



# **FAIRLY REDUCING CAR USE IN SCOTTISH CITIES**

**A JUST TRANSITION FOR TRANSPORT  
FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS**

**Becca Massey-Chase,  
Stephen Frost, Lesley Rankin  
and Luke Murphy**

July 2022

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This paper was first published in July 2022. © July 2022

IPPR

14 Buckingham Street

London

WC2N 6DF

T: +44 (0)20 7470 6100

E: [info@ippr.org](mailto:info@ippr.org)

[www.ippr.org](http://www.ippr.org)

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Stephen Frost** and **Becca Massey-Chase** are co-head of participative research and principal research fellows at IPPR.

**Lesley Rankin** is a researcher in the energy, climate, housing and infrastructure team at IPPR.

**Luke Murphy** is associate director for the energy, climate, housing and infrastructure team and head of the Fair Transition Unit at IPPR.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project has been funded by Sustrans Scotland, as part of a Transport Scotland research grant. The grant funds projects that provide insights and analysis that benefit the delivery of Transport Scotland's active travel agenda, as well providing evidence to support the Scottish government's walking, wheeling and cycling policy frameworks.



We would like to thank Sustrans Scotland for their generous support of this research. This is an independent research paper and the views expressed are those of the authors only and do not reflect the position of Sustrans Scotland or Transport Scotland.

We would also like to thank our workshop participants and interviewees for the time and insights they shared with us, which have enriched this report.

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### Citation

If you are using this document in your own writing, our preferred citation is:  
Massey-Chase B, Frost S, Rankin L and Murphy L (2022) *Fairly reducing car use in Scottish cities: A just transition for transport for low-income households*, IPPR.  
<http://www.ippr.org/publications/fairly-reducing-car-use-in-scottish-cities>

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# SUMMARY

Transport in Scotland needs to change, with new policies that will reduce emissions, restore nature, and deliver better access to the things people need and care about. This is what we mean by a ‘just transition’ for transport. Too often, transport decisions are made without the active involvement of those currently disadvantaged by the transport system. It will not be possible to deliver a fair reduction in car use in Scotland without changing who policymakers listen to, and whose needs our streets are designed for.

During the research that led to this report, we spoke directly to people living on low incomes in Glasgow and heard the daily challenges they face, the role that transport plays in shaping their experience of the city, and their views on what a fairer, greener transport system would look like. We found that there is support for urgently addressing the climate emergency, reducing car use, and bold action to reallocate space to walking, wheeling, cycling, and socialising in their city.

After three decades of limited change in emissions from transport in Scotland, and a missed Scottish government target for carbon reductions in 2019, it is clear that not enough progress has been made in responding to the climate emergency. The challenge for policymakers and practitioners is now to deliver interventions at a pace and scale that transforms the experience of people getting around Scotland’s cities while radically reducing emissions. In just eight years, residents of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Perth, and Stirling should be able to feel the positive difference that transport decarbonisation plans have made to their cities, and to their own health and wellbeing.

People must be provided with better transport alternatives, alongside implementing measures reducing demand for private car use. Improved public transport, increased access to shared mobility and safer cycle routes should all be delivered as part of an integrated plan for reducing the distance travelled by cars.

Low-income households are lower carbon emitters; they are not driving the climate crisis, nor are they driving most of the cars that fill our cities. Understanding the challenges they face, and what is required to make the transport system work better for them, should be central to fairly and effectively transforming how people travel.

## FINDINGS FROM OUR RESEARCH

- More than half (56 per cent) of our survey respondents agree that reducing the amount that people need cars to travel would make Scotland a fairer country, compared to 29 per cent who disagreed.
- Over 60 per cent of respondents to our survey said they worried about being able to afford transport.
- Almost two-thirds (65 per cent) do not believe the needs of those on low incomes are considered in decisions about transport, compared to 23 per cent who thought they were.
- There is significant support from low-income households for a wide range of road space reallocation interventions alongside more affordable public transport.

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Set stretching targets and provide clarity on how they will be achieved.** All authorities should set out their own targets for reducing car use and city transport decarbonisation plans must clearly show how these targets will be met, and be accompanied by detailed equality impact assessments. The Scottish government and local authorities should set targets for the desirable size of the car fleet.
- **Deliver road space reallocation urgently and at scale,** with an emphasis on schemes that operate at a city-wide level. Where financial disincentives are put in place to reduce car use, the impacts on those on low incomes must be clearly assessed, with support put in place to make it possible for people to shift to different transport modes.
- **Create a public transport system that works for people on low incomes.** Reduce the cost of travel, ideally with free provision, and create more joined-up services across modes and operators. Increase accountability of services and tackle experiences of discrimination by improving staff training and feedback processes.
- **Engage the public.** Scottish cities should establish representative, deliberative processes engaging the public on transport decarbonisation and a forum specifically for the people most often marginalised within decision-making processes. There also need to be coordinated national and local public information campaigns that keep climate on the agenda and demonstrate the benefits of active and public transport.
- **Build capacity to deliver a transport system that works for low-income households.** Scottish government must align Scotland's public sector behind the goal of reduced car use and improving access to services and opportunities for those on low incomes. Commit to long-term revenue and infrastructure funding.



# INTRODUCTION

Transport is the largest source of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions and road transport is responsible for over two-thirds of these emissions. The Scottish government has set out its plan for reaching net zero by 2045. These targets require significant reductions in emissions from transport within the 2020s. Key to this will be delivering on the government's aim to reduce the overall distance travelled by cars by 20 per cent by 2030. Within this target there is a recognition that some parts of Scotland, particularly large urban areas, have the potential to go further than others.

Done well, this transformation of transport demand can be aligned with meeting a wide range of other environmental and social goals. This can be achieved if action is fair, seen to be fair, and those currently marginalised by the transport system are actively involved in shaping its future. Scotland's Just Transition Commission (2021) established that:

*“Building a transport system that is fair for everyone will need to be based on the principle of participation, and giving marginalised groups affected by any changes a voice.”*

This conclusion mirrors those put forward by IPPR's Environmental Justice Commission, a UK-wide and cross-party research programme that sought to understand the opportunities to align responses to the climate and nature crises with tackling existing social inequality and improving people's quality of life. The Environmental Justice Commission shared a commissioner with Scotland's Just Transition Commission and undertook significant work in Scotland, including delivering a citizens' jury which considered what a fair transition looked like for Aberdeenshire. In this report we seek to build on the work of both these commissions and engage with a group that is often marginalised in transport decision-making: low-income households.

A two-day deliberative workshop with residents of Glasgow with low incomes was central to our approach. 11 participants were selected to include regular car users and those with no access to a car. The group, six women and five men, covered a range of ethnicities, ages, locations within the city, and included residents with disabilities.

A national poll to capture the wider views of people from low-income households across urban areas of Scotland complemented our research into the lived experience of Glasgow residents. The poll reached the largest number of participants possible with this methodology, just under 500 people equally split by gender and covering a range of Scottish regions and other demographics. The sample is not large enough to claim this is representative of all low-income urban residents; it should be considered illustrative of their views.

Further evidence was also gathered through a rapid literature review and interviews with academics, practitioners, and policymakers from across the UK. More details on the deliberative workshop, polling and interviewees can be found in appendix A.

Our core objective in this research is to provide insights into how interventions designed to reduce car use in cities, particularly through the reallocation of road space, can meet the expectations and needs of people living on low incomes. The approach taken to decarbonisation will differ across the country, and similar work should be undertaken to understand the unique context of rural areas and with people from a breadth of backgrounds and a diversity of lived experiences. Our initial focus on cities reflects the potential for them to act quickly and the significant role they are likely to play in achieving the national target for reducing car use.

A recent, large-scale health impact assessment on road space reallocation in Scotland is unambiguous in concluding that such schemes have the potential to “improve population health, reduce health inequalities and contribute to other positive outcomes” (Teuton et al 2022). This is supported by the Just Transition Commission (2021):

*“Road space will need to be reallocated from car user towards other modes, offering the prospect of cleaner air, less congestion, fewer road traffic accidents, and improved population health.”*

#### REDUCING CAR USE AND REALLOCATION OF ROAD SPACE

The Scottish government’s Sustainable Travel Hierarchy prioritises pedestrians and wheelchair users, then cyclists, then public transport, with cars given lowest priority. Limiting the physical space available to cars creates opportunities to reallocate that space to provide infrastructure for active or public transport, or to meet other local needs such as retail or hospitality, space for play or green space (Teuton et al 2022). Types of initiatives that are designed to reallocate road space include reducing access to vehicles, road closures, giving over road or parking space to widen pavements or create cycle lanes, and limiting traffic in the streets surrounding schools at key times.

Beyond reallocation, other traffic reduction measures and limitations placed on vehicle use that workshop participants and interviewees discussed in this research included city-wide 20mph speed limits, low emission zones, pavement parking bans, and workplace parking levies.

# 1. CLIMATE ACTION AND THE NEED FOR A FAIRER TRANSPORT SYSTEM

## SCOTLAND'S PATHWAY TO NET ZERO RESTS ON RADICAL CHANGE IN TRANSPORT DEMAND IN THE 2020S

Scotland's climate change legislation sets a legally binding target to reach net zero in 2045, five years ahead of the rest of the UK. To ensure delivery of this target, the Scottish government have also set interim targets – including a 75 per cent reduction in emissions by 2030. These goals were set before the onset of Covid-19 and the widespread health, social and economic impacts of the pandemic. In the update to the climate change plan 2018–32 the government detailed how it will respond to both the climate emergency and the need to support a recovery from Covid-19:

*“Amid the enormous challenges of the global pandemic, the climate emergency has not gone away – far from it – and the Scottish government remains absolutely committed to ending Scotland's contribution to climate change by 2045 in a just and fair way. Indeed, it is central to our recovery. We have the opportunity to design a better future and, coming out of the pandemic, put things back together differently.”*

Scottish Government (2020a)

The Climate Change Committee has welcomed Scotland's focus on “a highly ambitious decade of decarbonisation” but has also emphasised that much greater clarity is needed on how the outlined policies will deliver the required emissions reductions (Climate Change Committee 2021). The targets are stretching, and prior to the pandemic were not on track to be met; in 2019 Scotland emissions were 51.5 per cent below 1990 levels against a target of a 55 per cent reduction (ibid).

Transport is responsible for the largest amount of greenhouse gases in Scotland, and very little progress has been made in reducing these emissions in the past three decades (Transport Scotland 2020a). Rapid and deep changes in demand are required in the short to medium term (IPCC 2022). Cars accounted for 39 per cent of Scotland's transport emissions in 2018 (Transport Scotland 2020a). To meet its climate targets, the Scottish government must transform how people access the things they need to support a good quality of life.

Scotland is unique amongst the UK nations in setting out a target for reducing the distance travelled by cars. By 2030 the distance travelled by car in Scotland must be reduced by 20 per cent (Scottish Government 2020a).<sup>1</sup> This goal reflects that technology alone cannot deliver the change in emissions needed; reducing car usage is also required (Transport Scotland 2022). Achieving this large-scale change in transport demand will require all the existing powers available to transport

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<sup>1</sup> This target is as a national goal and will not be applied in a uniform manner to each individual or region (Transport Scotland 2022).

policymakers, as well as wider changes in land use, digital access, and service design. Table 1.1 outlines the four sustainable travel behaviours that Scottish government policy must support across Scottish departments and in partnership with the UK government, local authorities, and regional transport bodies.

**TABLE 1.1: GOVERNMENT POLICY MUST SUPPORT PEOPLE TO ADOPT NEW SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL BEHAVIOURS TO DELIVER A REDUCTION IN CAR USE WITHIN EIGHT YEARS**

**A summary of the policy interventions proposed by Transport Scotland as part of delivering the target of a 20 per cent reduction in car kilometres by 2030**

Sustainable travel behaviour	Policy direction	Key interventions
Reducing the need to travel	Removing the need to travel entirely by providing greater access to goods and services through digital means.	Embedding this goal in the Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4); extending superfast broadband; combining mapping of digital and transport connectivity; promoting flexible working; establishing local work hubs; and delivering the NHS Scotland Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy.
Living well locally	Making it possible to access goods, services, amenities, and social connections within a local area.	Using NPF4 to ensure all future development supports this goal; investment in community-led regeneration; development of 20-minute neighbourhoods; promotion of the Place Standard Tool; defining the best approach to mobility hubs; and introducing more 20mph speed limits.
Switching modes	Encouraging and enabling people to walk, cycle and use public transport instead of a car.	Increasing investment in walking and cycling infrastructure; supporting greater access to cycles; improving road safety; introducing Low Emission Zones (LEZs); reviewing transport governance; establishing a commission to review public transport fares (and making bus travel free for under 22 year olds); investing in bus and rail; implementing the pavement parking ban; developing workplace parking levy guidance; and supporting education on climate change in schools.
Combining or sharing trips	Promoting the sharing of journeys with other people where cars are the only option for travel.	Investing in Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and promoting car sharing and car clubs.

Source: Authors' analysis of Transport Scotland (2022)

The Scottish government has already taken steps to deliver on these priorities. Support for the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods, the commitment to spend 10 per cent of the transport budget (or at least £320 million) on active travel by 2024/25, and a pandemic response that included emergency funding for travel infrastructure interventions ('Spaces for People') are all welcome policies, but more urgent and creative action is needed.

20-minute neighbourhoods provide an important hook for coordinating work across government departments, but run the risk of being the emperor with no clothes if talk isn't matched with money to deliver the new local facilities and services required to make them a reality. For successful active travel schemes, investment needs to be accompanied by new funding models and a push for scheme delivery at a pace, scale, and quality beyond previous programmes.

Spaces for People demonstrated what can be achieved quickly, and provided opportunities for cities like Glasgow to test and then make permanent successful schemes (Sweco 2021). However, polling for Disability Equality Scotland showed that 71 per cent of its members felt that the initial design of Spaces for People projects across Scotland made it ‘more difficult to get around’, pointing to details like missing drop kerbs and piecemeal implementation (Disability Equality Scotland 2020) – demonstrating the importance of embedding fairness in effective design.

### SCOTTISH CITIES WILL FIND IT EASIER TO DELIVER SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN CAR USAGE THAN RURAL AREAS

Edinburgh and Glasgow have set targets to reduce the distance travelled by cars in their cities by 30 per cent by 2030 (Edinburgh City Council 2021a and Glasgow City Council 2022a). These commitments have been made, in part, to support these cities’ goals of being carbon neutral by 2030 (Edinburgh City Council 2021b and Glasgow City Council 2019). The scale of the challenge in reaching these targets cannot be overstated, requiring coordinated effort across all parts of society, and supportive policies from both Scottish and UK governments.

Compared to rural areas, these cities will find it easier to rapidly reduce transport emissions. They have a better starting point for both digital and public transport connectivity; shorter journeys are far more common in cities than in rural areas; cities’ density makes it easier to improve access to local amenities and services; and, crucially, car ownership is much lower in cities than in the countryside. 46 per cent of households in Glasgow and Dundee and 41 per cent in Edinburgh do not have access to a car, compared to the Scottish average of 30 per cent (see figure 1.1). Despite this, almost 8 per cent of the total distance travelled by car in Scotland is within Glasgow (almost 2,800 million car kms) and over 6 per cent is within Edinburgh (close to 2,400 million car kms) (Transport Scotland 2022).

**FIGURE 1.1: IN THE LARGEST SCOTTISH CITIES MANY HOUSEHOLDS HAVE NO ACCESS TO A CAR**

Percentage of households who do not have access to a car by selected Scottish cities, compared to the average for local authorities in Scotland (2019)



Source: Authors’ analysis of Transport Scotland (2022)

People living in UK cities want measures to reduce car use. Sustrans' Bike Life (2019) research found that 55 per cent of the residents they surveyed agreed that there are too many people driving in their area and supported measures to reduce motor vehicle use. 59 per cent of residents agreed that restricting through-traffic on local residential streets would make their area a better place to live and work, and 56 per cent supported charging more polluting vehicles to enter city centres if the money raised helped to fund public transport, walking, and cycling services (ibid).

### GLASGOW: POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE

Glasgow has the largest traffic volume of Scotland's local authorities (GCPH 2022a). 25 per cent of land is allocated to roads; this is more than twice as high as Edinburgh (12 per cent), and higher than similar cities in England such as Manchester (18 per cent), Birmingham (17 per cent), and Leeds (16 per cent) (Glasgow Connectivity Commission 2019). Glasgow also has one of the highest numbers of car parking spaces per capita of any UK city (ibid). Vehicle emissions account for almost one-third of the city's carbon output (Glasgow City Council 2022b).



27 per cent of vehicle journeys in Glasgow are one kilometre or less (Glasgow City Council 2022b), almost 50 per cent of journeys are under 3km in length, and 70 per cent are less than 5km (Glasgow City Council 2021a). Compared to other large urban areas in Scotland, Glasgow has a slightly lower proportion of people who walk for journeys, and comparatively more people using public transport (ibid).



Transport governance in Glasgow is complex, with responsibility for Glasgow's transport system split across several organisations (Glasgow Connectivity Commission 2019); for example, the Council does not run, and has limited control, over public transport.

### THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM DOESN'T WORK FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

People living on low incomes tend to have higher exposure to the negative impacts of our transport system. Their neighbourhoods are more likely to have high levels of air pollution and high traffic levels, which reduce social interaction and create harmful noise pollution (Campaign for Better Transport 2012; Teuton et al 2022). People living in lower-income neighbourhoods are more likely to be killed or seriously injured on the roads (Aldred and Verlinghieri 2020), with children on foot or bike more than three times as likely to be involved in a traffic accident in the 20 per cent most deprived areas in Scotland than the 20 per cent least deprived areas (Quayle 2019).

People living on low incomes are more likely to suffer the negative impacts of cars despite being less likely to own or have access to a car. In Scotland, only 40 per cent of households with a net annual income of up to £10,000 have access to a car, compared with 97 per cent of those with an income of over £40,000 (Transport Scotland 2020b).

51 per cent of people from households with incomes up to £10,000 use the bus at least once a month, compared to 27 per cent of those with incomes over £50,000 (Transport Scotland 2020b). While people on low incomes are more likely to take the bus than those on higher incomes, they are less likely to be served by buses that meet their needs. Transport systems tend to be designed around the needs of commuters – prioritising journeys into the centre of towns and cities, with fewer services available for the more local trips, such as to the shops or for childcare (Transport Scotland 2020b; Poverty and Inequality Commission 2019). Almost one in 10 Glasgow Household Survey respondents said they never travelled to the city centre during the day, rising to 39 per cent during the evening (Glasgow City Council 2021). Those in social classes ABC1 were more likely than C2DEs to travel into the city at both times of day (ibid).<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, discounts for bulk purchasing, for example monthly passes, have high upfront costs, and night shift workers can be excluded from cheaper day tickets because their shift cuts across two days (Crisp et al 2018). Services are often run by multiple providers operating separate tickets; switching between providers to complete a journey results in multiple costs (McHardy and Robertson 2021).

Unavailability and unreliability of public transport particularly impacts families with young children, children with health conditions and disabled children, as alternative travel options are often scarce or unsuitable (McHardy and Robertson 2021).

Those on low incomes are particularly reliant on walking but are often subject to challenging environmental conditions (Lucas et al 2019). Crowding is higher and access to green space often lower in poorer than richer areas – making the quality of the street space even more important (Aldred et al 2021). Homes often lack safe and secure cycle parking, especially for people living in high-rise accommodation and social housing estates, and in places with high crime rates (Lucas et al 2019).

The actual travel of people on low incomes may not reflect their true travel needs (McHardy and Robertson 2021). Some travel is discretionary and, if someone cannot afford to travel, they may restrict their activities. High transport costs and poor transport services can limit people to places they can reach on foot, which can in turn cost them more than if they were able to reach a wider range of places and services. Low-income families report that being unable to afford transport results in long walks for shopping and isolation from support networks (ibid).

**Low-income households can be well-served by local, accessible amenities and opportunities; too often they are not**



Challenges with transport add to the complexity of navigating everyday life for low-income households. Trying to mitigate the effects of living on a low income, especially for parents and carers, requires significant management and planning, and unreliability or inconvenience of public transport has a significant impact (McHardy and Robertson 2021).

Low-income groups experience higher levels of ill health and have higher concentrations of older and mobility-impaired people, lone parent households and carers. Other intersecting characteristics include larger families, ethnic minorities, and young mothers. Travelling, especially on public transport, can be a vehicle for social interactions,

<sup>2</sup> A, B, C1, C2, D and E are socio-economic classifications produced by the UK Office for National Statistics. ABC1 includes higher and intermediate managerial, supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative, professional occupations. C2DE includes skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, unemployed, and lowest grade occupations.

but the challenges faced by many people on low incomes means that they are also often victims of discrimination, and can be anxious about interactions with others (McHardy and Robertson 2021).

Transport has the potential to either exacerbate or alleviate hardship. Affordable, reliable, accessible, safe transport supports people's ability to work, learn, participate in cultural and public life, access support networks and be physically and mentally healthy. For people living on low incomes these things can be harder won, and they stand to gain significantly from making our transport system more equitable as well as greener.

### TRANSPORT POVERTY

Transport poverty does not have a single agreed definition or measurement; it broadly refers to households and individuals who struggle or are unable to make the journeys that they need (Gates et al 2019). Being on a low income, poor availability of public transport, and taking a long time to access essential goods, services, or employment all contribute to this. Car ownership places significant pressures on household finances, while poor alternatives to accessing key services put communities at risk of exclusion (Sustrans 2016). Transport poverty is not the same as living on a low income. It occurs when social disadvantage intersects with transport disadvantage to make people's lives more difficult. Low-income households can be well-served by local, accessible amenities and opportunities; too often they are not.

## 2. FINDINGS: PRINCIPLES FOR FAIRLY REDUCING CAR USE IN SCOTTISH CITIES

Below, we present findings from our research as six principles that should inform the approach taken to fairly reducing car use and reallocating road space in Scottish cities (see table 2.1 for a summary). While the policy and cultural contexts across the UK vary, these principles are relevant to all urban areas and governments in their aims to reach net zero and reduce dependence on, and demand for, cars. They should also be of interest to authorities considering how to deliver a fair transition for transport in rural areas.

Our research has focussed on the needs and expectations of those on low incomes. Low-income households contain many different lived experiences – their insights are helpful in considering how the transport system can work better for young or old, families, women, people with physical or invisible disabilities and people from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

TABLE 2.1: SUMMARY – PRINCIPLES FOR FAIRLY REDUCING CAR USE

<p>1. <b>Build on existing support</b> for climate action and desire for transformative change but <b>don't take it for granted</b>.</p>	
<p>2. Treat sustainable transport as a <b>public good</b> – one that everyone should be able to <b>access and afford</b>.</p>	
<p>3. Give people a <b>safer, more welcoming experience</b> of getting around their city, and <b>shift cultural norms about car ownership</b>.</p>	
<p>4. <b>Involve the public</b>, particularly the most vulnerable, in city wide climate action plans and <b>engage communities</b> in scheme design and delivery.</p>	
<p>5. Ensure action to decarbonise transport is being taken by <b>everyone</b> across society, and the <b>effort is fairly shared</b>.</p>	
<p>6. Embed the goal of <b>reducing car use</b> across all government strategies and <b>diversify the transport sector</b>.</p>	

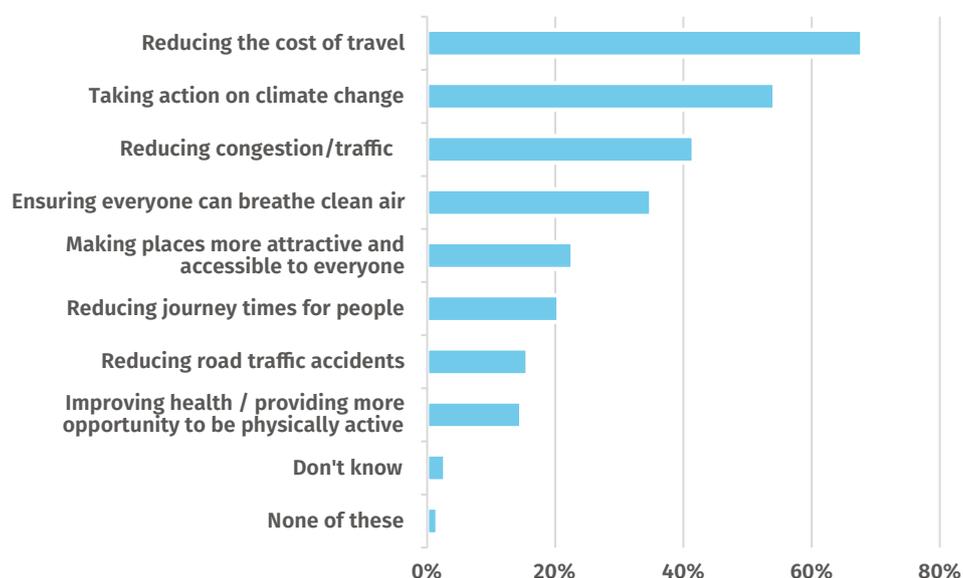
Source: Authors' analysis

## 1. BUILD ON EXISTING SUPPORT FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND DESIRE FOR TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE BUT DON'T TAKE IT FOR GRANTED

Since 2020, the environment has featured in the top three issues facing the country in 44 per cent of YouGov polls, and in the top four in 88 per cent (IPPR analysis of YouGov 2022). Polling consistently shows that the proportion of people concerned about climate change is high and rising, and that concern is increasing across all demographics. It is a concern that transcends differences in income, background and politics (Wang et al 2020), with over three-quarters of people (77 per cent) saying we must do “everything necessary, urgently as a response” (UNDC 2021).

**FIGURE 2.1: PEOPLE WANT TO SEE ACTION TO REDUCE THE COST OF TRAVEL, TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE, AND REDUCE CONGESTION**

Response to the question: “Which three, if any, of the following do you think should be a priority for transport decision-makers in the next 10 years?”



Source: Authors' analysis of YouGov poll commissioned for this project.

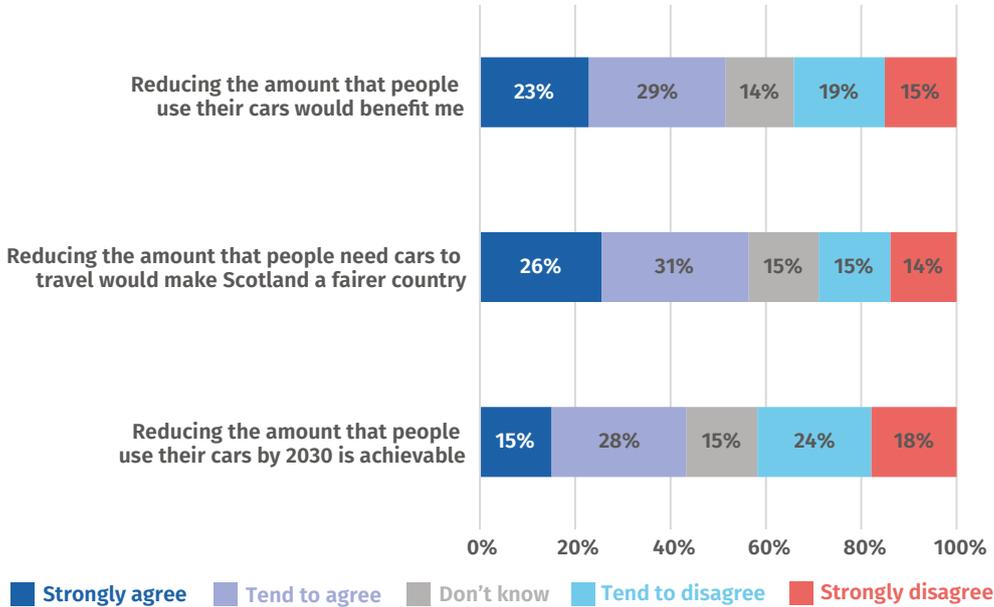
Note: Total sample = 498

Over 50 per cent of people from low-income households responding to our survey felt that “taking action on climate change” should be a priority for transport decision-makers. The only issue to score higher, at nearly 70 per cent, was reducing the cost of travel (see figure 2.2). Beyond these two priorities, people supported a wide range of goals that are aligned with reducing car use, including reducing traffic (42 per cent), cleaner air (35 per cent) and making places more attractive and accessible (23 per cent). Very few respondents (just 5 per cent) felt they didn't know what the focus should be or that none of these was a priority.

More than half (56 per cent) of respondents agreed that reducing the amount that people need cars to travel would make Scotland a fairer country, and a similar number (52 per cent) agreed that reducing car use would benefit them (see figure 2.2). Survey respondents were less clear on whether it was achievable to reduce car use by 2030 – with a relatively even split of 43 per cent agreeing to 42 per cent disagreeing that it was.

**FIGURE 2.2: RESPONDENTS BELIEVING REDUCING CAR USE WILL MAKE SCOTLAND FAIRER AND BENEFIT THEM**

Response to the question: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement relating to the aim of reducing car use in Scotland?”

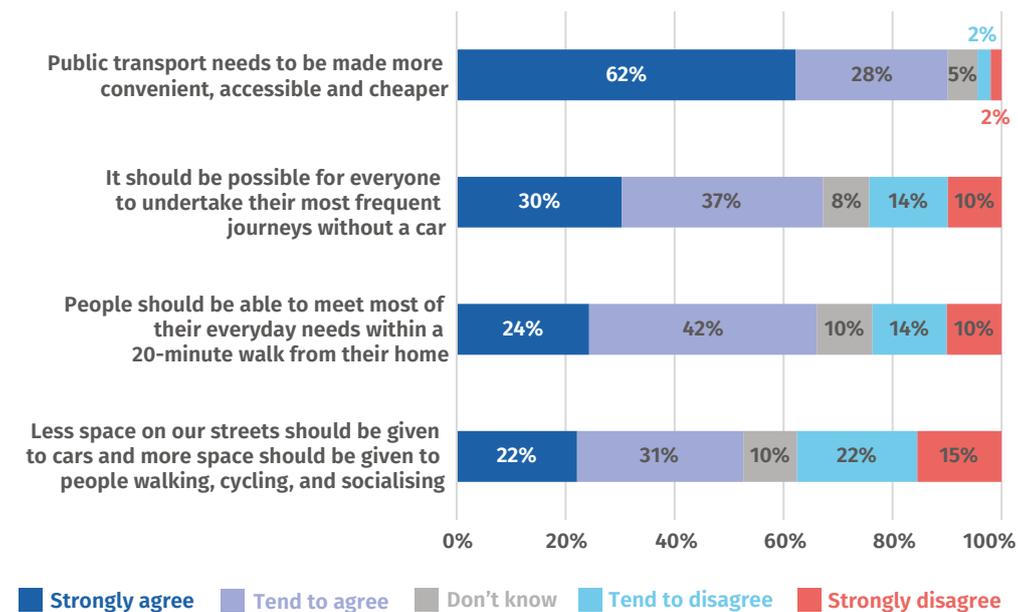


Source: Authors’ analysis of YouGov poll commissioned for this project

Total sample = 498

**FIGURE 2.3: THERE IS MAJORITY SUPPORT FOR A RANGE OF OBJECTIVES RELATED TO REDUCING CAR USE**

Response to the question: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement relating to the aim of reducing car use in Scotland?”



Source: Authors’ analysis of YouGov poll commissioned for this project

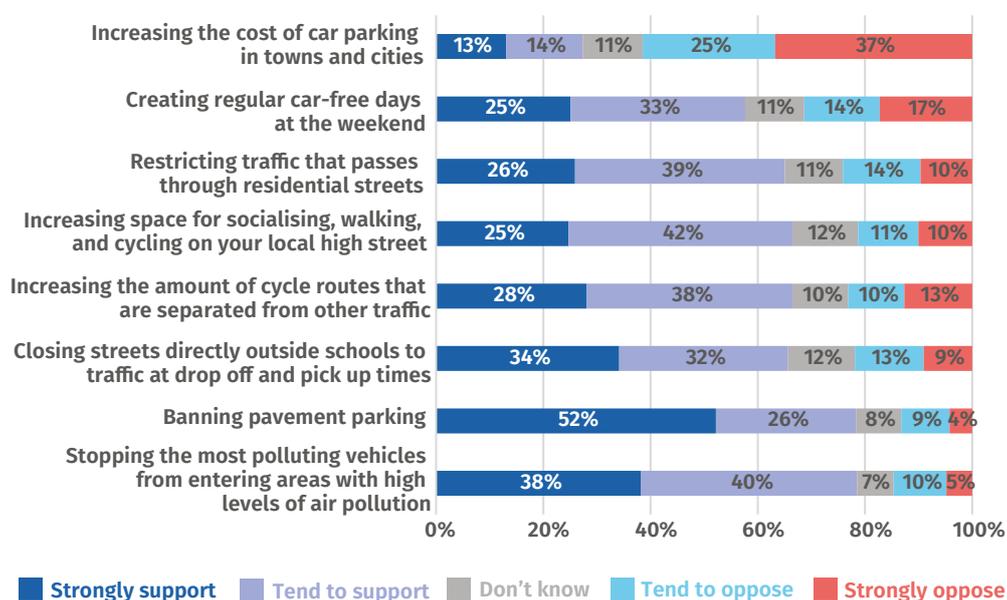
Total sample = 498

Our survey respondents support a range of goals that align with the promotion of sustainable travel behaviours. 90 per cent support action to improve public transport; two-thirds agree that it should be possible for everyone to undertake their most frequent journeys without a car (67 per cent), and that people should be able to meet most of their everyday needs locally (66 per cent) (see figure 2.4). Over half of respondents (53 per cent) support the direct reallocation of street space from cars to people walking, cycling, and socialising.

Our polling shows significant support among people from low-income households for a wide range of specific policies related to the reallocation of road space, restrictions on car use, or promotion of active travel (see figure 2.5). At least in theory, more than half of low-income households support stopping polluting cars from entering areas with high pollution (78 per cent), banning pavement parking (78 per cent), closing streets outside schools at drop off and pick up times (66 per cent), increasing the number of segregated cycle routes (66 per cent) and the amount of space for walking, cycling and socialising on high streets (66 per cent), restricting traffic that passes through residential areas (65 per cent) and creating regular car-free days at the weekend (58 per cent). The only policy not supported, and in fact heavily opposed, is increasing the cost of car parking (61 per cent oppose this).

**FIGURE 2.4: PEOPLE SUPPORT A RANGE OF POLICIES TO REDUCE CAR USE AND REALLOCATE ROAD SPACE FROM CARS, EXCEPT CHARGING MORE FOR PARKING**

Response to the question: “To what extent do you support or oppose the following measure to reduce car use and reallocate space from cars in urban areas of Scotland?”



Source: Authors' analysis of YouGov poll commissioned for this project

Total sample = 498

These survey results tell one part of the story about existing levels of support for climate action and the goal of reducing car use during the 2020s. Policymakers and practitioners should take heart from the level of support from low-income households for both the overall goal of transforming who the transport system serves, and for such a wide range of actions to deliver that change. However, as ever, this is only part of the picture and the deliberative workshop allowed us to

explore where this support may be qualified or require careful communications to be sustained.

**“I’m not concerned so much for myself, more for my children’s future”**



Our workshop participants expressed significant concern about climate change and were clear on the need for immediate action to address greenhouse gas emissions. Their level of knowledge about climate change, and what is happening to address it, were mixed – at least one participant had been active in a climate campaign group, others had largely picked up their information from occasional news bulletins. With Glasgow recently hosting COP26, several reflected that their levels of awareness and concern were heightened when climate change was more frequently covered in the news over the run-up to and during the conference:

*“I think the big thing about it [COP26] was I was taking it in a bit more. I paid a bit more attention to it on the news, not going for a cup of tea at that point, or things like that.”*

Although some were aware that climate change was impacting the UK today and felt it would impact their own lives, it was most common for participants to talk about their fears for the future and for more vulnerable countries:

*“I’m not concerned so much for myself, more for my children’s future.”*

*“It impacts the ones that are coming up in society [young people] and those in poorer countries as well.”*

For one younger participant concern about climate change was high enough to influence her life decisions:

*“I’m not really sure if I want to have children myself, as I’m worried that the world’s not going to be able to sustain their life in the future; it’s very worrying for people my age.”*

Reflecting on the links between climate action and current energy crisis, one participant was worried about the potential for increased conflicts and the impact on energy bills in the UK:

*“I think we’re going to see more conflict across the world as the price of fossil fuels rises... and it’s just going to get more and more expensive, and have we done enough to mitigate those expenses? I’m terrified about the bills, really.”*

The cost of transport for those on low incomes, and how this affects their ability to get around, was a recurring and primary concern. One participant suggested that if survey respondents were not given a list to choose from, “they might not have brought up climate change”. Concern for climate change was high, but not always front of mind: “If you have worries in your immediate life you don’t tend to worry about other things”.

People from low-income households care deeply about climate change and understand the need for action. They are also clear that they cannot be asked to take on greater costs.

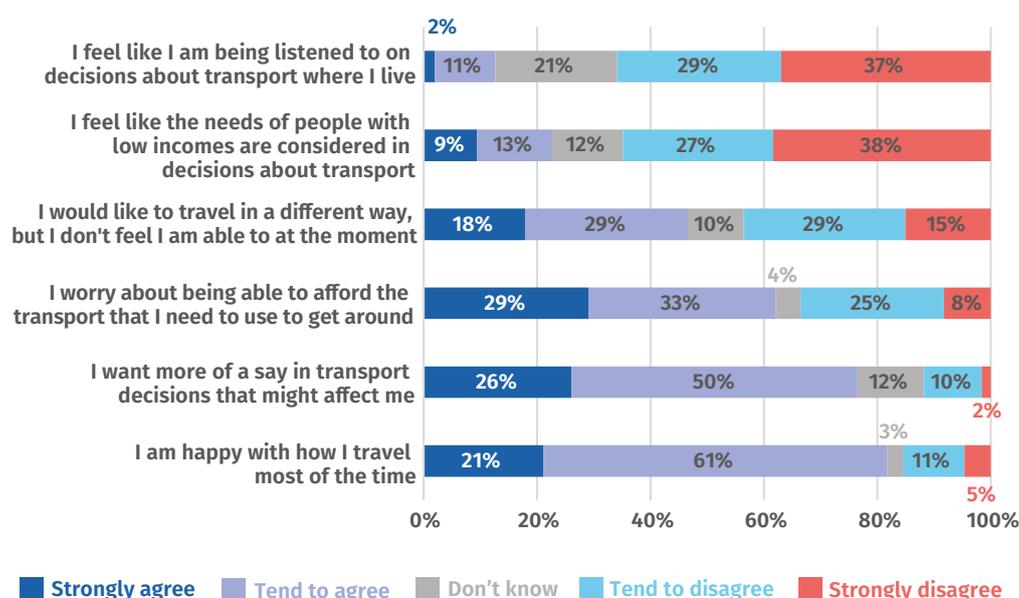
## 2. TREAT SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AS A PUBLIC GOOD – ONE THAT EVERYONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACCESS AND AFFORD

When thinking about transport, affordability is the key concern for low-income households. As well as wanting it to be the top priority for transport decision-makers, over 60 per cent of survey respondents said they worried about being able to afford the transport they need to use to get around (see figure 2.2 above). Almost two-thirds of respondents disagreed with the statement that the needs of people with low incomes are considered in decisions about transport – almost 40 per cent strongly disagreed (see figure 2.6).



**FIGURE 2.5: PEOPLE TEND TO LIKE HOW THEY GET AROUND BUT WORRY ABOUT THE COST OF TRANSPORT AND WANT MORE OF A SAY OVER TRANSPORT DECISIONS**

Response to the question: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement about transport?”



Source: Authors’ analysis of YouGov poll commissioned for this project

Total sample = 498

At the workshop, we heard how transport costs mean that “choice on how to travel is made for you”. For most, this means relying on walking or restricting their activities based on the affordability and accessibility of public transport. Time was also a key factor in how they made decisions about transport. In particular, those trying to juggle competing pressures, such as caring duties, talked about using cars or taxis to ensure they could get where they need to, when they need to.

Participants held mixed views on sustainable transport in the city and whether it currently offers a viable alternative to the convenience of car travel. When asked to think about the words they associate with public transport in Glasgow, the most common were “unreliable” and “cancelled” for the trains and “expensive” and “small” for the subway. Views on buses were more varied and dictated by two factors:

1. where people lived in the city, and therefore whether there was a local bus stop with regular services that ran into the evening
2. whether they qualified for a free bus pass.

This led to different views on the bus being either “convenient” and “free” or “expensive” and “delayed”. More positively, although reflecting that the weather and safety concerns could impact this, most found walking a “calm”, “healthy”, and “enjoyable” experience. Cycling was seen as dangerous to some but two regular cyclists in the group associated it with “freedom”.

Our research shows that measures that increase the cost of car use, including parking (as per figure 2.5) are less likely to receive public support. This clearly related to the range of experiences of public transport and active travel networks – and therefore the perceived viability of reduced car use. **Although participants supported shifting priority away from cars in principle, this support was nuanced and qualified.** For example, overall, the group supported the pavement parking ban and were aware of the challenges pavement parking creates for the most vulnerable. They were also quick to put themselves in the position of car owners with no choice but to own a car and with limited options to park it safely. One participant reflected that: “you can tell why it’s taken four years for them to implement something like this, as it’s a lot harder than it actually looks”. For more details on participants’ analysis of different transport interventions in Glasgow, see appendix B.

At the end of two days of deliberation, we asked the workshop participants what one thing they would do to fairly reduce car use in the city. Their answer was unequivocal: make public transport better. They want “the outer parts of the city [to be] more accessible by public transport” through the provision of more frequent buses and trains. They also want the cost of public transport to be reduced. They expressed strong support for a general reduction in prices and free travel passes for low-income households and “vulnerable groups”. Many participants expressed support for making “public transport ‘public’ again”, and the profit motive removed from this key public service.

Support for policies explicitly seeking to restrict demand for car use was contingent on improving public transport. If public transport was improved, no policy ideas were off the table for our participants – with many happy to see a cut in car lanes and restricted access to the city centre by car. As summed up by one participant, a retired bus driver:

*“If you can get a good public transport system you can have winners. If you don’t, we’re losers.”*



### **3. GIVE PEOPLE A SAFER, MORE WELCOMING EXPERIENCE OF GETTING AROUND THEIR CITY, AND SHIFT CULTURAL NORMS ABOUT CAR OWNERSHIP AND USE**

Views on the safest way to travel, and the desirability of car use, are partly shaped by personal experiences and wider cultural norms. We heard many examples of challenges people face negotiating public transport, in particular – including stories of racism from bus drivers, and people with buggies, in wheelchairs or from racialised communities seeing buses pass without stopping or refusing to put ramps down. We also heard from people who had worked on the buses, or had family who were bus drivers, about the abuse they faced from some passengers. Older and younger attendees both talked about experiencing anxiety on public transport:

*“I get anxious on the bus because of my age... that’s why I avoid it.”*

*“Maybe if I’m not in a good headspace, maybe I don’t want to be around a lot of people.”*

*“I have a heightened sense of vulnerability when getting the bus, particularly at night.”*

The challenges of getting around safely after dark – particularly on Friday and Saturday nights for women, on match days, and during Orange and loyalist marches – were also highlighted by many in the group. Some avoided walking the streets entirely at these times, either staying in or getting a taxi. Concerns about social safety are significant barriers to people making the shift from private cars.

The cultural significance of car ownership was raised in both stakeholder interviews and the workshop. One participant described car ownership as “like a coming-of-age thing... it’s engrained in our society... it’s just the norm”, with “getting your provisional licence a milestone growing up”. Another said he felt guilty about mentioning pollution in the context of cars as it felt anti-social to talk about the negatives associated with driving. These reflections sit in a context of powerful vested interests in maintaining a status quo of car ownership as aspirational – just under £2 billion is estimated to have been spent by the automotive industry in the UK on digital advertising alone in 2019 (He 2019).

**“I have a heightened sense of vulnerability when getting the bus, particularly at night”**



Despite this, participants reflected on how unnecessary and unsustainable car ownership was in Glasgow:

*“Glasgow wasn’t built for so many cars.”*

*“My car sits outside my house the majority of the time.”*

Their comments echoed previous findings from England showing that the average car or van is parked for 23 hours a day – only driven for 4 per cent of the time (Nagler 2021).

We asked all participants to discuss the impact of their own travel. Most consider how they travel to be an entirely personal decision. Responding to one participant mentioning how she felt guilty adding to traffic, another said:

*“I never thought of what you said... if you are getting a cab then you are adding to the congestion. I’d never even considered that. Cause I was thinking when you asked that question, I don’t think I have any real impact on the way other people travel, but yeah you’re right.”*

It was clear how infrequently people considered the impact of how they travel. Participants concluded that much more needs to be done to educate people on the impact of their travel decisions. Ultimately, they felt that the fairest way of reducing car use was to “dissuade people from driving in the first place”, which required a combination of both access to desirable alternatives and providing more information about the harm caused by current behaviours. They saw this as key to moving beyond a simple switch to electric vehicles to decarbonise:

*“That [electric vehicles] would solve the emission problem, but it wouldn’t solve the traffic problem.”*

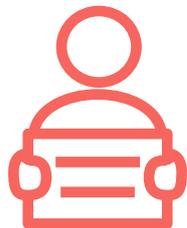
#### **4. INVOLVE THE PUBLIC, PARTICULARLY THE MOST VULNERABLE, IN CITY-WIDE CLIMATE ACTION PLANS, AND ENGAGE COMMUNITIES IN SCHEME DESIGN AND DELIVERY**

In 2018, just one in five adults in Scotland felt they could influence decisions in their local authority (GCPH 2022b). Research on community engagement in planning decisions in Scotland has shown a gap between rhetoric and the genuine ability of communities to influence decisions (Yellow Book Ltd 2017). Outcomes rarely change after engagement and there is “a lack of trust, respect and confidence in the planning system” (ibid). In 2016, an independent review found that there was “little evidence that disabled people, young people, minority ethnic groups, or disadvantaged communities are being effectively and routinely involved in the planning system” (Beveridge et al 2016). Research by the Poverty and Inequality Commission’s transport working group found reports of a lack of accountability of the transport system from people with lived experience of poverty, with people feeling unable to influence the delivery of services (Poverty and Inequality Commission 2019). People from low-income households do not feel that they are listened to, or that the needs of people on low incomes are considered in decision-making (see figure 2.6).

In our workshop we heard that support for many road reallocation interventions, particularly restricting traffic from residential streets, relied on the details being right for local residents. Participants wanted to see public engagement in decarbonisation plans, and particularly on transport schemes, go beyond traditional consultations to be part of a two-way, honest conversation, with citizens treated as equal stakeholders in decision-making.

Workshop participants felt that policymakers are not interested in their views, that decisions going out to consultation have already been made (or are the wrong options), and that “tokenistic” consultations lead to apathy, making genuine attempts to engage the public harder. Although local elections provide an opportunity to speak to potential councillors who knock on your door, participants did not feel that decision-makers are visible enough in their communities outside election periods.

**“We want to hear that we matter”**



Our participants believed that the specific needs of low-income groups are seldom considered in the design of engagement activities. They highlighted poor literacy (and IT literacy) as a big barrier for them and their peers: “I have to go to one of my family, because I’m computer illiterate”. They believed that the voices of women, ethnic minorities and young people were excluded from many of traditional decision-making forums – including being underrepresented in politics.

Participants felt that “there’s no one size fits all” way to reach people; a range of approaches are needed. As well as physically going to neighbourhoods most affected by decisions – engaging people in libraries, through schools and community centres, and on high streets – participants wanted to see more use of social media and advertising, particularly at bus stops and on buses. They believed it important to engage community groups that represent different demographics, and for communications to be in plain English, and translated

into all the languages of the city. For those with access to smartphones, one participant thought it should be possible to download an app that makes it easier to engage with locally-tailored content from the council, respond to consultations and receive updates on the projects on which they've shared their opinions. This feedback loop was seen as key, with many reflecting that, when they have taken part in a consultation, they never heard anything in response: "we want to hear that we matter."

Participants suggested that it is unrealistic to expect everyone to be directly involved in lengthy engagement activities for climate action plans or the detail of neighbourhood schemes, but that it matters that people like them are represented:

*"I would actively seek out to know if there was a person from the community representing us... a person from a minority, a young person..."*

Although none of our participants were aware of previous deliberative processes, such as Climate Assembly Scotland, they described the most desirable decision-making processes for Glasgow in very similar terms – a forum where a cross-section of society was represented and could share their views and have a tangible impact on the action taken, with a financial incentive provided to support those on lower incomes to participate. This forum would not be a one-off 'consultation'; it would allow for the decisions made to be tracked and adjusted if they weren't working.

Participants had very little, if any, awareness of either the Scottish government's or Glasgow City Council's aims to reduce the distance travelled by car before the workshop. Through presentations that covered the content of Transport Scotland's route map for reducing car use and Glasgow City Council's local plans, confidence in reducing the distance travelled by car by 2030 increased and some participants were impressed at how much thought had gone into them, one noting:

*"[I was surprised by] how much the government are actually doing and we're not aware of it."*

## **5. ENSURE ACTION TO DECARBONISE TRANSPORT IS BEING TAKEN BY EVERYONE ACROSS SOCIETY AND THE EFFORT IS FAIRLY SHARED**

Workshop participants wanted actions to reduce car use to be and feel "fair". Both the content and tone of the deliberations strongly back the Just Transition Commission's (2021) conclusion that:

*"People need to see and experience the transition as being fair; pushing ahead without giving attention to a just transition will see progress stalled. Achieving climate targets and a just transition cannot be separated."*

Our participants frequently reflected that those with the least resources, who contribute the least to climate change, could not be expected to do more than they could afford: "how did we get here? It's not due to us"; "[it's] not about whether I take my little boy to football once a week". They commented on the imbalance in emissions across society, including from international travel by the wealthiest, and many were angry about the starkness of these inequalities:

*"The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer."*

*"People are going up to the moon; it's a waste of money... they're damaging the earth."*

Some challenged the list of transport interventions they had been asked to consider – "political motivation is limiting the types of options offered" – wanting

to see more interventions targeted at businesses rather than individual behaviour change. In discussions on workplace parking levies, some argued that it was unfair for businesses to have the option to pass the costs onto employees, who might be forced into driving by a dearth of other options. Participants didn't want to achieve transport goals by making people's lives harder.

Our research indicates that those on low incomes are more likely to support bans and restrictions applied universally rather than policies that charge for negative behaviours, allowing the wealthiest to pay their way out of acting. 78 per cent of survey respondents supported "*stopping* the most polluting vehicle from entering areas of high air pollution" (see figure 2.6; our italics). Road space reallocation and restricting access to the city centre by car were consistently seen as positive by workshop participants; policies that focussed on charging met much more resistance.

## **6. EMBED THE GOAL OF REDUCING CAR USE ACROSS ALL GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES AND DIVERSIFY THE TRANSPORT SECTOR**

Participants were aware that the challenges they were being asked to consider go well beyond transport policy; addressing the climate emergency has implications for how the economy and wider society functions. They were quick to highlight decisions beyond transport that felt incongruous in the context of reducing emissions – for example, allowing new housing to be built where there is limited access to public transport, locking people in to using a car, or street trees being cut down despite being told that more need to be planted.

The stakeholder interviews underlined this, and pointed to a much needed transformation in how decisions are made to reduce car use and our understanding of what it means to 'live well locally'.

One practitioner told us how important it is to see the opportunities in linking different policy agendas, transport schemes approached as projects "to give people what they want in their lives". Joined-up thinking should be underpinned by a diversified sector that draws on a broader range of lived experiences to be better equipped to understand the needs of marginalised communities and the social issues with which transport intersects. In 2017, just 6.25 per cent of heads of transport were women, according to one study in Scotland (Motherwell 2018), contributing to a gender blindness in transport decision-making that further accentuates the emphasis within typical transport analysis guidance given to those – typically men – commuting long distances to work (Frost et al 2021).

The practitioners we spoke with thought that increasing capacity for local and regional authorities to design and implement ambitious transport schemes was fundamental to delivering transport decarbonisation at pace. Authorities need both long-term assurance of revenue funding, which supports them to train and retain skilled staff, and capital funding at the scale that will allow them to commit to transforming the accessibility of sustainable transport in their areas. One practitioner reflected that "the sustainable transport hierarchy is great in theory, but in practice current investment is almost inverse", with private cars receiving far more funding, in the form of roads investment, than active travel and local public transport.

The UK government's policies on fuel duty, and the future design of replacement road pricing schemes, should support the goal of transport decarbonisation and encourage people to shift to walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. The lack of joined up thinking in Westminster, where fuel duty has just been cut, has

negative consequences that make the job harder for devolved governments and authorities with ambitious goals to bring down car usage.

### LESSONS FROM CONNECTING WOODSIDE, GLASGOW

Glasgow's Connecting Woodside project aims to improve streets and public spaces for walking, wheeling, and cycling, and reduce the dominance of road traffic in the areas of Woodside/Woodlands.

- **Outreach work and building trust with locals.** At least 5 per cent of the project budget is protected for outreach activities aimed at encouraging active and sustainable travel.
- **Leverage local knowledge.** Council practitioners can monitor a location in person for a few hours a day, but with local knowledge, the scheme designers can learn from locals and get key information to inform the design and implementation, such as surge parking needs at certain times of day, and there is less of a feeling of imposition of the scheme on local people.
- **Link up with other schemes.** Adjacent to the Connecting Woodside project area is an area of social housing which is due to undergo green infrastructure regeneration starting September 2022, bringing street trees, biodiverse gardens, and edible landscapes, among other measures. The canal which borders the project area is also undergoing a major regeneration project, including a new park, and a new pedestrian bridge with ramp and boardwalk. Combining place-making schemes with traffic reduction measures, bus route protection, and active travel routes, delivers a better-quality environment for residents that supports sustainable travel.

### 3.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

### DELIVERING A JUST TRANSITION FOR URBAN TRANSPORT FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

The Scottish government's target to reduce the distance travelled by cars by 20 per cent by 2030 is ambitious and needed. It is vital both for net zero to be achievable and to create a fairer transport system which delivers tangible benefits to everyone, and especially those on the lowest incomes.

For Scottish authorities, the clarity provided by this national target should be welcomed. It makes clear that, although they will still need to decarbonise vehicles in the fairest most effective ways, the overriding priorities are to reduce the need for people to travel by private car and provide affordable, safe, and pleasant alternatives. In Scottish cities, this will mean both reallocating street space for walking, wheeling, and cycling, and reclaiming the public realm for the activities that aren't about getting from A to B – creating spaces for children to play, high streets that people where people can linger outside and more urban green spaces that offer calm spaces to rest. Cities designed to give priority to people over cars are fairer by design. This scale of reimagining of the public realm, and the implications for how people access their everyday needs, means the actions taken to get there must also feel fair.

Right now, the challenge in Scotland is how to put in place the regulations, infrastructure and incentives that achieve significant reductions in car use, while keeping the public's support for change, inside of eight years. The climate emergency dictates the required pace of action. Local government must now build a new relationship with their residents and create a new culture of public participation in decision-making to deliver a just transition.

The principles provided in this report provide some guidance for how a just transition for transport for low-income households can be achieved. Below, we outline policy recommendations and tips for practitioners shaped by the insights we gained from interviewing stakeholders, our survey of people from low-income households in urban areas, and our workshop with low-income residents in Glasgow.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCOTTISH CITIES AND NATIONAL POLICYMAKERS

##### *Set stretching targets and provide clarity on how they will be achieved*

- The national target to reduce car use sets out how travel across Scotland must change; it does not dictate how much of a reduction in car use each local authority should deliver. Nor does it define how much each of the policies it has proposed will contribute to reducing this target. These details are necessary. **By the end of 2022, all authorities should have**

**set their own targets for car use reduction** and, following the lead of Edinburgh and Glasgow, urban areas should recognise where they have the opportunity and responsibility to go further in their local plans than the 20 per cent Scotland-wide target.

- **City transport decarbonisation plans should set out robust analysis of how car use reduction targets will be met** and the implications this will have for local journeys. A model for how to do this can be found in Greater Manchester, which has set out the transport system it wants in 2040, setting the target for the share of trips made by car to be no more than 50 per cent (currently over 60 per cent), and detailed what this means for a range of different journey types within the region (Transport for Greater Manchester 2021).
- **Detailed equality impact assessments should be presented alongside transport decarbonisation plans**, making explicit the likely effects of the proposed approach to transport decarbonisation and providing a clear argument for how the principles of a just transition are being applied.
- As IPPR have previously argued, a reduction in car use is only one part of delivering net zero and achieving the benefits of a less car-dominated cities and a fairer transport system (Frost et al 2021). **The Scottish government and local authorities should set targets for the desirable size of Scotland's car fleet.** To reduce emissions and protect natural resources, there needs to be a reduction in the number of cars overall, not just a reduction in usage.

#### *Deliver road space reallocation at pace and scale*

- **The simple message on road space reallocation is that cities should be delivering it now, and at scale.** Our findings suggest that road space reallocation, or restrictions on cars at certain times or in certain places, is often considered fairer than imposing additional charges to influence car use.
- New charges for motoring and car parking are needed; therefore, **where financial disincentives are put in place, the impacts on those on low incomes must be clearly assessed, with support provided to make it possible for people to shift to different transport modes.** The funds raised through charges, such as workplace parking levies and low emission zones, must be allocated transparently to maintain public support and trust. There is an opportunity to align this with existing commitments for at least 1 per cent of local government budgets in Scotland to be allocated by participatory budgeting.
- When delivered at pace, and at scale, the risk of displaced traffic (ie simply shifting car use to different roads) reduces. **Scottish cities should seek to implement city-wide interventions, accompanied by strong public communication campaigns**, as these are the most effective in avoiding displacement and encouraging people to take up walking and cycling (Cavill et al 2019).

#### *Engagement of the public is crucial*

- Public engagement in the decisions that shape communities is not good enough. There is very little sense of people being able to influence decisions, especially for those from more disadvantaged communities. **There must be radical change in how communities are involved in decision-making and a more equal relationship between policymakers and citizens.**
- IPPR's Environmental Justice Commission makes the case for the shift from policy being done to people to being done with and by them (Environmental Justice Commission 2021). When policies are designed by experts and 'sold' to the public, people's role is confined to individual, consumer-focused

‘behaviour change’ (Ainsborough and Willis 2022). To be active citizens, who work with government to create the conditions for change, the public need the chance to have an input into policy direction and formation, and people need to see their priorities and views reflected in new policy (ibid).

- **Scottish cities should establish regular (or permanent) representative, deliberative processes to support ongoing engagement on transport decarbonisation**, including a reduction in car use and road space reallocation, and other activities related to delivering net zero. High quality, transparent and independent deliberative approaches will be crucial in achieving local buy-in.
- Those who are most disadvantaged by the current transport system need their voices amplified in the design of what comes next. Alongside representative panels, **Transport Scotland, regional transport partnerships and Scottish cities should establish forums focussed on a just transition for transport, where policies and ideas can be discussed with the people most often marginalised within decision-making processes** – including low-income households, minority ethnic groups, young people and people with disabilities. At the national level this forum should be a key part of the proposed development of an equitable ‘car demand management framework’.
- **Keeping the climate emergency in the public eye is key to maintaining support for ambitious transport decarbonisation policies and the required behaviour change.** Just five months had passed between COP26 and our workshop, but already people’s attention and concern had shifted to different, more immediate, priorities. Our deliberations in Glasgow echo the conclusion reached by Climate Assembly Scotland (2021) that “there is a fundamental need to focus the country’s collective mindset on the climate emergency” and that providing good quality information is vital in driving collective action across Scottish society.
- **The perceived desirability of car use must be addressed as part of the Scottish government’s envisioned “national conversation on sustainable travel” (Transport Scotland 2022).** This means coordinated national and local campaigns that demonstrate the benefits of active and public transport – in the words of one practitioner interviewee, “we need to make cycling and catching the bus cool”.
- In a similar way to the controls put in place to promote responsible drinking or reduce smoking, **action should be taken to curtail the negative impact of automotive advertising** and build public awareness of pro-social and pro-environmental personal transport decisions. For inspiration, Scotland can look to France, where a new decree requires that car adverts include messages to encourage people to consider more sustainable transport choices, translated as: “for short trips prioritise walking or cycling”, “consider ride-sharing” and “in daily life, take public transport” (Simonte 2022).

#### **Public transport is the key to a just transition for transport**

- Our findings make clear that affordable, convenient, and comprehensive public transport is at the heart of a fairer, greener transport system. Reducing car use, and ongoing public support for road space reallocation, is contingent on viable public transport options. **The most visible and immediate action that could be taken to demonstrate the Scottish government’s commitment to behaviour change is to reduce the cost of public transport.**

In response to the energy crisis there have been growing calls for making public transport cheaper (IEA 2022) and many countries have already taken steps towards this – New Zealand cut fares by 50 per cent for three months (NZ

Transport Agency 2022) and Germany is offering its citizens a nine euro monthly public transport pass for three months (McLaren-Kennedy 2022).

We support the Environmental Justice Commission's (2021) call for local public transport system to be free at the point of use by 2030. To specifically address the concerns of those on low incomes and those living in transport poverty, we also back the Poverty Alliance's (2021) campaign for the more immediate introduction of **free bus travel for everyone on universal credit (and other low-income benefits)**. Our research demonstrates the impact this would have on people's quality of life and is supported by recent qualitative research with low-income families on the benefits it would bring in their ability to access day-to-day services and meet wider social needs (McHardy and Robertson 2021).

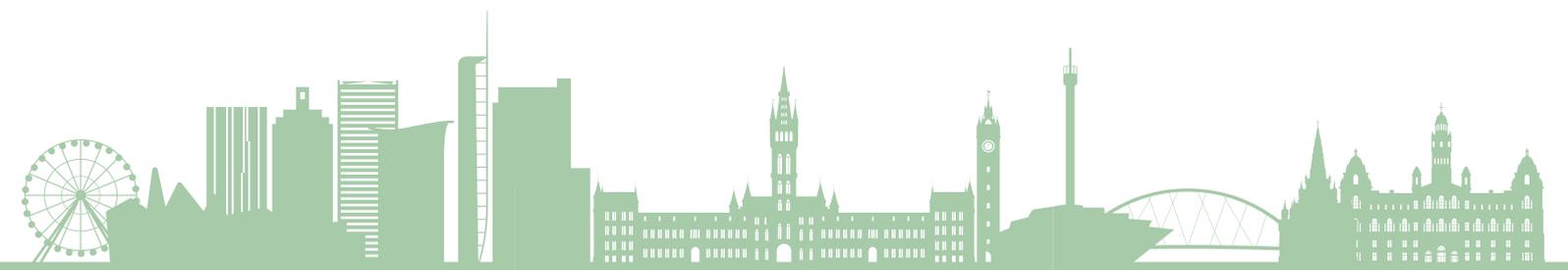
- **All Scottish cities need joined up public transport provision, across modes and operators.** Across Scotland, it should be possible to purchase a single, affordable ticket or season pass that provides access to community transport, local trains, buses and, where it exists, the subway – and beyond that, to shared mobility services such as ebikes and car clubs. Better integrated transport systems are not a new priority but the urgency with which they need to be adopted is now much greater. The more convenient it is to use public transport, and access shared mobility schemes, the more attractive the shift from private car use. Simple structures for fares particularly benefit low-income households already travelling by those modes.
- **The experience of using public transport must be improved through both staff training and better feedback processes.** Research by Poverty Alliance, amongst others, points to the need to strengthen and open up complaint and feedback processes on buses to increase accountability (Poverty Alliance and Oxfam 2019; Poverty Alliance and HUG 2019). To address the worrying levels of anti-social behaviour described by our participants, frontline transport staff (including customer service personnel) should receive training on the needs of different passengers and how to help them access and feel welcome on transport services.

#### ***Building capacity to deliver a transport system that works for low-income households***

- The goal of fairly reducing car use is not one that transport departments, either nationally or within cities, can deliver on their own. **All parts of Scotland's public sector must align behind achieving the goal of reduced car use and improving access to services and opportunities for those on low incomes.** As outlined by the Poverty and Inequality Commission (2019): "Strategies for delivering housing, employment, education, health, leisure and transport services should not be developed in isolation from each other but should be considered in a connected way".
- **Essential to delivering large-scale changes to the accessibility of sustainable transport is the commitment to long-term revenue and infrastructure funding.** The Scottish government's commitment to 10 per cent of the transport budget being spent on active travel by 2024/25 is welcome but should be seen in the context of an estimated £4 billion having been spent on building new roads in the past ten years (Transform Scotland 2021). Funding for active travel must be allocated to local authorities in a way that supports both the delivery of immediate changes and multi-year transformative projects. In order to ensure that the transport decisions makers of the 2030s, and beyond, are more diverse than they are today, investment should be made in providing new routes into the sector for people from a wider range of backgrounds, and training courses established that provide the skills needed to design and deliver a fairer, greener transport system.

## TIPS FOR TRANSPORT PRACTITIONERS IN URBAN AREAS

- **Be clear whose voices matter in consultations.** You can weight comments and feedback to reflect who is most affected or most stands to benefit from change. For example, if a disproportionate amount of feedback is coming from affluent areas, you can choose to give more focus to comments from more deprived areas. Design your processes to give weight to the voices you most want to hear and be transparent about decision-making.
- **Secure early involvement from those who are often disadvantaged by the transport system** – such as disabled people, older people, people on low incomes – to avoid replicating current transport inequality.
- **Give children a greater say in transport decisions.** Work with schools to engage young people directly in the design of road space reallocation schemes. Voting in consultations could also be extended to children.
- **Embed staff in the community.** This builds familiarity with local circumstances and context and helps gain the trust of local people.
- **Work with trusted local organisations.** Involving anchor institutions and community groups – such as churches, doctors' surgeries, local charities, and key employers – can help you to reach more people.
- **Give residents power to reduce traffic on their streets.** Create a direct, simple, streamlined mechanism for residents to apply for modal filters on their streets.
- **See the transport system as a whole.** Don't separate public transport and active travel in your plans or the design of schemes – see public transport as part of increasing active travel.
- **Speed up implementation.** Temporary road reallocation measures put in place during the pandemic demonstrate that schemes can be implemented quickly and then changed, or made permanent later.
- **Build a strong evidence base of public support for action.** Invest in high-quality independent research that can be used to both shape city-wide strategies and communicate the need for specific interventions. This can include deliberative events, such as citizens' juries, or large-scale qualitative and quantitative research.
- **Be brave.** Have the confidence to let schemes bed-in, while being ready to adapt if it is obvious something is going wrong. Adapting doesn't have to mean rowing back; it could mean being more ambitious and expanding plans to tackle displaced traffic on adjacent roads.



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# APPENDIX A: OUR APPROACH

## DELIBERATIVE WORKSHOP

We ran a two-day deliberative workshop with residents of Glasgow from low-income households on Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 March 2022. Participants all had a household income of under £15,000 p.a. and were recruited to be broadly representative of the wider demographics of Glasgow in terms of age, gender, and ethnicity. They came from a range of locations in the city. Some had no access to a car; others were regular car users. All participants received lunch and a financial incentive to participate.

Through the workshop, participants reflected on their experiences of transport in Glasgow. They were provided with information on climate change and the Scottish government's and Glasgow City Council's transport plans. Their deliberations focussed on 1) the design of car use reduction and road space reallocation interventions and 2) how people should be involved in transport decision-making. The outline agenda is provided below.

Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> March
Introductions, consent, safeguarding, and research aims.
Getting to know each other and discussing how they travel now.
Considering the motivations for travel behaviours and the level of choice available.
Participants' views on the impacts of transport on them, other people, places and the environment.
Presentation on climate change by IPPR.
Presentation on Transport Scotland's 20 per cent reduction in car km route map by IPPR (based on slides provided by Transport Scotland).
Presentation on Glasgow's transport plan / policy framework by Deborah Paton, Glasgow City Council.
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> March
Welcome back and overnight reflections.
Considering the good and bad of the journey to and from the venue.
Presentation on the results of the YouGov survey and their own responses to the questions.
Detailed look at the survey results and their feedback on them.
Review of interventions to reduce car usage and provide more space for walking and cycling.
Developing recommendations of how people on low incomes (and beyond) should be involved in decision-making.

## NATIONAL POLL

YouGov Plc conducted a national poll on behalf of IPPR using their online panel. The total sample size was 498 Scottish adults living in urban areas whose household income is £14,999 or less. Fieldwork was undertaken between 4–10 March 2022.

This sample was the largest possible number of participants that could be reached through this methodology. The sample was equally split by gender and covered a

range of Scottish regions and other demographics. The sample is too small to be representative of all low-income urban residents.

### **ADDITIONAL RESEARCH**

We also conducted a policy and literature review and held semi-structured interviews with academics, practitioners, and policymakers from across the UK, including interviewees from: Glasgow Centre for Population Health, Glasgow City Council, Leicester City Council, Newham Council, University of Edinburgh, University of Manchester, Sustrans, and Transport Action Network.

# APPENDIX B: INTERVENTIONS

The following table summarises the feedback we heard from our Glasgow workshop participants on the interventions they discussed.

Intervention	Comments
<b>Making space for cycle lanes</b>	<p>Good support for this intervention.</p> <p>Competition for limited space on certain streets means choices about who is prioritised. Sometimes, priority should be given to creating more room for pedestrians instead; sometimes other changes to road layout might be more appropriate.</p> <p>It should be a local decision where to implement them.</p>
<b>Widening pavements – eg removing car parking to create space to socialise</b>	<p>Good support for this intervention</p> <p>Cheap and flexible solution.</p> <p>Pedestrianisation and wider pavements – suitable for walking and socialising – makes streets nice than ones dominated by cars.</p> <p>If planters are used to create this space, they need to be looked after, not left with rubbish in them.</p> <p>Concerns were raised that taking away parking spaces could simply displace parking or dissuade people from going into town.</p> <p>Keen to hear about studies that evidence the positive impacts of these sorts of interventions.</p>
<b>Local road closures</b>	<p>Average support for this intervention.</p> <p>In local neighbourhoods where there is a lot of through traffic a road closure could make a big positive impact – improving the streets for children and making it safer for everyone. However, it might not be suitable for all areas – for example on already quiet roads where the potential disruption to people’s journeys and to home shopping deliveries (for example) doesn’t outweigh the gains.</p> <p>Road closures should be presented as part of wider plans to help people move around sustainably. The relationship between road closures and the opportunity to create 20-minute neighbourhoods could be explored with local people.</p> <p>Given the impact on local access, the community should decide if a road should be closed and given the opportunity to consider the pros/cons for the range of people in the area. The majority view is important but need to consider and give weight to concerns of the most vulnerable (eg those with disabilities).</p>
<b>Reducing access for vehicles to the city centre</b>	<p>Good support for this intervention.</p> <p>Reducing the number of cars in the city centre was seen as important in making the city safer for pedestrians; creating new public spaces that people could gather in would bring social benefits too.</p> <p>Spaces that are created for pedestrians might not be suitable for cyclists as well. Cyclists on pavements were perceived as a risk and made people feel unsafe on certain streets in the city.</p>

<p><b>Low emissions zones</b></p>	<p>Strong concerns about this intervention.</p> <p>Although the goal of improving air quality was supported, there were concerns about the design of charging zones. Concerns were raised about focussing on individuals paying or changing their behaviour, most of whom do not know how polluting their cars are and cannot afford to buy a new one.</p> <p>Implementing charging schemes requires a long lead in time, significant consultation with those most affected areas and engagement with the small businesses owners who can't afford to buy new vans.</p> <p>A fairer approach would be to ban traffic that is just passing through the city centre.</p>
<p><b>Workplace parking levy</b></p>	<p>Strong concerns about this intervention.</p> <p>Although supportive of the aim of reducing the number of people driving to work, this approach provoked the most debate of any of the discussed interventions. With the council able to decide if they will implement the policy, or not, and employers able to decide whether to pass on the costs, participants felt that everyone was being provided with choice except the employee.</p> <p>This policy would have significant impact on low-income workers, particularly those who have to drive to combine their trip to work with other responsibilities (eg getting kids to school, shopping etc). If there are no alternatives then the policy just adds another cost, at a time when things are already hard.</p> <p>If the employer took on the costs, and it was guaranteed that the money would be spent on providing better transport alternatives, then the policy would be fairer. There should be transparency in exactly how the money raised would be spent.</p>
<p><b>School streets</b></p>	<p>Strong support for this intervention.</p> <p>Providing safer streets for children was seen as a high priority and temporary street closures seen to have minimum negative impacts. People want to see more kids able to walk to school as many see this as something that has reduced to very low levels.</p>
<p><b>20mph speed limits</b></p>	<p>Strong support for this intervention.</p> <p>This intervention was seen as being good for safety (particularly for children) and, through reducing congestion, also good for reducing pollution and improving health.</p>
<p><b>Banning pavement parking</b></p>	<p>Mixed support for this intervention.</p> <p>It was clearly understood that pavement parking could cause significant challenges for anyone trying to use the pavement who had an additional mobility need. In principle there was good support for action to address this. However, there were concerns about people needing to park far away from their homes, and the safety and inconvenience of this – especially for those with children or disabilities. They were also concerned that it would affect some people more than others – people with drives wouldn't be affected but those living in tenements would be.</p> <p>For this policy to be fair, it should be linked to reducing the need for car ownership.</p>

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