



Transport in Bristol Regaining momentum

Councillor Ed Plowden, MSc, MCIHT, CMILT

Green Party Councillor for Windmill Hill
Chair of Transport and Connectivity
Committee



Towards Sustainable Mobility: A **Personal Reflection**
on Progress and Priorities for Future Research

Transport in Bristol: Regaining momentum

Ed Plowden
Programme Director
Paths for Everyone

July 2024



“Portfolio” career

- Youth and Shop Worker 1990s
- Home Office 1990s/2000s
 - Drugs Prevention
 - Drugs and Crime
- Bristol City Council 2000s/10s
 - Crime
 - Cycling City Programme
 - Head of Local & Sustainable Transport
- Sustrans 2020s
 - Director of National Cycle Network
- Green Party City Councillor (2021)
- Masters in Public Health



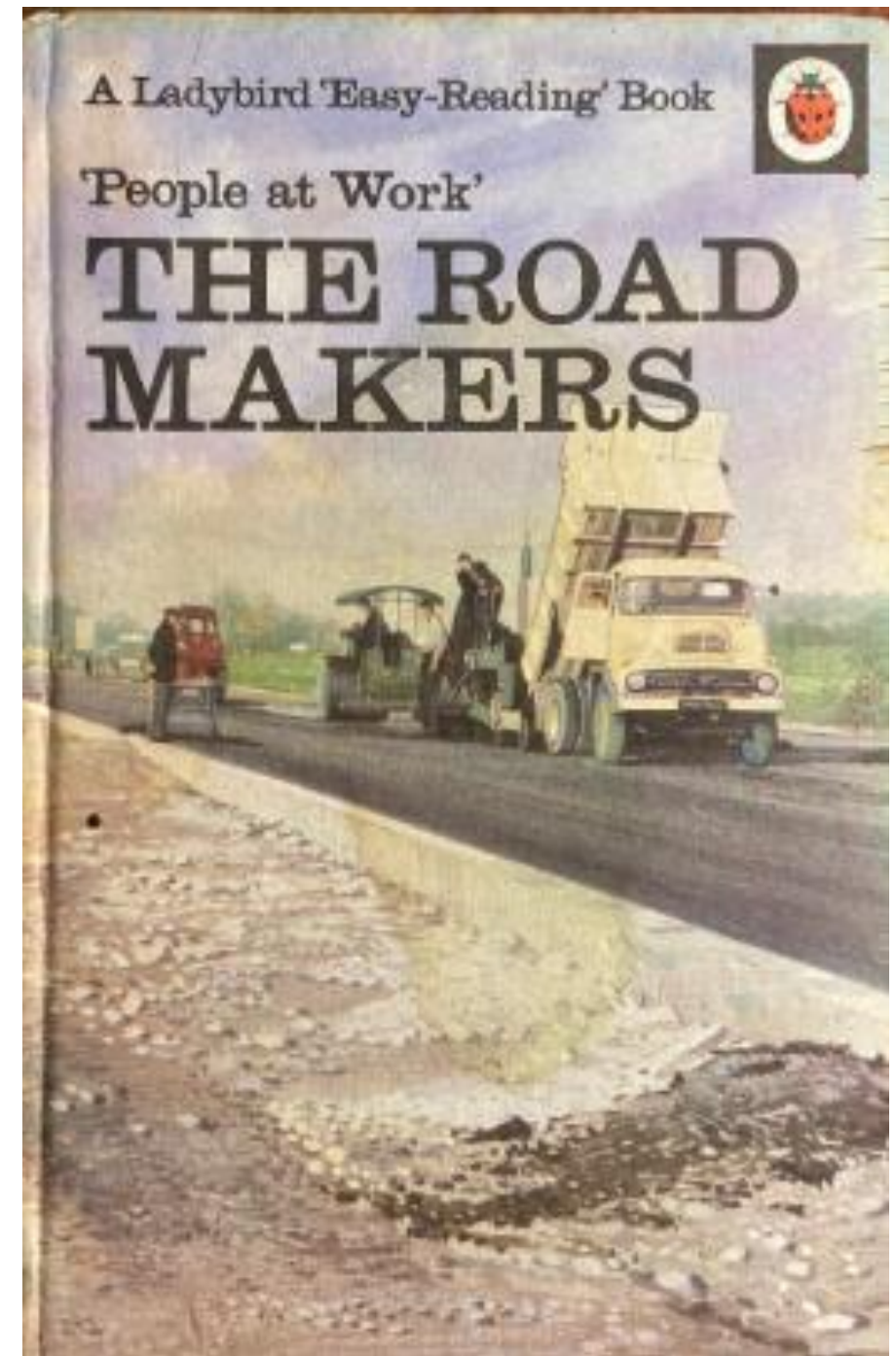
Brief Background

My first memory of Transport Policy

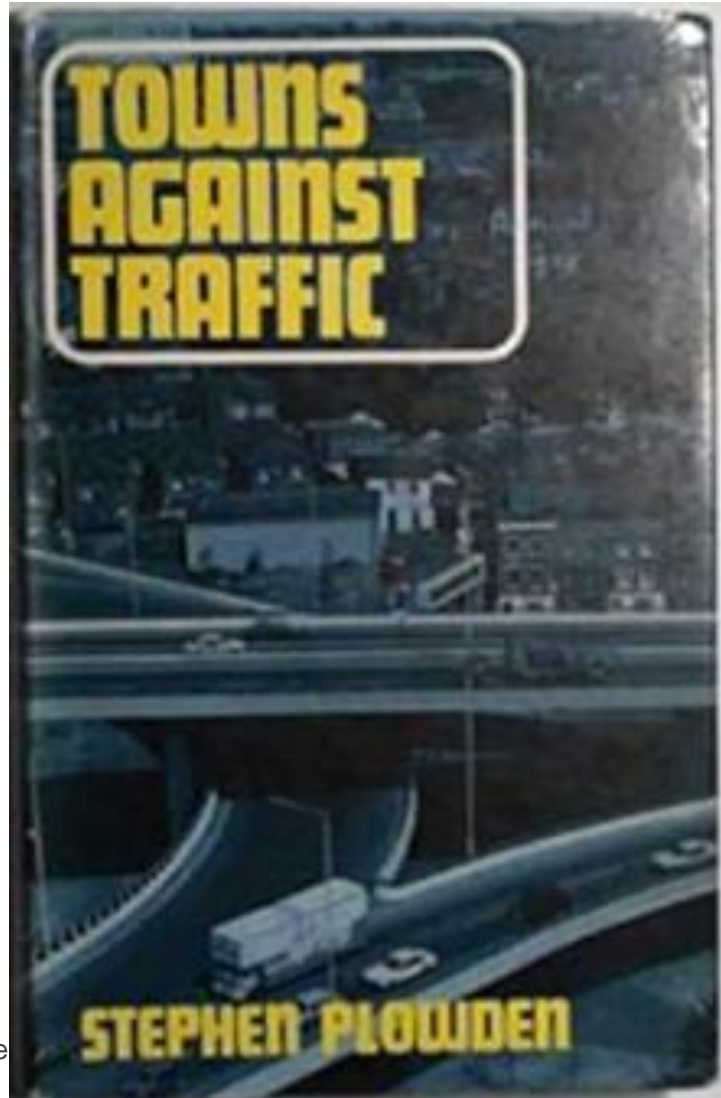
“These are not good people”

- *Current methods for **predicting future transport requirements** in towns are briefly described and criticised.*
- *The author discusses also the need to examine **alternative kinds of transport systems** and ways of controlling them.*

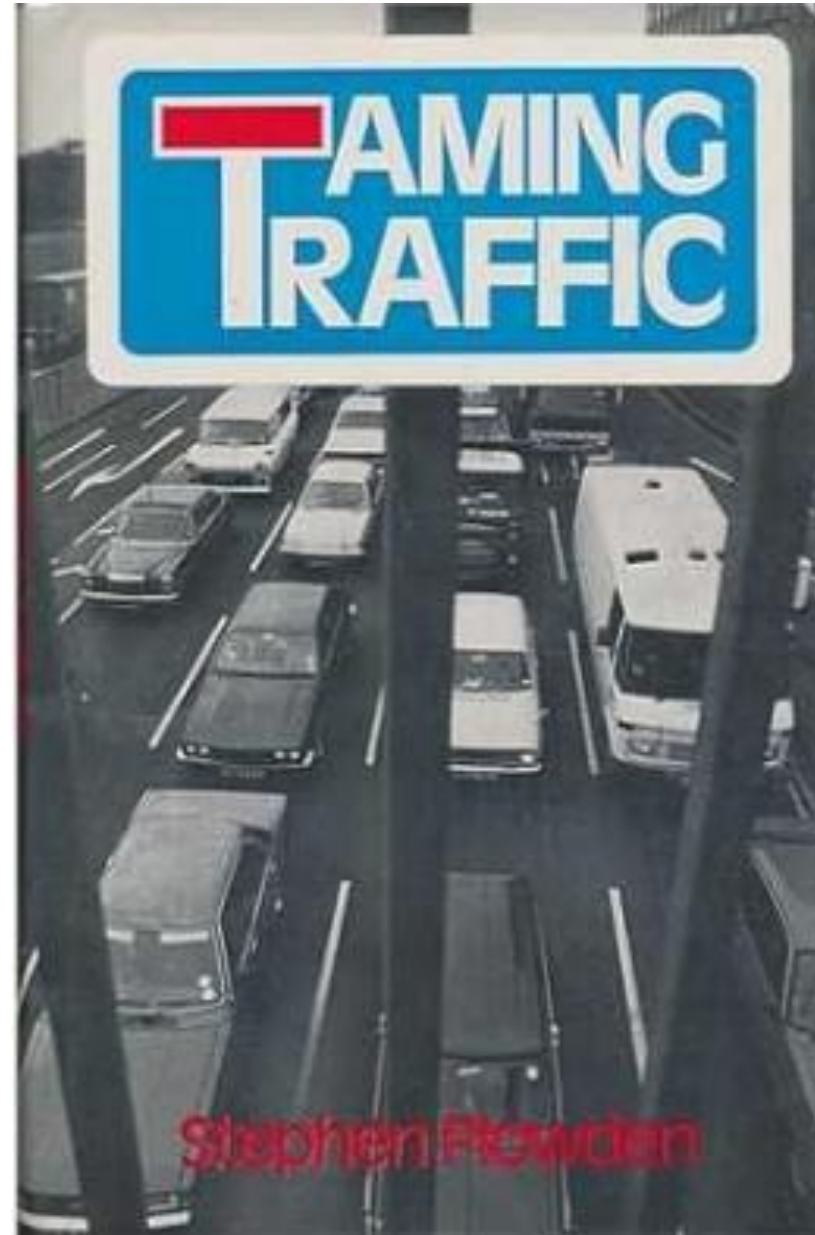
Plowden, S. P. C. “Transportation Studies Examined.” *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy* 1, no. 1 (1967): 5–27.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20052034>.



Other publications



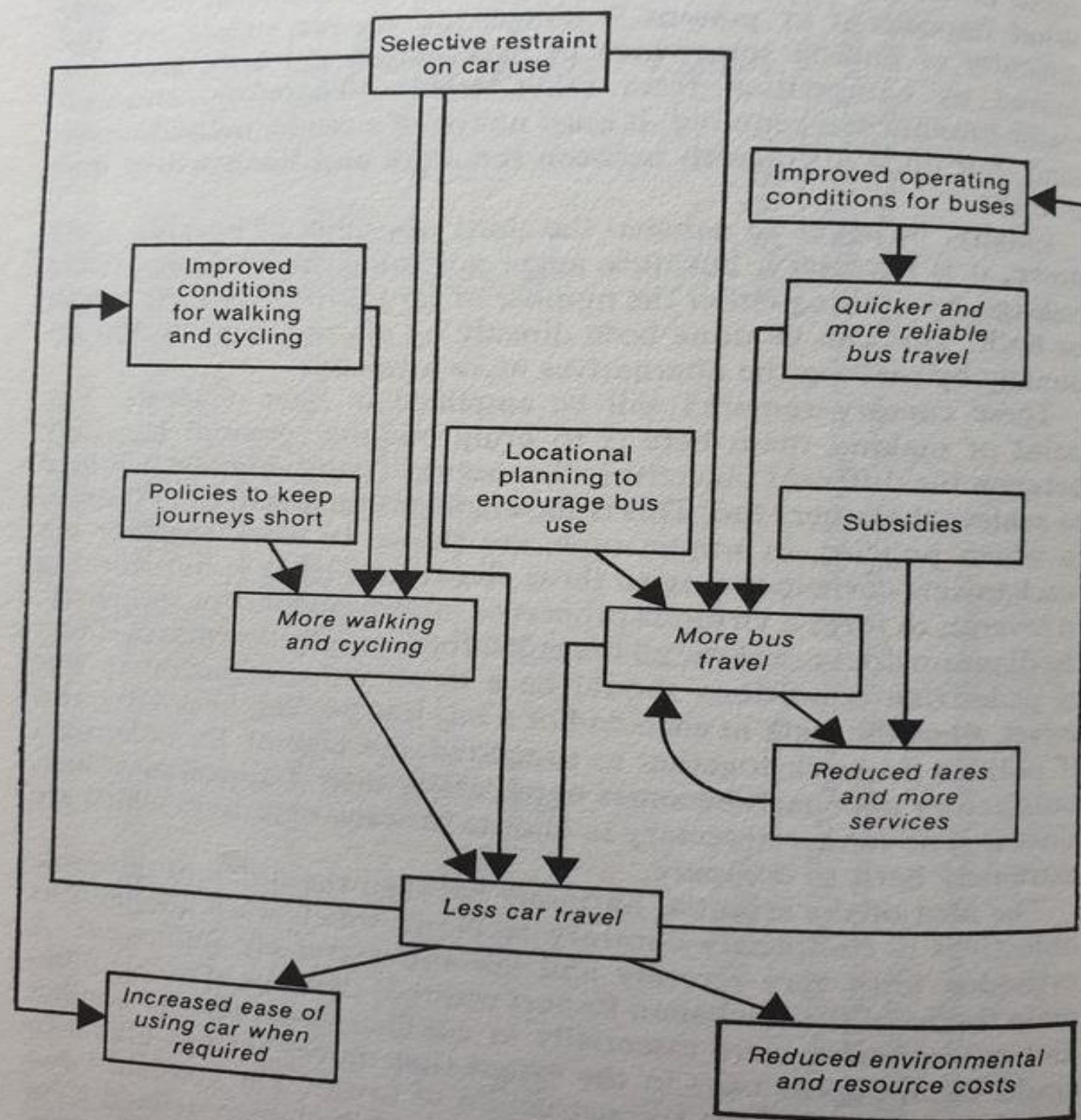
Document title



Virtuous Circles in Personal Transport

Presumption in favour of “soft measures”

Policies to keep journeys short



Bristol Transport

- Congestion
- Illegal Air Quality
- Collapsing bus market
- High levels of car ownership
- Cautiousness of the ex-Mayor
- Widespread dissatisfaction with transport
- Housing Crisis



Transport priorities for the city - rebalance

1. Citywide strategy, raise revenue to manage demand and fund other options
2. Disabled people and transport accessibility
3. Neighbourhood streets
4. Parking and vehicle management
5. Rebalancing transport hierarchy

Summary “thread of threads” on Twitter:

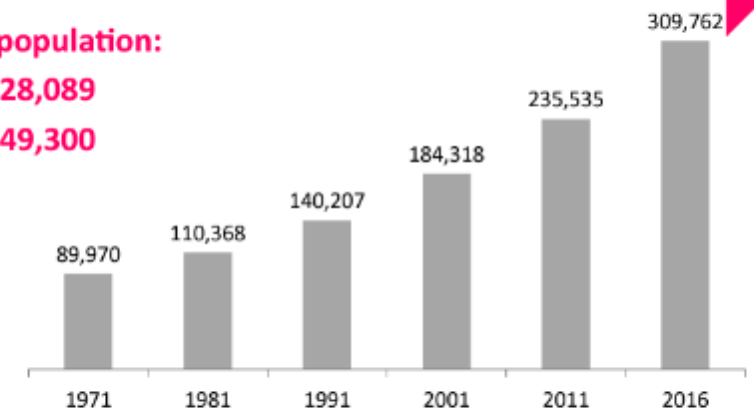
<https://x.com/RobBryher/status/1785592649069535324>

The number of cars and vans owned in Bristol has tripled

Bristol population:

1971: 428,089

2015: 449,300



The number of cars and vans owned in Bristol has tripled over the past 40 years. The percentage of households without a car has dropped from 49% to 29% in the same period, well below the core city average of 38%.

SOURCES: BCC (2016), Department for Transport (2017), National Census (2011).

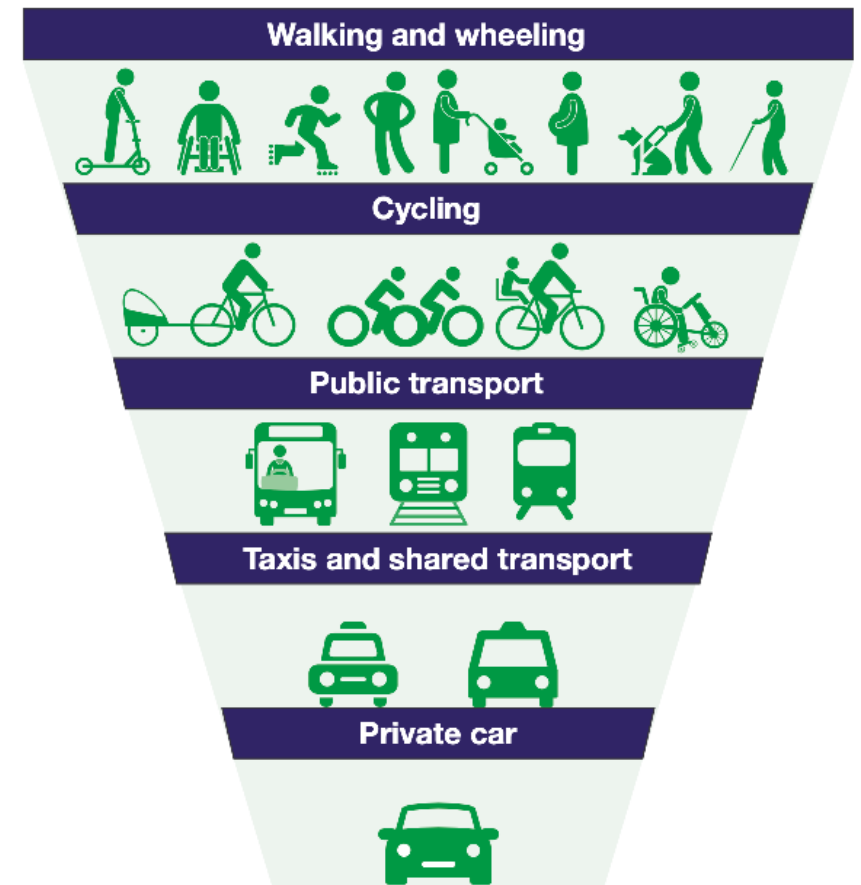
(Ed) - Information to Include: Policy for Transport, University of Bristol & Bristol City Council

Transport priorities for the city - rebalance

1. Citywide strategy, raise revenue to manage demand and fund other options
2. Disabled people and transport accessibility
3. Neighbourhood streets
4. Parking and vehicle management
5. Rebalancing transport hierarchy

Summary "thread of threads" on Twitter:

<https://x.com/RobBryher/status/1785592649069535324>



Transport priorities for the city

Citywide strategy, revenue-raising to fund other options

- Workplace parking levy
- Bus franchising (WECA)
- Vision Zero - road safety (One City)
- Transport and travel plan
- Circulation plan
- Kerbside Strategy (Supplementary Planning Document to new Local Plan)
- Greater priority to transport/mobility in the planning system
- 20mph as default
- Review mass transit options (preference for overground)
- Keep clean air zone under review
- Recruitment to improve capacity of City Design Team



Transport priorities for the city

Disabled people and transport accessibility

- Include disabled people and disabled people's organisations in transport decisions, rather than as an afterthought.
- Aim to reduce traffic overall so disabled people who use cars have more space on our streets.
- Increase access to our high streets by providing additional disabled parking spaces.
- Ban pavement parking in areas without parking restrictions
- Work with bus operators for more flexible use of space
- Ensure good training for bus and taxi drivers
- Review rail station accessibility (Parson Street and Lawrence Hill ramp access)



Transport priorities for the city

Neighbourhood streets

- Targeted highway maintenance and repair budgets (increase if possible)
- School Streets
- Liveable, low-traffic neighbourhoods (East Bristol and South Bristol schemes)
- 15/20-minute neighbourhoods (longer term aim)



Transport priorities for the city

Parking and vehicle management

- New parking management schemes (also known as residents' parking schemes)
- Weight-based pricing system for vehicle permits (used in Paris)
- Accessible, loading, car club and visitor pay-and-display in parking management areas
- Expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- TRO powers to ban pavement parking in other areas
- Increase Civil Enforcement Officers
- Clear process for on-street uses (kerbside) = cycling parking, parklets, TIER scooters/bikes



FIRST STEPS AND PRIORITIES

- A. Delivering current projects by 2027 (£540m)
- B. Generating Revenue
- C. Prioritisation of investment in public transport
- D. Kerbside and parking strategy
- E. Network/Circulation plan – including buses, bike, walking and wheeling
- F. Implementation of “Liveable Neighbourhoods”



Challenges

- A. Local government austerity > officer capacity
- B. Prioritisation of policy proposals
- C. New committee system and finding common ground and overlap with Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA)
- D. Expectation management
- E. Public support for schemes > low-traffic/liveable neighbourhoods



The importance of evidence...

- Key tenet of Green Party Policy making
- Fundamental to Public Health
- Overwhelming consensus about the need for Sustainable Transport
- Growing body of health evidence about Air Quality
- To counter beliefs and opinions

In defence of LTNs: Transport Planning Society writes to Prime Minister

Transport planners urge continued support for active travel schemes to deliver the PM's priorities



Mark Moran

08 August 2023



Ben Plowden

The Transport Planning Society (TPS) has written to the Prime Minister expressing the support of transport planners for active and mode-shift schemes like Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs).

The transport planners have set out how active travel and mode-shift schemes such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods are not anti-car but pro-people and support the government's wider policy goals.

The letter is a response to Rishi Sunak's recent pledge to review 'anti-car' schemes. It was copied to transport secretary Mark Harper, Ben Goldsmith, chair of the Conservative Environmental Network, and Ruth Cadbury MP and Selaine Saxby MP, co-chairs of Cycling and Walking APPG.

... but,

- Road Building Bonanza
- 75% cut to Active Travel Budgets
- Lack of progress on decarbonising transport
- Increasing weight and size of vehicles
- “Birthday buses”
- Motornormativity

Cars are rewiring our brains to ignore all the bad stuff about driving



Photo by Aaron Ontiveroz / MediaNews Group / The Denver Post via Getty Images

/ A new study reveals how unconscious bias leads us to neglect negative externalities of driving. You may call it ‘car brain,’ but this research team calls it ‘motornormativity.’

By [Andrew J. Hawkins](#), transportation editor with 10+ years of experience who covers EVs, public transportation, and aviation. His work has appeared in The New York Daily News and City & State.

Jan 31, 2023, 9:13 PM GMT



88 Comments (88 New)



News

Hammersmith
Fulham
A 219
ULEZ
Wandsworth →
ULEZ FROM 25th OCT

Sunak to review low traffic neighbourhoods



Our plan for
DRIVERS

Slamming the brakes on
anti-motorist measures.

**LONG-TERM
DECISIONS**
FOR A
BRIGHTER FUTURE



More challenges –

Modelling Assumptions

- Core DfT scenarios
 - cost of car use relatively declining over time
 - cost of public transport increasing
- Any project to reduce capacity of cars has a poor BCR (Business Case)
- 2004 Transport Management Act – duty to tackle congestion
- Bridges and swimming
- Bristol – “crucible of wokery” – one size fits all? Within the city and in comparison with elsewhere

The increasingly unsustainable cost of UK public transport

Change in financial cost of travel in the UK from May 2011 to April 2021, by type and compared to the cost of living



Motoring costs include fuel, tax & insurance, purchase and maintenance.

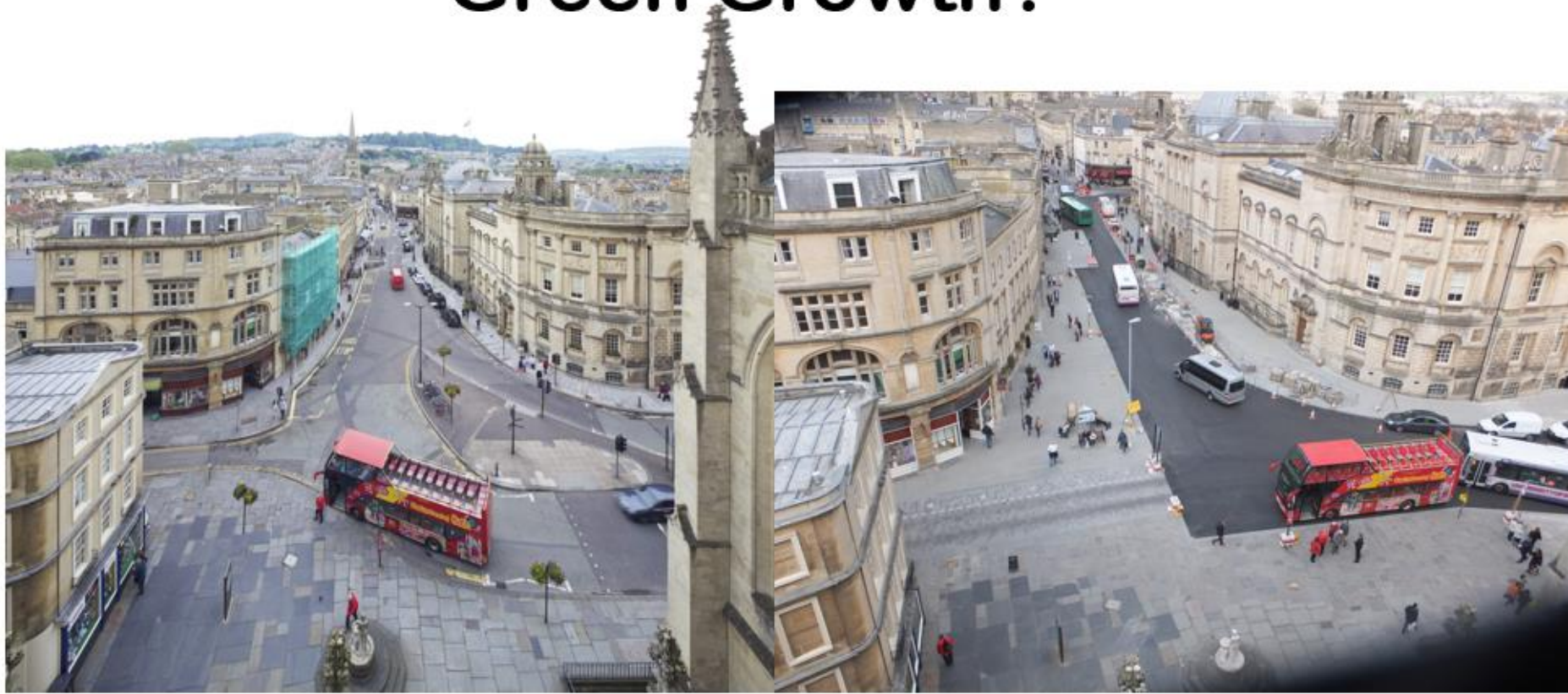
* Retail Price Index

Source: RAC Foundation analysis of ONS data



statista

Green Growth?

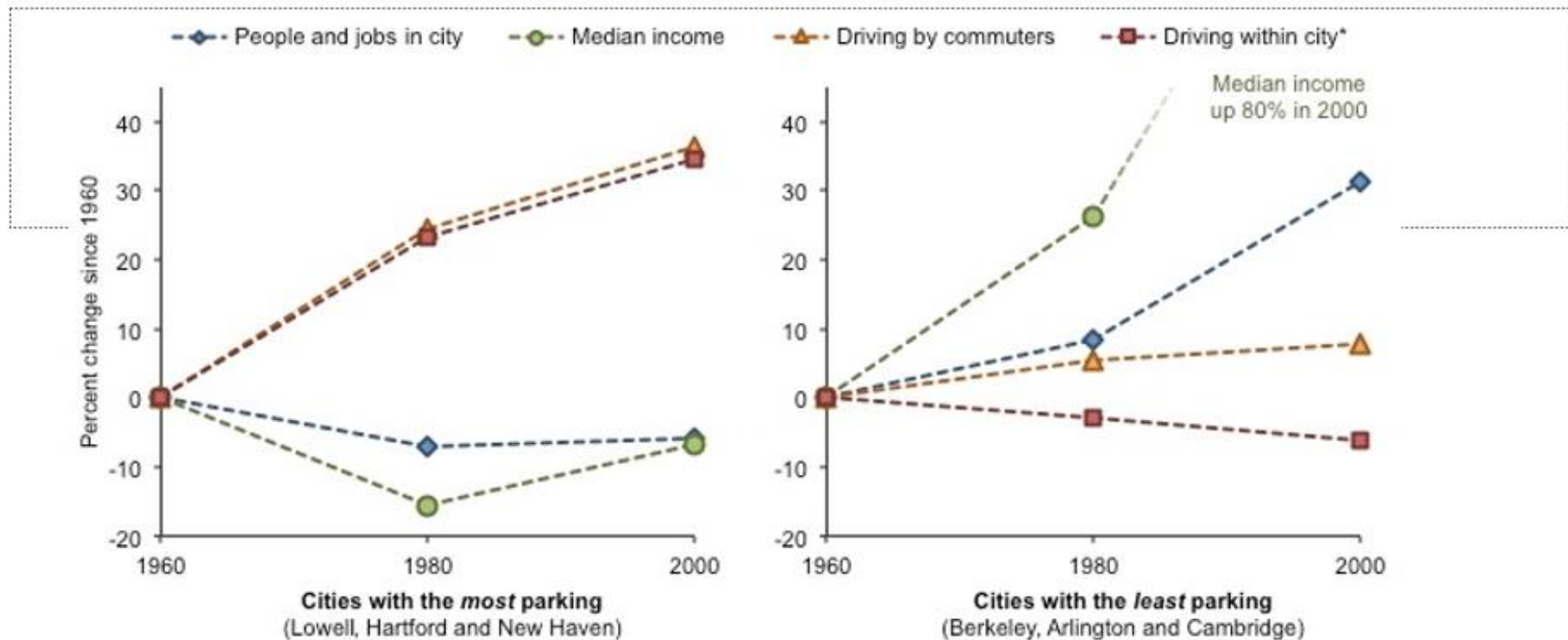


Improved urban realm
5-15% Boost to economy (DfT)
Improved Personal safety and overall health

Bath City Centre –
evidence of decreased
voids and increased
retail turnover



**Queens Square – 30% vacant 1992, 0% since 2002
Property values increased by 16% over inflation**



Cities that promoted parking on the left

Those that consciously restricted it on the right:

Researchers' conclusions: Giving lots of land to parking is bad for economic growth – it ends up as unproductive space.

Research into practice

- How to prioritise ?
- What is the most potent mix for rapid decarbonisation?
- Raising revenue
 - Council Tax Precepts
 - Work Place Parking Levy
- Achieving balance – carrots and sticks
 - addiction to parking revenue

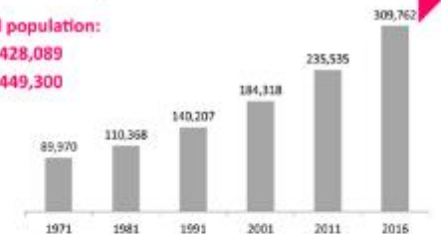
Transport priorities for the city

1. Citywide strategy, revenue-raising and mass transit
2. Disabled people and transport accessibility
3. Neighbourhood streets
4. Parking and vehicle management
5. Rebalancing transport hierarchy

Summary "thread of threads" on Twitter:
<https://x.com/RobBryher/status/1785592649069535324>

The number of cars and vans owned in Bristol has tripled

Bristol population:
1971: 428,089
2015: 449,300



The number of cars and vans owned in Bristol has tripled over the past 40 years. The percentage of households without a car has dropped from 49% to 29% in the same period, well below the core city average of 38%.

SOURCES: BCC (2016), Department for Transport (2017), National Census (2011).

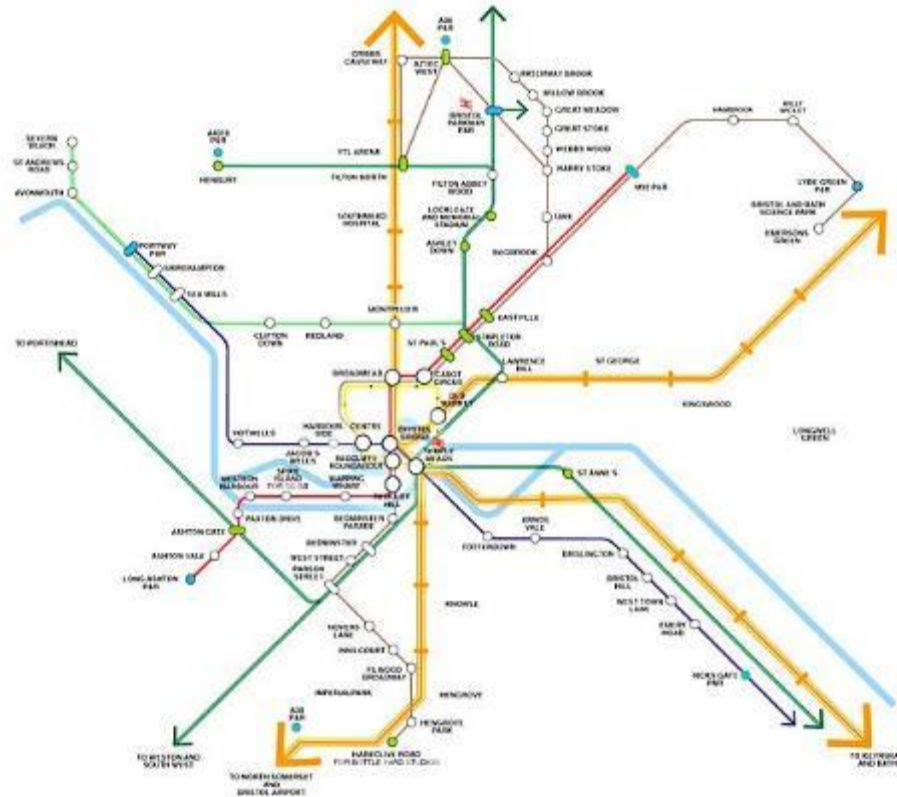
Research into practice

- Soft measures (revenue) vs Hard measures (capital) (+LTN1/20)
- Carbon Accounting and Net Zero
 - Network effect
- Materials – new, repair and managed decline
- Density of cities and height of developments for health



Mass Transit

Bristol public transport network vision



NEWS

Home | InDepth | Israel-Gaza war | Cost of Living | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | P

England | Local News | Bristol

Bristol underground: Mayor says studies show it is viable

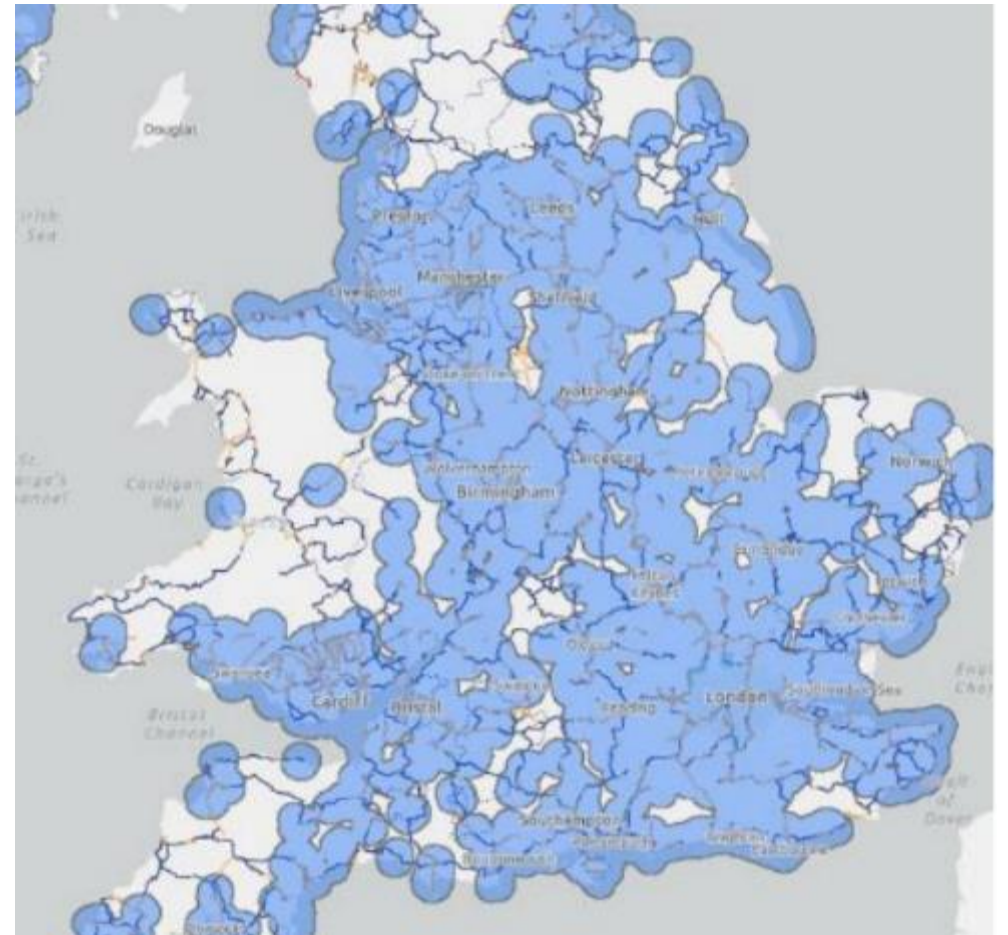
GREENS CALL FOR ALL OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED ON MASS TRANSIT

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE TRANSPORT 11.03.22



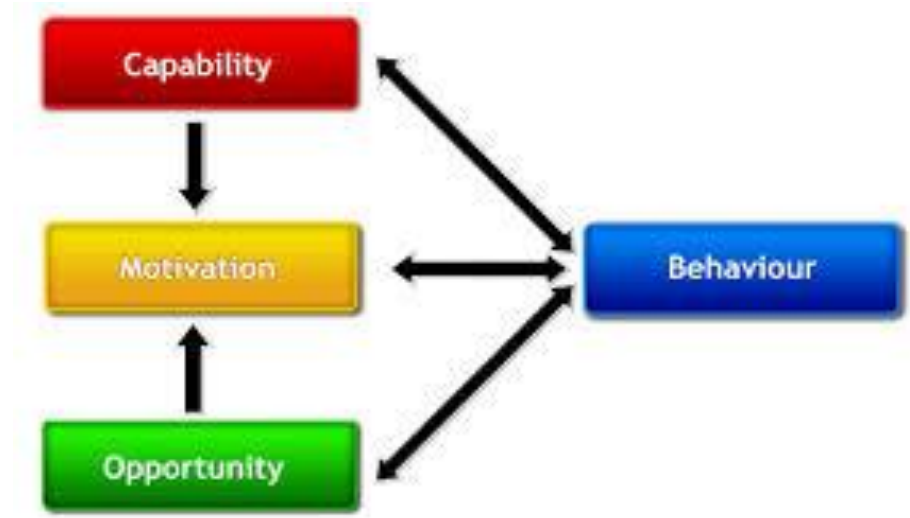
Sustrans perspective

- Potential of e-bikes
- Mapping conventions for active travel (NAPTAN for buses)
- TSRGD for active travel
- Measuring Active Travel (or stopping/lingering)



Need for evidence

- How do we frame the debate – challenge conspiracy theories?
- How do we *set/sell* a compelling vision?
 - Or take the suburbs with us?
- Preaching to the converted?
- Marketing to individuals
 - Theory of planned behaviour, COM-B
- Or changing social practices



Decide and Provide

- Strategic Case over Economic case
- How to put this in place
- Best of current appraisal, or..
- ... a whole new approach to streets?

- No longer in opposition



Dear Gandalf

I was really hoping you had your magic wand ready but completely understand that it is worn out trying to make things happen. I will watch with interest !

Cllr.ed.Plowden@bristol.gov.uk

@edplowden

