

This is the third part of the \$FWLYH 7UDYHO toolkit on The Role of \$FWLYH 7UDYHO in Improving Health.

>RO +M^S`O >\K`OV ^YYVUS^] KSW ^Y ROVZ 6/:] KXN ^RO.
NOVS`O\c ZK\^XO\] ^Y\$

' H H O R S \ R X U E F X W L H Q H R U W L Q Q Z H D O W N P L Q Q V D Q Q F K F H F I O V L Q J

/LQN ZDONLQJ DQG F\FOLQJ VFKHPHV WR \RXU VWUDWHJLF HF growth priorities, housing growth and planning, and public health.

6XSSRUW WKH SODQQLQJ DQG GHOLYHU\ RI ZDONLQJ DQG F\FOLQJ schemes in your local area.

This toolkit will cover the following areas:

- 1 ■
- 2 ■
- 3 ■

A slide pack on the role of sustainable transport in improving mental health can be

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1. The financial and personal costs of poor mental health

2. The benefits of physical activity for mental health

SRSXODWLRQ & RQYHUVHO\ LQDFWLYH SHRSOH DUH PRUH OLNHOV depression.⁵

There is unequivocal evidence that physical activity has positive effects on anxiety, DQG VSHFLÛFDOO\ WKDW VKRUW EXUVWV RI SK\VLFD ODFWLYLW\ I The most positive effects are noted among those who maintain physical activity programmes over several months. Physically active people report fewer symptoms of anxiety or emotional distress than those who are inactive. Physical activity can help people feel less anxious in general, and even single exercise sessions can help individuals feel less anxious. Moderate intensity activity can reduce short-term psychological reactions to psychological stress and can help people UHFRYHU PRUH TXLFNO\ 3K\VLFD ODFWLYLW\ KDV VRPH EHQHÛFLD generalised anxiety disorder, phob6 R

3. The benefits of active travel for mental health through the commute

Active travel

Psychologists have long recognised the potentially detrimental effect of the commute upon our mental health. As walking and cycling contribute towards physical activity both modes are good for our mental health. Public transport journeys typically feature physical activity when accessing bus stops or railway stations and therefore are also often proven to be good for mental health.

Public transport use are the least stressful modes and that active travel is often reported as a positive experience in terms of stress management. Across the developed world, users of public transport also “complain” about delays,¹¹ or actually enjoy their journey. Users of public transport also “complain” about delays;

commuting time have shown to be associated with improved subjective wellbeing scores.

Roads however can lead to community severance and be dangerous and unfriendly environments for people. Therefore without adequate pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to overcome barriers and enable attractive, continuous, direct and

Case study: Adults' commute travel behaviour over time and wellbeing

In a longitudinal survey of the British Household Panel Survey (1991/2–2008/9)¹, researchers found associations between wellbeing and:

- travel mode choice,
- FK D Q J H V L Q W L P H V S H Q W F R P P X W L Q J E \ V S H F L Û F W U D Y H O P R
- switching to more active travel modes.

This research found a positive association between active commuting and wellbeing, for example

- there was a positive relationship between time spent walking and wellbeing.
- with regards to public transport there was a positive association observed between wellbeing and public transport when compared to car travel of a comparable magnitude to that observed between wellbeing and active travel overall.

7 K H U H V H D U F K H U V Q R W H G W K D W D S D U W L D O H [S O D Q D W L R Q I R U W transport journeys typically feature physical activity when accessing bus stops or railway stations.

7 R J H W K H U W K H V H U H V X O W V D S S H D U W R V X J J H V W W K D W D Y R L G L G to wellbeing. This view complements existing evidence of a negative association between driving and physical health and is consistent with the hypothesis that car driving (a non-passive travel mode that requires constant concentration) can give rise to boredom, social isolation and stress.

This view is also consistent with the hypothesis that intrinsic enjoyment is gained from the exercise or relaxation associated with active travel. In addition to potential SK \ V L F D O K H D O W K E H Q H Û W V W K H S R V L W L Y H S V \ F K R O R J L F D O Z H C V W X G \ V K R X O G E H F R Q V L G H U H G L Q F R V W t E H Q H Û W D V V H V V P H Q W V promote active travel.

4. Improving links between transport health and wellbeing

resulting from investment in transport schemes, most notably for walking and cycling schemes.¹

As the Chartered Institute for Highways and Transportation has stated, there are opportunities to improve links between transport, health and wellbeing, but progress is being hampered by a lack of strategic integration nationally and joint working

health and wellbeing should be emphasised more in policy and practice.²⁰ The key

5. Acknowledgements

This toolkit was written by Adrian Davis, Independent Consultant on Health and Transport and Sustrans, in partnership with Living Streets and The TAS Partnership. The toolkit was peer reviewed by Stephen Watkins, Director of Public Health at Stockport Council.

6. References

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