Transport and the rural economy

Gordon Stokes
What I’ll talk about

• Overview of rural transport
  – Travel behaviour
  – Opinions on rural transport

• Rural transport futures

• Rural transport and the economy
  – Rural and inter-urban transport
The problem

• Rural areas have a polarised travel pattern:
  – Some have no car and poor accessibility, while others with low incomes spend a great deal to run a car
  – Many contribute greatly to carbon emissions
• It’s far easier to change travel behaviour in urban areas

• But if we ignore the problem:
  – Rising fuel prices may make costs of running cars (for the poor) more difficult
  – Rural areas will contribute a disproportionate amount to carbon
  – It is likely to damage rural economies
Rural people make slightly more trips, spend slightly more time travelling …

But travel much further

Source – Analysis of NTS 2008
Virtually all this distance difference is due to more use of cars

- But people in villages and hamlets travel further by rail

Source – Analysis of National Travel Survey 2008
People on low incomes in rural areas spend a large amount of their income on running cars

- Average spend per week on motoring and on public transport fares

Source – Expenditure and Food Survey 2006-8  NB – *Some sample sizes are small*
Extra spend needed for Minimum Income Standard over and above urban spend

- All except pensioner households in rural towns were felt to need a car
- 2 adults with children needed one each
- Source – Minimum Income Standards (Rural) Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2010
The needs and benefits of public transport

• Small proportion of rural people don’t have cars (but it varies)

• Those who don’t are mainly elderly

• Many on low incomes find they have to have a car, and many have two or more

• Public transport vital for access to work and training, especially by young people
Summary of rural travel behaviour

- Greater access to cars
  - but for people on low incomes, ownership is often a necessity because of
    - lack of other modes
    - greater distances to access services and jobs

- Car running costs somewhat higher
  - higher cost of some remote petrol stations
  - but petrol spending per car only 10% higher

  - the problem is mainly for the rural poor and those without cars
  - and those who rely on vehicles for business

- BUT Highly polarised
  - HIGH Mobility is accompanied by LOW Accessibility
Public transport seen as most important "for improving life in your local area"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Less Sparse Town</th>
<th>Less Sparse Village</th>
<th>Less Sparse Hamlet</th>
<th>Sparse Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>Activities and facilities for teenagers 19</td>
<td>Activities and facilities for teenagers 20</td>
<td>Public transport 34</td>
<td>Public transport 30</td>
<td>Public transport 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Level of Crime 17</td>
<td>Public transport 20</td>
<td>Shopping facilities 21</td>
<td>Road maintenance 22</td>
<td>Job prospects 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Facilities for young children 15</td>
<td>Shopping facilities 15</td>
<td>Road maintenance 15</td>
<td>Road Safety 18</td>
<td>Shopping facilities 18</td>
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<td>4th</td>
<td>Job Prospects 12</td>
<td>Facilities for young children 12</td>
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<td>Shopping facilities 13</td>
<td>Affordable decent housing 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Road maintenance 11</td>
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- Graph shows the top priorities for each of the five area types, colour coded by issue.

Source – CRC Rural Insights Survey 2009
Transport issues as viewed by the rural disadvantaged

- The main disadvantage
  - restricted access to employment and social opportunities
  - a prism through which other disadvantage can be seen

- Public transport - poor timing, costliness and lack of information
- Increased reliance on cars (with higher costs)
- No street lighting, road drainage or road gritting adds to sense of isolation and disadvantage

“...without a car it's appalling – impossible to conduct a life really! You’d have to really plan ahead and basically you would be reliant on lifts from neighbours and friends.”

Survey of 12 groups of disadvantaged people in rural areas – 6 in areas of general disadvantage, and 6 in more affluent areas close by. Research in Autumn 2008
“Major life events” where transport impacts seriously on people’s lives

• Cancer treatment - frequency of need to get to hospital - inability to drive
• Stroke – response times for ambulance – families’ ability to get to stroke centre, travel for after care - ability to get to out-patient appointments (if able to).
• Job loss - if money is tight, car is first thing to go - getting to jobcentre, getting to interviews, travelling to the job if gained especially for shift workers
• Young carers - vast majority cannot drive, so rely on parents (who may be the ones cared for), or public transport (cost) – some too young to travel on their own

Qualitative research carried out with people experiencing various potentially life changing situations in rural areas. Research carried out in 2009
Motorways and rural increasing much faster than urban
Capacity reached in many towns and cities
60% of car travel is in or through rural areas

Source – DfT Transport Statistics
Rural – 19% of population – 30% of car mileage

- Rural people on low incomes drive roughly their “fair share”
- Rural people on high incomes driver much further than their “fair share”

• But it’s high income people that account for the ‘extra’
Transport Futures

• Key drivers with ‘constancy’ likely
  – Ageing population
  – Impact of engine technology and improving fuel efficiency

• Key drivers with less predictability
  – Economic performance
  – Government policy reaction to climate change
  – The spatial planning regime

• Shaw and Stokes (2011) How will rural people be travelling in 2030? – Scenarios and implications for transport policy
The three Futures scenarios

• Economic growth at any cost
  – No road charging but expensive fuel, service decline, and polarisation

• The Green Countryside
  – Reduction in car use, reverse of counterurbanisation

• Rural growth
  – Development along corridors, more homogeneous countryside, greater planned investment in public transport
Futures Recommendations

- Car likely to remain dominant mode of travel, but should be no ‘necessity’ for more than one, and car may become electric
- Need for alternatives – credible interurban public transport system with intermodal linkages
- Maintenance of service outlets – ICTs will not provide the answer to all access needs
What happens if we do nothing?

• A very significant proportion of car travel will be difficult to reduce
• Clean technology won’t be widespread for another 25 years or so
• Cheaper car travel in rural areas would help the rural poor *a bit*, but encourage greater car use and emissions
• Fuel prices *will* rise – many in rural areas would suffer disproportionately, especially those with lower incomes and the elderly
• Rural economies will suffer when fuel prices affect attractiveness of rural areas
What could we do?

• Technology – cleaner engines

• Improve intercity public transport

• Encourage mix of modes including non motorised

• Improve local services
• Capitalise on the Big Society?
Scope for the Big Society

• Community transport already exists
  – Potential for more, or saturation already in some areas?

• Advice from professionals
  – Will communities listen to (or be able to get) realistic advice about likely demand?

• Who will volunteer?
  – Stability and security are key to volunteering
  – Cutbacks add to insecurity?
Investment – what do we mean?

• Doing something that ...  
  – brings a return in the future  
  – enables the economy to work better

• All investment involves a mix of capital investment and revenue commitment
Transport investment – in a rural context?

• Economy damaging issues for rural and interurban transport
  – Lack of accessibility for those without cars and cost of car travel
  – High carbon emissions from rural car use
  – Congestion on inter-urban roads
  – Inter-urban carbon footprint
How different solutions impact on main problems

### Problems related to travel in and through rural areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential solutions</th>
<th>Lack of accessibility for those without access to cars</th>
<th>High carbon emissions from rural car use</th>
<th>Congestion on inter-urban roads</th>
<th>Inter-urban carbon footprint</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology that reduces vehicle emissions</td>
<td>No effect</td>
<td>Reduction in emissions</td>
<td>No effect</td>
<td>Reduction in emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-urban transport network with rural stops</td>
<td>Benefit to a proportion</td>
<td>Small reductions in emissions</td>
<td>Reduced</td>
<td>Reduction in emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local rural public transport provision</td>
<td>Better local accessibility</td>
<td>Possible small scale modal shift</td>
<td>Negligible effect</td>
<td>Negligible effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-urban public transport with local rural transport links</td>
<td>Better local accessibility</td>
<td>Reduction in emissions</td>
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- Technology won’t solve rural problems
- Local transport provision won’t help national problems
- Need to have policies that will help both
Networks of transport provision

• Network of inter-town and inter-city public transport services
  – with ‘staging points’ in rural areas can reduce the carbon footprint for interurban and some rural travel,

• A variety of local links to the main network
  – Demand responsive
  – Conventional buses
  – Community transport,
  – Walking and cycling,
  – Park and ride

• Information
Lincolnshire “InterConnect”

*Semi-flexible services that divert off the fixed route in response to passenger requests.* Listed are all the villages covered by these services, from within the orange tinted area of the map. If you live in any of these villages, call **0845 234 3344** to book your travel.

- Ashby by Partney
- Belchford
- Bleasby Moor
- Bunwell
- Claxby St Andrew
- Haltwham
- Kenwick
- Maidenwell
- Mareham on the Hill
- Miningsby
- Tattershall Thorpe
- Tumby
- Tumby Woodside
- Ulceby
- Well

*New type of bus service that operates only in response to pre-booked requests.* Listed are all the villages covered by this service from within the purple tinted area in the map above. If you live in any of these villages, call **0845 234 3344** to book your travel.

For villages connecting with Horncastle **Click Here**
For villages connecting with Spilsby **Click Here**

- Asgarby
- Ashby Puerorum
- Aswardby
- Halton Holegate
- Hameringham
- Hareby
- Roughton Moor
- Sausthorpe
- Scamblesby
Conclusions

• Immediate and long term rural transport problems are serious enough for economy to warrant action

• We must view transport investment ion a different way
Thank You

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