

# Joining Forces to Improve Air Quality and Health Sector Involvement

Behaviour, perceptions, practices and lifestyles

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(CAST Centre)

# Social science, climate change and air quality

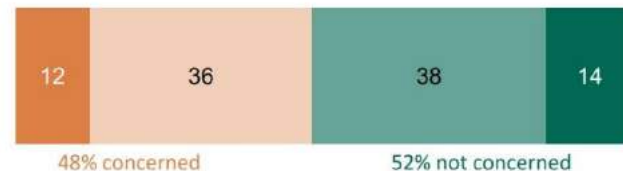
- **Air quality and air pollution as part of wider set of environmental, social problems**
- **Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations (CAST Centre)**
  - Focus on mobility as one of four key sectors
  - Transport emissions hardly budged in recent years
  - Common causes and benefits from acting



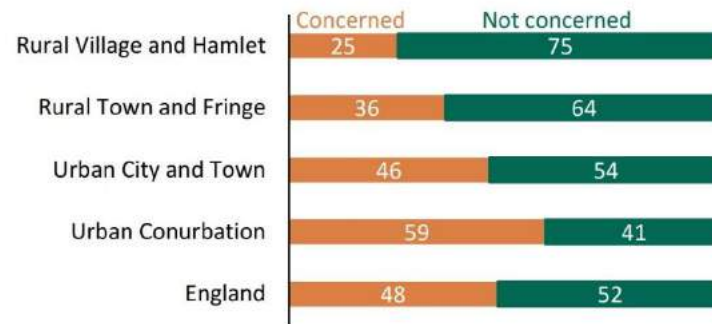
# Public risk perceptions

- **Climate change perceptions**
  - High levels of concern, despite covid-19
  - 74% think addressing climate change requires (extremely) high level of urgency
  - Worry about climate comparable to covid (May, '20)
  
- **Air quality perceptions**
  - Around half of people in England concerned / not concerned about air quality (DfT, 2020)
  - Cars and lorries/vans main causes of concern (73% and 82%)
  - 'Household sources' only 16%

"How concerned, if at all, are you about air quality in your immediate area?"



Concern over air pollution by settlement type



# Perceptions of air quality

- **Outdoor air pollution**

- Awareness and concern strongly linked to
  - physical senses – visual, smell, taste
  - soot, dirt, degradation of trees, nature
  - personal experience, including health symptoms (Oltra & Sala, 2014)



- **Indoor air pollution**

- Little evidence on perceptions, understanding
- Some links to SES, basic measures of behaviour e.g. window opening, cleaning (Ferguson et al., 2020)



# Next big developments?

- **Transformative shift away from petrol and diesel cars**
  - Ban on new purchases by 2030?
  - Government support and investment for active travel? (vs proposed £27bn on new roads)
  - 15 minute cities?
  - Lifestyle change as if we mean it? (UNEP, 2020) (vs 'simple and painless' small-scale action)
  - Integration of health, climate, community, air quality?
  - Meaningful, ongoing citizen engagement with better alternatives?

30th September

## List of 'School Streets' set to expand this October

By Frankie Adkins | [@frankie\\_adkins3](#)

Community reporter



Roads pedestrianised in Wandsworth for 'School Streets' scheme

### Action:

## Create '15-minute cities'

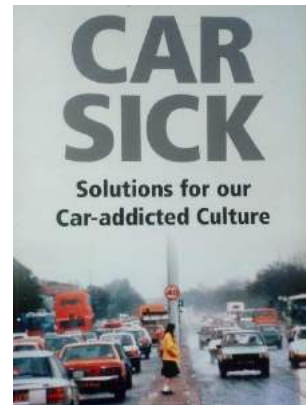
We are implementing urban-planning policies to promote the '15-minute city' (or 'complete neighbourhoods') as a framework for recovery, whereby all city residents are able to meet most of their needs within a short walk or bicycle ride from their homes. The presence of nearby amenities, such as healthcare, schools, parks, food outlets and restaurants, essential retail and offices

# Current problems, limits

- **Understanding of ‘behaviour’ in research and policy**
  - Behaviour and lifestyle change  $\neq$  voluntary, individual, unsupported choices
  - Behavioural science useful, but hard limits on its own
- **Inertia and established ways of life**
  - Cultural conventions, well-ingrained patterns = high levels of car use
- **Absence of transdisciplinary thinking**
  - Psychologists do individual behaviour
  - Economists model price effects, etc.
  - Social contract and the governance trap

# Integration, collaboration

- **Develop multiple benefits approach**
  - Health, wellbeing, air quality, jobs, climate, environment, SDG objectives are well-aligned
  - Focus on e.g. better communities, better ways of life
  - Applies to other areas also e.g. diet

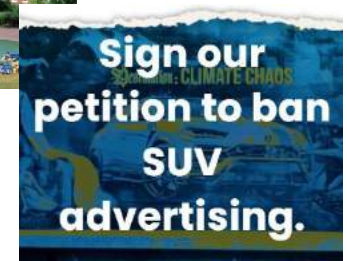


# Integration, collaboration

- **Focus on practical implementation**

- Work with e.g. cities, grassroots groups, campaign orgs.
- Useful: describing, understanding  
*More* useful: making change happen in practice
- Legal, infrastructure, health interventions, habit disruption, communication, (dis)incentives, transport policy, etc. etc.
- Citizen engagement on air quality and neighbourhood transformation

“Climate policies that promote co-benefits (that tackle climate change whilst also delivering on other priorities) can bolster support from local stakeholders, increasing the likelihood that they will be approved by decision makers.”



**Possible.**

Inspiring climate action



# Thanks and plugs

- **CAST Centre**

[www.cast.ac.uk](http://www.cast.ac.uk)

**@CAST\_Centre**

- Capstick, S., Lorenzoni, I., Corner, A., & Whitmarsh, L. (2014). Prospects for radical emissions reduction through behavior and lifestyle change. *Carbon management*, 5(4), 429-445.
- Nielsen, K. S., Clayton, S., Stern, P. C., Dietz, T., Capstick, S., & Whitmarsh, L. (2020). How psychology can help limit climate change. *American Psychologist*.
- Capstick, S., Khosla, R., Wang, S. et al. (2020). *Lifestyle change for emissions reduction*. UNEP Emissions Gap report, forthcoming.