

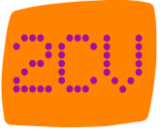
StreetGames: Walking & Cycling

Summary Research Findings

May 2018



Background



- Data from the Active Lives Survey and local monitoring data shows that although rates of walking and cycling for utility/commute journeys are similar between LSEG and other groups, rates of these activities for leisure are significantly lower amongst LSEGs
- StreetGames wanted to understand the current walking and cycling behaviors of disadvantaged young people, including the barriers and motivations to walking and/or cycling more, with a view to exploring opportunities to increase walking and cycling amongst this group



Walking and cycling have many benefits in young people¹:

- Increased concentration
- Increased mood
- Better health
- Lower rates of drug/alcohol addiction

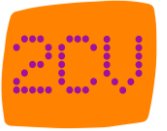


They are also activities that have significant government support, potential stakeholders and funding available.

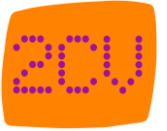
1. https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/file_content_type/sustransinfosheet_benefits_activetravel_youngpeople_web_0.pdf



Overarching Objectives

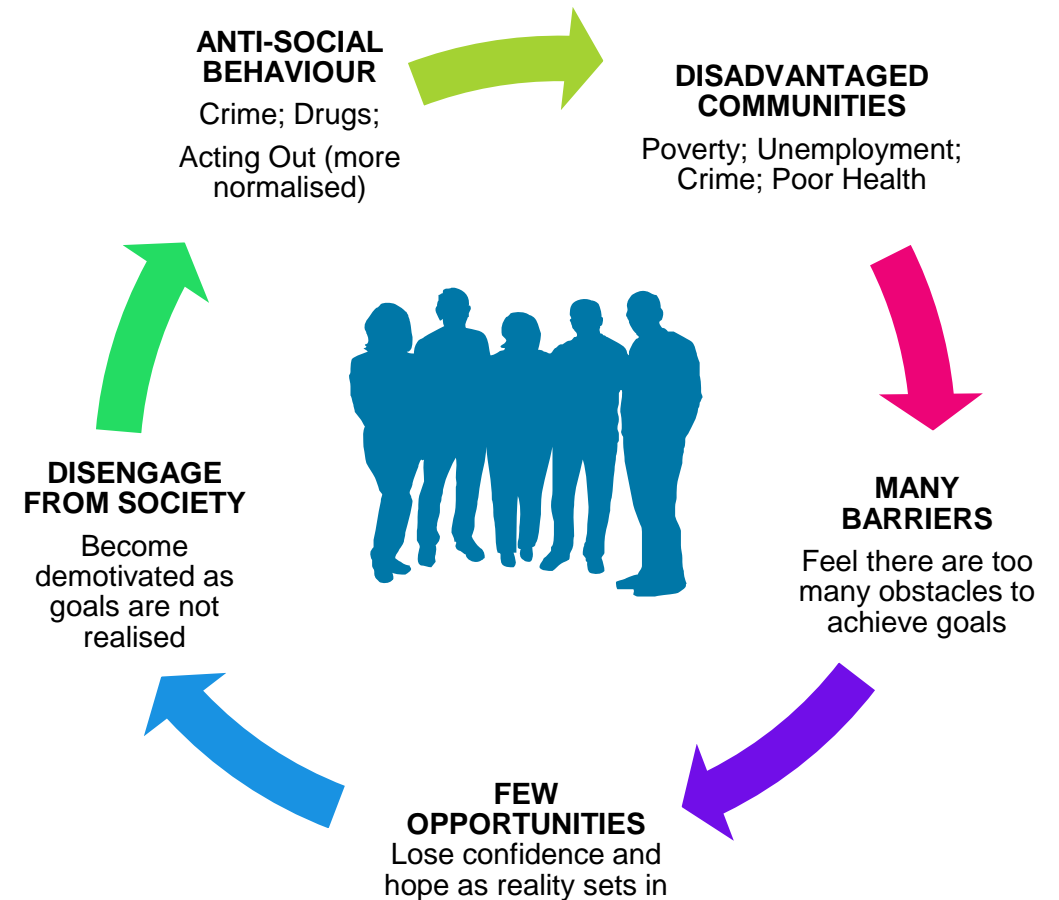


Young people from disadvantaged communities feel they're the same as any other young person, but their world is limited*



- As part of the “brand me” generation, young people are under pressure to form identities from an early age and express this online
 - Consumer society in the form of celebrities, media and brands is having a major impact on the image young people feel they should project

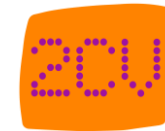
“I’m usually on my phone, it’s a big part of my lifestyle, I love being on social media”
Female, 12, Bristol



- What differentiates disadvantaged young people from their peers is the fact that their world is often limited by social and financial instability
 - This leads to a cycle of barriers to opportunity and disengagement

* Findings from Street Games research study 2014; Understanding the lives of disadvantaged people

This is further compounded by the micro-environments in which they operate....



- These young people's horizons are even limited on a geographical level with little need for travel outside their immediate locale
 - Radius of travel day-to-day is generally small
 - The local area very much forms their frame of reference for life

This morning I walked to Caia park to get my friend and we played basketball for a while...

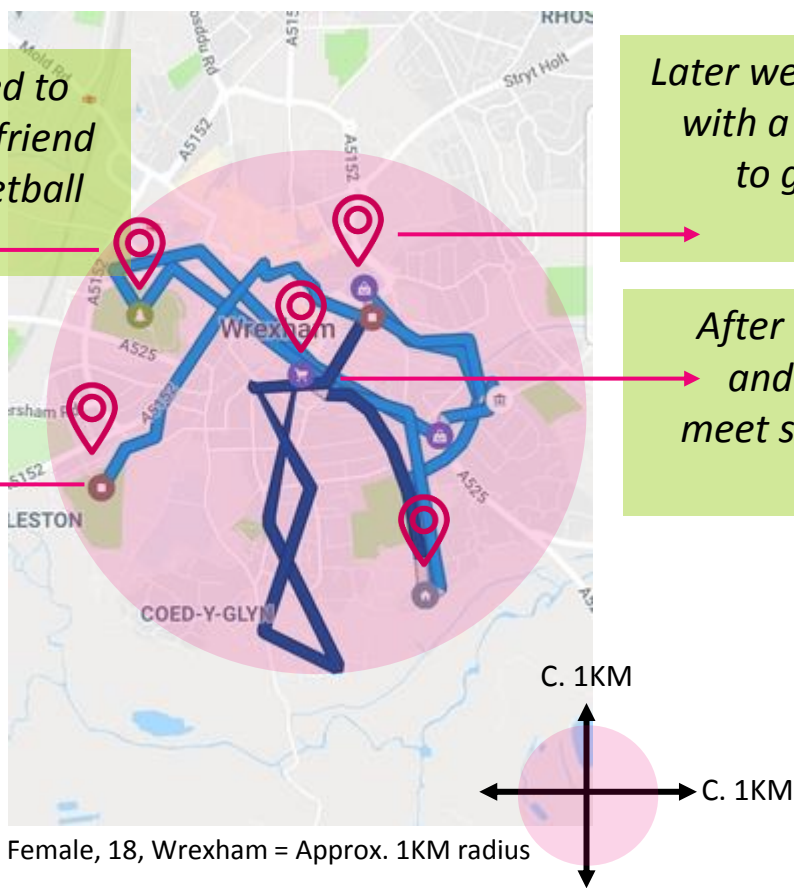
Later we walked to town with a group of friends to get something to drink...

"Most days I'm either going to/from school, the green at the end of my road or MacDonald's which is about 10 minutes away"
Male, 14, Bristol

Then we walked to Bellevue park to sit...

After this I stayed in town and walked to Erddig to meet some friends where I sat for a while...

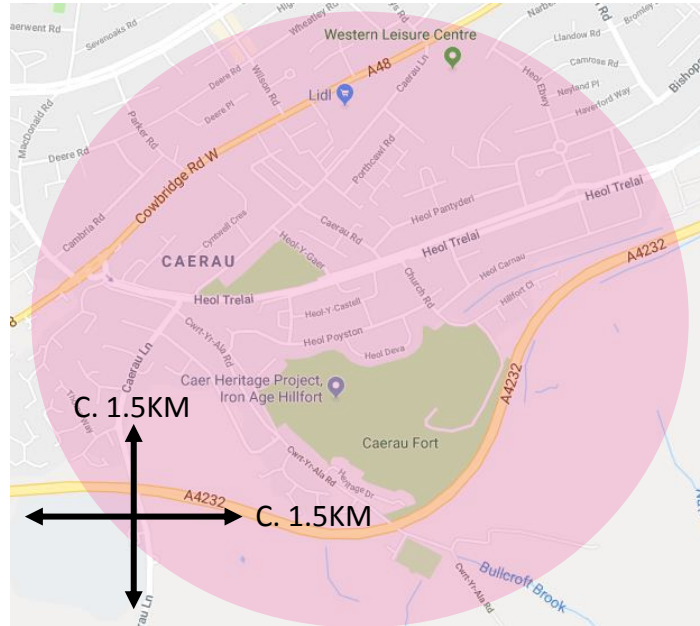
"I don't mind walking but not too far. I walk to the bus stop or the tram stop...when I'm going out with friends we walk to the tram and to each other's houses or the cinema. It's not that far"
Male, 19, Manchester



10 day diary - map example from Female, 18, Wrexham = Approx. 1KM radius

A selection of maps showing these micro-environments*

CARDIFF

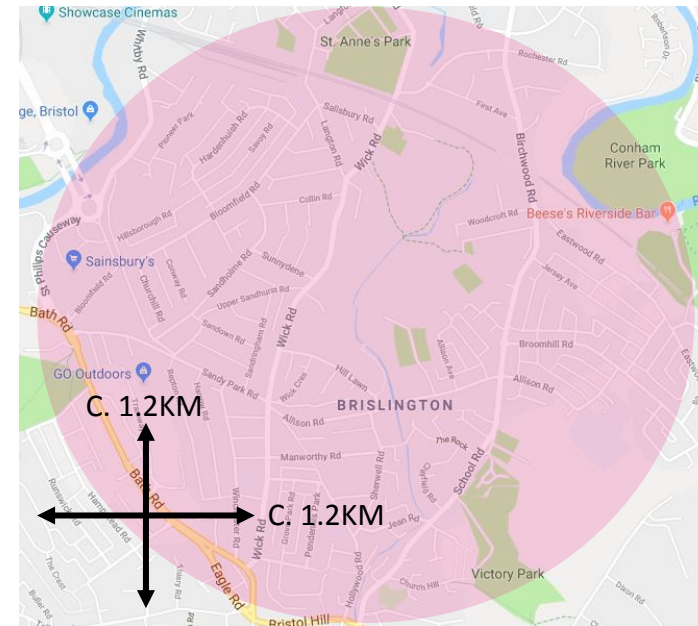


- Female, 24
- Travelled in area of approx. 1.5KM radius during 2-week period
- Walking was kept to a minimum; bus and car became the default for most journeys.

"I went to my friends house for a few hours which I walked and walked back home."

"I went to a few local shops with my friend in a car and back home."

BRISTOL



- Male, 13
- Travelled in area of approx. 1.2KM radius during 2-week period
- Cycled regularly

"I was on my way to school."

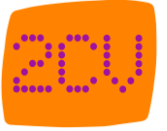
"I cycled down to the pound shop to get some food."

"I cycled to St Anne's Park with my friends, after about 3 hours, I cycled back to my house."

"I was cycling to my Uncle's house with my brother – we do this once a week."

* Specific details of routes taken out for privacy purposes

... where challenges are common place and further restrict them



Living in deprived areas exposes these young people to further challenges

- **High rates of drug usage and crime** make certain streets, parks etc. feel like no-go areas
 - For the younger group (12-14 years), parents limit solo travel to their street/local shops, with clear areas to avoid

“There is a canal near our house but we’re not supposed to go there as there’s lots of homeless people”
Female, 14, Manchester

- **Lack of places to go** or things to do for young people
 - Often local facilities have been shut down
 - Lack of access to public transport for some e.g. local bus stop or a car (parent may or may not drive) further limits
 - Home can be quite small and crowded, making young people want to go out but it feels frustrating when there are few options for what to do



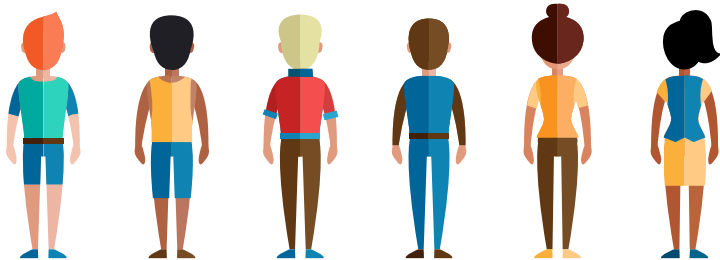
“I just stay at home as there is nowhere to really go – there used to be this youth centre thing but it shut down, so my friends just come to mine” Male, 13, Wrexham

“My house is so hectic with my sister and her kids – I always want to get out the house but there’s nowhere really to go” Female, 17, Cardiff

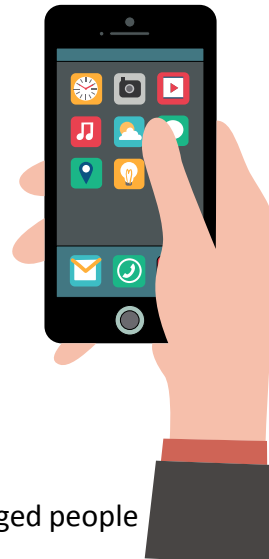
This amplifies the importance of things critical to most teenagers*

Frequent social and financial instability in their lives, a limited physical world and not wanting to be branded a 'disadvantaged youth' amplifies the importance of:

Fitting in: Emphasis placed on ensuring social belonging, following what their mates do, not becoming an outsider



Social status: Sensitivity around not wanting to embarrass yourself, chasing the latest trends & making an extra effort to maintain how peers perceive them in order to 'keep up' with other teens



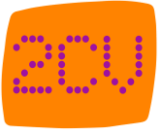
Live for today: Earn & burn impulse spending; cash comes and goes very quickly, barriers to future goals make it easier to focus on here and now



"People round here are so judgemental so you don't want to look stupid or you'll never live it down"
Female, 15, Manchester

* Findings from Street Games research study 2014; Understanding the lives of disadvantaged people

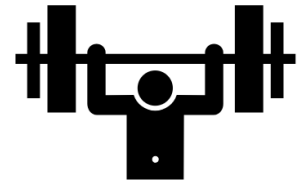
Sport and exercise is rarely a priority for most and participation can be patchy*



“For me, its about being able to show that I’ve been working out – that’s why I go to the gym, to work on that.”

Male, 18, Wrexham

- Young people already feel like they have a lot on their mind, sports are an adjunct to life for many, there are other priorities that take precedence
 - Can feel ‘one dimensional’ and limited to getting a better body or used as social cred (especially for boys)



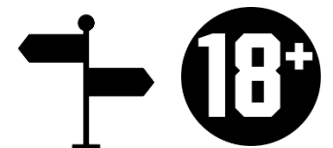
- Young people tend not to actively seek out new sports
 - Instead they rely on other people and their environment to nudge them into participation (e.g. being asked to join the school netball team, a friend asking to come along to a class, a new gym opening)



“I used to do lots of sports at school, I was on the basketball team, but when I left that just all stopped and now I don’t really do anything”

Female, 17, Manchester

- Lack of direction and lack of momentum mean that sports journeys are patchy and somewhat random, sometimes punctuated by periods of intense focus
 - Small barriers can result in complete drop-off; “the centre shut down” “my friend stopped going, so I did too”
 - The biggest drop off occurs in the transition between school and ‘adulthood’



* Findings from Street Games research study 2015; Exploring sports pathways

Walking and cycling are perceived as distinct from sport

Young people do not think of walking or cycling as a sport, for two main reasons:

1. Primarily a mode of transport

Young people think of walking and cycling primarily as a means of utility / transport

- Mostly a way of getting from A to B
- Secondarily can be linked to leisure as a way to spend time with friends ‘hanging out’ but very rarely for the ‘joy of the activity’ itself



2. Exercise benefits not overtly linked

Unlike other sports, the health benefits to walking and cycling (especially walking) are not obvious or apparent

- They wouldn’t think to walk or cycle if they wanted to exercise/lose weight – for this they would turn to other more traditional sports and higher intensity activity
- Very few think there are distinct physical health benefits of walking or it is a way of getting ‘fit’
 - Though it is loosely associated with ‘staying fit’ i.e. those who never walk are seen as likely to be unfit

“Generally it’s a means to a ends, you don’t really think about it. Can be cool if you’re walking with friends though somewhere as a chance to chat”
 Female, 19, Wrexham

“If you want to get fit – walking and cycling aren’t the way to do it. Though I guess people that never walk are going to be pretty lazy and so definitely unfit!”
 Male, 17, Bristol

Summary of Walking



1 Typical Behaviours

- Walking often the main mode of transport – how they get to school, to work, to meet friends etc.
- Walking is part of hanging out with friends – walking to the park/shops with groups of friends
- A minority of the younger group are ‘going for a walk’ and when they do it is to spend time with friends when there is lack of much else to do

2 Associations

- ‘Just something you do’ – walking is a means to an end, a way to get you from A to B
- People who walk for fun are ‘weird’
- For old people who can’t do other exercise



3 Motivations



- ✓ Free and easy way to get somewhere
- ✓ Mental health benefits – a way to ‘clear your head’
- ✓ Socialising with friends

4 Barriers



- No fun element associated with walking in itself
- Don’t think of it as exercise
- Often nowhere nice to walk locally
- Alien concept to walk without a destination – feels ‘pointless’ and lacks any sense of achievement
- No skill or learning is gained from walking

“I don’t understand why you would want to walk more. If I wanted to get fit I would just go to the gym or play more basketball. Walking is boring and you do it enough day to day as it is” Male, 18, Wrexham

Summary of Cycling

1 Typical Behaviours

- Boys are using their bike to get around quicker – cycling to school
- Boys cycle in groups and ‘hang out’ with their bikes, doing tricks etc.
- Girls are cycling much less – younger girls who are cycling are doing so less frequently and more as a leisure activity – with family or close friends as a weekend activity


2 Associations

- For kids / young boys
- Cycle rides something you do with your family
- For the elite (Tour de France/Olympics)



3 Motivations

- ✓ Quick way to get around
- ✓ Has the ‘cool factor’ for younger boys (under 17)
- ✓ Fun and exhilarating activity which is good exercise



4 Barriers

- Cost of buying/repairing a bike
- Logistics
 - Where to leave it
 - For girls – what to wear, carrying bags, messing up make up etc.
- Lacking confidence to cycle on the roads
- Limited places to go in the local area
- Don’t think of cycling as a ‘sport’ – lack of a goal/game element
- For girls – less normalised, they worry about how you will look/what people will think
- Loses the cool factor as boys get older, and driving becomes more aspirational (18+)



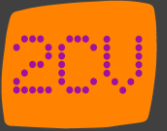
Overall, walking and cycling more isn't currently an exciting proposition for young people

- There is not a big appetite from young people to walk/cycle more
 - They are not particularly excited to engage in these activities more, and their participation thus far is passive and circumstantial
 - Other sporting activities are more appealing to this audience and have more obvious benefits associated with them

"If I want to do something outside I will meet my mates to play basketball. It's fun, good exercise and we can do it together. That's what I want more of" – male, 12, Wrexham

"I feel like there are other activities that are more exciting – walking and cycling are cool, but I'm not desperate to do them more. I don't see what the benefit would be?" – Female, 18, Bristol

However, there are potential opportunity areas for each



WALKING – A STEPPING STONE FOR THOSE LESS ACTIVE

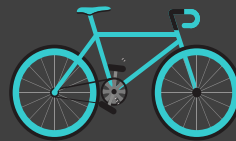
- For the very **inactive older audiences** (18+), walking is an unthreatening entry point and potentially easier for them to engage in
- But, still lacks clear benefits to engage them so work needs to be done to reposition walking to them, 'selling' the benefits

"At least walking is easy to do. I don't do any sport but I wouldn't mind going for a walk" – female, 24, Cardiff

"If you're unfit, walking at least will help you get started, and it isn't hard to" – male, 14, Nottingham

"I haven't cycled since I was about 12, I don't know if I could get back on now, it's been too long" – female, 24, Cardiff

"I have a bike and cycle to school so I could cycle a bit more than I do already. It would be easy to do" – male, 15, Wrexham



CYCLING – ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO KEEP CYCLING AND AVOID DROPPING OFF

- Once young people stop cycling, the barriers to starting again become more pertinent
- Encouraging those who cycle to keep cycling will help to increase participation and avoid the big barriers arising
- For girls, encourage them to keep cycling beyond 13/14 years old, and for boys beyond 16 years old

Fundamental considerations for engagement



To engage young people in walking/cycling, some important factors need to be considered:

Reframe walking and cycling as a sport that's 'for me'



Link to their values and priorities



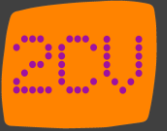
Involve learning and improvement



Create an enabling environment



How to translate these considerations into action...



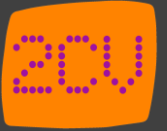
Reframe
walking and
cycling as a
sport that's 'for
me'

- **Walking & cycling need to be reframed to become relevant to young people in their worlds:**
 - **Cycling:** currently thought of as for kids, young people often grow out of it. There is a need to reposition it as being a cool and beneficial thing for older young people to do as well
 - **Walking:** seen as for older people. Need to reframe as being a fun activity for young people
- Potentially the **use of influencers and social media** could help to rebrand these activities and shift perceptions
- **Clearly position walk and cycling as a sport & exercise by highlighting the health benefits**
 - Show that you get X result by cycling/walking X distance
 - Set challenges and link them overtly to the results

Involve
learning and
improvement

- **Find ways to give a sense of progression through participation in walking and cycling.** For example...
- **Cycling:**
 - Learning tricks to impress your friends
 - Offering safe spaces to build confidence & skill
- **Walking:**
 - Adding elements to make it more challenging, such as distance goals, speed, etc.
 - Tracking progress to give that sense of achievement, for example through a fitbit

How to translate these considerations into action...



Link to their
**values and
priorities**

Connect walking and cycling to what matters for young people

- **Fitting in:**
 - Show others like them cycling
 - Use influencers to make it 'cool'
 - Make activities social so young people can do it with their friends
- **Social status**
 - Use gamification to create a trend young people can engage with and share their progress with their peers (e.g. Pokemon go / fitbit)
- **Live for today**
 - Young people want to feel an immediate benefit to participating.
 - They don't see walking in itself as a strong enough benefit, so they are looking to be incentivised through rewards – vouchers, discounts or points of some kind.

Create an
**enabling
environment**

- Young people don't consider going outside their immediate local environment but their local area is usually limiting. To encourage participation in walking and cycling, having a **safe and inspiring space is key.**
- There are two main options to do this:
 - Take them somewhere more exciting – offer transportation to take them somewhere fairly nearby which has more to offer
 - Create a fun space in their local area – for example a bike/skate park