Reaching Net Zero: The role of active travel



27 October 2023

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Photo credit: Jonathan Bewley

We work for and with communities, helping them come to life by walking, wheeling and cycling to create healthier places and happier lives for everyone. <u>www.sustrans.org.uk</u>

Registered charity no. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland).

Summary

Our modelling work suggests that swapping 40% of car journeys under 5km to active travel (walking, wheeling or cycling) would have reduced 2019 carbon emissions from cars¹ by 9-11%. If every journey under 5km was made by active travel², this would save 23-28% of carbon emissions from car



for various trips. To calculate emissions, we have used a low, middle, and high value for each distance category of the Transport Scotland figures⁴. In some cases, this Trill give a range of values rather than a precise figure.

What impact can active travel have?

40% of trips under 5km in Scotland in 2019 were made by a driver of a car/van⁵. Reducing this to 22% of trips under 5km (i.e., a 40% reduction) would result in carbon reductions of 9-11% of all car emissions⁶.

 Previous research based in Wales suggested that 41% of short car journeys can feasibly be swapped to active travel, and this would mitigate 4.5% of carbon emissions from cars⁷.

If 100% of all trips under 5km in 2019 were made by active travel, car travel carbon emissions would have reduced by 23-28%. If 10% of car trips over 5km were also shifted to a combination of public transport and active travel, this would rise to 30-35%⁸.

⁴ Transport Scotland group trips by distance (e.g., 5-T0km). Within these categories we have no way of knowing how long trips are and Trave hence gone with a proxy of choosing the lower (5km), midpoint (7.5km) and highpoint (9.9km) end of each 0295110.2811 R Gategors 32 841.92 reW*nBT/F1 12 Tf1 0 0 1 349.99 364.73 Tm0.255 0.251 0.259 rg0.255 029 ⁵ Caldulation.32 . 841.92 reW*n /Span /MCID 9/Lang (en-GB) >BDC BT/F1 8. 0.259 RG4s1 0 5e3(rit)



journeys can be shifted to public transport plus sustainable travel connections.

 Independent active travel journeys (i.e., shorter trips), and active travel journeys as part of a longer public transport trip have similar requirements (in terms of accessibility, infrastructure, ease of use, etc.). Therefore, investment in active travel must be integrated into investment in public transport¹².

CO₂e emissions from cars decrease by 7% for every 10% shift to active travel and public transport in journeys over 5km.

Assumptions

The model assumes that the only change is to mode of transport. However, modal shift to active travel is likely to bring about other changes which may further influenc





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