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Newsletter

Winter 2020 

Patric takes the helm

During the Derby Cycling Group AGM, held 27th October, long time DCG member Patric Harting was elected our new Chair.

Patric is stepping up to lead DCG at a crucial time in UK &

Derby cycling with the implementation of Covid-19 Emergency Active Travel measures and the government's proposed CO2 reduction targets with cycling playing a key role in both.



Patric has already set out where DCG's focus should be.

Identified key areas:

Improve communication to the members

DCG has a growing membership so it is vital that we communicate and engage with members through effective use of social media, email, newsletter and meetings

DCG Campaigns Co-ordinator

Role of the Campaigns Co-ordinator is to prompt members into taking action & disseminate information

Campaigning

Focus on particular local cycle campaign issues

Growing the Membership, numbers and breadth

Look at membership post code data to see if we have any obvious gaps

Consider engaging community groups / neighbourhood officers

It is vital for DCG under Patric's leadership to become a stronger voice for Derby cyclists. This is especially important as some of the Derby Covid-19 Emergency Active Travel measures are currently under consultation with many of them under pressure both locally and nationally. Also the future of cycling infrastructure along Friargate remains uncertain. But in a short period Patric has injected the much needed energy and clarity of purpose into DCG providing the leadership for DCG to become a cycle campaigning group to be reckoned with.

What is remarkable is that DCG has not had an elected Chair for several years - so we must pay particular thanks to Tony Roelich for stepping up and doing a brilliant job as acting chair, to fill the void over the intervening period.

Female representation on DCG committee

It is also important to add that two female members Eloise Thatcher and Jean Baird were elected to the DCG committee at the AGM. Eloise also takes over as treasurer.

Their election goes some way to addressing the lack of diversity on the committee in recent years and helps with the promotion of female cycling in Derby, so we warmly welcome Eloise and Jean to the committee.

Newsletters articles needed!

To keep the DCG Newsletter relevant and interesting we would really welcome articles from the wider membership.

Any article length would be welcome so please don't worry if it's just a few words of news or on any cycle related subject that particularly interests you—we want to know about it. And please include any pictures & photos if available.

Please send your article by email to articles@derbycyclinggroup.org.uk

Derwent Valley Cycleway Darley Abbey to A38 section reaches landmark

by Ian Dent

The project to build a riverside multi-user path between Haslams Lane in Darley Abbey to Ford Lane in Allestree has now reached the important milestone of applying for planning permission. This project is being delivered by Highways England as part of their "Designated Funds" support for local community projects across the country after a successful grant application from the Derwent Valley Trust.

Significant objections to the plans are not expected and there is widespread local support but, due to the vagaries of planning procedures, it is important that all those who support the project make their views known to the planning authorities. As the route spans two council areas there will be separate planning applications to Derby City and Erewash Borough Councils. At the moment only the Derby City application is visible publicly.



To submit your comments and support please visit <https://eplanning.derby.gov.uk/online-applications/> and search for 20/01542/FUL

Select "Documents" and then review the "DCC Planning Statement" for a good summary of the project. This document is supported by other detailed surveys (e.g. wildlife, etc.) which are also available on the site. To submit your comments visit "Comments". You'll need to register yourself using an email address and password and can then login and complete a feedback form. Note that only Derby City postcodes are recognised in the postcode lookup but others outside the city can still register and comment by manually entering their address.

Whilst feel free to give detailed comments, the main benefit will be to register your support for the project. This will help show the Planning Committee the widespread support for the

proposals and encourage them to quickly pass the planning application.

More details will be shared about the Erewash Borough planning application once it is available publicly.

This is an excellent opportunity to provide a high quality cycle route at no direct cost to the local Councils (funds are all from Highways England) and will provide a scenic and safe cycle route from the north into the City avoiding the current accident black spot of Palm Court Island (the A6 / A38

junction). The project also has the support of Sustrans who will realign National Cycle Route 54 from the existing poor route on Alfreton Road and alongside the A61 to use the new traffic free cycleway.

The Derwent Valley Trust are working on proposals to extend the route further north to Duffield and beyond (eventually to Chatsworth!).

The deadline for comments on the planning application is the 24th December so please submit your demonstration of support NOW to help ensure the project progresses.

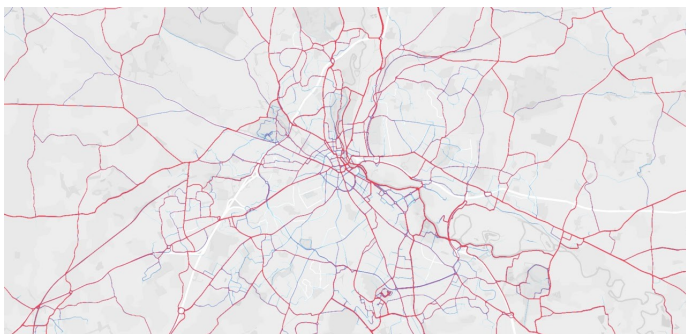


Strava Metro by Oliver Feaver

Strava has recently made their Strava Metro platform available to cycling advocacy groups, as such after the application process and the 3 week wait, I now have an account for the Derby Cycling Group. The Strava dataset is made up from people using the Strava application and website, by recording their walks, runs, bicycle rides etc on their phone or GPS recording device. The recorded data can then be used by governments, councils, planners (and now advocacy groups) to better understand mobility patterns, to identify opportunities to improve infrastructure and monitor the effectiveness of any infrastructure changes.

As we look into the data it's important to recognise that it is a collection of data generated by their users, due to size and prevalence of Strava users, this can generate a lot of useful information, but could also lead to a skew in the data. I personally follow the mantra, "if its not of Strava, it didn't happen" so I like to record all my rides and look into the data generated, but some may not go to the effort to record a short ride to the shops or about town, or may not be interested in recording their bike rides whatsoever, so it could lead to some users types or demographics not recorded accurately in the data. But, the more people that use Strava, the the more representative the data becomes, also note that the Derby Cycling Group also has a Strava group!

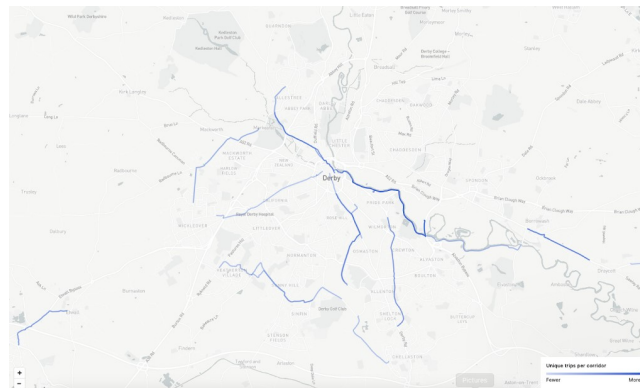
For people not familiar with Strava, one of the basic features it has made available for a few years now is the "Global Heatmap". The "Heatmap" shows where people cycle, walk and run the most, it can be a very useful tool when planning a walk or cycle route, showing where it is popular to go and occasionally you can find interesting routes. This is of particular interest for mountain bikers searching for new trails in locations you've not rode before. Looking at the cycling "Heatmap" of Derby, there are some very popular areas to cycle, but other area have hardly any cycling taking place...



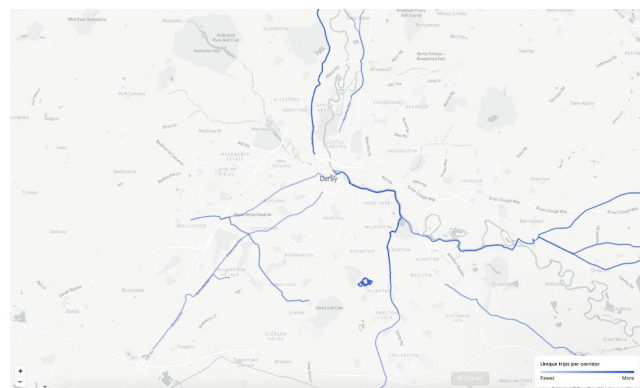
Building on from the "Global Heatmap", the Strava Metro platform can identify "travel corridors". These are the trunk routes that you can use to get around, before branching off to your final destinations. Effective travel corridors can greatly improve being able to move about the city. Generally the shorter corridors show short local trips, ie route within the

city. Longer corridors show routes into out of the city, ie longer leisure rides or commuters cycling into the city from neighbouring areas.

The image below shows the short travel corridors. It shows there are really only a few corridors within the city, with the main one going from north west to south east of the city. Additionally it shows the corridors are not effectively connected.



The image below shows the longer travel corridors. This shows the cycling routes into and out of the city, with the majority of the trips are from the north of Derby and east of Derby. It highlights the A6 is a very popular route into the city from the North, but from a personal experience it isn't particularly fun to cycle on...



Both travel corridors clearly identify the cycle path beside the river as a very popular place to cycle. In fact at the height of the cycling activity this year, May 2020, of the 3858 people who recorded a bike ride that month, 2880 people cycled under the rail underpass between the city centre and pride park, that's 75%!! and of the 21170 trips recorded that month, over a quarter went via that underpass. So that route looks to be the busiest and most popular place to cycle in the city. Clearly showing the popularity of traffic free and convenient cycling routes.

While the river side path is clearly a success, it only benefits the people those who want or need to cycle along that route. If there were more traffic free routes of a similar length and continuity, it would aid mobility about the city. But in the

event that this route is obstructed, as was the case last year, it can cause significant disruption with people needing to find alternative routes around the obstruction. While these events are rare, with the ever increasing rates of cycling, the robustness of the cycle paths should be investigated and alternative routes identified to minimise disruption and at a minimum the route should be brought back to a safe condition as quickly as possible.



From the dataset, the cycling statistics for Derby can be found. It is worth again pointing out the data is from Strava users, so won't include all trips and all users (ie those not using Strava). This means actual cycling trips and people cycling is most likely higher rate than those recorded and any increase in the figure would hopefully be a result of more trips and people cycling, but it could also just be a result of more people using Strava and recording their rides...

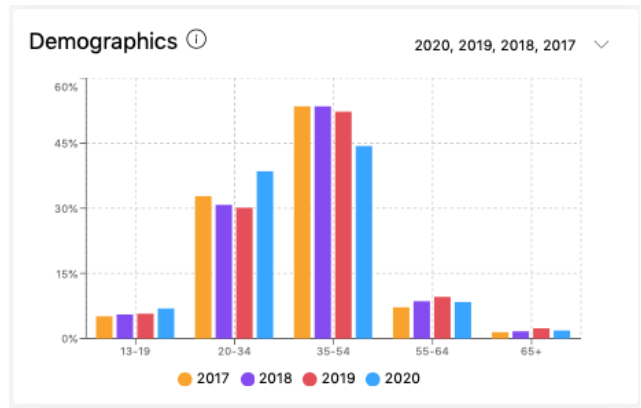
Year	No. of trips	No. of People Cycling
2017	126,737	5,560
2018	146,045	5,939
2019	152,239	6,140
2020*	139,407	8,823

* note the full year not yet complete

Generally, there has been a gradual increase in cycling trips each year, with 2020 expected to set a new record. While the increase in trips number is expected to be modest for 2020, a result of more people working from home, so fewer people commuting by bicycle to work. The main thing to point out is the BIG increase in the number of people cycling this year, with 2683 more people who rode a bike this year compared to last year. The peak of this was in May, when 3858 people made 21170 trips about the city.



The age demographics of the cyclists within Derby is shown below. Maybe it takes 10 years of sitting in stationary traffic to question if there is a better way to move about the city....



Another reminder of the barriers that may exist that prevent some from cycling is the male / female split. Generally the split is roughly 90% male / 10% female, this changes to 80% male / 20% female on the traffic free routes, and 95% male / 5% female on popular road route. This could be down to the Strava user base skew, but is a stark difference to the Netherlands where 55% of all cycle trips are made by women. There are obvious deficiencies in the cycling infrastructure in Derby preventing younger people and women from cycling.

One area that has seen a big increase in cycling numbers is through Darley Park, due to the new path built in October 2019. Looking at the path past the rowing club (ie the route into Darley Park), in March 2017, 2018, and 2019 roughly 50 people cycled past there, but in March 2020 this rose to 205, a 4x increase!. But, at the peak in May 2020, almost a thousand people rode along there. The new path didn't just benefit cyclists, it also benefited runners and walkers. The number of runners and walkers have doubled compared to previous years. So this new path has allowed many more people to enjoy this park.

While some areas have seen an increase in cycling, some have seen a reduction. The riverside path was damaged by the flooding of 2019. There was a sharp reduction in trips in November 2019 along that route. As the weather turns at the end of the year, there is normally a gradual reduction in trips, but the number halved compared to previous years due to the awful state of the path.



While the weather and unique environment may have fuelled a big upturn in the number of people cycling, it is important to note the number of people cycling is still higher than the past 3 years. So it is important that we further encourage, promote and invest in cycling so that we build on this years increase in cycling and not let it become a blip in the data. Bicycles should not be objects that gather dust and spider webs in the garden shed, they should be used, enjoyed, to enable people to move around the city and to move Derby forward.

Driver Aggression and Road Collision

Reporting Guidelines by Ken Timmis

Unfortunately close passes are something that people riding bicycles have become accustomed to. On every bike ride I will experience at least one close pass. This is bad enough but then to have drivers shout abuse as they drive past is taking things to another level, fortunately quite rare. However, in a recent altercation between a driver and a person riding a bicycle things went even further. The incident reported on the Derbyshire Constabulary Facebook page indicated:

“A man reported that he had been cycling down Morley Lane, into Lime Lane (Oakwood) when a motorist in a dark coloured car overtook and verbally abused him.”

“Following a verbal altercation, the motorist is said to have braked harshly, and collided with the cyclist before driving away.”

“The cyclist required hospital treatment for facial injuries and his bike was badly damaged.”

This is inexcusable behaviour and can never be condoned.

See news report <https://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/news/derby-news/cyclist-badly-injured-abusive-hit-4604347>

There are probably many causes of this sort of behaviour but in amongst them is the media’s negative portrayal of cyclists. Reports and articles in the media often use language that dehumanises or which may incite violence or hatred against people on bicycles. This sort of language is associated with aggression and anti-social behaviour. There have long been concerns about the language being used by the media in relation to people on bicycles and the effect this is having on their relationship with drivers.

Taking inspiration from media guidelines on suicide, a group has developed guidelines for the reporting of road collisions. These guidelines have been produced by the University of Westminster’s Active Travel Academy in collaboration with representatives from the police, academics, experts in the field, road safety charities and the national union of Journalists’ ethics council, and advised by IMPRESS. These guidelines align with the core journalistic principles of accuracy, fairness, non-discrimination and justice. If adopted, they should form an industry standard to help pave the way for better reporting. The guidelines and related information can be found on the website, ‘Media Guidelines - Road Collision Reporting Guidelines’.

Link to draft press guidelines at <https://www.rc-rg.com/>

It is in all of our interests that such guidelines are adopted by the media in reporting road collisions that truly reflect the circumstances. Is this a pipe dream or can we hope for better reporting in the future and good relationship with other road users?

Gear Change, up or down? by Ken Timmis

The Government in the guise of the Department for Transport published their document “Gear Change - a bold vision for cycling and walking” <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england> during the summer. Reading the document was a little diversion from the gloom that filled the news, promising a new era for cycling and walking.



Going straight into the substance of the document, it starts by highlighting the potential health and wellbeing benefits of cycling and walking. Reading a subtitle ‘A bold future vision for a new era’ suggests something wondrous is about to appear before our eyes. On a blue background, between an array of colourful, active figures, we are told of the wondrous benefits that we can expect from being active: health, wellbeing, congestion, environmental and air quality, climate change, etc. Then we are advised “Actions, not just words”, an optimistic promise for the future of plans for cycling and walking in the UK.

The document is presents four themes, each focusing on a different aspect of the policies being promoted, as follows:

The first of the themes is titled “Better streets for cycling and people”. A grand vision of hundreds and thousands of miles of safe, continuous, direct routes for cycling in towns and cities, physically separated from pedestrians and volume motor traffic. Closing roads to through traffic and the creation of low traffic neighbourhoods will be determined by local communities. Cycle, bus and walking corridors will be created to allow safe, low-traffic routes, using retractable bollards or camera enforcement. There is an intention to “set a much higher standards” for cycling infrastructure, recognising that the current situation offered little protection from motor traffic and “gives up at the points where any difficulty is faced or inconvenience to the motorist is risked”.

Theme 2 “Putting cycling and walking at the heart of transport, place-making, and health policy”. It starts with promises of “significantly increased spending”, with large sums being promised. There is a focus to combine cycling and

train journeys with increased bicycle parking at stations and increasing space for bicycle on existing trains, where possible. Interestingly a suggestion to work with bus operators to allow limited number of bikes on board, not a common occurrence in the UK. A promise that many will be pleased to see implemented is “we will ensure that all new housing and business developments are built around making sustainable travel, including cycling and walking, the first choice for journeys”, but the current lack of facilities being included in many housing developments and changes to the planning rules do not bode well.

Promoting cargo bike freight delivery and reducing unnecessary motorised delivery would reduce air pollution and improve the environment but it still requires infrastructure to enable such deliveries.

Appendix. The appendix concentrates on principles for cycle infrastructure design, that are defined in LTN 1/20 published by the Department for Transport <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>. Of the 22 key points I have picked out the following: It is interesting to note that “cycles must be treated as vehicles and not as pedestrians”, cynically is this a move to align legislation for dangerous driving to apply to cycling? Another section states that cyclists must be physically separated and protected from high volume motor traffic, although it fails to state the criteria for implementing physically separated lanes. Perhaps the most interesting and significant point made here is the requirement for designers of cycle schemes to experience the roads as a cyclist, it is clear that most designers experience the road from behind the windscreen. I could suggest several sections of road that traffic engineers should



Theme 3 “Empowering and encouraging local authorities”. £2 billion promised, surprisingly looks very similar to the £2 billion identified in theme 2. Local authorities will be supported with new officer posts and training, hopefully in cycling infrastructure. Only new schemes that meet the new standards and principles set out in theme 1 will be funded. The cycling budget will be managed by the new commissioning body and inspectorate, Active Travel England. Despite being identified as the body responsible there seems to be no indication of its existence on the government website, so there is little hope of seeing any new cycling projects in the near future.

Theme 4 “We will enable people to cycle and protect them when they cycle”. This part addresses some of the peripheral issues that affect cycling. Cycling will be used to improve the health of the nation and reduce demand on the NHS. There will be changes to the law to introduce offence of causing serious injury by careless or inconsiderate driving and maximum sentences for other driving offences. The highway code will also be updated to improve safety for all road users. There is also suggestions to support the use of electrically assisted bikes, although the priority seems to be for people in business clothes ahead of older or less fit.

ride along! Which roads would you like to see our council officers ride along?

This document contains many of the good things that the cycling and walking community have been waiting to see promoted by the government. Although £2 billion has been promised is it sufficient to do anything really meaningful? (Despite this good news we must bear in mind that vast sums are still being spent on major road projects and in supporting technology developments in the car and associated industries.) The government has specified that funding will be managed through a new body, Active Travel England. Currently there is no visibility of this body, which urgently needs to be put in place to ensure projects are being implemented. To address the issues highlighted in this document funding needs to be urgently directed to active travel, through this new body.

Implementation of these proposals relies on local authorities developing schemes that satisfy the requirements set out in the respective documents and submitting them to Active Travel England. What routes do we want to see developed in and around the city? Now is the time to make suggestions for safe, coherent and convenient cycling and walking routes for our future network.

Cyclist's Dismount by Patric Harting

Today I learnt two lessons.

The first lesson is that apostrophes have real power.

This is not just the commonly observed power to annoy all manner of pedants, sticklers and grammarians, like myself, or my colleague Mike. We all know someone like this...

The power I write of today is the power to change the thoughts of people, and therefore their actions.

This might have seemed like conjecture to me yesterday, but personal experience is one of the more effective teachers.

I was cycling home from work, feeling pretty good about myself. A tiring working week had come to an end. I was looking forward to a trip to see my grandparents. The ride was enjoyable. I felt strong enough to stay in top gear most of the way, zipping along at a good pace without feeling too breathless, or in too much pain.

The weather had turned from drizzling to rain and back. The precipitation started just as I left the building. I greeted it with a friendly laugh.

There seemed to be a strong headwind, but I managed to convince myself that I was just travelling faster than usually. After all, was my shirt not drying at a quicker rate than it was getting wet?

My commuting ride takes me through a picturesque village full of old buildings and small parcels of farmland. There are donkeys, sheep, cows, geese, horses, ostriches and cats.

After the village there is a stretch of shared walking/cycling path, separated from the old A-road by four or five metres of grass. On the other side is some shrubbery and a bank leading down to a brook, possibly connected to the umbilical cord of the industrial revolution, the Derwent.

The tarmac path is in good condition. It is flat, wide, smooth and reasonably free of debris. Unfortunately, it is currently interrupted by a construction site, carrying out maintenance on the water system.

The workers blocked off the path and most of the grass with tall wire fences. In its stead they constructed an alternative path, out of badly overlapping mats of textured black rubber, that goes over uneven ground, is quite narrow and contains several 90° turns.

The workers also put up some helpful signs. One of them states, in white capitals on bright red "CYCLIST'S DISMOUNT".

I had taken this make-shift diversion path twice before, once in each direction, without paying any particular attention to the signs, staying on my bike both times.

This time I noticed the sign as I came up to the disruption. My shirt was damp and was quite warm, breathing rhythmically (two heartbeats in through the nose, two out through pressed

lips). As I slowed down, to make the first sharp turn, the apostrophe registered in my mind, triggering an involuntary snort.

Going slowly along the uneven rubber panels, a series of questions formed in my head, pondering the many possible meanings, intended and unintended.

1. Was this location the dismount of a specific cyclist?
2. If so, whose?
3. Did it mark a specific type of dismount?
4. If so, what kind?
5. Was it just the name of this place?
6. Had someone made a mistake?

As I went around the third corner, all these questions were suddenly answered.

1. Yes.
2. Me.
3. Yes.
4. Hand first, sideways slide, on one knee.
5. No.
6. Quite possibly.

As I jerked myself, and my trusty steed, off the cold wet rubbery-muddy-grassy floor, the second lesson became apparent.

The coefficient of friction, μ , between rubber surfaces, separated by a thin film of water and some air, is much closer to 0 than to 1. For comparison Teflon on Teflon is about 0.04.

In the usual after accident rush I checked all the parameters.

Was my wrist broken? No. Good.

Were my trousers ripped at the knee? No. Just dirty.

Did I damage my bike? No. Phew!

Did anyone see me? Hard to tell. There were no pedestrians or cyclists, but some of the queuing drivers nearby might not have been on their phones.

The usual rush also compelled me to keep walking as if nothing had happened. But something had happened and my adrenaline levels were proof. Stumbling along, as if drunk, I lost control of the bike again, and nearly fell on top of it, as it splurged into the muddy grass.

Having picked up my ride a second time, I managed to take a few breaths to calm myself down somewhat. The remainder of the journey was uneventful.

There was also an opportunity for a third lesson, namely that hubris precedes the fall. But let's face it, this wasn't the first time arrogance precipitated a (literal) fall. And I doubt it will be the last.

The social ideology of the motorcar by Ken

Timmis

I recently came across this 1973 essay by Andre Gorz and was surprised at its relevance to the present time, the following is my synopsis, the full article can be found at: <https://unevenearth.org/2018/08/the-social-ideology-of-the-motorcar/>.

Why is the car treated like a sacred cow? Could the answer be found in the following aspects of driving:

- Motoring gives and supports the illusion that each individual can seek their own benefit at the expense of everyone else. The cruel aggressive selfishness of the driver who at any moment is figuratively killing the "others", who appear merely as physical obstacles to his or her own speed. This selfishness marks the arrival of universally bourgeois behaviour, and has come into being since driving has become commonplace.
- The automobile is a paradoxical example of a luxury object that has been devalued by its own spread. But the practical devaluation has not followed by an ideological devaluation. The myth of pleasure and benefit of the car persists, though if mass transportation were widespread its superiority would be striking. The persistence of this myth is easily explained by the spread of the private car has displaced mass transportation and altered city planning and housing to such an extent that it transfers to the car functions which its spread has made necessary.

Here is the paradox of the car: it appears to confer on the owners limitless freedom, allowing them to travel when and where they choose at speed. But actually, this seeming independence hides a radical dependency. The motorist was dependent for the fuel supply, as well as for the smallest kind of repair, on dealers and specialist in engines, lubrication, and ignition, and on the interchangeability of parts. The motorists relationship to their vehicle was to be that of user and consumer, not owner and master, obliged to consume and use a host of commercial services and industrial products that could only be provided by third party. The apparent independence of the automobile concealed the actual dependency.

Oil magnates soon realised the prize that could be extracted from the wide distribution of the car. If people could be encouraged to travel by car then they could be sold fuel. The entire population would become the oil merchants' customers. The dream of every capitalist was coming true. A single industry held a monopoly.

The price of cars fell with mass production. People fell over themselves to buy one, without noticing they were being led

by the nose. What did the motor industry offer them? "From now on, like the nobility and the bourgeoisie, you too will have the privilege of driving faster than everybody else. In a motorcar society the privilege of the elite is made available to you."

People rushed out to buy cars. The promise of a bourgeois privilege, they had to go into debt to acquire it, and then saw that everyone else had one too. What good is privilege if everyone has got one? It's a fools game and worse, it pits everyone against everyone else. When everyone claims their privilege, everything comes to a halt and the speed of city traffic plummets, at rush hour below that of a bicycle.



Nothing helps. The more roads there are the more cars clog them. As long as there are cities the problem will remain unsolved. Paralysing congestion reduces the average speed to 10 to 20 kmh.

"The typical American devotes more than 1500 hours a year to their car. This includes the time spent behind the wheel, both in motion and stopped, the hour of work to pay for it and to pay for the gas, tyres, insurance, tickets and taxes. It takes this American 1500 hrs to go 6000 miles. In countries that have no transportation industry, the people travel on foot, with the added advantage that they can go wherever they want, not restricted to asphalt roads."

In non-industrialised countries travel uses only 3 to 8% of peoples time. Thus a person on foot covers as many miles in an hour devoted to travel as a person in a car but devotes 5 to 10 times less time in travel. Moral: the more widespread fast vehicles are within a society, the more time, beyond a certain point, people will spend and lose on travel.

Endless highways bisect suburbs to avoid congestion. To make room for the car, distances have increased, people live far away from work, far from schools, far from supermarkets - which then require a second car to do shopping and take children to school. The car wastes more time than it saves and creates more distance than it overcomes. "A good part of each day's work goes to pay for the travel necessary to get to work."

The great city which for generations was considered a marvel, the only place worth living, is now considered to be a “hell”. Everyone wants to escape from it, to live in the country. The car has made the big cities uninhabitable; stinking, noisy, suffocating, dusty, so congested that nobody wants to go out in the evening. Cars have killed the city, we need faster cars to escape on superhighways to suburbs that are even farther away.



From a luxury item and sign of privilege, the car has become a vital necessity. There's no need to persuade people that they want a car, its necessity is a fact of life.

After killing the city, the car is killing the car. The promise of fast travel is now limited by the slowest car.

There is really no choice, the suburban world is designed to be a function of the car and so is the city world. Modern major cities are built around the car, splintered and strung along empty streets lined with identical developments. “These streets are made for driving as quickly as possible from work to home and vice versa. You go through here, you don't live here.”

Is the jig up? The alternatives to the car will have to be comprehensive. For people to give up their cars, it won't be sufficient to offer them more comfortable mass transit. They will have to be able to do without transportation altogether because they feel at home in their community, the human sized cities, and take pleasure in walking from work to home, or if need be by bicycle. No means of fast transportation and escape will ever compensate for the vexations of living in an uninhabitable city in which no one feels at home or the irritation of only going into the city to work.



“People, will break the chains of overpowering transportation when they come once again to love as their own territory,

their own particular beat, and to dread getting too far away from it.” Firstly we must make the cities liveable, and not ‘trafficable’. The neighbourhoods and communities must once again become a microcosm shaped by and for all human activities, where people can work, live, relax, learn, communicate, and knock about, which they manage together as the place they live.

What's to be done? Never make transportation an issue by itself. One place for work, another for living, a third for shopping and a fourth for learning, a fifth for entertainment. The way our space is arranged carries on the disintegration of people that begins with the division of labour in the factory. It cuts a person into slices, our time, our life, into separate slices so that in each one you are a passive consumer at the mercy of merchants. It never occurs to us that work, culture, communications, pleasure, satisfaction of needs, and personal life can and should be one and the same thing: a unified life, sustained by the social fabric of the community.

This essay is possibly more pertinent today as countries have become even more dominated by the car. In 1973 there were 15.4 million registered vehicles on the road of the UK, in 2019 this had risen to nearly 39 million vehicles. It raises some very interesting questions for society and how we deal with the car:-

What relationship does society want with the car in the future?

What should our cities look like in the future?

How do communities go about achieving its version of the future?

Quotes of the Quarter by Ken Timmis

I recently came across this thought provoking quote;

“Adding car lanes to deal with traffic congestion is like loosening your belt to cure obesity.”

Interestingly it was written in 1955 by Lewis Mumford, an amazingly insightful person. He could not have known that 60+ years later we would be facing not only the metaphorical crisis but that very real crisis. Mumford was a writer, historian and philosopher, having a particular interest in societies relationship with technology and especially transport.

In 1963 he wrote;

“The main issue is that the right to have access to every building in the city by private motorcar, in an age when everyone possesses such a vehicle, is actually the right to destroy the city.”

He wrote this in response to western European cities being redeveloped to accommodate the burgeoning number of cars during the boom years of the 1950's and 60's.