



**CeMoRe**

Centre for Mobilities Research

# **The Pedestrian City: Historical Perspectives**

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# Main travel mode: England 1965-2016

	Walk	Cycle	Public transport	Car/van
1965	(12.1)*	7.6	40.3	40.1
1975/6	34.8	3.2	13.2	45.8
1985/6	34.2	2.4	10.1	50.5
1995/7	26.7	1.8	9.1	61.3
2005	23.6	1.4	9.8	63.9
2016	25.5	1.6	10.2	62.0

**Source: National Travel Surveys 1965-2016**

**\*Excluding all trips under 1 mile (1.6Km).**

# Travel to work mode, Britain: 1890s-1990s

Decade	Walk	Cycle	Public transport	Motorcycle	Car/van
1890-99	59.4	2.0	36.6	0	0
1910-19	40.6	13.3	43.2	0.6	1.9
1930-39	22.5	19.1	46.0	2.3	9.1
1950-59	13.4	16.0	49.1	3.0	16.3
1970-79	13.4	4.5	34.6	1.9	44.5
1990-99	7.9	6.1	32.0	0.6	52.8

Source: Pooley, C., Turnbull, J. and Adams, M., 2005. *A mobile century? Changes in everyday mobility in Britain in the twentieth century*. Aldershot: Ashgate. p116

# **Key factors**

- **Transport mode choice**
- **Perceptions of normality**
- **Time pressures**
- **Perceptions of risk**

# Qualitative data sources

- **Narrative life histories**
- **Diaries**
- **Statements made at London's Central Criminal Court (The Old Bailey)**  
<https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/index.jsp>



1889.

- 4, claf. Went such a ride with it 94.

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# When walking was normal

- *‘I live at 52, Dean Street, Islington—on this Saturday I went to Sadler's Wells about seven o'clock, and left about a quarter to ten, and went for a walk round by Chapel Street, Islington, and then got home about a quarter to twelve’* (OB Ref: t18911116-59).
- *‘I am the wife of Sir Edward Carson, and live at 39, Rutland Gate—between 1 and 2 p.m. on August 14th I was walking by Rutland Gate—it was raining—I had an umbrella in one hand and my dress and purse in the other.’* (OB Ref: t19010910-584).
- *‘On February 3 I left school with my brother Albert at 4.30 p.m. I met prisoner in Hornsey Road; he asked me where the Oxford coffee shop was, and I and my brother showed it him.’* (OB Ref: t19110228-12).
- *‘On November 25, at 1 a.m., I was standing at a coffee stall by the Elephant and Castle, having just walked from Hatfield, when Jackson offered me a cup of coffee and gave me sixpence to get a lodging.’* (OB Ref: t19110110-9).



# Identifying change

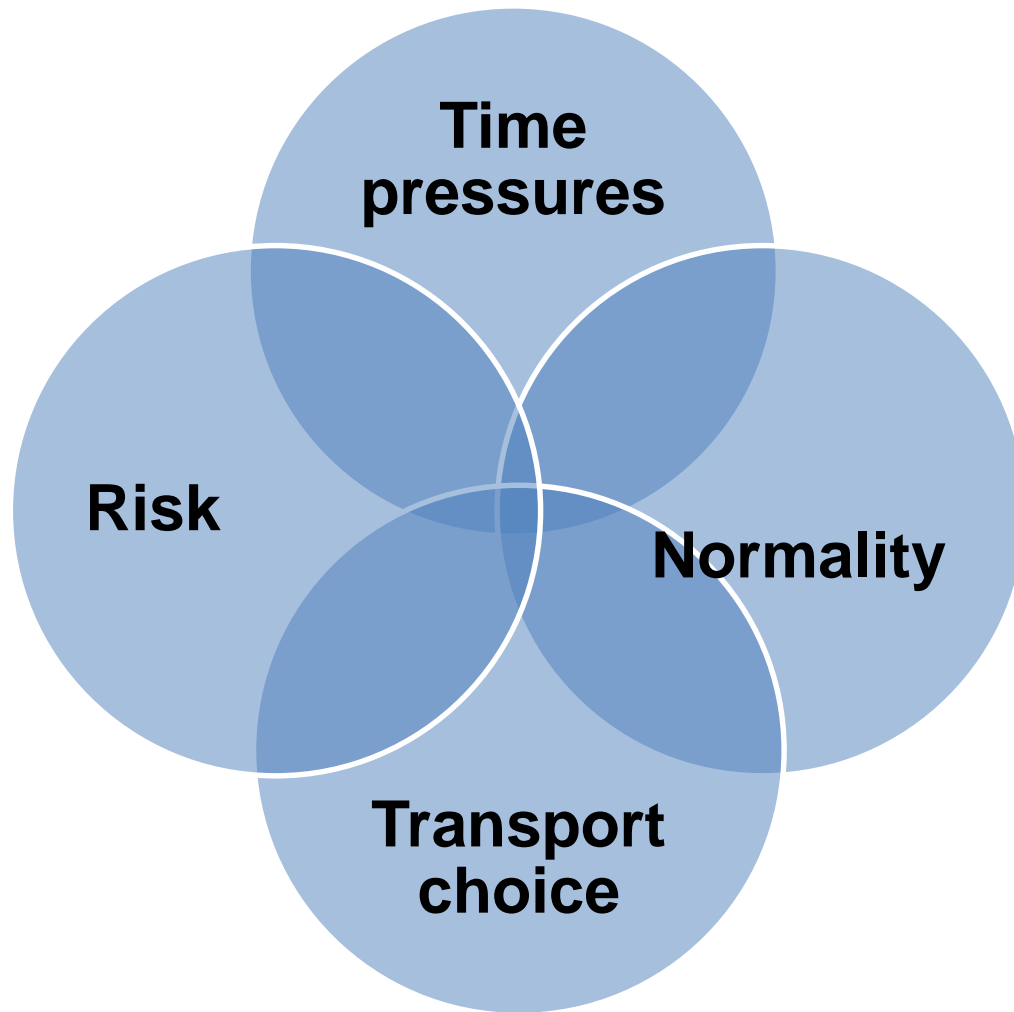
- *‘I soon decided to get up a bit earlier and walk because ... I was paying ... half a crown for tram fares, and I thought I can’t even save up to go home. So I started walking to work and walking back.’* (RJ16, Manchester, female, 1930s)
- *‘If you had access to a car at that stage ... you would have used that for leisure only. It would not have occurred to you to use it for work’.* (RJ04, Manchester, male, 1950s)
- *‘The whole thing with transport and not having a car, I do feel like a second class citizen, there’s definitely a sense that as a pedestrian and a cyclist you are definitely second class citizens’.* (Jim, Lancaster, 2010)
- *‘You feel unusual walking’* (Eliza, Leeds, 2010)

# Time pressures

- ***‘With the demands of family and work and everything there’s not much time or energy [for walking]’ (Percy, Worcester, 2010)***
- ***‘I enjoy walking – always have done – but we don’t have time to do it’. (Jack and Deidre, Leeds, 2010)***
- ***‘Little book I am miserable ... I was up this morning before 8 – (I used to roll down about 8.45 or 9) – washed the children – combed their hair – gave them breakfast and got them off to school. It was about 9 o’clock that I was able to have a cup of tea myself. Then I put a soup on the gas for father, Mark and myself for the shop – Then I ran up to make the beds, and dusted - went out shopping – cleaned the place round. The children don’t care for soup so I had to make them potatoes and veal cutlets. I have to prepare meat and kosher it the previous day.’ (Diary of Annie Rudolph, 1923)***

# Perceptions of risk

- *'If I want to go to the Post Office, there's one quite close but I'll take the car because I don't like walking through the estate. ... I feel very vulnerable walking some places because I can't run'. (Jen, Worcester, 2010)*
- *'Had a most annoying experience this evening. I was returning from evening school. On my own some of course. I heard quick foot marks behind me, and a voice said 'do you mind if I walk with you? I'm going your way!' I got the wind up and crossed the road, but would you believe it, he crossed over too. Isn't it absurd to walk zig-zag to avoid someone one doesn't know, so I said 'I don't know you and don't want to know you. If you don't skiddadle – in other words vamoose – I'll call someone'. So he said ' Now don't talk like that kid. I want to know you '. But I turned my nose up and flew!!! Positively.'  
(Diary of Annie Rudolph, 1923)*



# **Policy implications**

- **Recreate historical situation where walking was normal:**
- **Make it feel easy, comfortable and safe**
- **Make car use seem expensive, difficult and anti-social**