

# What makes a quality place?

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# Presentation Outline

- Introduction to Living Streets
- What doesn't make a quality place
- What makes a Living Street
- Why it matters
- Creating better quality places



# Introduction to Living Streets

Living Streets is the national charity that stands up for pedestrians.

With our supporters we work to create safe, attractive and enjoyable streets, where people want to walk.



# Introduction to Living Streets



1929 – 2009: 80 years of campaigning as  
Pedestrians Association and Living Streets



# Our key areas of work

- **Projects and campaigning**
  1. Community engagement
  2. National and local lobbying
  3. Healthy Environments
- **Consultancy services- Community Street Audits; Active Travel Audits, etc**
- **Local groups and supporters**



# Not a new challenge

- **DH Lawrence on urban change (1930)**
- *“We have frustrated that instinct of community which would make us unite in pride and dignity in the bigger gesture of the citizen, not the cottager [individual]. The great city means beauty, dignity, and a certain splendour. This is the side of the Englishman that has been thwarted and shockingly betrayed.”*

















# What makes a living street?

1. Direct walking links to places people want to go.



2. Clean and well maintained



**3. Local shops and services within walking distance.**





4. Well-lit and safe, day and night.



## 5. Attractive and interesting design



6. Space to play and relax



7. Well designed, clutter free pavements.



8. Places for people, not just traffic.



9. Local people involved in decision making.



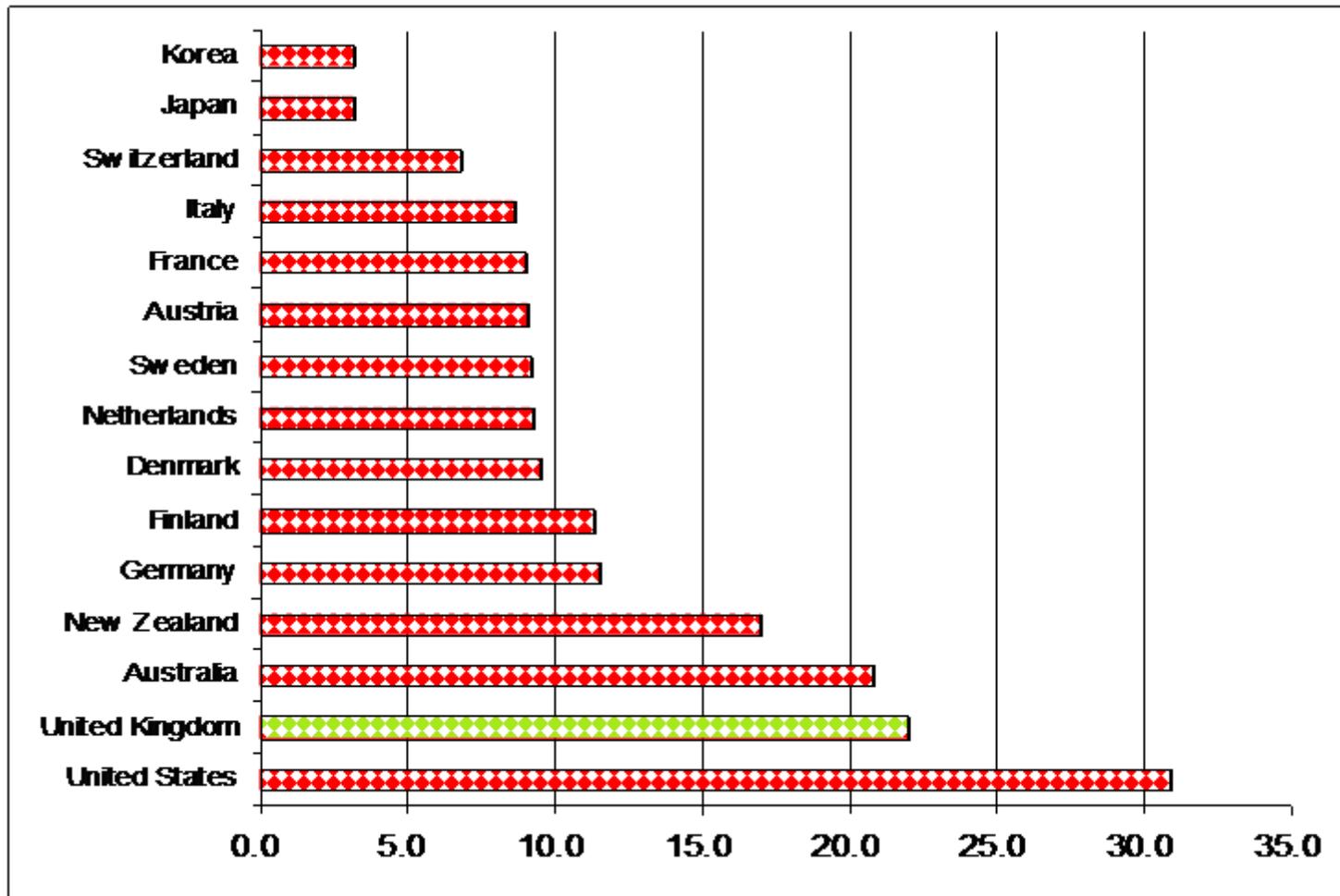
10. Maps and signs to make it easy to walk.

# Today's challenge: health

- **Scottish Government Healthy Eating Active Living Action Plan, (2008). Key objective:**
- *“Create, improve and maintain the supply of natural and built environments encouraging more active lifestyles (this includes opportunities for walking, cycling and informal recreation space as well as formal leisure centres, sports fields or swimming pools);”*



# Obesity by Country



Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; World Health Organization, International Obesity Task Force; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Public Health Statistics.

# Risks of obesity

- Projected cost £50bn by 2050
- *“Obesity threatens the health and well-being of individuals and will place an intolerable burden on the Exchequer in terms of health costs, on employers through lost productivity and on families because of the increasing burden of long-term chronic disability.”*
- (UK Government Foresight report on obesity)



# A Healthy Environment Is ...

## A walkable environment

*“Evidence is emerging that people who live in more walkable neighbourhoods and areas with higher levels of mixed land-use are more active and have somewhat lower body weights than those in areas less conducive to walking or cycling as part of their everyday routine.”*

(Scottish Government, Health Eating Active Living Action Plan, 2008)



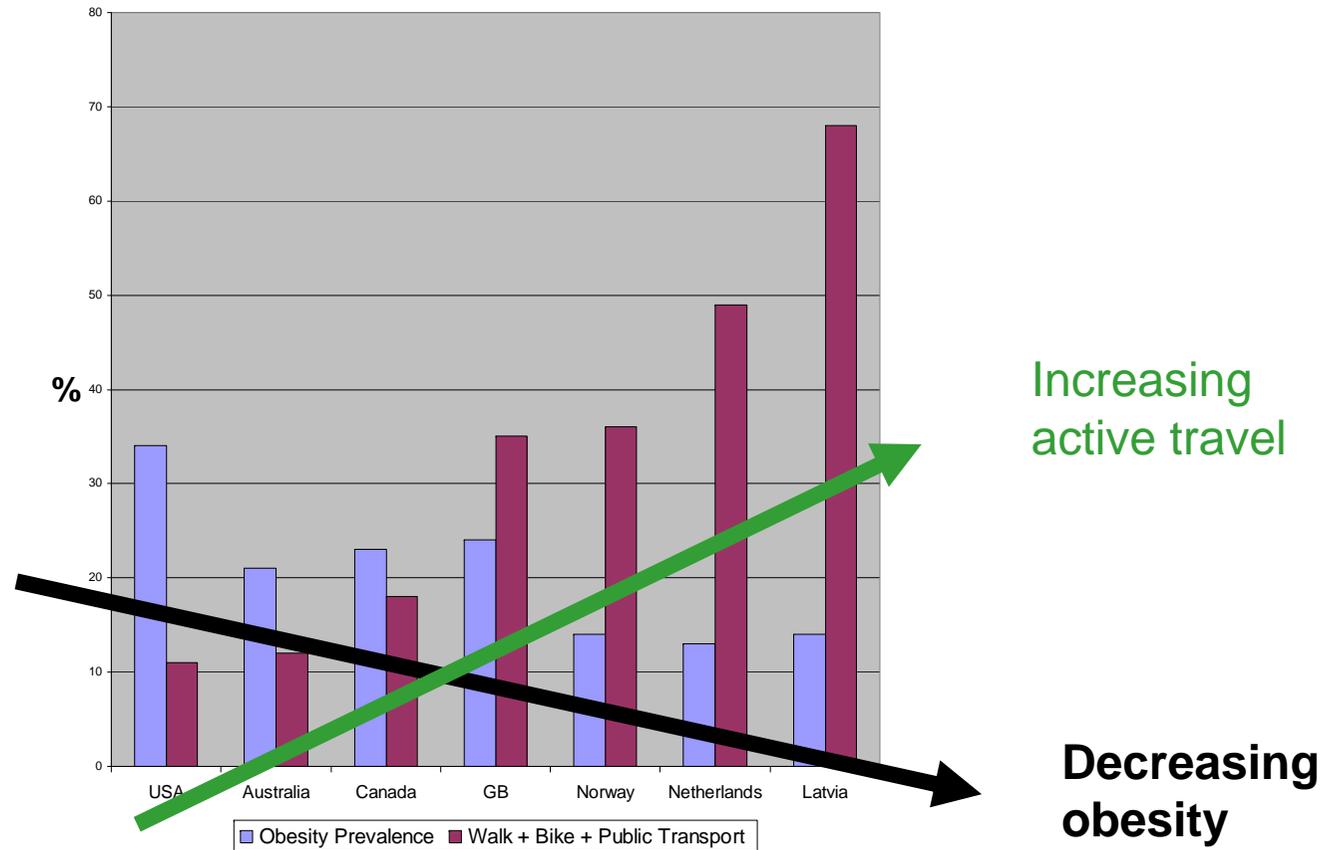
# A Walkable Neighbourhood

- High population density
- Mixed land use
- High connectivity - easy walking & cycling routes between destinations
- Good pedestrian and cycling facilities – well maintained pavements, cycle routes, traffic calming measures
- Good accessibility – variety of easily reached destinations or facilities (within 10 minutes walk / 800m)
- Daily needs within walking distance of most residents



# Obesity & Active Travel

(short distance daily travel)



Source: Bassett et al, J Physical Activity & Health, 2008, 5, 795-814



"One unanticipated result...was that I began to gain weight. Though we were doing barely enough at the quarry to work up a sweat, the walk there and back was enough to keep me trim." (Long Walk to Freedom)



'What has helped enormously has been the audio books I listen to while I'm walking



'I have lost over a stone in weight by walking more for ministerial duties.'



# Air pollution

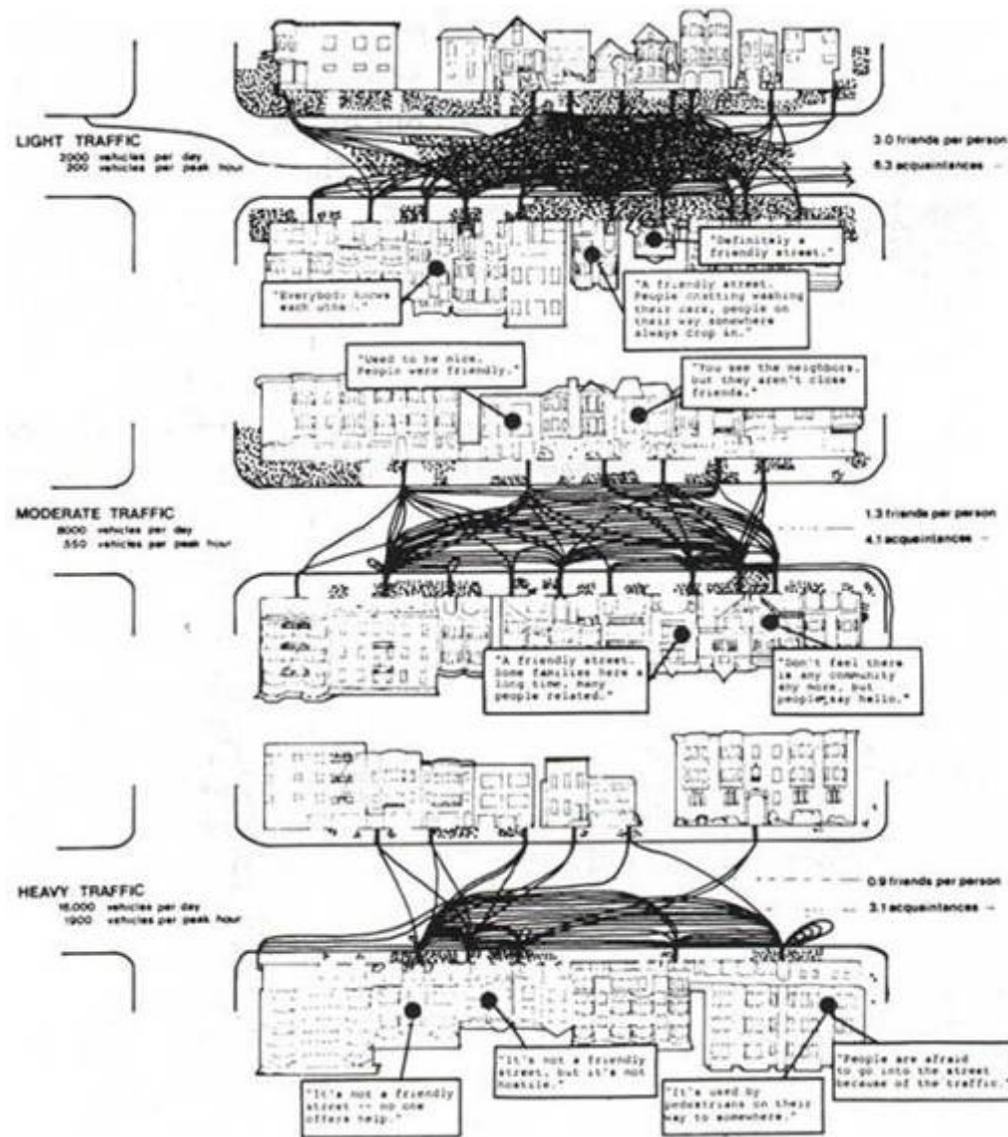
- **Long-Term Ozone Exposure and Mortality**
- New study showing 25%-30% greater risk of dying from lung disease due to ozone exposure
- Previous research connected exposure to impaired lung function or hospitalisation
- 370,000 people in Scotland currently receiving treatment for asthma
- Source: New England Journal of Medicine. Volume 360:1085-1095, March 12, 2009 Number 11



Photo copyright Dr Keats



# What impact has traffic had?

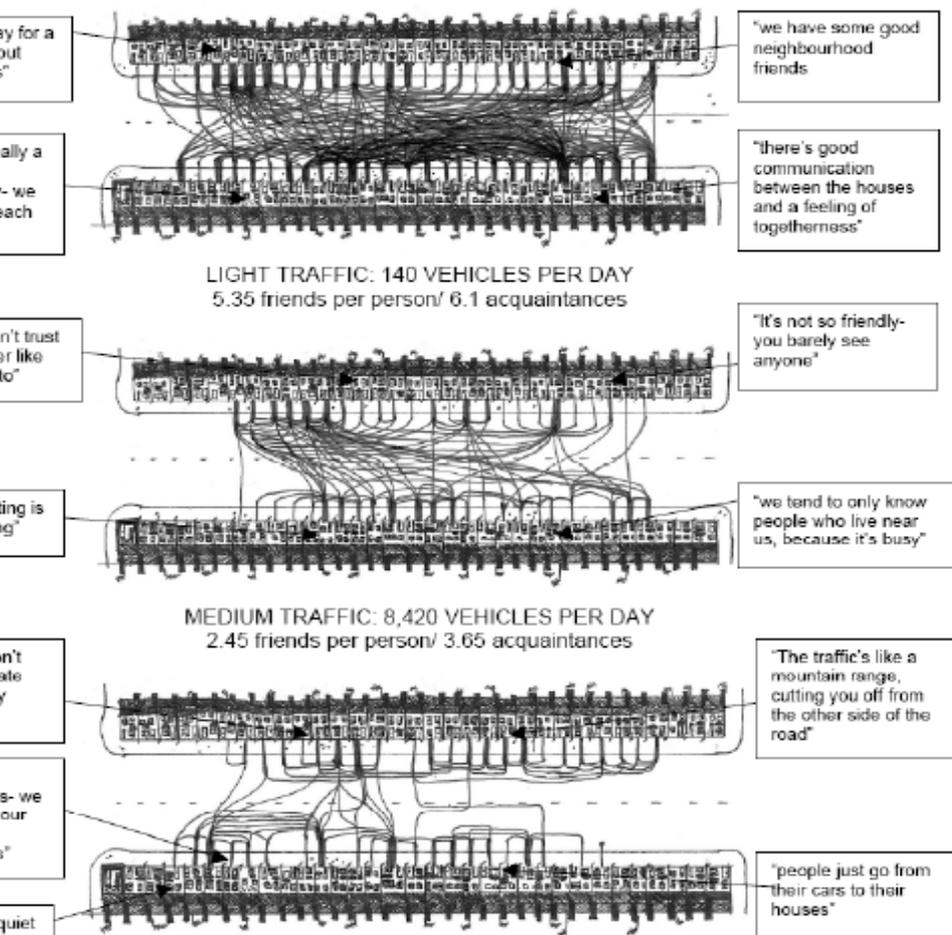


**The effect of traffic on community ties**  
– Appleyard and Lintell, 1972

**LIVING STREETS**  
PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

# Is it still a problem today?

Community Interaction on Three Bristol Streets



**...research  
replicated  
in Bristol  
2008  
(Josh Hart)**

**LIVING STREETS**

# Crime and anti-social behaviour

**Fear and loathing reign on the streets The Herald April 8<sup>th</sup> 2009**

*‘The irony is that they were built for safety reasons; to stop people having to run the gauntlet of fast and heavy traffic. But for many today the underpass has come to represent a frontier of urban lawlessness, where feral youth are held to congregate in the hours of darkness to hone their skills in antisocial behaviour.’*



# Broken Windows theory

People become more disobedient in littered/ graffiti / broken window environments

## **Groningen experimental research:**

€5 note left sticking out of envelope, hanging out mailbox.

No litter or graffiti: 13% of passers-by stole the money

Mailbox daubed with graffiti: thefts doubled to 27%

Mailbox surrounded by litter: thefts doubled (25%)

Flyer attached to bike handlebars in cycle park with a anti-graffiti sign: cyclists twice as likely to drop flyer as litter if there was graffiti on the walls.

No signs better than non-obeyed signs



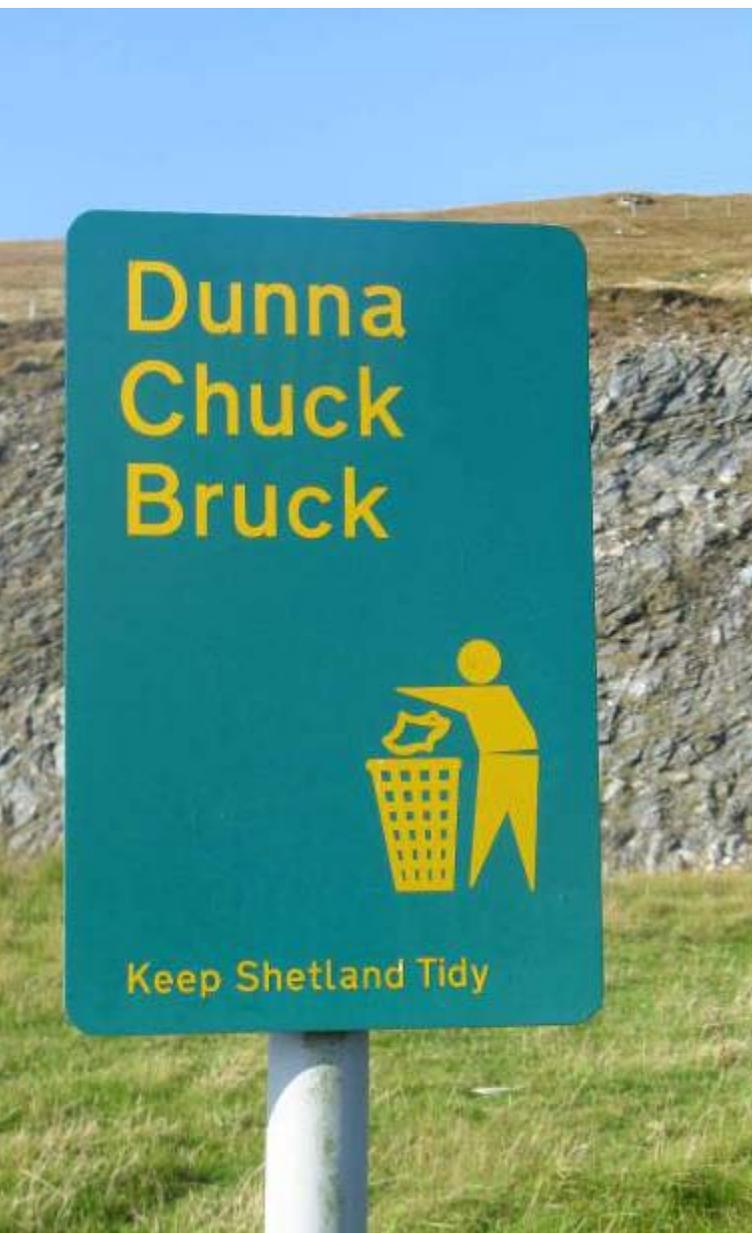
**Maintenance**





- Are we welcome in our own public space?

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- Signs make a place



# Solutions?

Creating better quality places:

1. Little changes
2. Retro-fitting- putting people first
3. Use relevant design guidance for streets
4. Use our streets differently

# Little changes, Large impact





# Retro-fitting: putting people first







# Oxford Circus

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# Amsterdam





# Inverness



Dundee



# Edinburgh

# Dundee Town Centre



Thanks for listening

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