

# Travel mobility and accessibility

## Planning better for older people

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With thanks to Dr Mima Cattan



# Key questions

- What type of transport system do older people want?
- What are the impacts/coping strategies?
- To what extent is need met today?
- What will the customer of the future want?
- What are the policy interventions to assist?

# Focus Group Findings

- Wide range of mobility:
  - From physically fit to extremely frail
  - Conditions included; visual impairments, mental health problems, osteoarthritis, Parkinson's
- Wide range of activity levels:
  - From travelling "*all over*" to "*the sitting brigade*"
  - The ability to "*just get out of the 4 walls and see people*" more important than specific activities
  - Shopping serves many purposes; functional, gives structure to the week and an activity in itself "*it's a day out, it's a social thing*"

# 3 Key Barriers


- Physical Ability
  - Gradual process of decline
- Individual Characteristics
  - Lack of control
  - Varying degrees of engagement
- Physical Environment
  - Feeling of being “pushed out” or “out of step” with the environment
  - Disruption

# Physical Ability

- The accessibility / acceptability of Public Transport affects:
  - How long people wish to remain driving
  - When they start needing assisted transport

**Less acceptable:**



Declining physical ability 

**More acceptable:**



# Individual Characteristics

- Feeling of a lack of control over transport provision
- Ill thought out decisions particularly irritating
- Three typographies:
  1. The Resigned Acceptors

*“we can’t change the bus route, we can’t change the fact we can’t walk as well as we did, we just have to accept it as best we can”*
  2. The Frustrated Acceptors

Frustrated but aren’t aware of how / feel unable to influence
  3. The involved. “Fighters!”

Actively trying to influence decisions at a local or city level

# Physical Environment

- Difficulties **CROSSING ROADS** is the dominant issue
  - Everybody said something about this
- Issues with other people's use of pavement space
- Issues with condition of pavements

# Crossing Roads: informal crossing

Lines of sight (angle of junction)



Crossing width



Number of roads joining a junction



# Public Transport

- Many examples of bad falls - many “*don’t dare*” to use
- Caused by:
  - Drivers setting off before older people are seated
  - Having to get up before the bus stop
  - No grab rail and front tipping seats
  - General rough driving
- Getting on and off significant problem – “kneeling” inconsistent
- Great variability of drivers



# Public transport

- For the more mobile:
  - Extensive use
  - Concessionary fare popular
- Issues for the less mobile / more frail:
  - Unreliability meaning long waits
  - Buses not entering estates
  - Bus stops in city centre a long way from desired locations
- Re-scheduling unsettling
- Security at bus stops problem for all

# Taxis

- Critical for some *“I’d be lost without them”*
- Fills gaps in public transport service

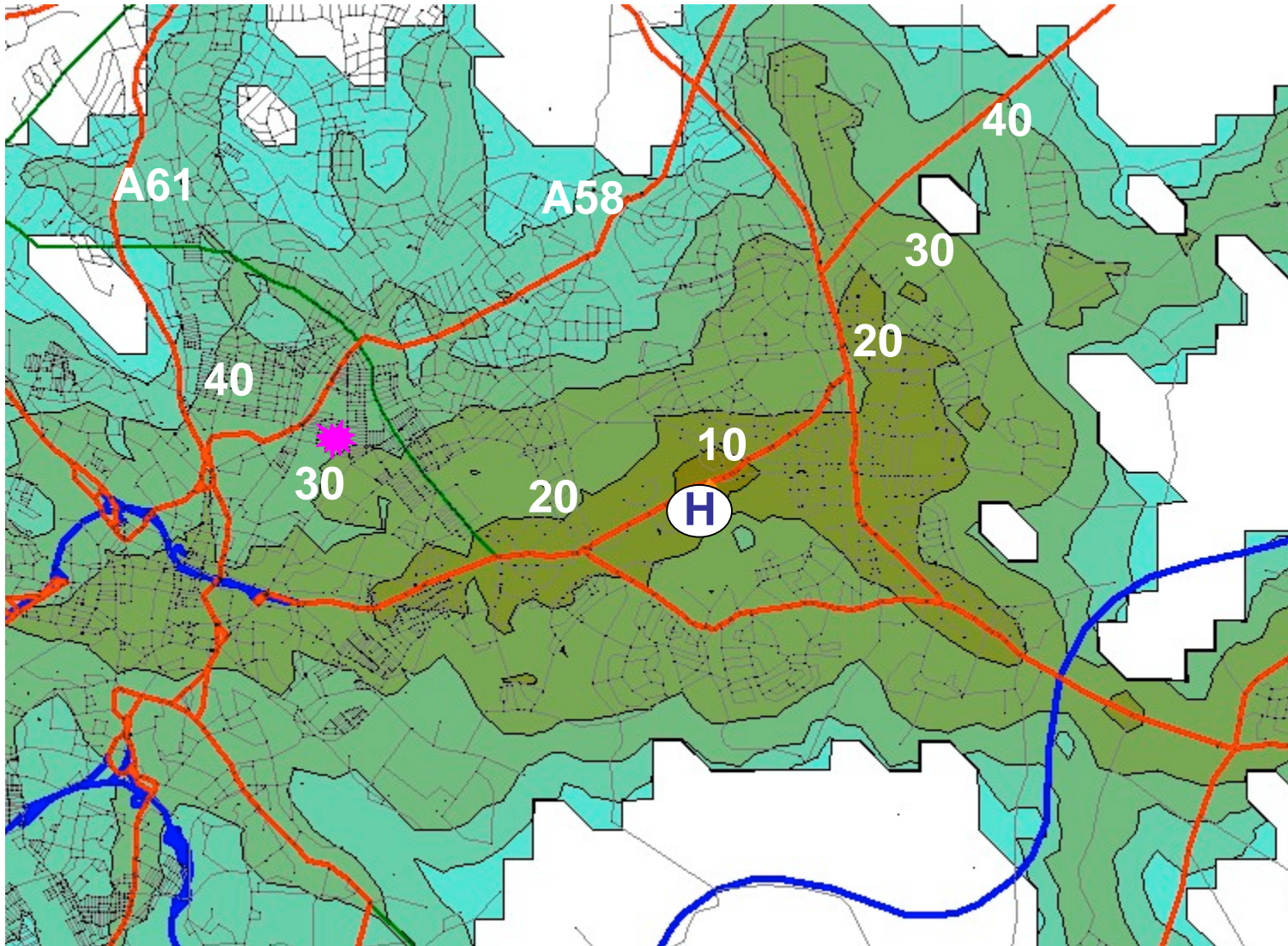
But..

- Concerns about driver behaviour
- Security concerns
- Expense / fear of over-charging
  - particularly for rural residents and during holidays

# What type of system do older people want?

- One that they can use independently
- One which is safe and accessible
- One which is 'stable'
- Benefits are
  - Retaining independence longer
  - Inclusion
  - Better (mental) health and well-being

# To what extent is need met today?



# What will the older person of the future want?

- Influence of driving licence holding
- Drive for longer
- Who will make transition to non-driving?
- When will they make the transition?
- How will this impact on choice and independence?

# What are the policy options to assist?

- Technology?
  - Some fit today – some in the future
    - Texting for bus arrivals 0
    - Oystercard ✓
- Service mix?
  - Public transport includes taxis...
  - Dedicated ‘inflexible’ flexible services???
  - Community transport, liftshare...
  - Scooters, cycles + feet!!!



# Where next?

- Research Bid Submitted
  - What are the key contextual changes?
  - Why do older people travel how they do?
  - How does this relate to how they have always travelled?
  - (How) is the next generation planning for travel?
  - How are expectations conditioned?