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Unhealthy commodity advertising: understanding individual and area-based policy interventions for children's exposures

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Unhealthy commodity advertising

1 Current UK advertising policy for Children

Description of current Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) Advertising Codes, written by the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP).

2 Bus stop advertisement audit

Description of our audit of advertisements in Scotland using Google Street View imagery.

3 Methods of assessing Children's 'exposure'

Describe the placement of advertisements in relation to (a) proximity to schools and (b) where children go.

4 Findings & policy recommendations

Present the findings from the study and future policy recommendations based on our static and individual-level exposure assessment.



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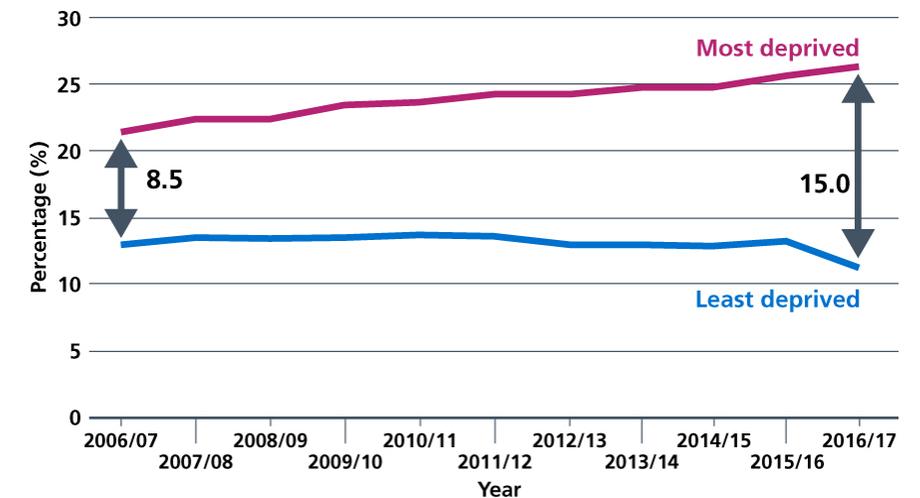
Unhealthy food and drink advertisement

- Children's exposure to unhealthy commodity marketing is a global priority for policy action due to its status as a risk factor for the development of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
- Inequalities in levels of obesity for school children are increasing.
- Advertisement of unhealthy food and drink products to children are associated with consumption:

“Awareness was associated with higher weekly consumption for ten of the twelve HFSS foods. For example, those reporting medium marketing awareness were 1.5 times more likely to report higher weekly consumption of cakes/biscuits compared with those reporting low awareness” Critchlow et al (2020)
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980020000075>

“Evidence to date shows that acute exposure to food advertising increases food intake in children” Boyland et al (2016)
<https://doi.org/10.3945/ajcn.115.120022>

Childhood obesity at Year 6 of primary school



England

Source: NCMP, Public Health England (PHE) (2018)

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UK advertising policy for Children

Governments have taken steps to protect under-16s from exposure to advertising of high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) products.

The UK Advertisements Standards Authority (ASA) guidelines state media owners should ensure outdoor advertisements are "**responsibly placed**" where the population consists of **more than 25% under-16s**.

Additionally, some advertisers voluntarily do not advertise within 200m of these places.

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Food: HFSS Media Placement

Advice online | 03 Aug 2018

What is required for ads in outdoor media?

When it comes to posters and billboards, the audience is usually considered to be the general population, which isn't, at the present time, considered to consist of more than 25% of under 16s. Marketers should still take care though and if, for example, the poster site is located near a school, the ASA is likely to consider that to have skewed the audience towards having a higher proportion of children.

Many outdoor media owners apply a '100 metre rule', meaning they will not place certain ads, for example those that are sexually suggestive, or those that promote age-restricted products such as alcohol, gambling or e-cigarettes, within 100 metres of a school boundary. While this is not an explicit requirement under the CAP Code, the ASA has previously taken the application of the position into consideration when assessing whether an ad has been responsibly placed. As such, marketers are advised to consider this approach when ensuring outdoor HFSS ads are not targeted at an audience which consists of more than 25% of under-16s.

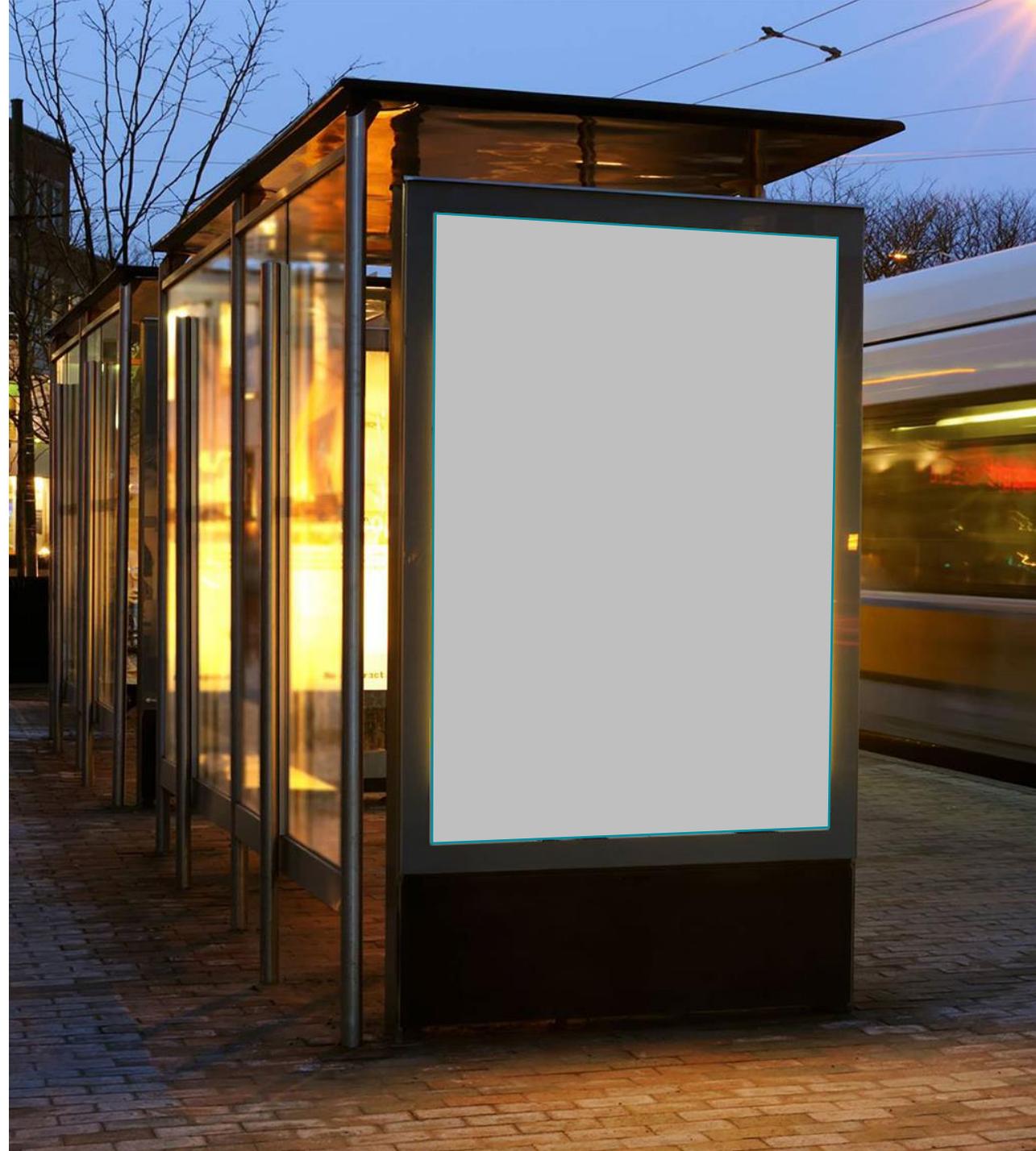
"ensuring outdoor HFSS ads are not targeted at an audience which consists of more than 25% of under-16s."

<https://www.asa.org.uk/advice-online/food-hfss-media-placement.html>

Our research

- 1** Audit advertisements at bus stop locations in Scotland.
- 2** Explore whether unhealthy commodity advertisements were more likely to be places in more deprived areas.
- 3** Explore whether unhealthy commodity advertisements were more likely to be in the local area surrounding schools.
- 4** Calculate children's 'real' exposure to bus stop advertising.

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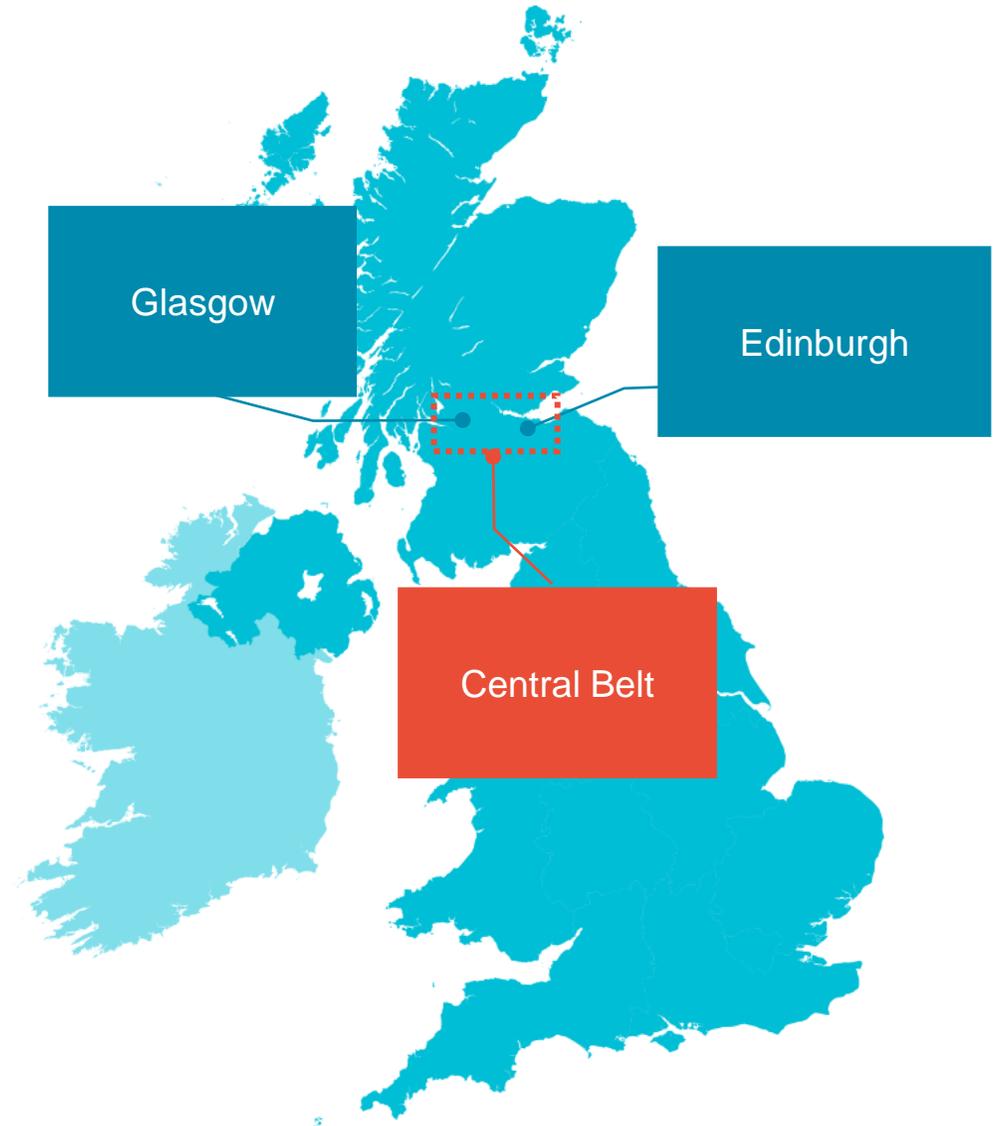
Bus stop audit

Study area and bus stop locations

Central belt of Scotland

Includes:

- Glasgow
- Edinburgh
- Urban / Rural areas between
- Contains over half of the Scottish population.



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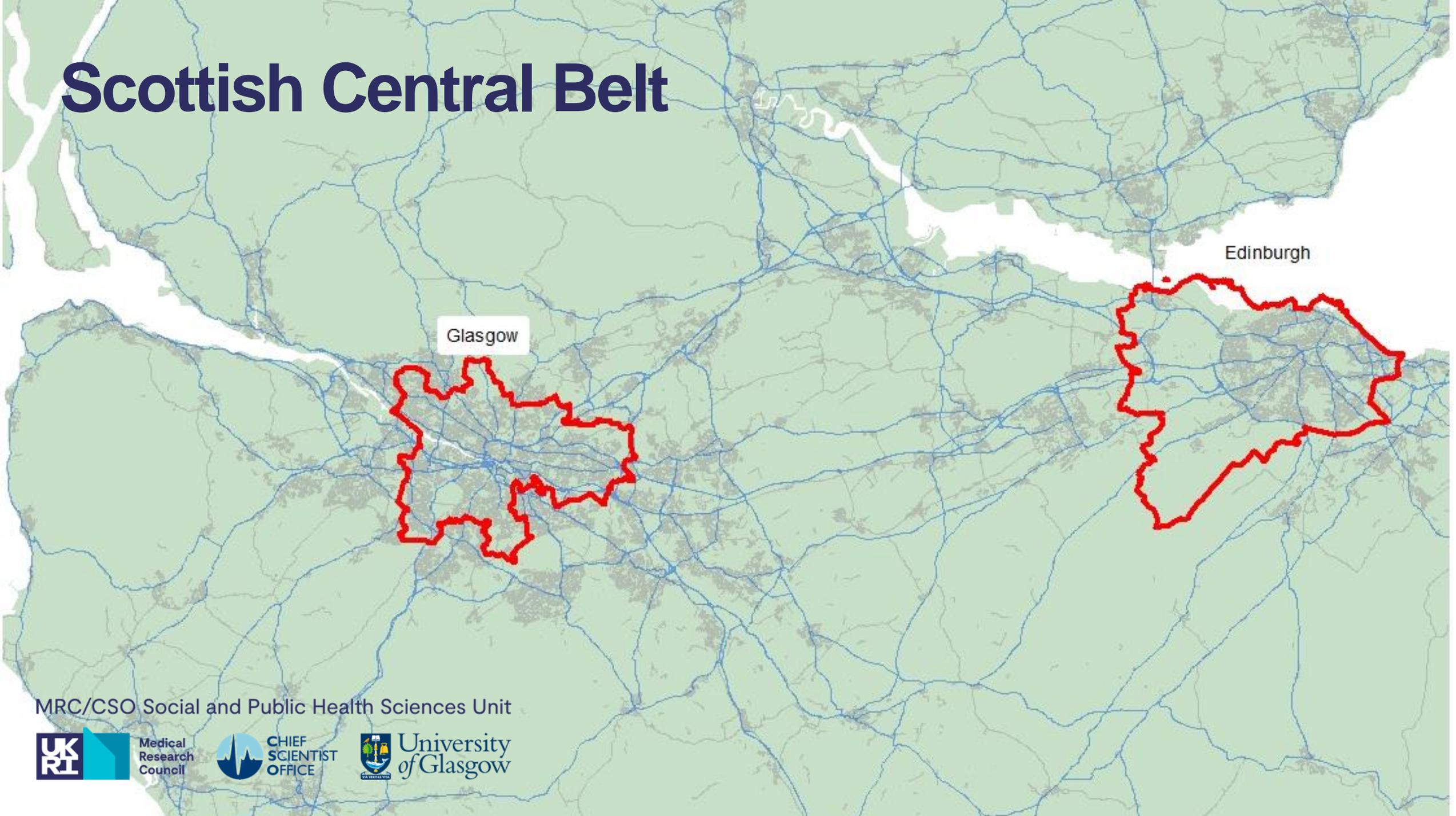


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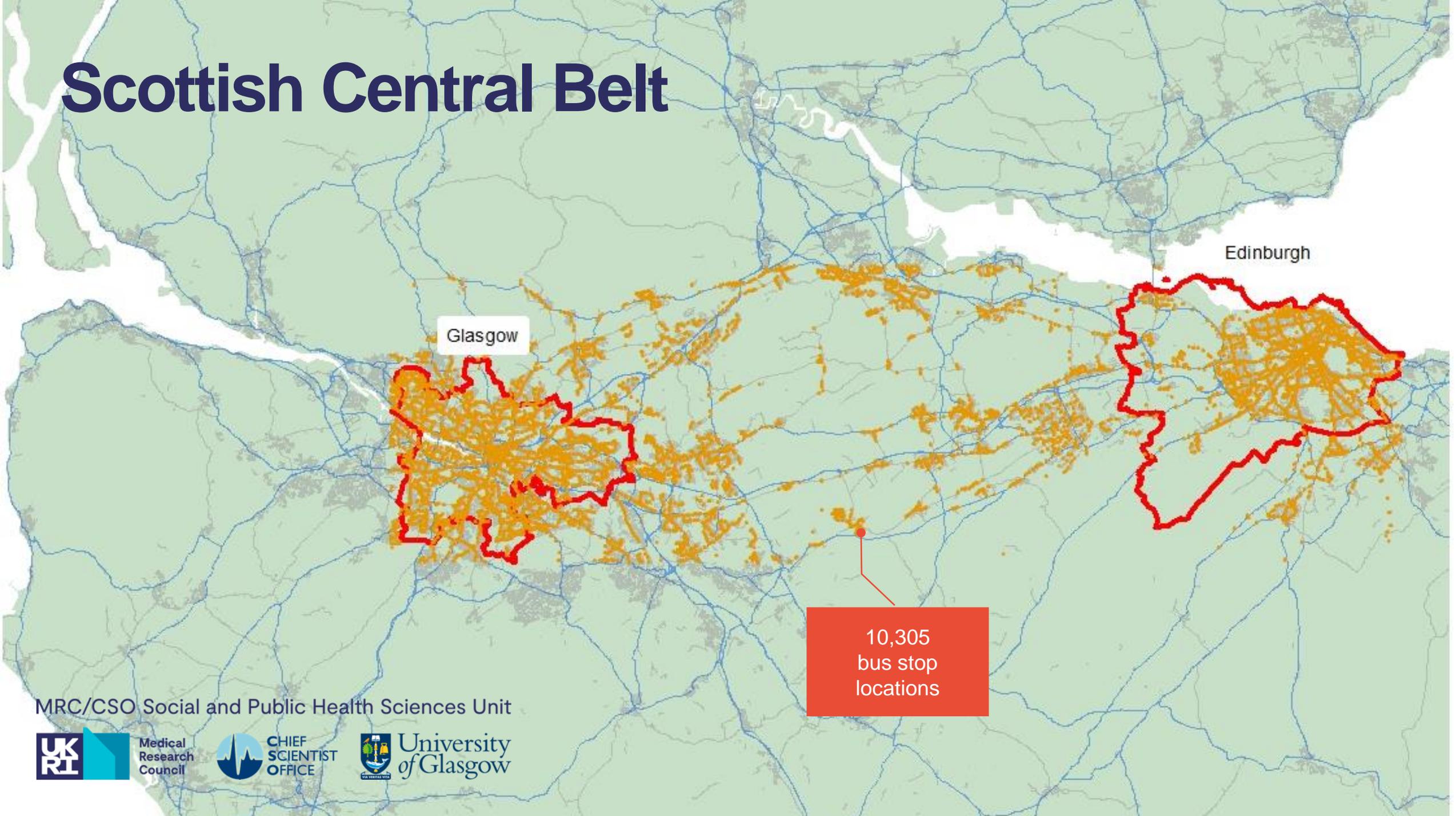


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Glasgow

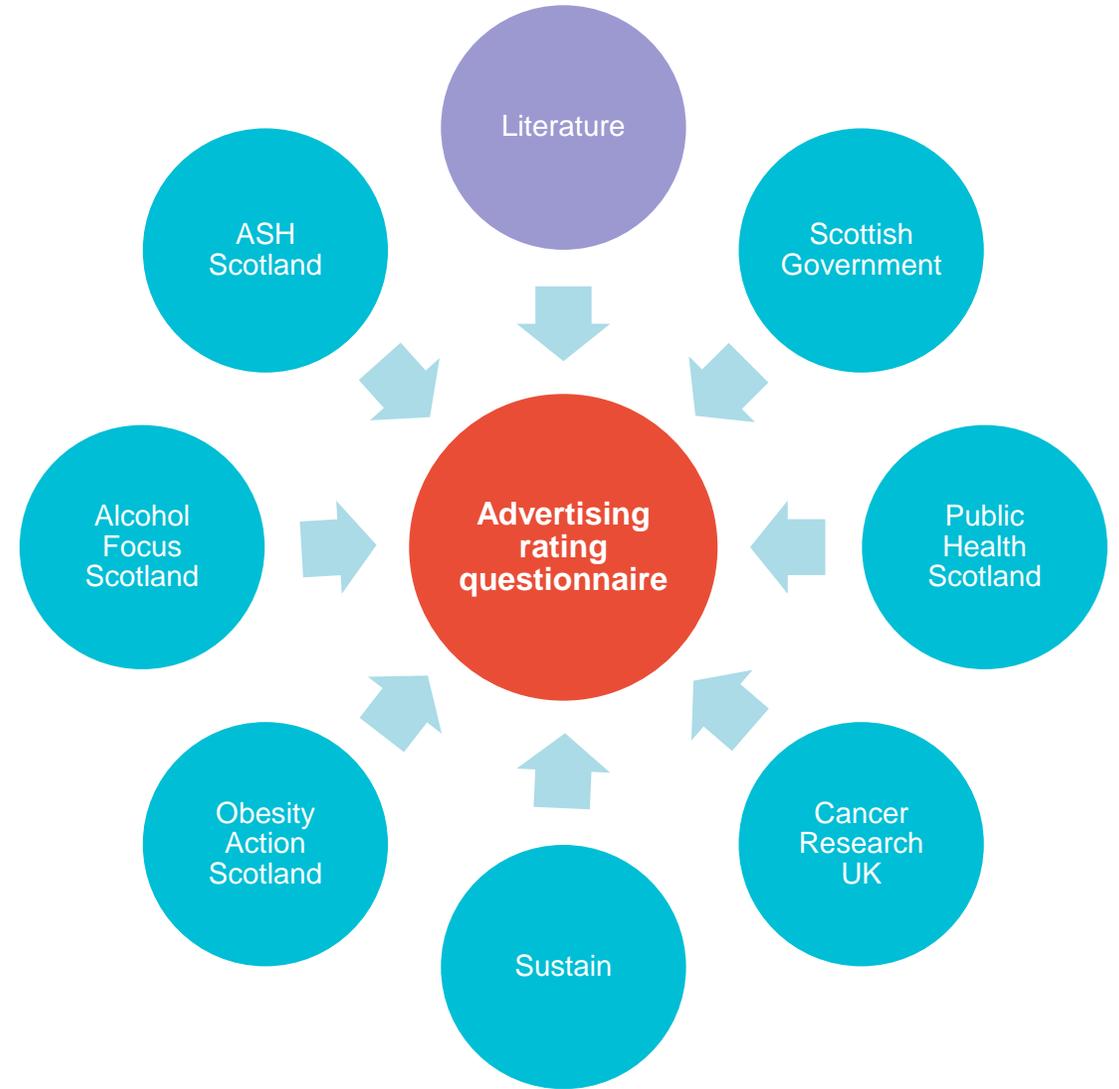
Edinburgh

10,305
bus stop
locations

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Bus stop audit

- A 15-item coding frame was created to categorise the main product being advertised within a visible bus stop advertisement.
 - Developed based on their prominence in literature on the commercial determinants of health.
 - Their relevance to current policy priorities emerging from consultation with a group of representatives from health charities and public health agencies in Scotland.



Advertising rating questionnaire

Bus stop advertisement categories

- FOOD Fast food product (For example McDonalds or KFC or subway)
- FOOD: Confectionary (for example 'Dairy Milk' or 'Fruit Pastilles')
- FOOD: Crisps and savoury snacks.
- FOOD: Cakes or pastries or puddings or sweet biscuits.
- FOOD: Ice-cream and frozen dessert
- DRINK: Sugar-sweetened beverage (for example 'Coca-Cola' or 'Irn Bru')
- DRINK: Artificially sweetened beverage (for example 'Diet Coke' or 'Pepsi Max')
- DRINK: Alcohol (Wine, beer, spirits)
- DRINK Energy drinks (for example Monster or Red Bull)
- DRINK: Fruit juice or smoothie
- DRINK: Caffeinated products (for example 'Starbucks' or Costa Coffee')
- DRINK: Water (including flavoured water)
- FOOD: Fruit and vegetables
- Gambling (for example 'National Lottery' or 'Paddy Power' or 'Gala Bingo')
- E-cigarettes (or E-cig liquid)
- Other
- Unable to distinguish
- No Advert

Categories for analysis

Unhealthy food and/or drink

Unhealthy food

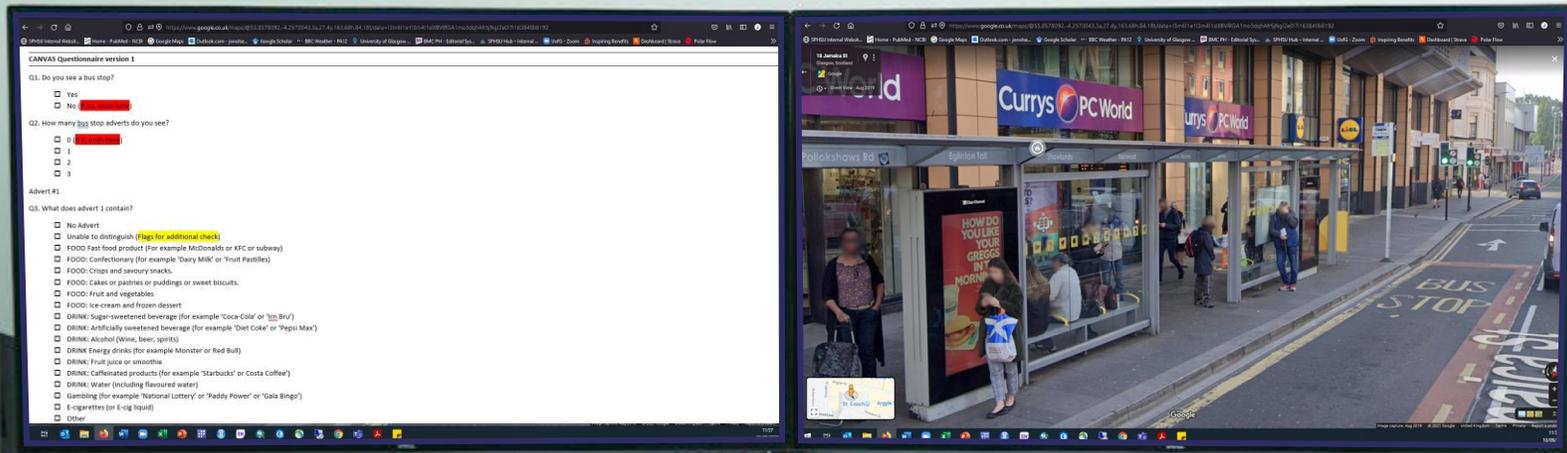
Sugar-sweetened beverages

Alcohol product

Gambling

E-cigarette product

Virtual street audit

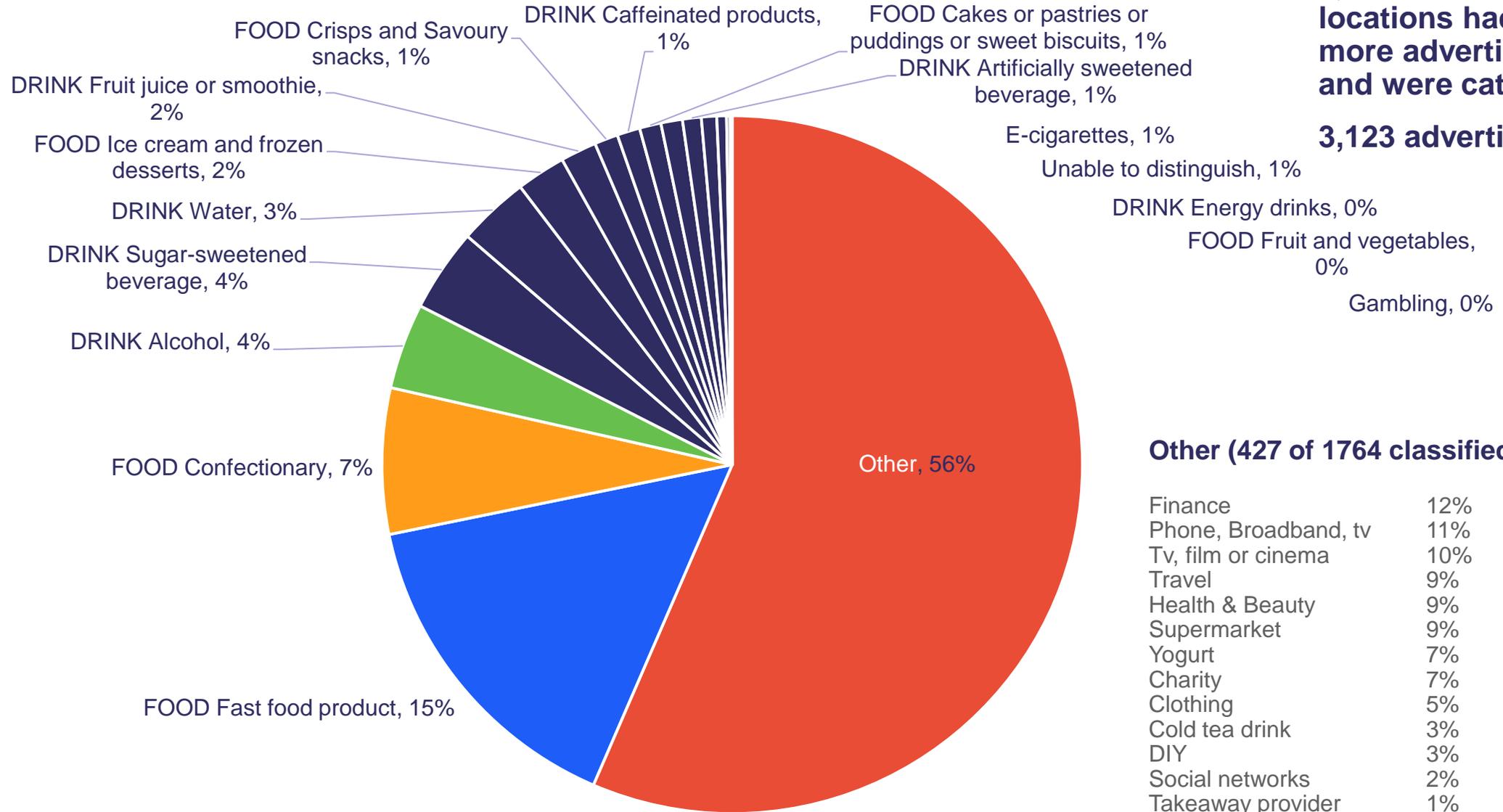


Bus stop advertisement categories

All 10,305 bus stop locations were audited.

1,845 bus stop locations had one or more advertisements and were categorised.

3,123 advertisements.



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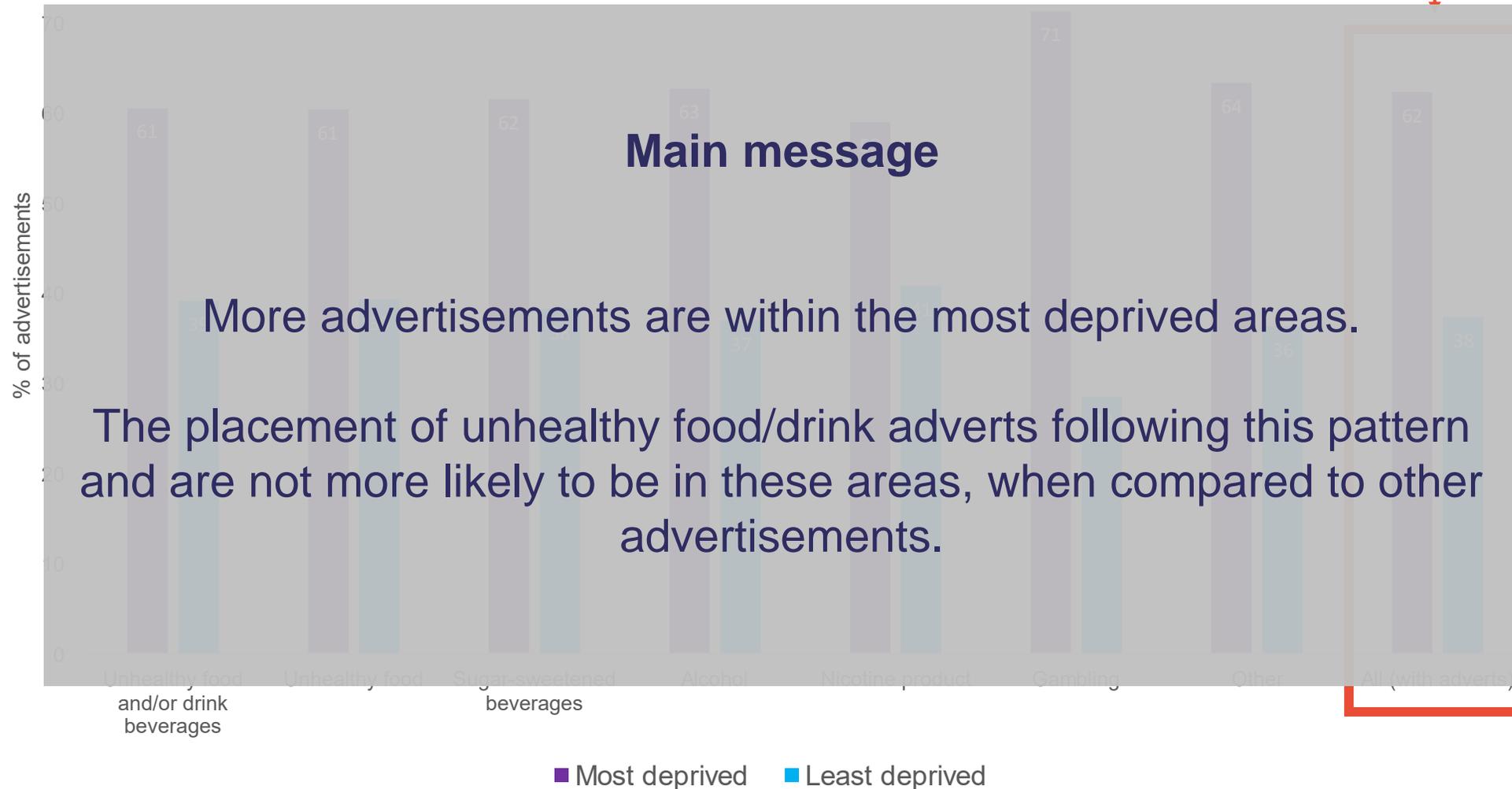
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Advertisement category by area level socio-economic deprivation

80

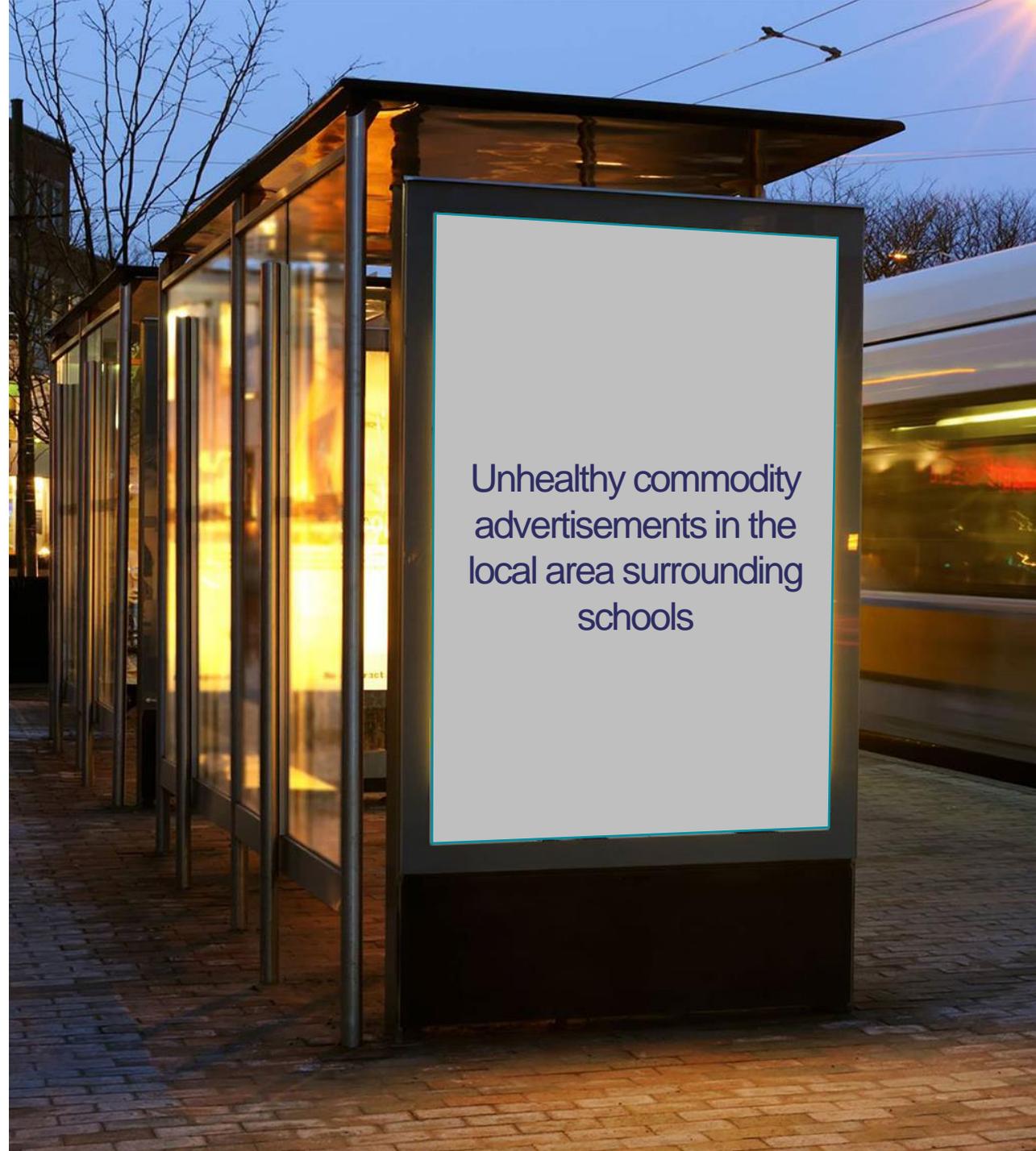
All Adverts
↓



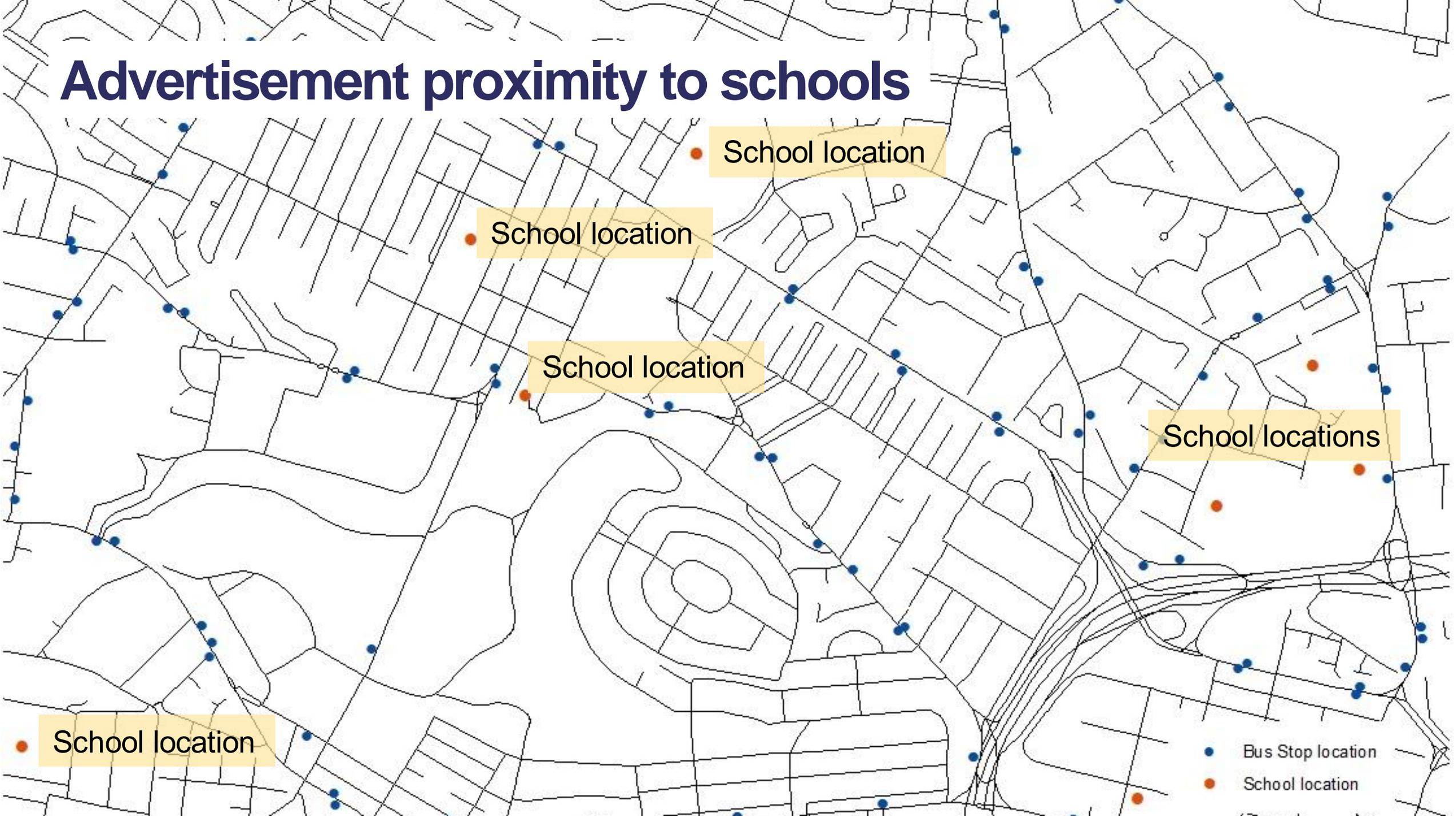
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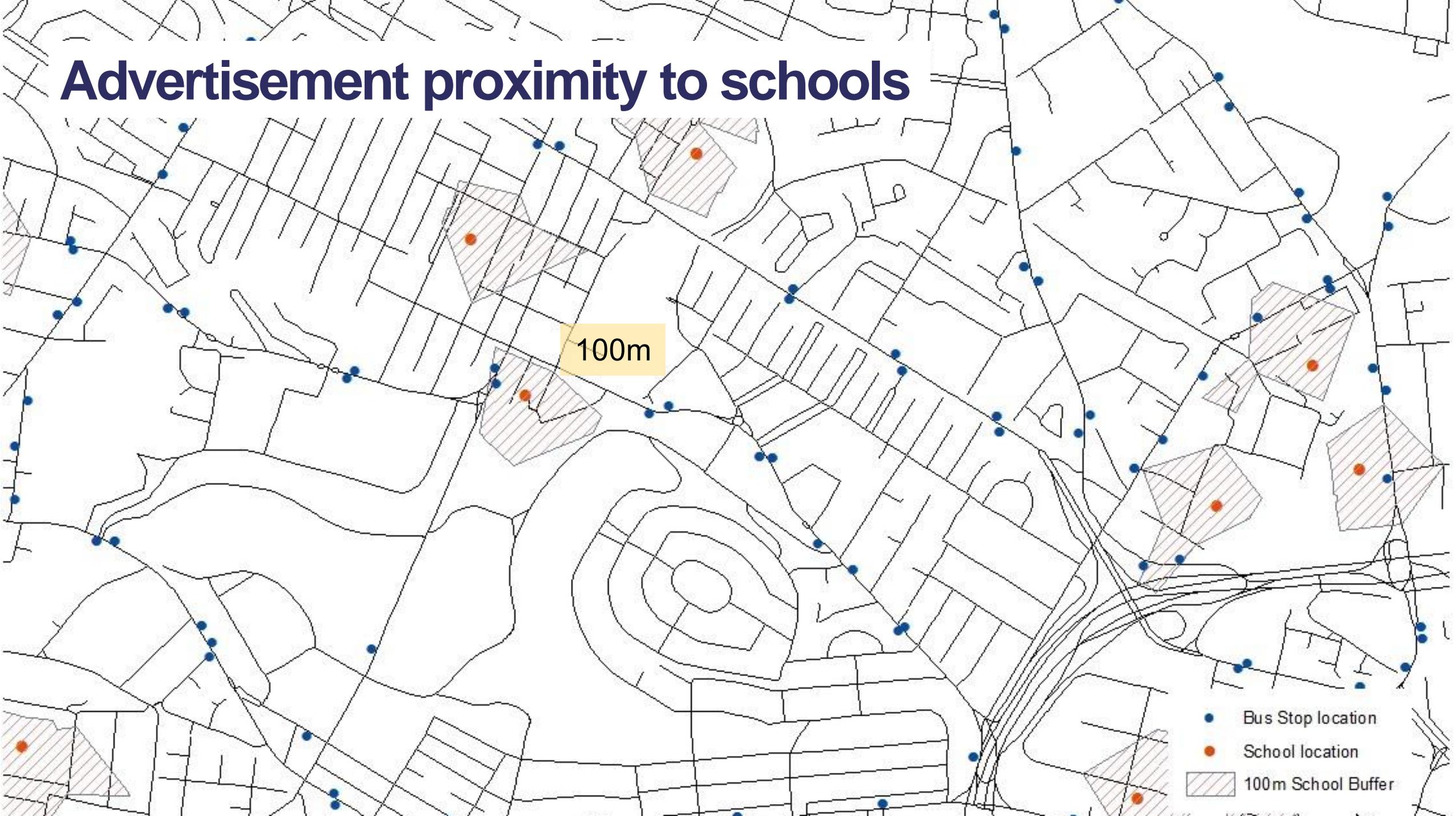
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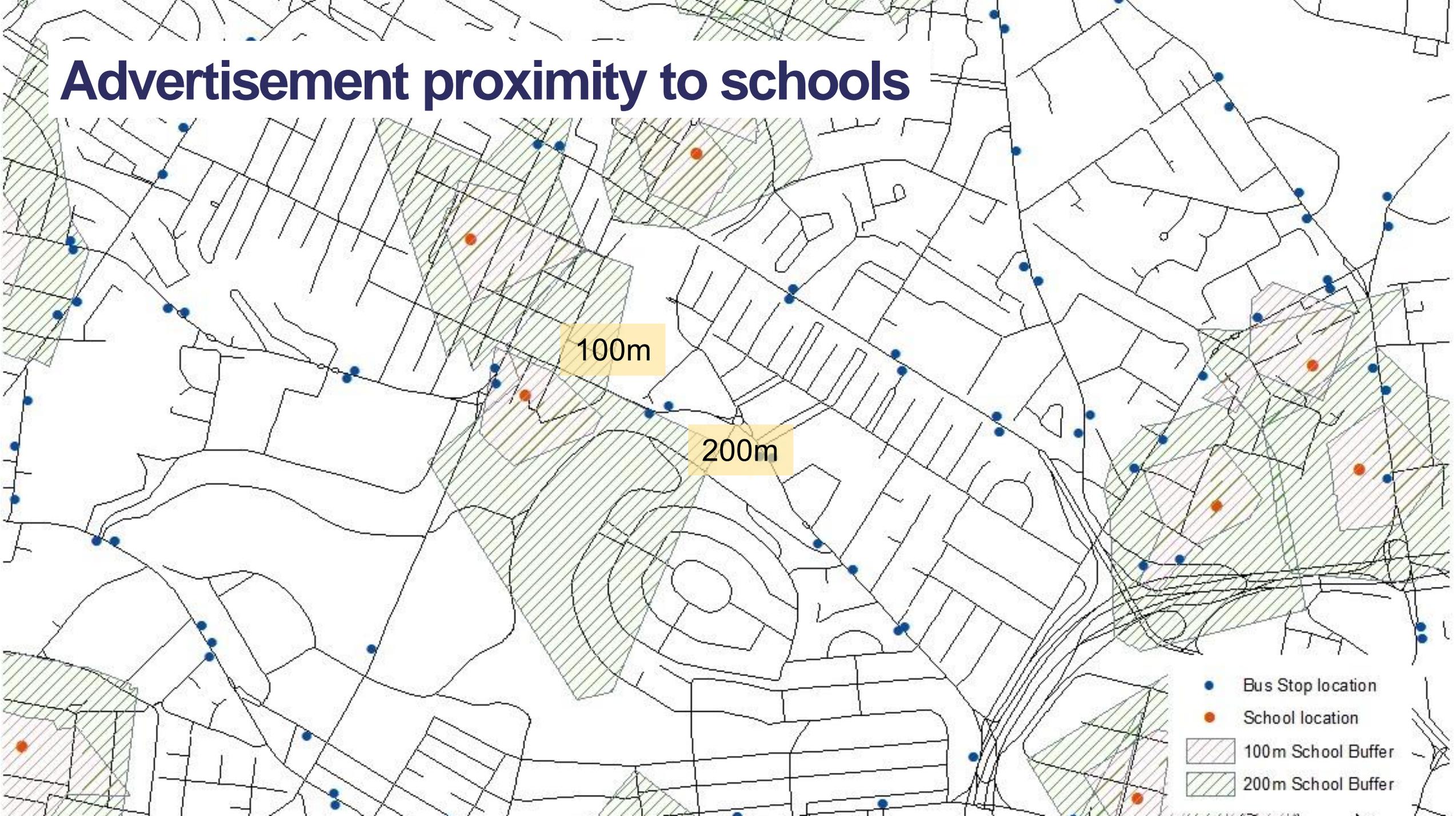
Advertisement proximity to schools



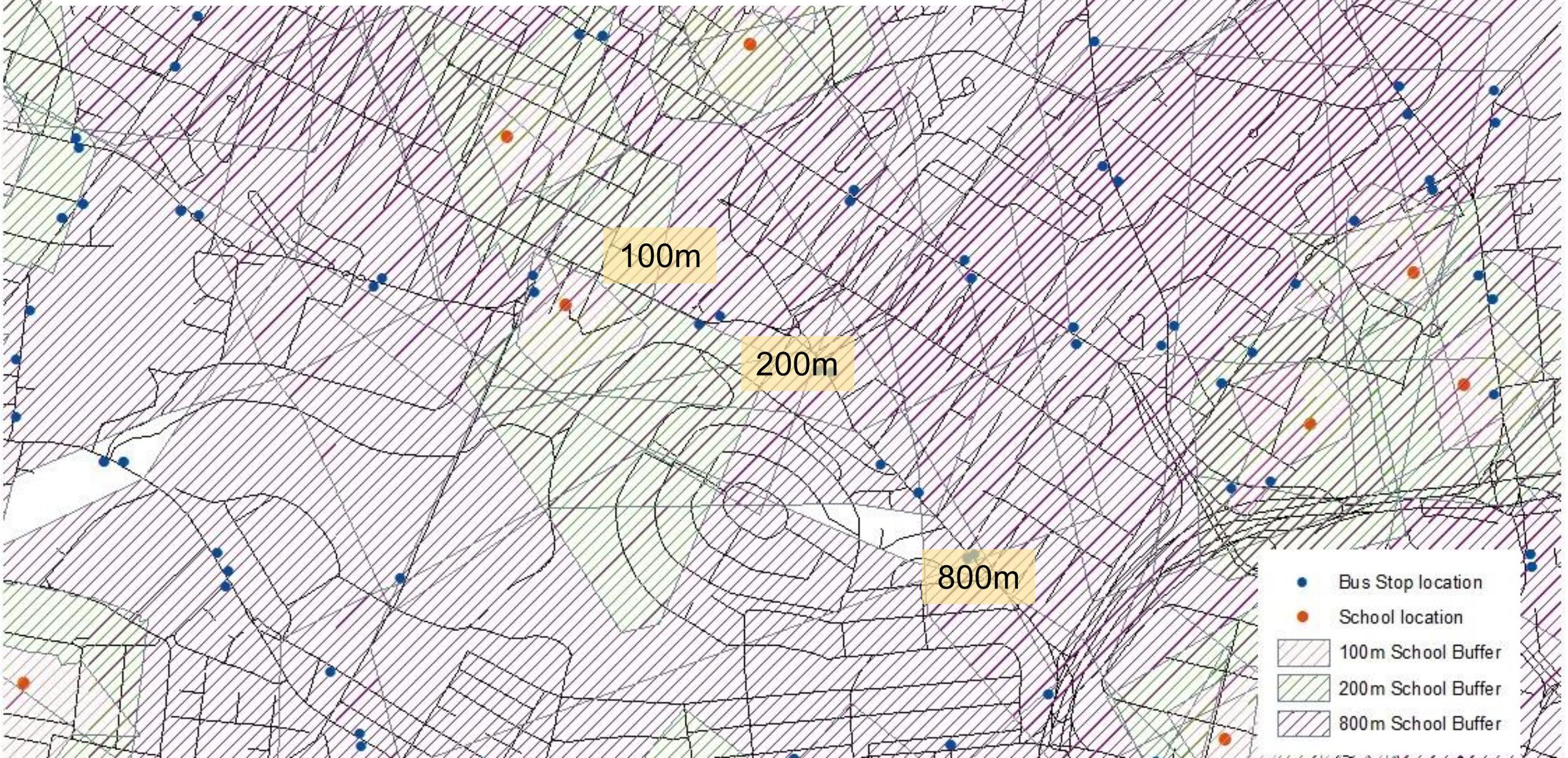
Advertisement proximity to schools



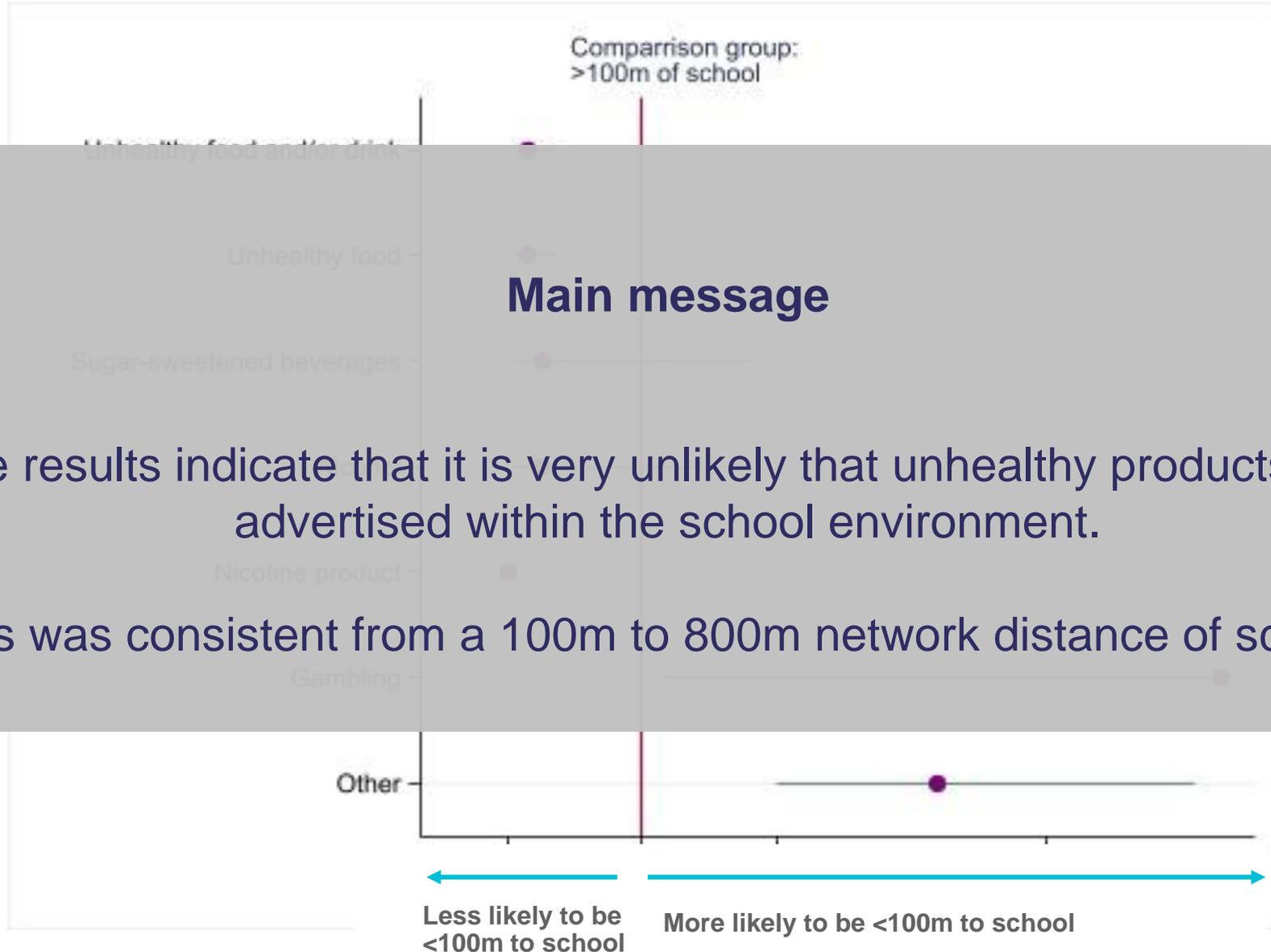
Advertisement proximity to schools



Advertisement proximity to schools



Advertisement proximity to schools



Our research

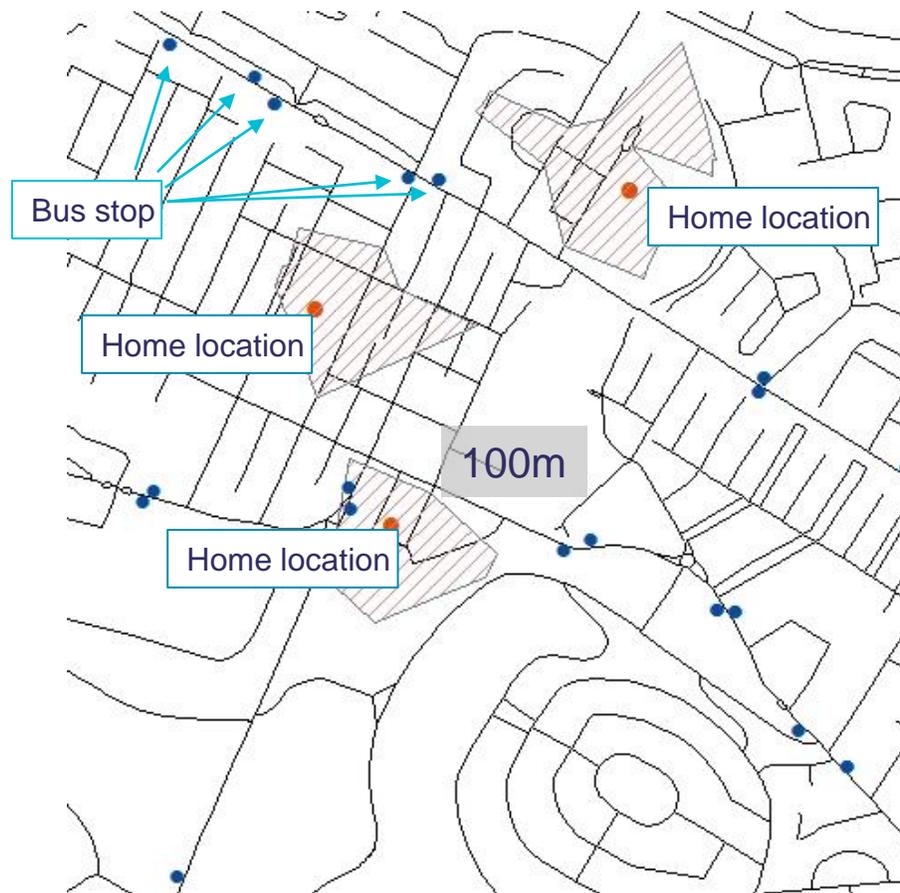
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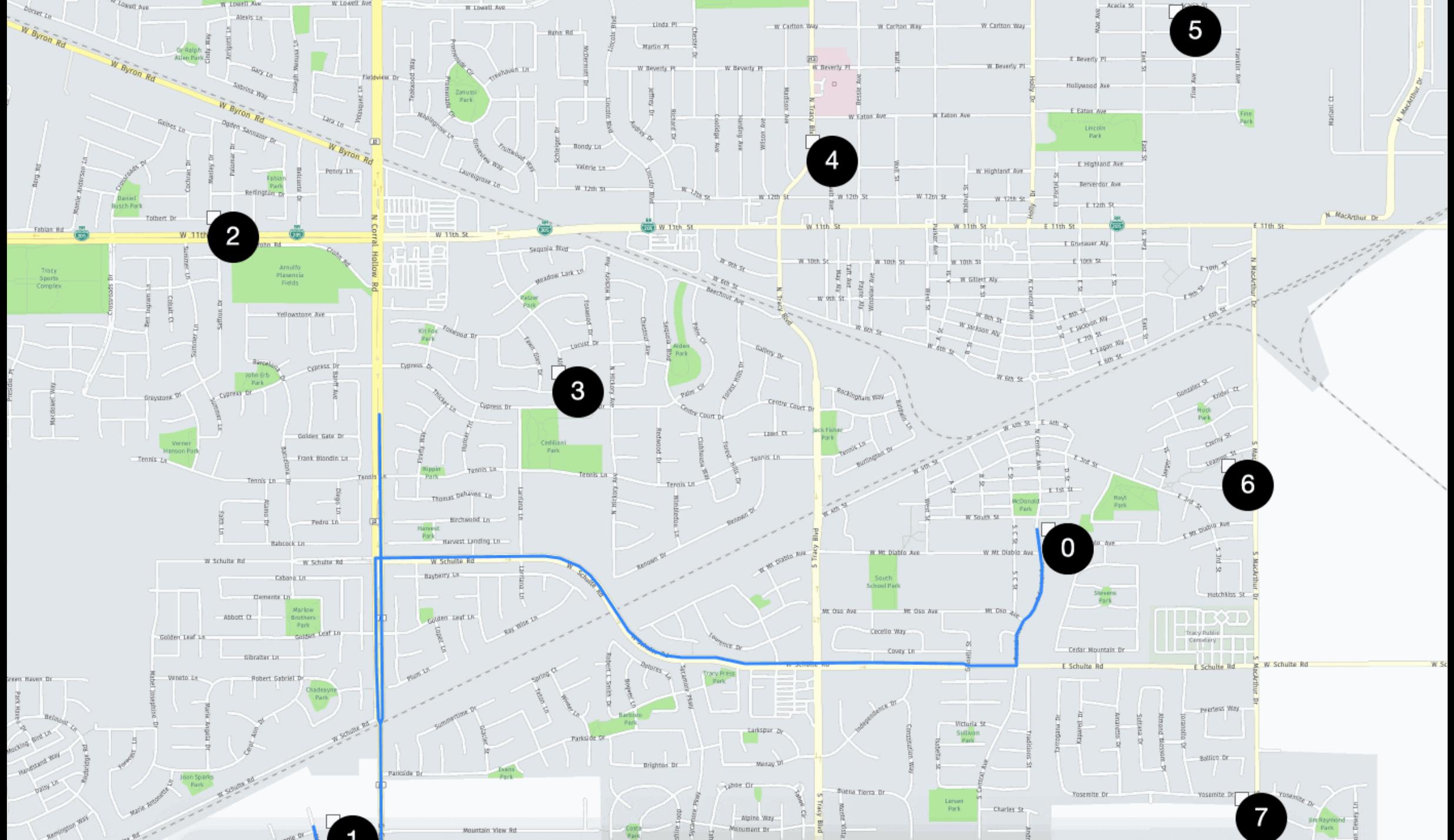
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Children's 'real' exposure to bus stop advertising

Static boundaries





2

4

5

3

6

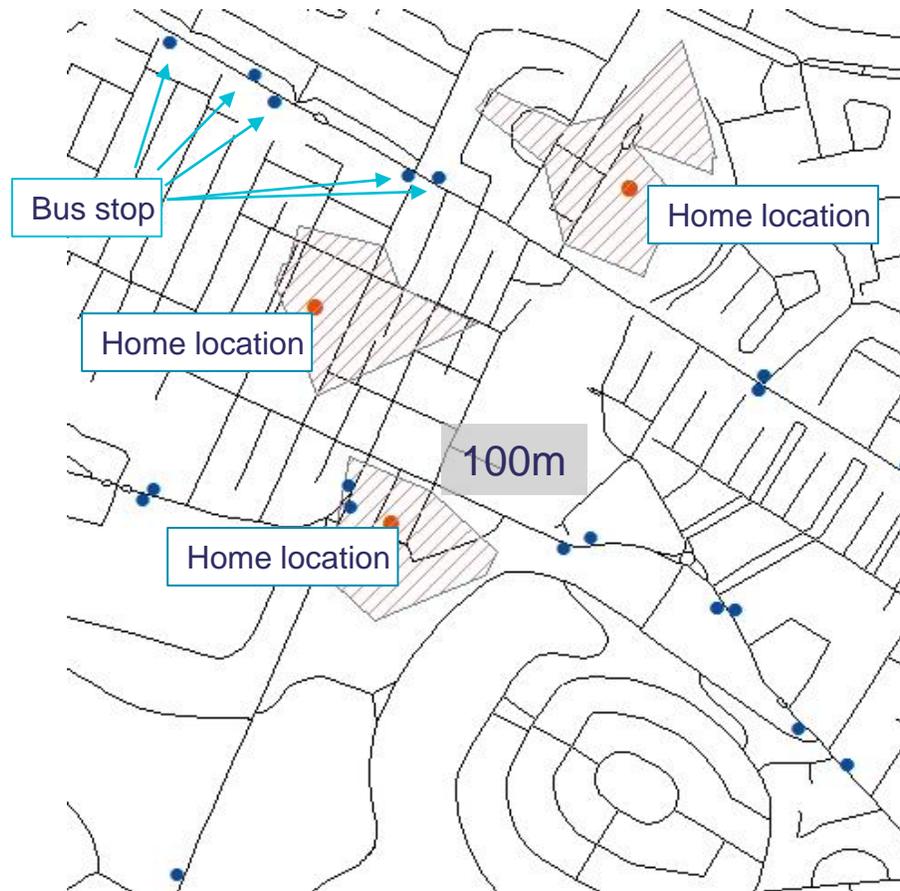
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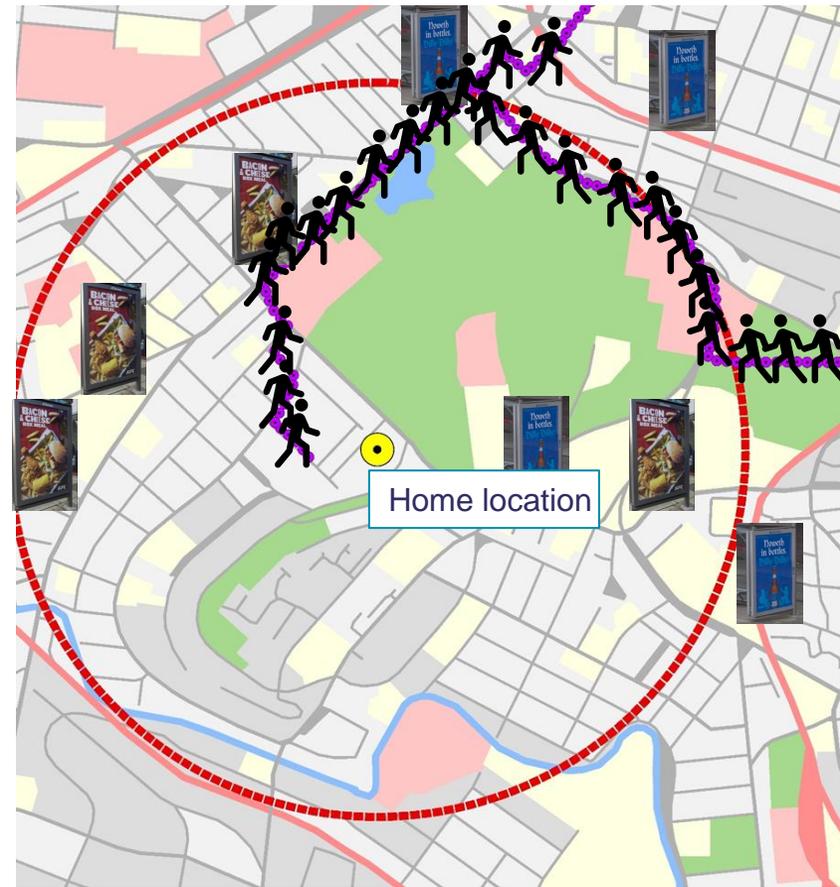
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Children's 'real' exposure to bus stop advertising

Static boundaries



Children's daily travel behaviour



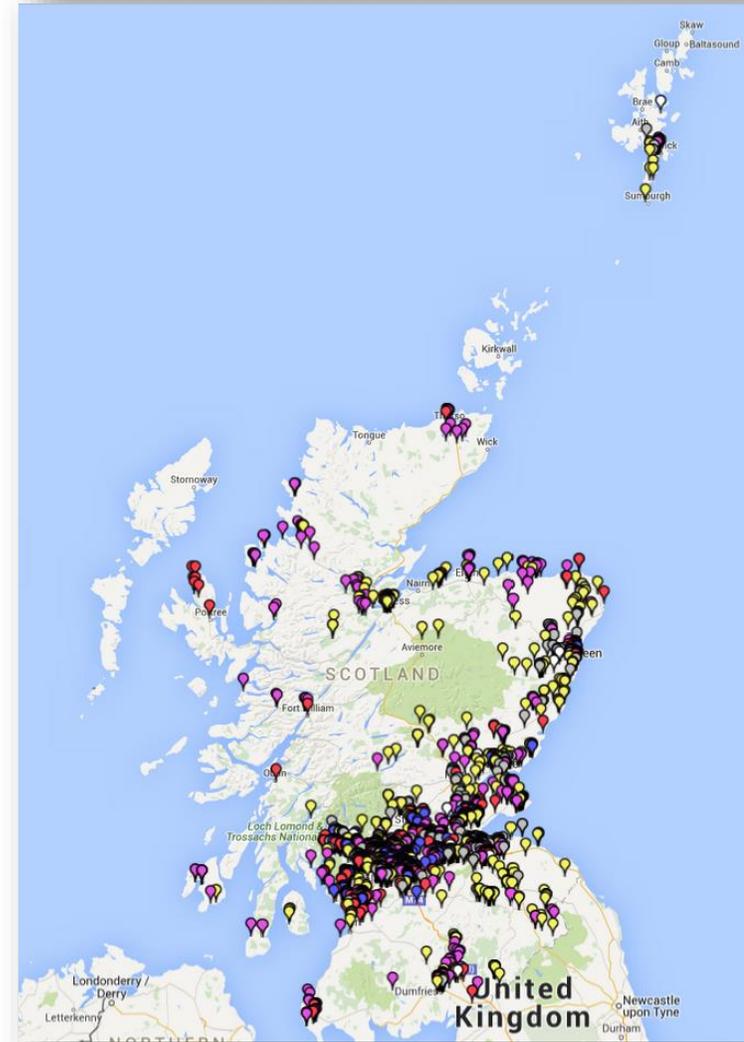
Participants

Participants

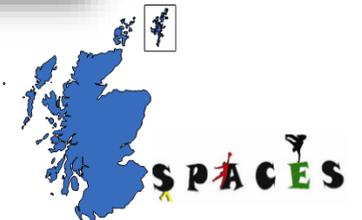
- n=2,162, 10/11 years old
- BC1 Cohort, Phase 1
- Scotland wide
- Nationally representative sample
- May 2015 – May 2016
- 229 participants in Central Belt study area



8 days
Waking
hours



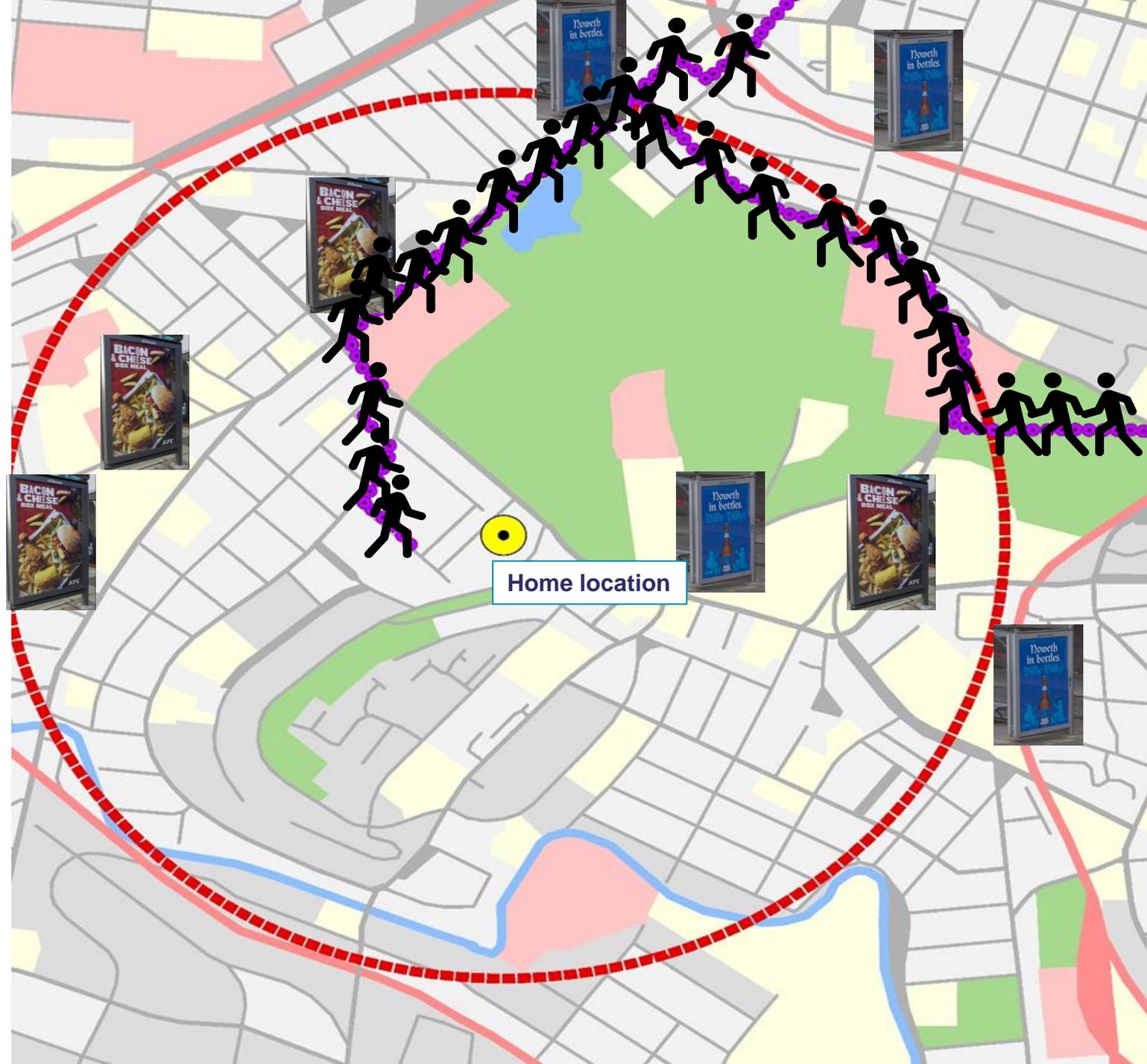
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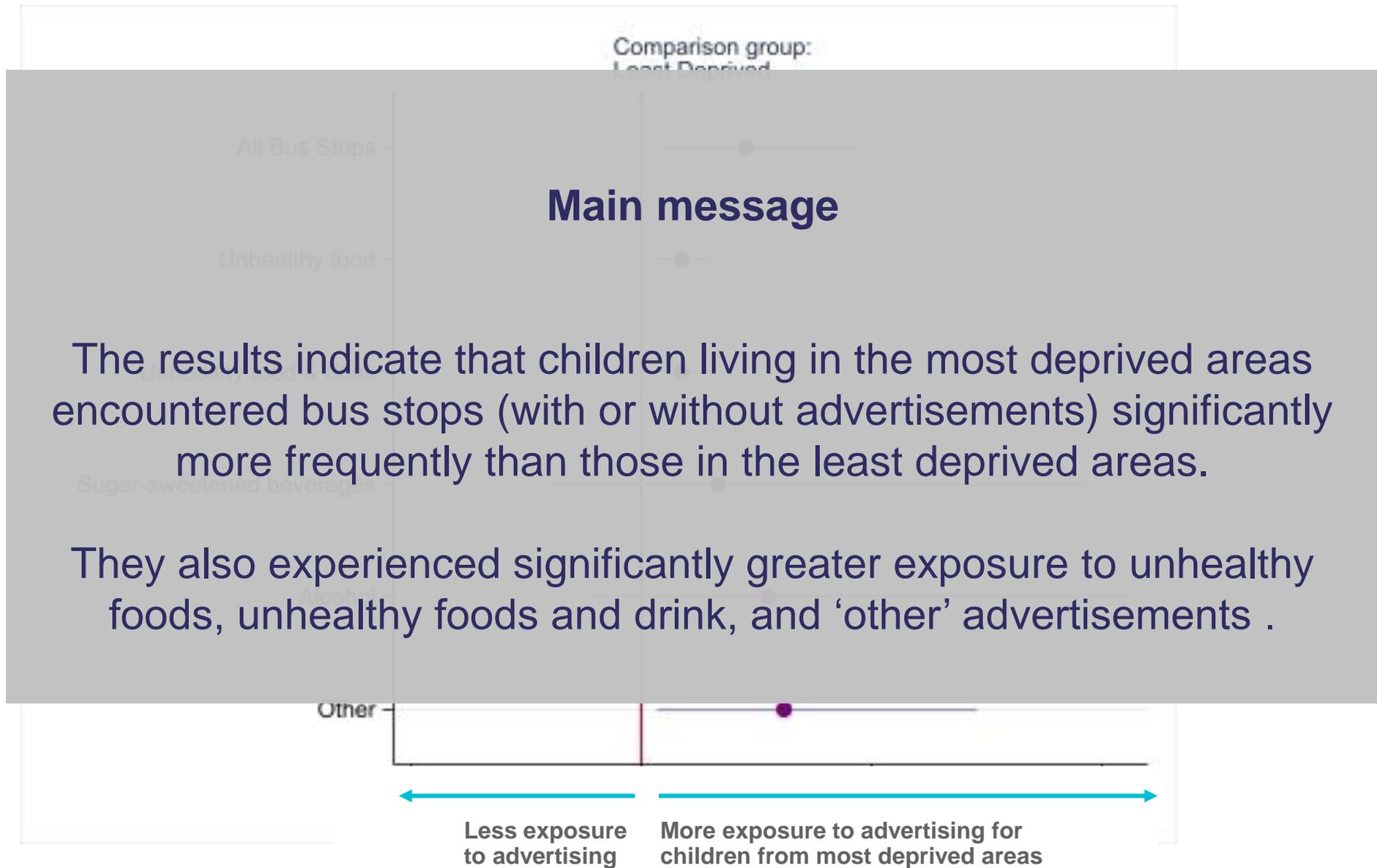
Studying Physical Activity in Children's Environments across Scotland

Children's 'real' exposure to bus stop advertising

- We measured individual-level exposure to bus stop locations.
- GPS locations were classed as 'exposed' when distance to nearest bus stop containing an advertisement was $<10\text{m}$.
- Models compared exposure to advertisement categories across binary income deprivation levels, urbanicity, sex and season.



Children's 'real' exposure to bus stop advertising



Main findings



Current ASA restrictions have likely been effective in reducing unhealthy commodity advertising around schools.



Children who resided within more deprived areas had greater contact with the transport network



Children from more deprived areas were more likely to be exposed to unhealthy food & drink advertising.

Policy recommendations...

Recommend a transport network wide restriction of unhealthy commodity advertisements, rather than school-based spatial restrictions.

This may be most effective to target inequalities in exposure for children.

Examples of similar policies:

- 1) London - prohibited advertising for HFSS foods on taxis and transport network.
- 2) Ireland – alcohol advertising is prohibited on public transport; bus stops and stations.
- 3) New York - Alcohol Advertising Ban on City Property.

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De Blasio Administration Announces Alcohol Advertising Ban on City Property

April 30, 2019

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced an [Executive Order](#) banning all alcohol advertising on City property. Under the order, alcohol advertisements will be banned from City property, including bus shelters, newsstands, phone booths, Wi-Fi LinkNYC kiosks and recycling kiosks. The order will take effect immediately, meaning

Email Print

THE IRISH TIMES

Mon, Sep 13, 2021

NEWS SPORT BUSINESS OPINION LIFE & STYLE CULTURE

Ireland > Irish News

Alcohol advertisements to be banned near schools from Wednesday

Move is one of a suite of measures aimed at 'changing the culture of drinking in Ireland'

Mon, Nov 11, 2019, 00:47

Tim O'Brien

MAYOR OF LONDON

What we do In my area Get involved

Home > Press Releases > Mayoral > Ban on junk food advertising on transport network

Mayor confirms ban on junk food advertising on transport network

23 November 2018

Other

New comi

Acknowledgements



**Chris
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**Rich
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**Shona
Hilton**

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Unit.

Olsen, J. R. , Patterson, C. , Caryl, F. M. , Robertson, T., Mooney, S. J., Rundle, A. G., Mitchell, R. and Hilton, S. (2021) Exposure to unhealthy product advertising: Spatial proximity analysis to schools and socio-economic inequalities in daily exposure measured using Scottish Children's individual-level GPS data. *Health and Place*, 68 (2021): 102535. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2021.102535>

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Thank you

 @JonOlsen_

 @theSPHSU

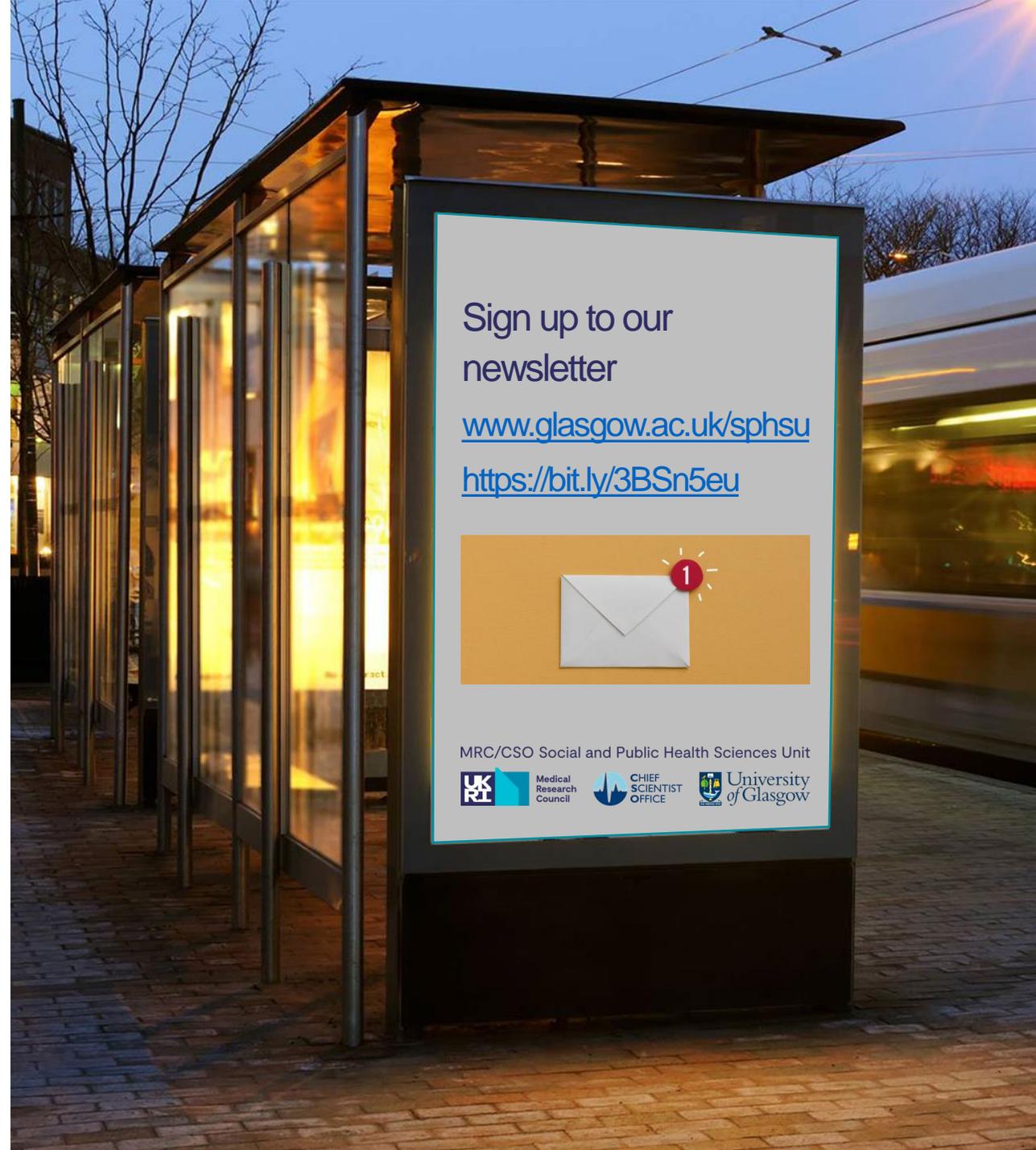
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