

Transport and the rural economy

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SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY AND THE ENVIRONMENT



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



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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

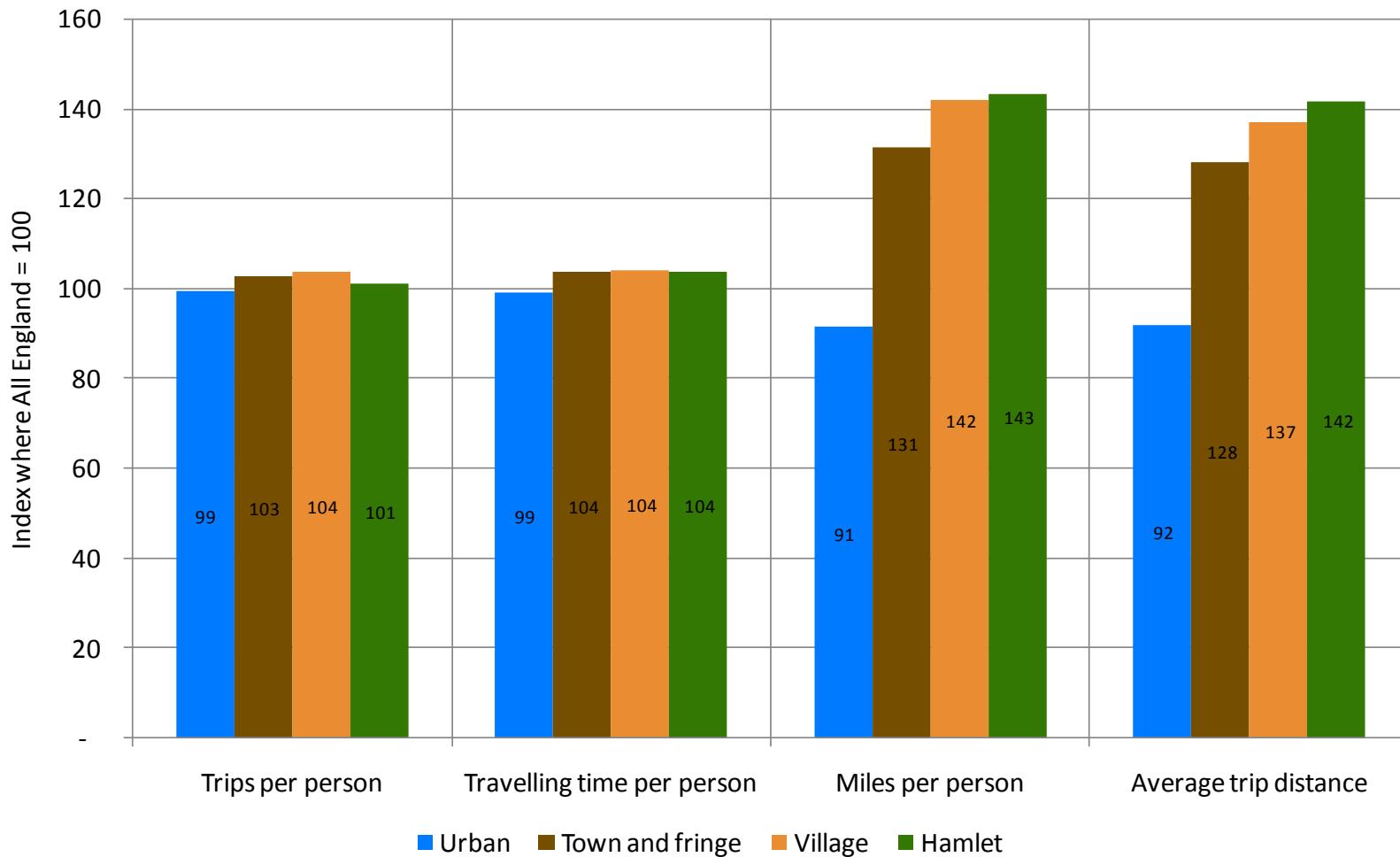


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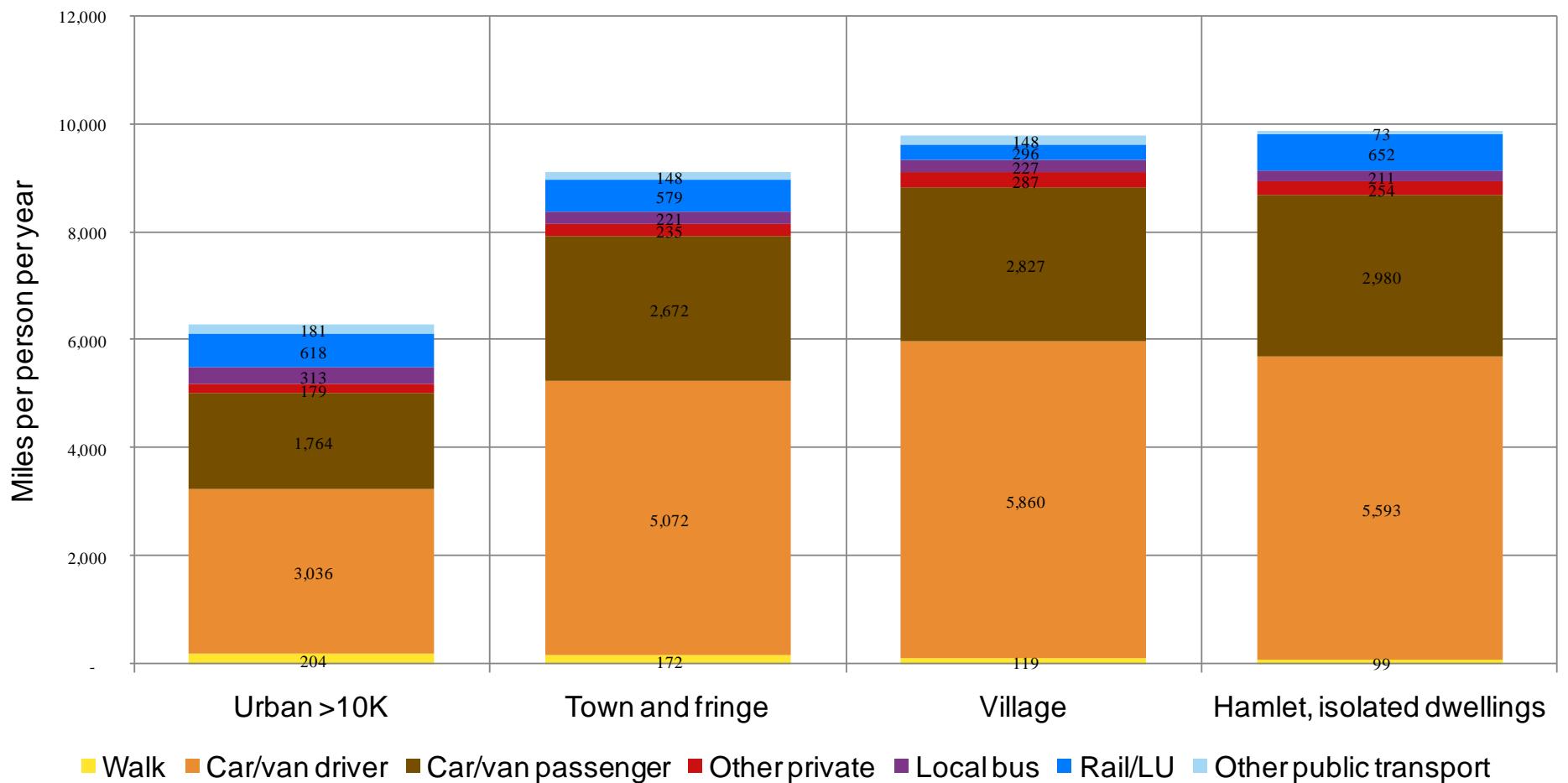
Rural - Similar trips and travel time – more miles

Index of numbers of trips, travelling time, total mileage and trip distance



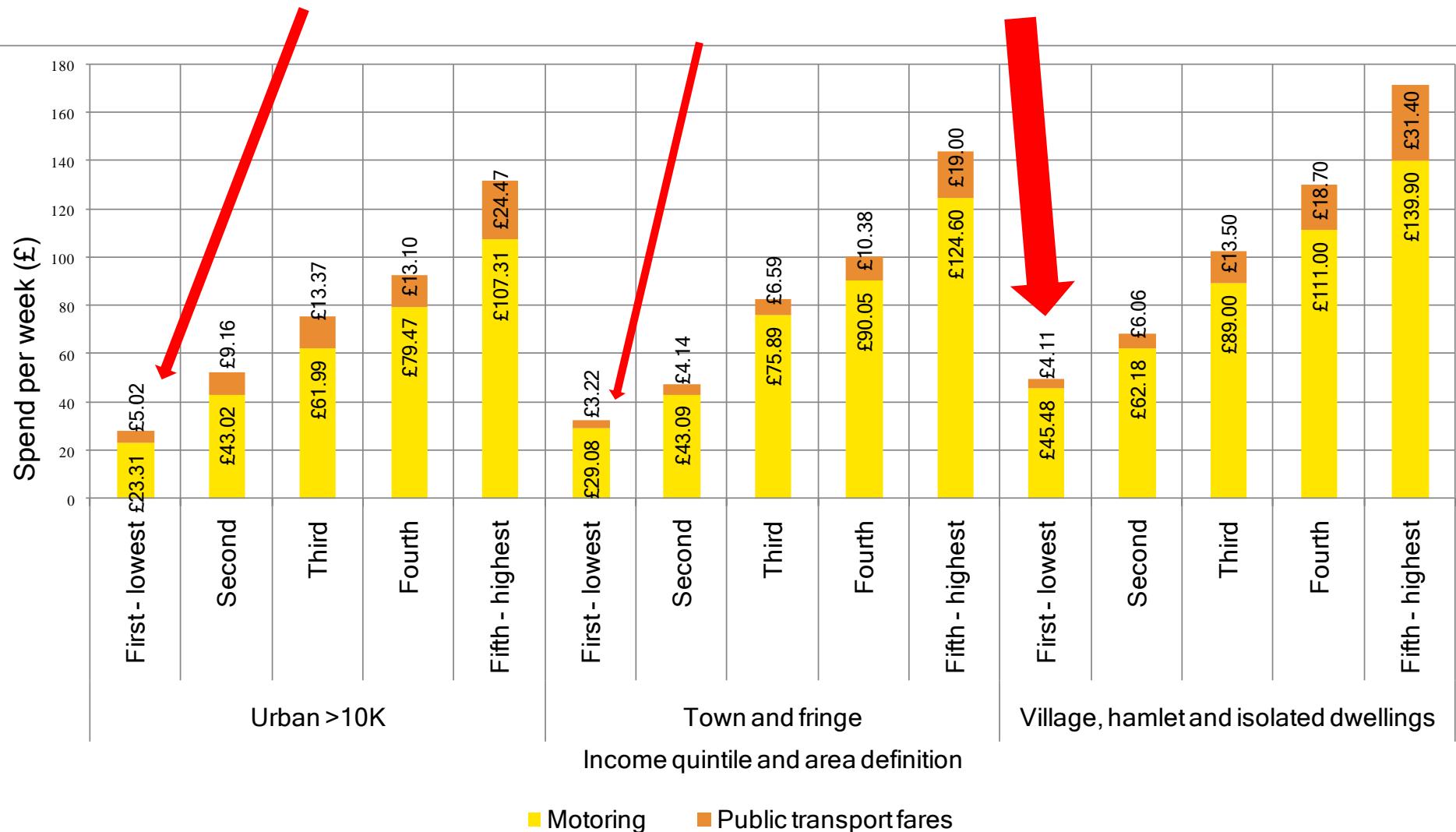
- Rural people make slightly more trips, spend slightly more time travelling ...
- But travel much further

Virtually all the extra distance is by car



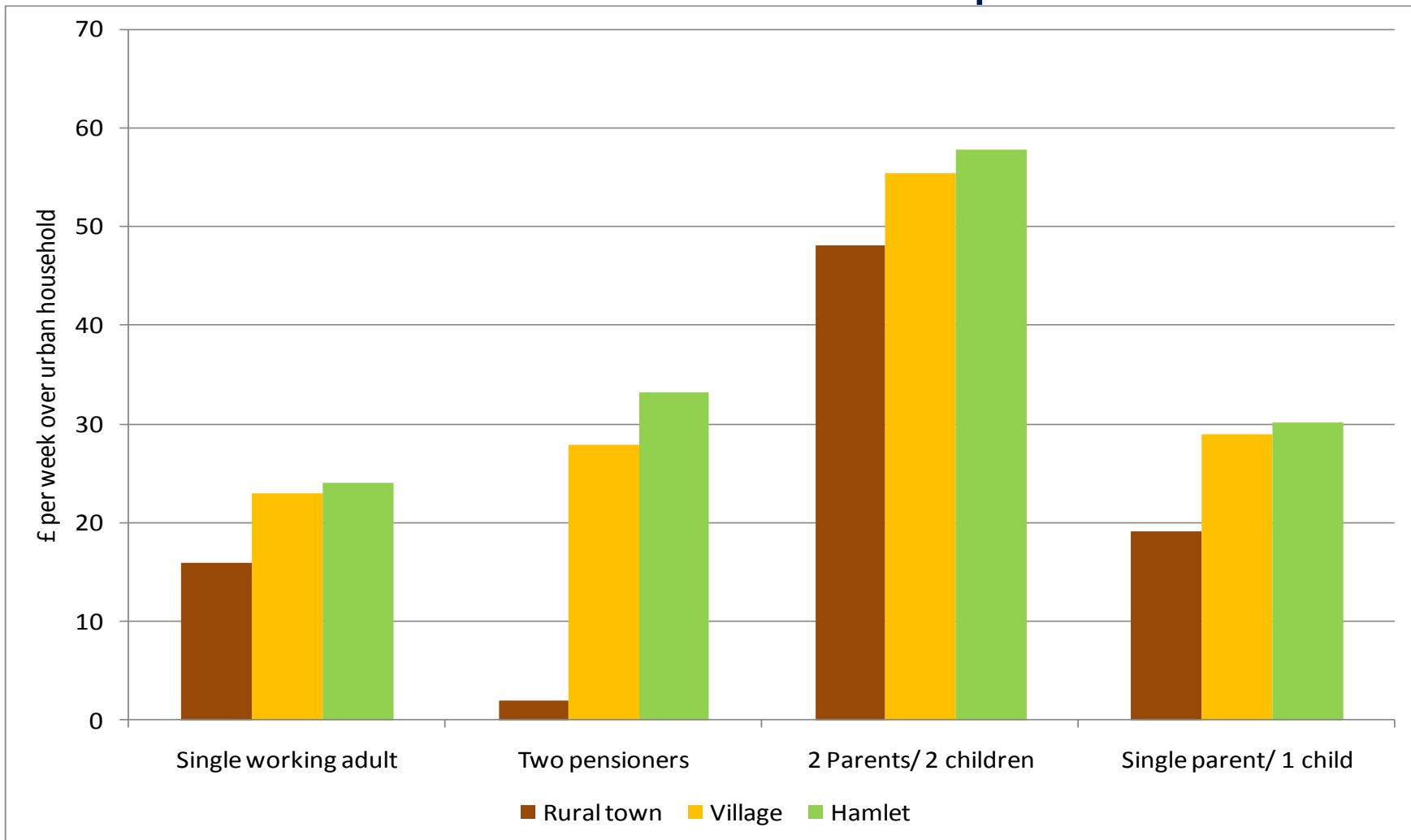
- Virtually all this distance difference is due to more use of cars
- But people in villages and hamlets travel further by rail

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

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



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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



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Public transport seen as most important “*for improving life in your local area*”

	Urban	Less Sparse Town	Less Sparse Village	Less Sparse Hamlet	Sparse Rural
Highest	Activities and facilities for teenagers 19	Activities and facilities for teenagers 20	Public transport 34	Public transport 30	Public transport 36
2 nd	Level of Crime 17	Public transport 20	Shopping facilities 21	Road maintenance 22	Job prospects 20
3 rd	Facilities for young children 15	Shopping facilities 15	Road maintenance 15	Road Safety 18	Shopping facilities 18
4 th	Job Prospects 12	Facilities for young children 12	Facilities for young children 12	Shopping facilities 13	Affordable decent housing 18
5th	Road maintenance 11	Road maintenance 12	Road Safety 11	Affordable decent housing 12	Activities and facilities for teenagers 13

- Graph shows the top priorities for each of the five area types, colour coded by issue.

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.”

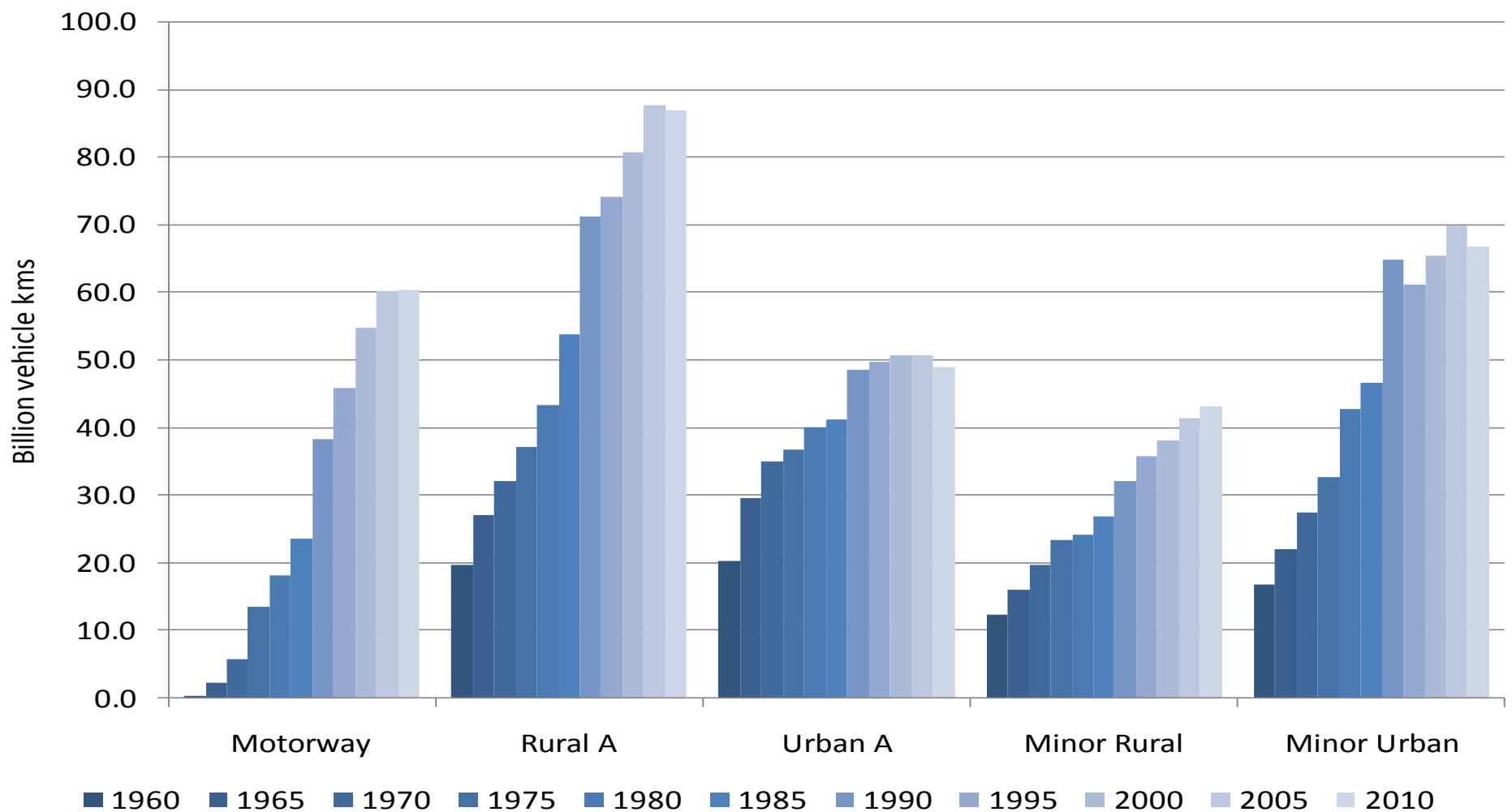
Survey of 12 groups of disadvantaged people in rural areas – 6 in areas of general disadvantage, and 6 in more affluent areas close by. Research in Autumn 2008

“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

Traffic growth 1960-2010



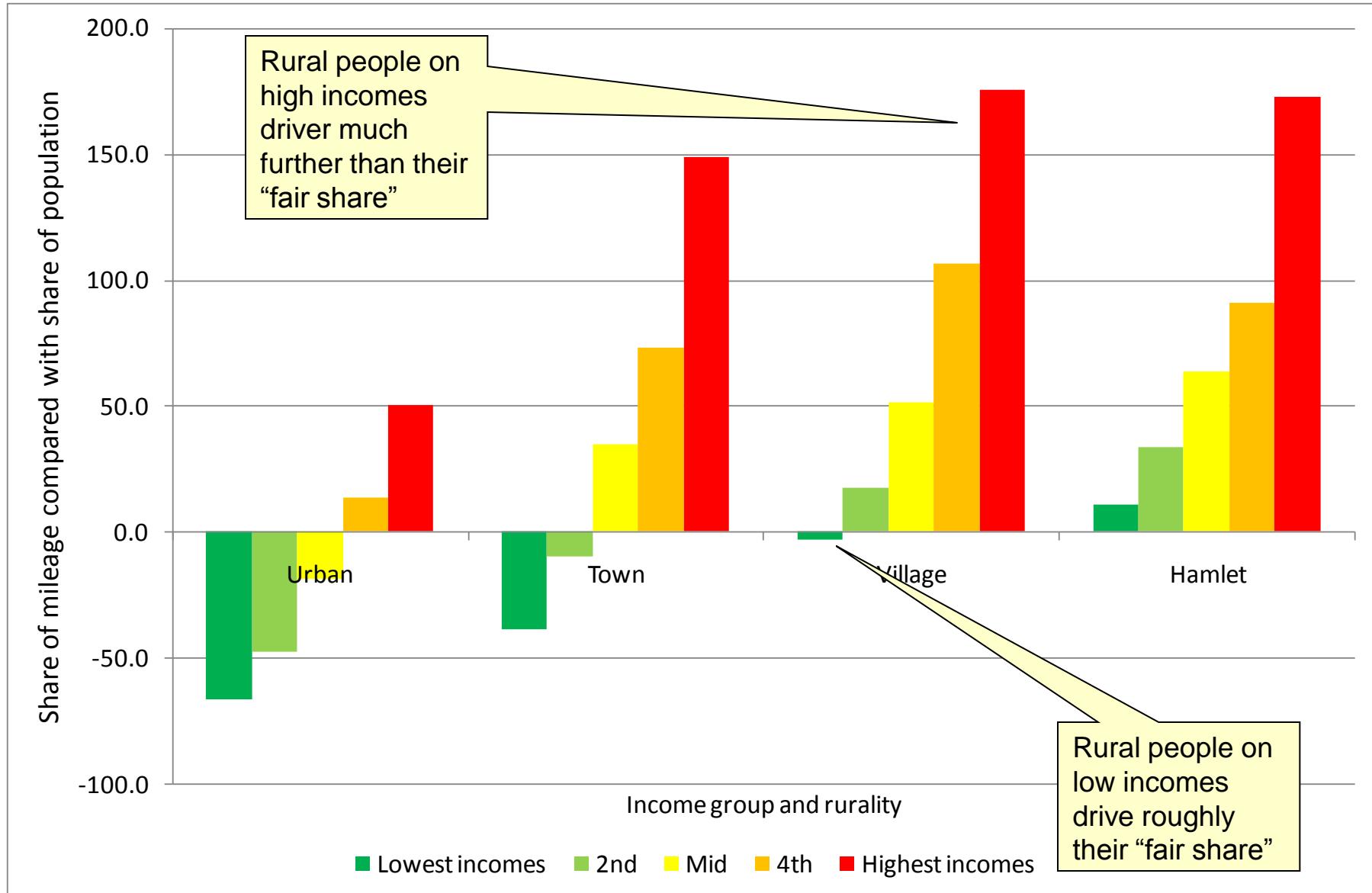
- Motorways and rural increasing much faster than urban
- Capacity reached in many towns and cities
- 60% of car travel is in or through rural areas



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Rural – 19% of population – 30% of car mileage



- 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
http://ruralcommunities.gov.uk/files/transport_2030.pdf

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



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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



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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



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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?



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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?



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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



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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



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How different solutions impact on main problems

Potential solutions

Problems related to travel in and through rural areas

	Lack of accessibility for those without access to cars	High carbon emissions from rural car use	Congestion on inter-urban roads	Inter-urban carbon footprint
Technology that reduces vehicle emissions	No effect	Reduction in emissions	No effect	Reduction in emissions
Inter-urban transport network with rural stops	Benefit to a proportion	Small reductions in emissions	Reduced	Reduction in emissions
Local rural public transport provision	Better local accessibility	Possible small scale modal shift	Negligible effect	Negligible effect
Inter-urban public transport with local rural transport links	Better local accessibility	Reduction in emissions	Reduced	Reduction in emissions

- 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

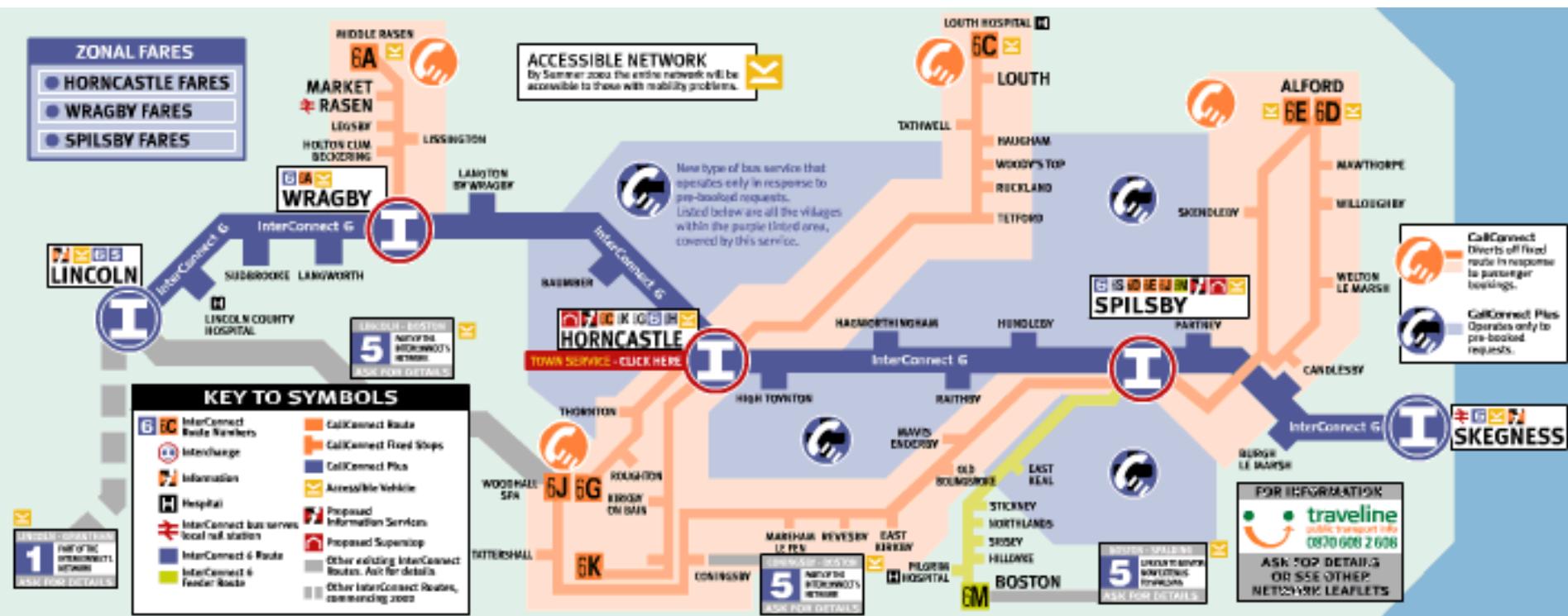
- Network of inter-town and inter-city public transport services
 - with ‘staging points’ in rural areas can reduce the carbon footprint for interurban and some rural travel,
- A variety of local links to the main network
 - Demand responsive
 - Conventional buses
 - Community transport,
 - Walking and cycling,
 - Park and ride
- Information



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Lincolnshire “InterConnect”



CallConnect

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
Burwell
Claxby St Andrew

Haltham
Kenwick
Maidenwell
Mareham on the Hill
miningsby

Tattershall Thorpe
Tumby
Tumby Woodside
Ulceby
Well

CallConnect Plus

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	Halton Holegate	Roughton Moor
Ashby Puerorum	Hameringham	Sausthorpe
Aswardby	Hareby	Scamblesby

Conclusions

- Immediate and long term rural transport problems are serious enough for economy to warrant action
- We must view transport investment in a different way



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Thank You

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