FTVG

FTVG
Group 5:
Manchester Ad. Collective
21/05/2021

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Note on Deliverable

This report out is intended as an accessible blog piece to openly share our novel approach and project finding. We discuss some of our work, outline how we would take this approach beyond the limitations of this project and highlight insights from our learning's throughout.

We look forward to any feedback from the judging panel ☺

The Future of Transport is here, we just don't use it enough!
- Manchester Ad Collective

The future of transport is already here, the majority of people are just not in the habit of using it! They don't realise to what extent walking, cycling or taking public transport is good for them, that it is good for the planet… and if they don't use these options, they won't improve! This project proposes a delivery model of how to develop and finance a behaviour change campaign that can start influencing peoples' habits now, so we can realise a more sustainable transport future.

Introduction:

We believe that the solution for a sustainable future of transport is already here. While we acknowledge the excitement and potential surrounding emerging technologies such as autonomous and electric vehicles, we are already living among tried-and-tested efficient transport modes: active travel and the public transport system (AT/PT).

However, there are stigmas surrounding the use of our bus and rail services. Even in places like Manchester where the tram, rail, and bus networks provide sufficient level of services, owning and driving a car is still seen as aspirational. This mind-frame contributes to a negative loop of public transport use, where reduced passengers lead to a reduced incentive to improve services, leading to further decreased patronage.

When initially considering proposals for our project, as a team we questioned why there isn't more already being done to use proven advertising methods to promote the benefits of sustainable travel, especially given its societal benefit, to get people to experience them first-hand. We hypothesised that this is because advertising is expensive, and it is down to individual operators to market each of their routes.

Car manufacturers spend significant amounts of their marketing budget promoting their vehicles to new potential customers. In comparison, operators tend to spend a limited budget, mainly on the promotion of new routes. Due to this, there are potentially millions of people who already have services available to them, who are not aware of them, or worse, not willing to give them a try based on their uninformed prejudices of what it might be like. This project seeks to take a higher level, collaborative approach to tackle this problem.

Car manufacturers even advertise on the Transport for London (TfL) website. This is despite the strong vision of TfL to reduce car trips in London. See Figure 1.

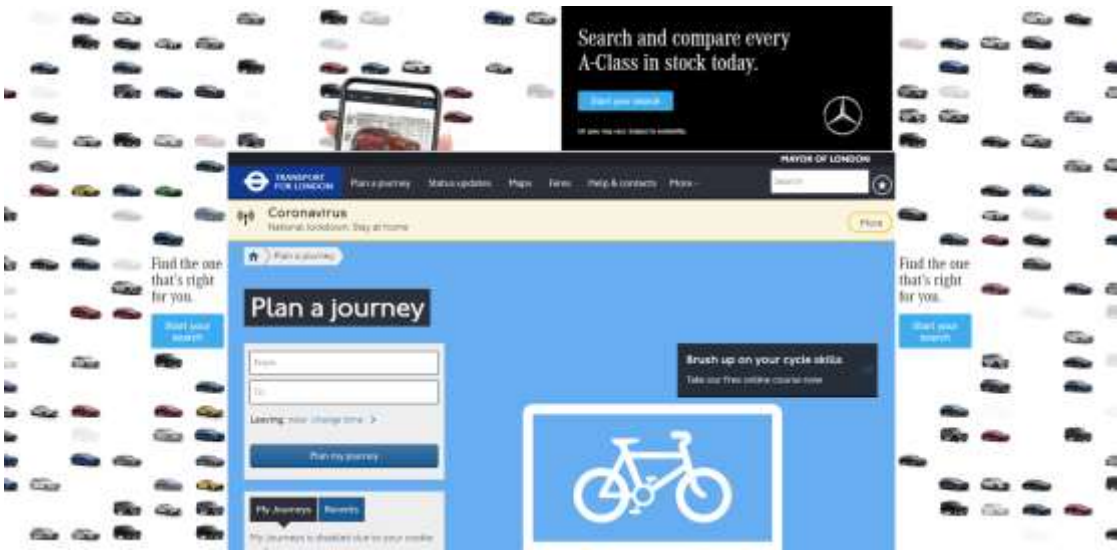


Figure 1 TfL Advertising Cars on their Journey Planner

As transport professionals, we understand the benefit of public transport and the need to increase its mode share. However, this understanding is difficult to convey to the masses. In our project, therefore, we aim to develop a campaign strategy to personalise and present the evidence of sustainable travel choice and their benefits to the public.

Further, we position our project as a starting point to bring together public transport stakeholders which include the operators, health authorities, and wider communities to come together and lend their support for the campaign with the goal of behaviour change at scale.

Behaviour Change

Exploring how to change behaviours we came across the *Stanford: Behavior Design Lab*'s Fogg Behavior Model. This model, shown below, proposes that for an individual to change their behaviour three things need to be in place: the activity needs to be easy to do, the person needs to be motivated to do them and they need a reminder, a trigger to do so again and again until the change becomes a habit. The triggers success will succeed or fail based on a combination of how hard the change is to make and how motivated the individual is to make the change.

'When a behaviour does not occur, at least one of those three elements is missing.'
- BJ Fogg, PhD[i]

Applying this model to changing people's sustainable travel habits we started to consider how it could be applied to our 'Ad. Collective' concept. These three enablers became the elements we would need to seek out, understand and design for to maximize our potential to change behaviours:

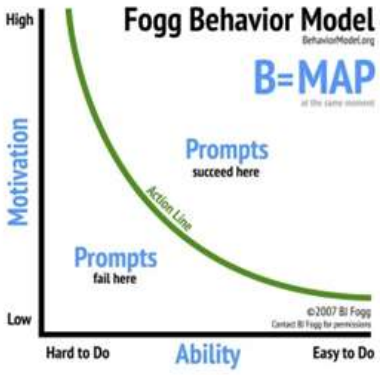


Figure 2 Fogg Behavior Model

- **Ability:** We would look to find places where sustainable transport should be easy to do.

- **Motivation**: We would look to understanding and personalising benefits and increasing social pressure resulting in higher motivation.

- **Trigger**: We look to prompt action through a recognisable campaign identity and a call to action as part of the campaign.

With these elements of behaviour change theory in mind and considering the disparity in campaigning budget between car and more sustainable modes, we felt the need to look at how a campaign would be funded. We took inspiration from 'Social Impact Investing' to create a replicable model for collective behaviour change campaigning which we went on to work through in this project.

Figure 3 The M.ad Collective Model for Behaviour Change Campaigning

Steps:

1. **Identify Target Demographic**.
   Draw on existing data to identify a community with good access to sustainable transport options who are not utilising them.
2. **A. Identify Benefactors**
   Consider the local stakeholder who would benefit socially or commercially from a shift toward more sustainable modes.
   B. Quantify impact of change
   Quantify this benefit using total cost modelling and analytical techniques
3. **Understand target demographic**
   Engage the target demographic, understand their preconceptions, barriers to change and how they might respond to motivators or triggers
4. **Create targeted behaviour change campaign**
   Come up with a creative campaign solution tailored to the target demographic which can be disseminated through channels most applicable to them.

5. **Package and pitch**
   Bring together the benefactors to collaboratively invest in this campaign based on expected social and commercial impact

What follows is an insight into these steps we have taken and the learning's we have gleaned by trying this out in practice. We conclude by sharing an example campaign and proposition for how we might take this forward beyond this research initiative.

Our thanks go to the Future Transport Vision Group (FTVG) and the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund for sponsoring this exploratory project.

What we delivered

Step1: Identify Target Demographic

Manchester was selected as the city of focus for this project for numerous reasons. Firstly, Greater Manchester (GM)is going through an exciting period of change. Greater Manchester is growing rapidly, with the region's population forecast to grow 13% to 3 million by 2040[ii] resulting in a 10% increase in daily trips. To ensure that this growth is sustainable, healthy and equitable, significant changes in how people travel is needed.

Moreover, there are ambitious targets within the city to improve the transport system so that - by 2040 - 50% of all journeys in GM are made by public transport or active travel, resulting in a reduction in car use to no more than 50% of daily trips. As a team, we felt this was a particular area of challenge.

Additionally, GM has set out a bold target to be carbon neutral by 2038, 12 years ahead of the Government's target for the UK. All ten of their local authorities and the GMCA have declared a climate emergency, making clear the need for urgent action to put them on a path to carbon neutrality by 2038. GM is taking action through the '5-Year Environment Plan for Greater Manchester, which includes priorities for reducing transport emissions and improving the region's air quality.

From a health perspective, in Greater Manchester, physical inactivity remains a key public health issue, with over 1 in 3 of adults in the region not being physically active. Greater use of public transport and active travel can make a significant contribution to improving health by increasing levels of activity and improving air quality. The focus should be making walking and cycling the natural choice for shorter, everyday trips, instead of a car. It is important to recognise that, for many people, a car is the default choice; often however they are not aware of other modes available or are reluctant to give it a try.

All of the above (and not limited to) reasons, resulted in the team identifying Manchester as an exciting city of focus: the transport network is well established, there are varied modes, and the city is changing with far-reaching ambitious targets. It is felt that a shift in attitude could have a long-lasting and positive impact.

We selected two suburbs of Manchester: **Chorlton and Levenshulme**. These areas were chosen, as they were deemed far enough from the city centre that a car may be relevant, however, both areas

have good and varied public transport links that could be utilised for commuting and leisure trips**.** In addition, through analysis, it was identified that both Chorlton and Levenshulme have high proportions of young professionals and young families.

Analysis of the ACORN Consumer groups, we decided to focus the research on Young Suburban families (see analysis below). We felt that younger people are potentially more susceptible to making changes that have the potential to result in longer-term behaviour change, compounding the impact over a longer lifespan.

In summary, Chorlton and Levenshulme provided two locations rich with our target demographic with good transport links in place, suggesting that promoting the benefits of PT/AT could encourage proportional behaviour change.

Table 1 ACCORN Analysis of potential consumer groups

Name	Q1 - Car Reliant	Q2 - Stigmas	Q3 - Benefit	% people impacted	Level of reliance on PT
Lavish Lifestyles	Yes	Yes	No	low	Low
Executive Wealth	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**low**	**Low**
Mature Money	Yes	Yes	No	medium	Low
City Sophisticates	No	No	No	medium	Medium
Career Climbers	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**medium**	**Medium**
Countryside Communities	Yes	Yes	No	low	Medium
Successful Suburbs	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Medium / high**	**Medium**
Steady Neighbourhoods	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**M/H**	**Medium**
Comfortable Seniors	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Medium**	**Medium**
Starting Out	Yes	No	Yes	Medium	Medium
Student life	No	No	Yes	High	High
Modest Means	No	No	No	High	High
Striving Families	No	No	No	High	High
Poorer Pensioners	No	No	No	High	High
Young Hardship	No	No	No	High	High

Step 2: Identify Benefactors and Quantify Impact of Change

To understand the full impact of a shift to public transport, we first mapped the cost and benefit elements of private and public transport mode as can be seen in Figure 4 below. These elements are assigned to stakeholders to help us build narratives to engage with different parties.

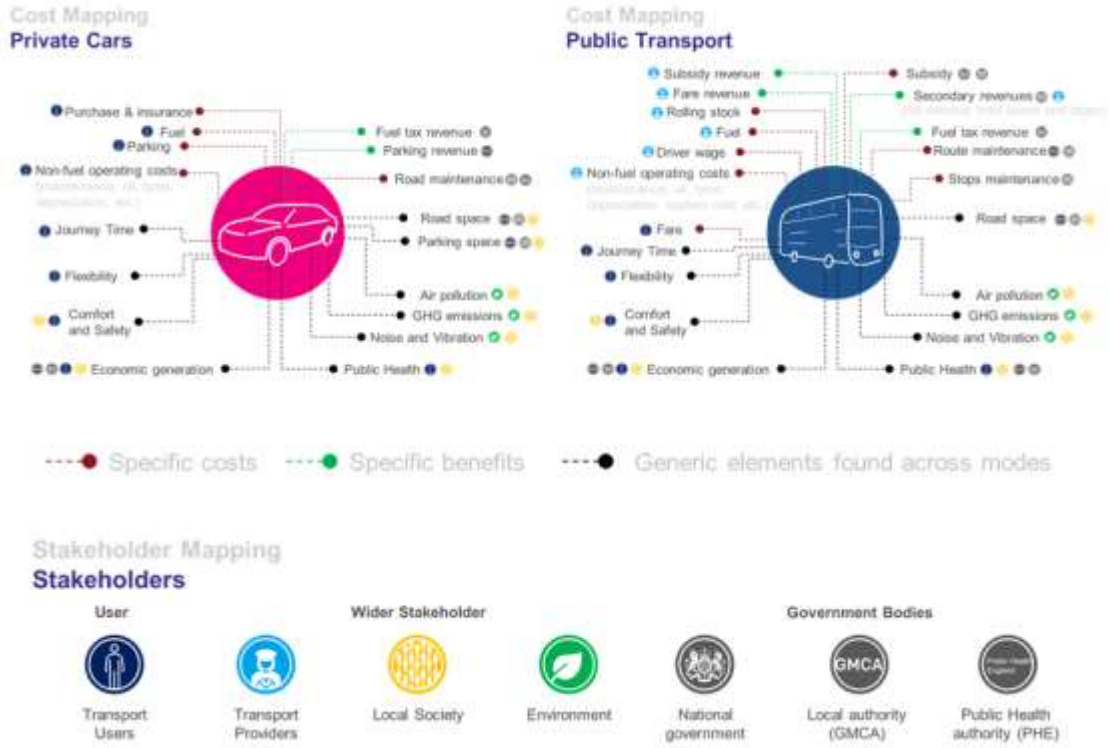


Figure 4 High-Level Cost & Stakeholder Mapping

Once we have mapped out the elements, we conducted a cost modelling exercise based on a journey comparison between private and public transport mode from origin to destination. To contextualised the analysis, we have studied the journey options from Chorlton and Levenshulme to Manchester city centre. We compared the distance and the time between the origin and destination using different transport modes as conceptualised in Figure 5 on the next page.

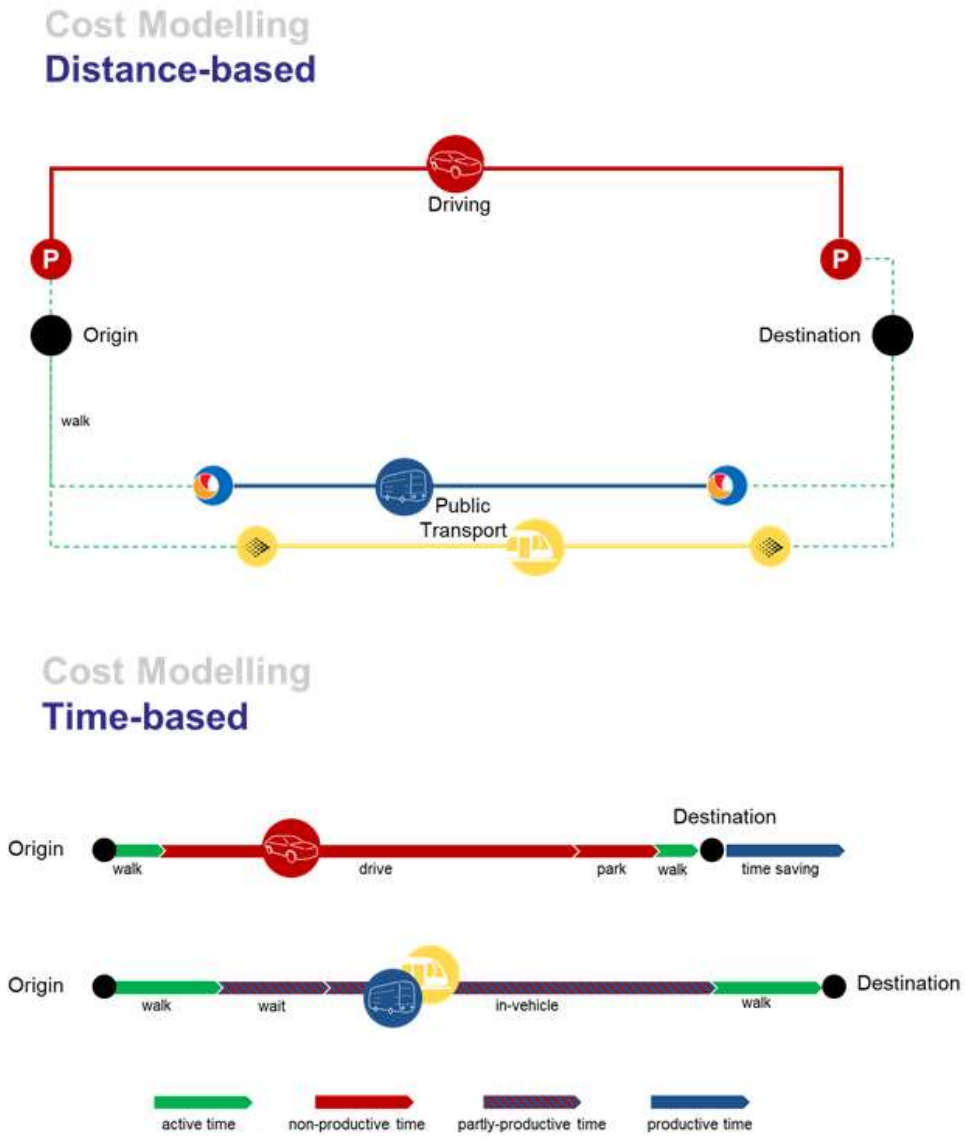


Figure 5 Conceptual General Cost Modelling

As can be seen, public transport journeys typically include more walking time and distance to access bus or Metrolink stops. This is often seen as a deterrent to public transport. However, the walking segments of public transport journeys could be reframed as active time which would improve passengers' health. The longer journey time due to waiting and in-vehicle time compared to car journeys is also often quoted as a barrier for using public transport. These segments could also be reframed as 'partly productive' time where passengers have some options of activities such as reading a book, doing some work, or having a down-time.

We frame this as partly productive time as we have found in the focus group that most people would not consider this a fully productive time as their options are dependent on several aspects such as seat availability and crowding.

A modal shift to public transport triggers four immediate effects: increased active time and increased partially productive time for users, reduced vehicle kilometres, and increased fare revenue

for operators. Using the guidance from WebTAG and academic resources, we have calculated the economic impacts of some of these immediate effects. Due to the qualitative nature of some of the impacts, some relationship has been assessed qualitatively rather than quantitatively.

Figure 5 below provides a conceptual diagram of the impact assessment process. The continuous lines in the figure represent relationships that have been examined quantitatively while dotted lines represent qualitative assessments.

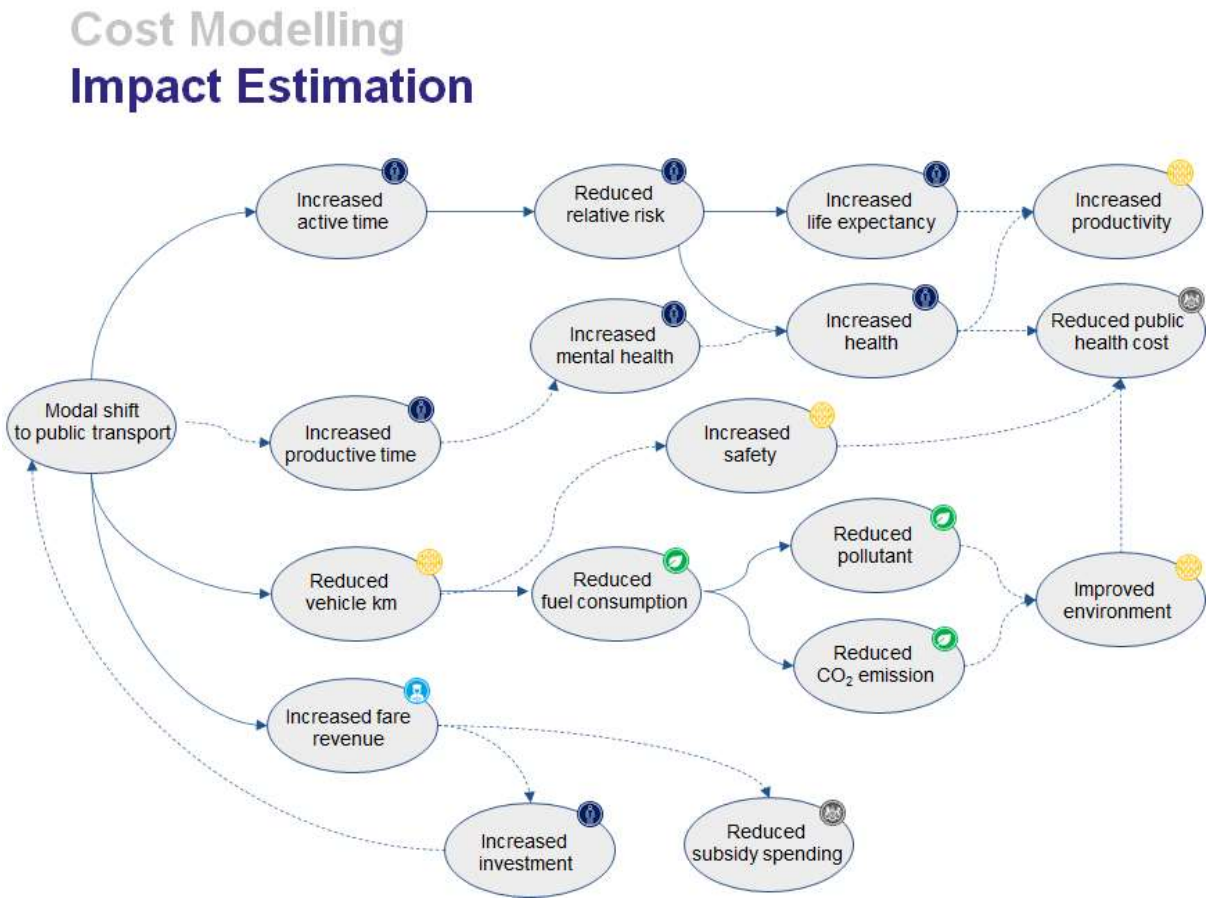


Figure 6 Impact Assessment Map

Using guidance from national data (WebTAG) and calculating cost benefits and relative health risk, we have derived the overall individualised impacts of moving from car to more sustainable modes. (See additional documentation for detailed calculations and methodology)

In terms of health, based on the calculation that the average walking time for a one-way commute using public transport is 12 minutes, a two-way commute 5 days a week would equal to 2-hour walking time per week. This level of physical activity reduces public transport users' relative risk of illness to 83% of that of car users. This means that public transport users will be less likely to contract a wide range of health issues such as heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and type-2 diabetes. Sustaining this level of physical activities for 25-years would result in an increase of life expectancy by approximately 3 years.

A Chorlton or Levenshulme resident switching from car to bus would also reduce their $PM_{2.5}$ (fine particulate) emission 13 times over which would improve public health by reducing the risk for asthma and heart diseases for the local population. They would also reduce their CO_2 emission 7

times over which contributes to reducing the risk for extreme weather events and disruptions of natural habitats globally.

While at the individual level these changes may seem small, it is important to note that collectively the compound effect would be greater than the sum of individual effects. Further, these modal shifts would increase fare revenue for public transport operators which would improve the economic viability of increasing investment to improve services and ultimately lead to a step-change in passenger demand.

Step 3: Understanding the Target Demographic

To understand why a resident of Chorlton or Levenshulme may be reluctant to use public transport, including understanding current barriers to use and existing preconceptions, the team held a series of user engagement sessions. An agency was used to recruit participants, to deliver three focus groups containing 15 residents of Chorlton and Levenshulme, aged 24-35 and identifying as being a regular car user.

The main purpose of the focus groups was to understand current barriers to public transport, preconceptions, and test what messaging may be relevant to create a shift in mindset. It was hypothesised that if a promotional campaign can be personalised to the needs of the end-user, i.e. relevant journey statistics, an indication of personal health benefits etc, then a change in attitude could be more likely. The benefits of PT/AT and promotional themes were tested during the focus groups, to explore the extent they could resonate and its' potential to encourage behaviour change.

Key themes and insights from the focus groups:

Sustainable modes of transport have an image problem:

- Public transport is unreliable, dirty, dangerous, loud, cramped and uncomfortable.
- Active travel takes longer, is more dangerous, sweaty and hard work.
- Existing preconceptions run deep. A lot of stigma around being a lower-class form of travel and public transport can be unsafe and unreliable.
- These stigmas are mostly felt by the people who have never experienced these modes and who are unaware of the benefits each of these options could have on their time, their health and their bank account.
- Car ads are selling the feeling of adventure; to change the image of PT we should sell a feeling of positive self/smugness for sustainable transport.
  i.e. make people feel good about making a greener / healthier option

Value and convenience are paramount to the user:

- Young people not sold on new car ads, more focused on 'Value' rather than 'shiny new features'
- When thinking about public transport advertising more generally, they are drawn to features (wifi, charging) and its convenience ahead of how it makes them feel.
- Sometimes the monetary cost of PT is prohibitive, this needs to change. In that sense, some of the other benefits to the individual need to be the focus.
- Commuting is not thought of as a productive time, as PT/AT can often be a stressful experience for the user

Individual Benefits need to be the focus (esp. health benefits):

- People could be motivated by the benefits PT/AT can offer to them on a personal level: health/mental health, productivity/time, cost, personal green values.
- Generalised statements about the benefits do not resonate, need to have a way of making it relevant to them and their reality of using PT
- Ads tend to show perfect families, better to show real people that can be identified with, proving that 'people like me' can make a change. It is important, to be honest about the realities of public transport.
- Across all focus groups, health benefits were seen to have the potential for the greatest impact in terms of encouraging a shift in travel behaviour.
- A targeted campaign message could trigger them to try sustainable travel (in areas where hard factors are met) leading to a change in their perceptions and could form new habits.

In summary, the focus groups gave us invaluable insight into the current 'image' problem and perceptions that some people have about PT/ AT, as well as providing the design specifications for our campaign.

Step 4: Develop a Campaign

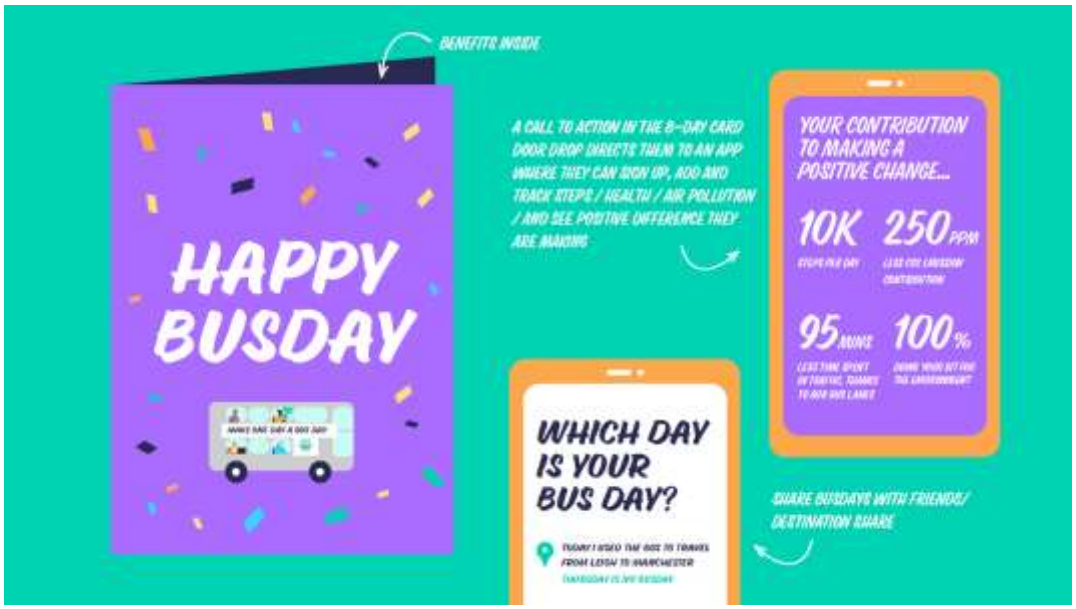
To promote positive behaviour change, we were inspired by a range of campaigns that have successfully helped shift behaviours, such as Veganuary and the NHS's Couch to 5k. The team and the focus groups all resonated with this type of promotion, as it provides an actionable and motivational way to make small steps towards a bigger mindset shift, without the need to change the transport product itself or build further transport-related infrastructure.

Figure 7 Example Behaviour Change Campaigns

Throughout the project we were supported by a local creative agency, Creative Spark, who assisted the team through mood-boarding, creating briefing, ideation and concept selection; before visualising some of the better campaign concepts on our behalf. Throughout this process, we drew on the insights from our focus groups, so that the direction taken has the best chance of resonating with our target demographic of young suburban families.

A mock-up of the concept we feel could work best for influencing sustainable travel behaviour change in young suburban car owners from Levenshulme and Chorlton is shown here:

BDAY!...
BUS DAY
BOOT DAY
BIKE DAY
HAPPY BDAY
B PART OF THE MOVEMENT
TO A HEALTHIER YOU AND A HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT


BENEFITS INSIDE
HAPPY BUSDAY
A CALL TO ACTION IN THE B-DAY CARD DROP DROP DIRECTS THEM TO AN APP WHERE THEY CAN SIGN UP, ADD AND TRACK STEPS / HEALTH / AIR POLLUTION / AND SEE POSITIVE DIFFERENCE THEY ARE MAKING
YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO MAKING A POSITIVE CHANGE...
10K
250 PPM
95 MINS
100%
WHICH DAY IS YOUR BUS DAY?
SHARE BUSDAYS WITH FRIENDS/ DESTINATION SHARE

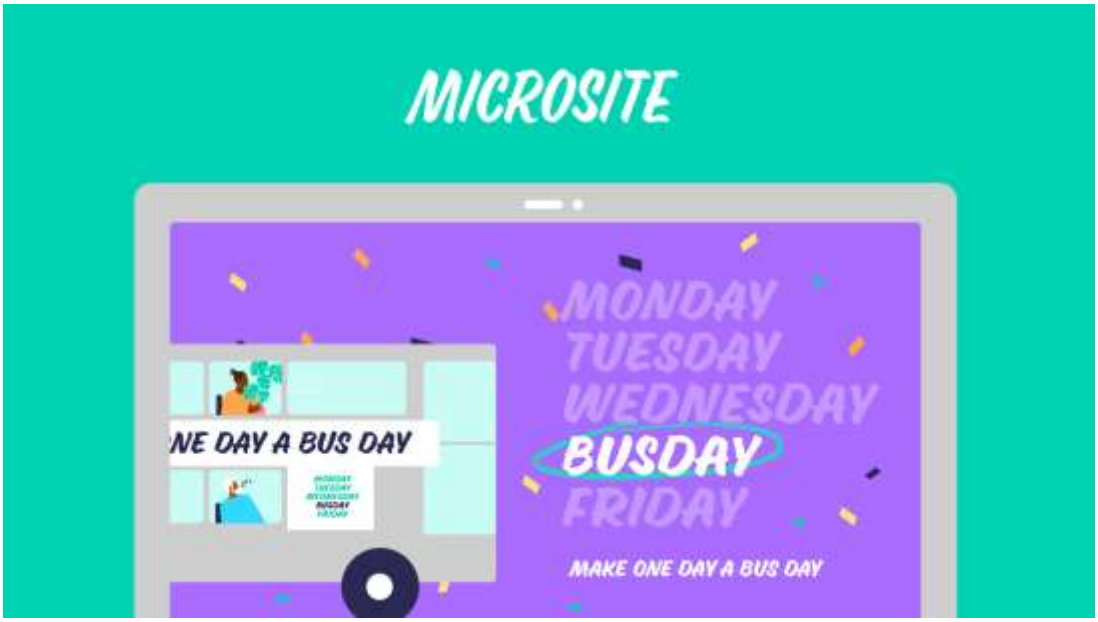


Figure 8 Mock-up of a Behaviours Change Campaign

Happy B-Day – where B stands for sustainable travel: boots, bikes and buses. It could even expand to included 'borrowed' transport: scooters, e-bikes and car clubs.
It stands for Better travel choices: a better choice for the planet, for the community and yourself.

We would send out localised maildrop cards in birthday card envelopes. When the individual opened it they would highlight the local sustainable travel options and some of the general benefits of this type of travel. Each card would contain a link to a website with a built-in journey planner which could be used to calculate the personalised benefits to each individual if they decided to bus, bike or boot their journey.

The site would also host short interviews and testimonies of what local people are getting out of their B-day. For example:

- Katie is using her B-day to hit her step goal
- Paul has earned a guilt-free Kit-kat on his walk to the bus
- Samina managed two chapters of her book this morning!
- Rokie got to chill out and kill some aliens!

This campaign could also incorporate triggers like a free bus ticket one day a week, or the individual could earn rewards for sharing their sustainable habits and getting others involved through referral initiatives.

Although local to Manchester with ties to the 'B' network and the popular Manchester Bee, campaign material would be created in a way that it could be replicable easily or scale into other local areas.

Through this project, we have recognised the importance of making the benefits of using PT/AT induvial to the user. Therefore, a key output of this project is a 'Travel Benefit Calculator', where another area, city, transport authority etc. can input information on their transport network, and at the push of a button, receive key information about the potential benefits to individuals i.e. CO2 reduction, calories burnt, KM walked etc. In this way, we believe the project is replicable in many other areas, and can easily replicate the 'B-Day' campaign.

In addition, from a transport planning perspective, the ability to demonstrate the benefits of a transport system to the end-user, via this calculator, could help secure funding for future transport infrastructure.

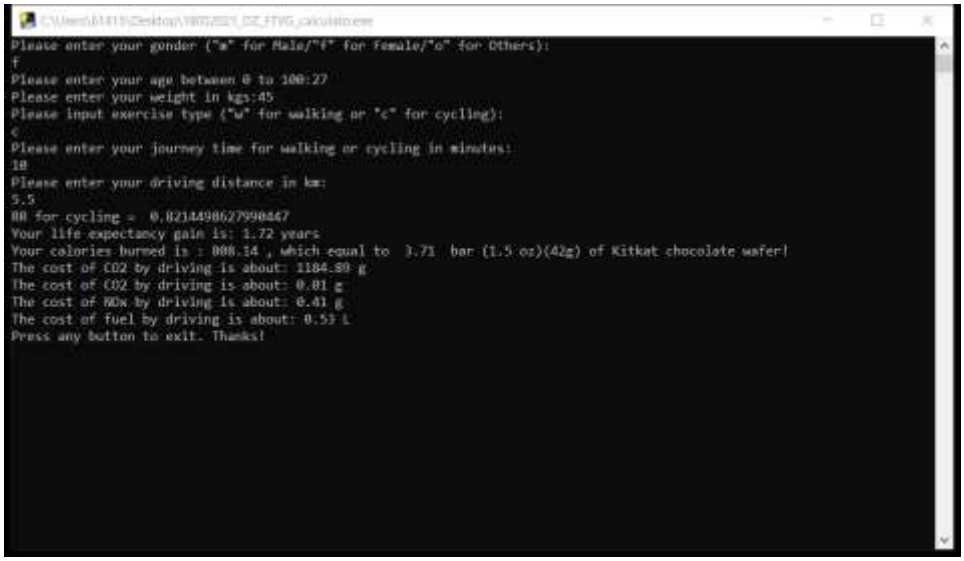


Figure 9 Travel Benefit Calculator Prototype

Step 5: Package and Pitch – The Next Step

It has cost £5,750 (excluding VAT) and approximately 50 days of volunteer time from the team to get to the final product presented in the previous section. To deliver this campaign effectively, a collective effort and investment from various stakeholders must be secured.

It is our aim that the end of this year's FTVG programme would not necessarily mean the end of this project. Based on the stakeholder and cost mapping exercises, we have invited Transport for Greater Manchester, Stagecoach, GM Moving, and Better Buses GM, as representatives of local stakeholders and Public Health England as a representation of a national government body for a discussion to bring this advertisement campaign forward.

Our next step would be to package up this campaign and pitch it to these stakeholders suggesting the investment required to launch it in the target areas, the expected impact this could have on behaviour change, and the return they would see to their own KPIs. This would provide each stakeholder with an outline business case for investing in an Ad Collective campaign like our B-Day proposal.

Conclusion

We have demonstrated through this project, that there is the opportunity to create a meaningful campaign with the ability to encourage people to make a positive behaviour shift towards making more sustainable travel choices, rather than relying on private car use. In the context of Greater Manchester, this could help to deliver some of the targets set out within the 2040 strategy and those set out within the 'Right Mix' vision.

In addition, this project has reinforced the knowledge, that in the context of Greater Manchester (Chorlton and Levenshulme), the transport network is well established with multiple connections and varied modes. As such, we re-enforce the belief that the solution for a sustainable future of transport is already here.

We hope this project will pave the way for future modes of transport coming to fruition as if we can't get people to use public transport services today, how will we get people to move towards future modes?… leading the team to question whether there is such a need for revolutionary technologies if the solutions that already exist are under-utilised?

We believe a project of this type is extremely important to 'bridge the gap' between existing modes and the possibility of future mobility technology and innovation.

The project also highlighted the public transport and active travel has somewhat of an 'image problem' with many people viewing car usage as being a superior mode of choice for many reasons, often reasons that could not be verified i.e., it is for 'poorer people', it is inconvenient, it is not safe etc. We believe that these negative preconceptions could be alleviated by highlighting the individual benefits of using PT/AT on a personal basis, hopefully resulting in a re-evaluation of their pre-conceptions.

We believe this could be achieved through the B-Day campaign where the journey info and links to a personalised in-journey planner can be used to calculate the personalised benefits to each individual if they decided to bus, bike or boot their journey.

By encouraging a shift, it's not just operators who benefit; the societal benefits are significant in terms of health, the economy, congestion, air quality and emissions. Moreover, we believe the financial investment required for this collective campaign, would be minimal in comparison to the potential impact and long-lasting benefits, and a fraction of the cost when compared to the significant advertising budgets committed by car manufacturers.

Finally, we believe the replicability of this campaign is the key to its success. As such we have created the 'Travel Benefit' calculator, so another area/city can also use the campaign as a framework to promote sustainable transport practices.

Through collective campaigns around the UK working in collaboration to change travellers' perceptions over 20 years, we can normalise sustainable modes. The aim is for the wider society to realise that even though it may seem difficult to use active travel or public transport, these choices are better for them and the society than continued use of private vehicles. Their use of active and public transport will also support future investment in sustainable transport which will contribute greatly towards making these choices easier in the future.

Our work in developing the campaign ties in with strategic transport priorities in the UK. We believe that there are government funding streams available that could support this project. In the past, several Local Sustainable Transport Funds (LSTF) exists which support local authorities to improve public transport and active travel. Currently, this project could be a good complement to the Bus Back Better program as part of Covid-recovery. We believe that there is a great potential in linking with public health funding as we have shown that modal shift would greatly benefit individual's and societal health as well as the environment.

What's Next

The team are committed to this project and intent to pursue piloting the B-Day campaign in Greater Manchester. We are looking to hold a discussion group in September 2021 with interested parties sharing the expected cost and benefits structure to deliver something at the required scale.

By piloting the programme we would expect to prove our remaining assumptions:
- stakeholders engaging and buying into the benefit in collaborative campaigning
- members of the target demographic engaging with a sustainable travel campaign
- social acceptance increases as a result
- more people using sustainable travel modes as a result
- more ongoing investment in AT/PT longer term as a result of increased use
- compounding benefits over time: social/commercial impact, perception and use of sustainable modes in the area.

If you are interested in hearing more about the business case behind the campaign, would like to join the discussion group or just to say you have learned something from this project please get in touch through info@ftvg.com or by tweeting us @FTVG_UK.

End

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Team:
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This project has been delivered through the Future Transport Visions Group (FTVG), funded by the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund.