

Transport & Older People

Older People

Transport

Planning

Accessibility

Integrating Transport Planning and User Needs

Greg Marsden & Anne Jopson

University of Leeds

Mima Cattan & Jenny Woodward

Leeds Metropolitan University

The Investigation

This study brings together transport and public health research to demonstrate how older people's involvement can help improve current transport planning tools.

Objectives

- To investigate how accessibility problems affect older people's independence
- To determine the extent to which currently available modelling tools reflect older people's accessibility needs
- To pilot techniques that could provide a more robust measure of accessibility for older people

Research Plan

Focus groups will be held in areas less well served by public transport. These will identify factors relevant to accessibility for older people but not included in current transport planning software. Methodologies will then be applied to better reflect actual accessibility for older people in transport planning.

Potential Benefits

This project aims to get people involved in designing public transport and walking facilities that better meet their needs. Greater involvement and better planning should reduce unnecessary barriers to travel and promote greater social interaction and a more active lifestyle.



Photos supplied by Design for Health, Leeds West PCT

Contact Details

Principal Investigator

Dr Greg Marsden

G.R.Marsden@its.leeds.ac.uk

Institute for Transport Studies

University of Leeds

Leeds LS2 9JT



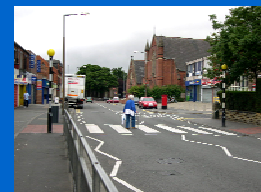
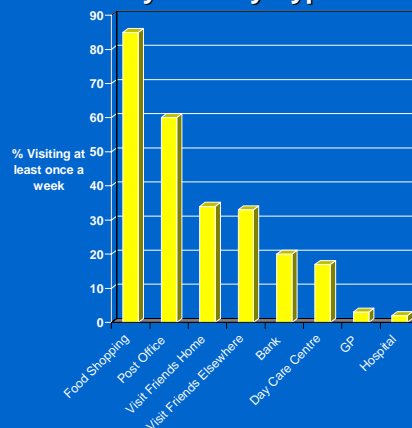
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Transport Issues

Current accessibility assessments focus on access to employment, education healthcare and healthy food. This ignores many activities crucial to the well-being of older people.

Older People's Participation by Activity Type



The Impact on Health

Costly or inaccessible public transport can be a significant barrier to social participation and contribute to the loss of independence for older people and potential social isolation. This can adversely affect physical and mental health leading to problems such as depression (Cattan, 2005). Older people report that public transport improvements would improve their quality of life.

"When you find yourself old and disabled and not able to do the things you used to do, you get lonely"

"Sometimes my nephew takes me out in the car at the weekend but apart from that ... I never get out because there is no transport"

"I ... cannot get out of the house unaided ... Now it just feels like solitary confinement"

Contact Details

Co-Investigator

Dr Mima Cattan

m.cattan@leedsmet.ac.uk

Centre for Health Promotion Research

Leeds Metropolitan University

Leeds LS2 8AJ

