

# Transport & Older People

Older People

Transport

Planning

Accessibility

## Integrating Transport Planning and User Needs

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### Overview

Costly or inaccessible public transport can act as 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, 2006). Older people report that improvements in public transport would improve their quality of life.

All local authorities are required to assess the ability of residents in their areas to reach key services. The particular focus is on those suffering from social exclusion and those most reliant on public transport. Older people are one of the target populations for action but little is known about their accessibility needs (Help the Aged, 2005). Accessibility assessments focus on access to:

- employment
- primary/secondary education
- healthcare
- healthy food

**This list ignores many activities crucial to the well-being of older people.** The current methods for assessing whether people are well served are also deficient. For example, all adults are assumed to be able to walk 500m to the nearest bus stop.

### Resources

The project has a value of £24,963 plus contributions in kind from our partners

### Partners

Leeds Older People's Modernisation Trust  
METRO



Images Courtesy of Design for Health, Leeds West PCT

### Objectives

- To investigate how accessibility problems impact on older people's independence
- To determine the extent to which currently available data sources and modelling tools reflect older people's stated accessibility needs
- To pilot techniques that could be applied to provide a more robust measure of accessibility for older people

### Plan

- Areas of Leeds less well served by public transport will be identified using existing accessibility tools.
- Focus groups will be conducted to identify factors relevant to accessibility for older people but not included in current software.
- Methodologies will then be applied to better reflect actual accessibility for older people in transport planning and subsequently assessed.

### Access to town centres by public transport

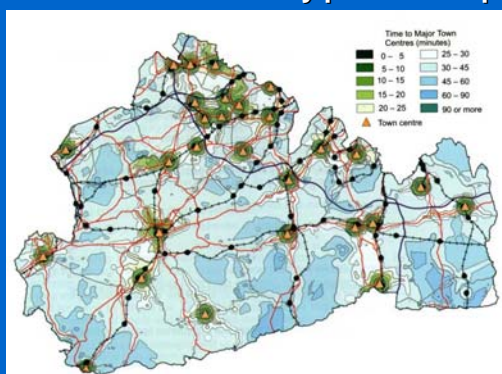


Image courtesy of Surrey County Council

### Potential Benefits

The project aims to get older 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.

### Contact Details

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