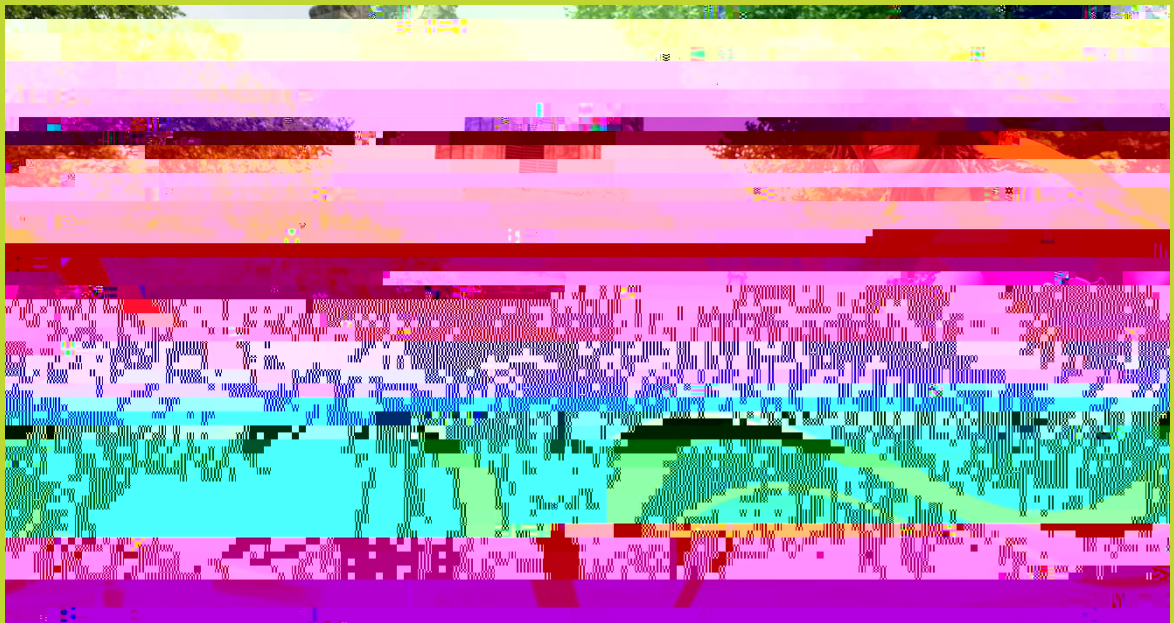


Reaching Net Zero: The role of active travel



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To find out more, please contact: Seán Fortune
sean.fortune@sustrans.org.uk.

Photo credit: Jonathan Bewley

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Registered charity no. 326550 (England and Wales)
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Summary

Our modelling work suggests that swapping 40% of car journeys under 5km to active travel (walking, wheeling or cycling) would have reduced 2019 carbon emissions from cars¹ by 9-11%. If every journey under 5km was made by active travel², this would save 23-28% of carbon emissions from car

for various trips. To calculate emissions, we have used a low, middle, and high value for each distance category of the Transport Scotland figures⁴. In some cases, this will give a range of values rather than a precise figure.

What impact can active travel have?

40% of trips under 5km in Scotland in 2019 were made by a driver of a car/van⁵. Reducing this to 22% of trips under 5km (i.e., a 40% reduction) would result in carbon reductions of 9-11% of all car emissions⁶.

- Previous research based in Wales suggested that 41% of short car journeys can feasibly be swapped to active travel, and this would mitigate 4.5% of carbon emissions from cars⁷.

If 100% of all trips under 5km in 2019 were made by active travel, car travel carbon emissions would have reduced by 23-28%. If 10% of car trips over 5km were also shifted to a combination of public transport and active travel, this would rise to 30-35%⁸.

⁴ Transport Scotland group trips by distance (e.g., 5-10km). Within these categories we have no way of knowing how long trips are and have hence gone with a proxy of choosing the lower (5km), midpoint (7.5km) and highpoint (9.9km) end of each

⁵ Calculate

journeys can be shifted to public transport plus sustainable travel connections.

- Independent active travel journeys (i.e., shorter trips), and active travel journeys as part of a longer public transport trip have similar requirements (in terms of accessibility, infrastructure, ease of use, etc.). Therefore, investment in active travel must be integrated into investment in public transport¹².

CO₂e emissions from cars decrease by 7% for every 10% shift to active travel and public transport in journeys over 5km.

Assumptions

The model assumes that the only change is to mode of transport. However, modal shift to active travel is likely to bring about other changes which may further influenc

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