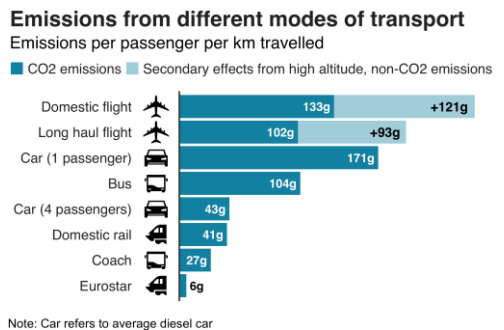


What are the problems?

We lead busy and increasingly complex lives. Our towns have been shaped over the last 50 years around motorised transport, often at the expense of other methods, and to the exclusion of those without a car. Cars get us from A to B in comfort and at our convenience (56% of car journeys are under 5 miles). However fuel prices are increasing as oil supplies decline and cars are increasingly expensive to run. Congestion, fumes and parking add to our daily stress. Our cars pollute the air right where we live. Public Health England research suggests poor air quality is responsible for 28-36,000 premature deaths per year, most of it related to vehicles. As we increasingly use cars, air pollution in urban areas is only increasing. And of course, cars are a major contributor to climate change. Planes, trains and buses also contribute to the growing concentration of climate change gases – but there are large differences in their impacts as can be seen right.



What can we do to help?

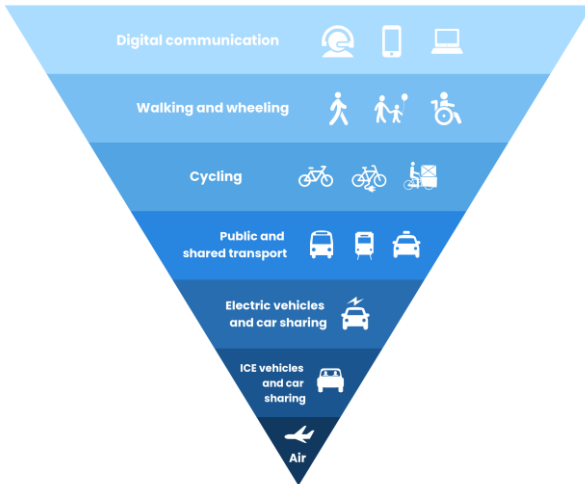
- Consider digital communications for working, socialising and shopping and reduce our need to travel in the first place
- Walk and cycle more. Not just for leisure but for daily journeys. Invest in clothing and equipment to carry what we need and to stay safe and dry
- Use public transport more. Use Google Maps to plan our journeys - it automatically includes timetable changes and real time delays
- Drive our cars less. Drive them efficiently and full with people, if possible, when we have to drive. Lift share for regular journeys
- Consider an electric vehicle if we really need to replace our old cars with another car or, ideally, replace it with a normal or electric bike
- Consider shared car ownership or use a car club
- Reduce or stop flying and cruising. Consider taking holidays in the UK or taking a holiday abroad by train or coach

What do you think?

- Why is so much of our public space given over to private car ownership?
- How much money is spent dealing with poor health, such as obesity and respiratory conditions, directly or indirectly caused by car ownership?
- Which sections of the world's population fly the most and which sections bear the brunt of the impact of flying on the environment and the climate?

What else can be done?

Travel is clearly an area where Government intervention is required in addition to personal changes. This has been acknowledged in the government Transport Decarbonisation Plan but, in the words of the Government's own Climate Change Committee, the plan is "too little, too late". Local councils should therefore exploit all opportunities for investment in sustainable travel (e.g. Active Travel) and lobby Government for the resources to achieve local targets.



We can engage with councillors and MPs to articulate local travel priorities with the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy (see left) and integrated travel solutions in mind. Additionally businesses should enable staff to work and travel sustainably and reconsider benefits based around the car such as parking and lease cars.

Keywords for further research

Active Travel; Local Transport Plan; Weymouth Transport Action Group; Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan; Weymouth Climate Emergency Plan; Low Traffic Neighbourhoods; Sustainable Cities; Walking Buses; Sustrans School Streets; Play Streets; Living Streets; 20-minute & Walkable Neighbourhoods; World Car Free Day; Seat61