accessibility

Mobility

'Movement of people or goods' (Litman, 2003)

Accessibility

'ability to reach desired goods, services, activities and destinations' (Litman, 2003)

Lack of accessibility can lead to social exclusion
(Preston and Raje, 2007)

Mobility and accessibility can affect older people's happiness, via human contact

Many participants happy with Staple Hill*

Human contact is important key to happiness – Workshop definitions and interviews

- 1) Formal and organised meeting places
- 2) Informal meeting places - wider concept of 'accessibility' to social destinations
- 3) Social walking

Mobility and accessibility => Human contact => Happiness

Environmental factors

- Important to participants
- pavements (Sugiyama and Thompson, 2008)
lighting
- Users of other modes – cyclists and parking
- Toilets –prevents park access

Bodily factors

- Feet, arthritis, injured spouse

Psycho-social factors

Fear and loss of confidence

Associated with ability to walk 1/2km - Rantakokko et al. (2009) -

Fear – dark, crime, cyclists

Loss of confidence*

Friends and family*

Impacts on health - House et al. (1988)

Relationships can determine mobility

Attitudes

Some very positive

'Keeping moving' & active

Avoiding becoming sedentary

Robust towards weather, physical impediments

SANDRA: Yes, no regrets at all. And as I say, I've made a couple of friends in here, and that's it. Betty upstairs she's made me go to different things! It was her that made me go to this.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, she talked you into it!

SANDRA: She talked me into it, keep her company to go up, otherwise I don't think I would bother.

Psycho-social factors

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Land-use mix

Neighbourhood layout key to accessibility for older residents – Preston and Raje (2007)
proximate facilities => decreased exclusion

Walkable destinations - their GP, the park, a wide range of shops, bus stops to the centre, an optician, a post office, a hairdresser, a library etc. *

Concomitant benefits for environment and health, but also **happiness**.

Conclusions

We've argued:

Mobility and accessibility can be key in older residents **happiness**, via facilitating human contact

Wide concept of mobility is relevant - psychosocial factors, including fear and confidence, motivation from friends and family, and positive attitudes. These factors may decide whether an individual makes the most of their physical capabilities and neighbourhood facilities. Also wide concept of **accessibility**.

Mixed use walkable neighbourhood – not only environment and health, but also **happiness** of older residents.

References

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