ACTIVE TRAVEL IN SURREY

Surrey Living Lab Project Report 2021

1. Interventions to increase active travel should be tailored to the stage of change of the target group.
2. The quality of walking and cycling infrastructure in Surrey is insufficient.
3. There is a lot of potential for increasing cycling - the key barrier is infrastructure.
4. People who can walk, will walk.
5. Short journeys have more potential travel behaviour change

INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

Walking and cycling as a form of active travel is one of the most sustainable ways of transport. Therefore, the promotion of active travel is a main objective in making communities more sustainable. Active Travel as an alternative mode of transport has the potential to reduce a community's carbon footprint, while simultaneously having direct health benefits for its individuals. Therefore, the UK Government has created a £2bn Active Travel fund for local authorities during its 2020 COVID-19 response to support walking and cycling. However, many citizens struggle to change their behaviour towards more active travel. The Active Travel Project aims to shed light on some of the key barriers and motivators of active travel within Surrey and to support local transport planning and policies by providing key contemporary evidence.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Active Travel Project was initiated in March 2021 as a collaboration between the University of Surrey Living Lab and the Surrey Climate Commission. The project aims at identifying key barriers and motivators as well as appropriate interventions in promoting active travel within Surrey. The project started with an online workshop together with local stakeholders and partners who are interested in active travel in Surrey. The workshop identified some of the key barriers and enablers for active travel in Surrey as perceived by the stakeholders and the information obtained was used to create a citizen survey, which was distributed from July until September 2021. In a second stakeholder workshop, the initial results of the survey were presented and a discussion about the results and further opportunities to collaborate in the promotion of active travel within Surrey were facilitated. Active Travel project outputs were used to provide local evidence to the Surrey County Council consultation at the end of October 2021.

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP I

June 10th, 2021

GROUP DISCUSSION

As the workshop was held online due to COVID-19, a series of discussions within breakout groups lead to the identification of some of the key barriers and enablers of Active Travel within Surrey. The results of these discussions are summarized below since they informed the contents of the subsequenty online citizen survey.

KEY BARRIERS OF ACTIVE TRAVEL

- Personal safety: Not feeling safe to walk/cycle to school or work (e.g., for women)
- Inadequate infrastructure (e.g., safe crossing places)
- Cycle route marking and signage can be confusing which discourages less experienced cyclists
- Lack of access to training for employees and pupils (finding time in the curriculum/school timetable to deliver training is challenging – cycling proficiency is not compulsory)

WHO WAS THERE?

People from a range of different Boroughs and Districts as well the business community, initiatives and community groups interested in Active Travel in Surrey were invited to the first workshop, leading to the attendance of a variety of stakeholders, e.g.:

- Surrey County Council
- Tandridge District Council
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Zero Carbon Guildford
- Spelthorne Borough Council
- Runnymede Borough Council
- Network Rail
- Guildford Borough Council

KEY ENABLERS OF ACTIVE TRAVEL

- Infrastructure is key to promote active travel and behaviour change
- Behaviour change campaigns should be introduced in areas where there is good infrastructure or where it is planned to be implemented
- There is a better take up of active travel if the school/work commute is a short journey
- Incentives, local champions, and collaborations with communities are a critical factor to the success of any active travel initiative
- Targeting areas rather than trip type: Within areas we can then target particular groups, i.e., women, BAME, disadvantaged communities
- Understanding “trip chaining”: A typical commute will likely contain a number of journeys (i.e., work – post office – school – supermarket – home)
- Encouraging people to carry out trip chaining via active travel
- Educating people as to why active travel is beneficial (promoting it across diverse citizen groups)
- Town centres across Surrey (and beyond) typically encourage walking
- Framing Active Travel as a major contribution to a more locally focussed economy (can enhance support across the political spectrum)

CONCLUSION WORKSHOP I

The discussions during the first workshop identified some of the key barriers and enablers of Active Travel in Surrey as perceived by a wide range of local and regional stakeholders. All workshop input was used to develop a citizen survey which aimed at verifying workshop conclusions throughout Surrey.

THE ACTIVE TRAVEL SURVEY

July - September, 2021

BACKGROUND AND AIMS OF THE SURVEY

The survey focused on questions around walking and cycling, with a particular interest in understanding contemporary attitudes and preferences of residents about both forms of active travel. In order to get a more in depth understanding, the Stages of Change model by Prochaska (1984) was implemented. The model suggests that behaviour change is not an event, but a process and that people can be placed in different stages of change: *pre-contemplation*, *contemplation*, *decision*, *action*, and *maintenance* (see Appendix p.8). The most effective behaviour change interventions are those tailored to the right stage of change of the target audience (e.g., building a cycle lane is not going to make someone cycle who has never even thought of doing so [pre-contemplation], but it can change those who are "ready for action").

METHODS

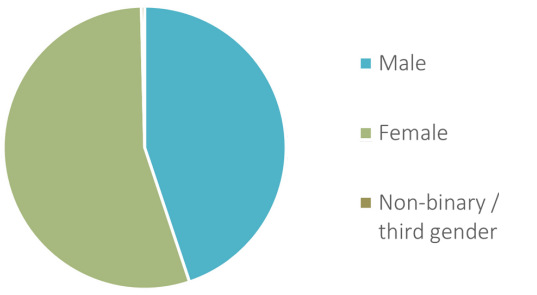
The survey consisted of questions about walking and cycling to five different destinations:

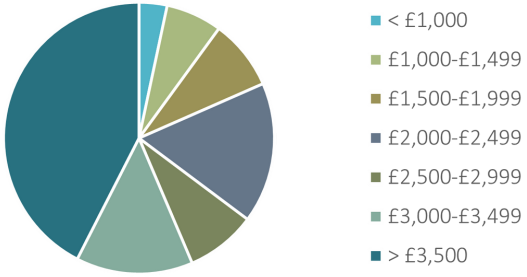
- To school with children
- To work
- For grocery/general shopping trips
- To leisure destination (a frequently visited nearby destination such as the gym, the pub, etc.)
- For pleasure (not to go anywhere) in the local area

The first section of the survey focussed on **walking** and asked participants to state in which stage of change they are in for each of the destinations above (e.g., "This is something I might be willing to try" represented the contemplation stage of change). The Stages of Change section was followed by questions about different types of interventions (i.e., wider footpaths, better lighting, CCTV, more pedestrian crossings) and whether the implementation of these interventions would likely make participants walk more to the given destinations. The same types of questions were then repeated for **cycling**, while the mentioned interventions were bicycle lanes, better marking and signage and more cycle parking areas.

PARTICIPANTS

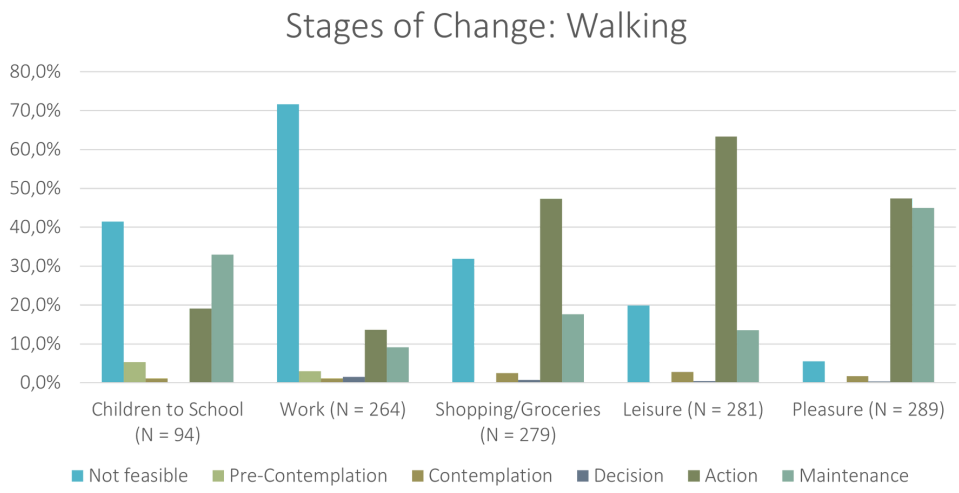
The survey was distributed between July and September 2021 and received 295 responses (55% female, 45% male). The survey was distributed through the research and stakeholder network, leading to participants from a number of different age groups and monthly incomes. However, it should be noted that 53% of participants were more than 50 years old and 42% of participants reported to have a monthly income of more than £3,500. Moreover, there was a slight over representation of participants from Guildford (35,5%).

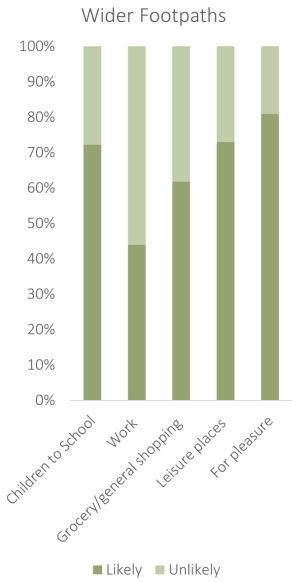




THE ACTIVE TRAVEL SURVEY

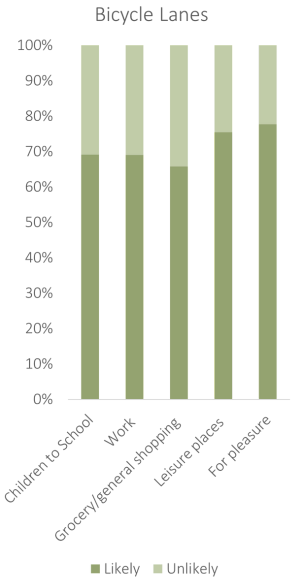
July - September, 2021

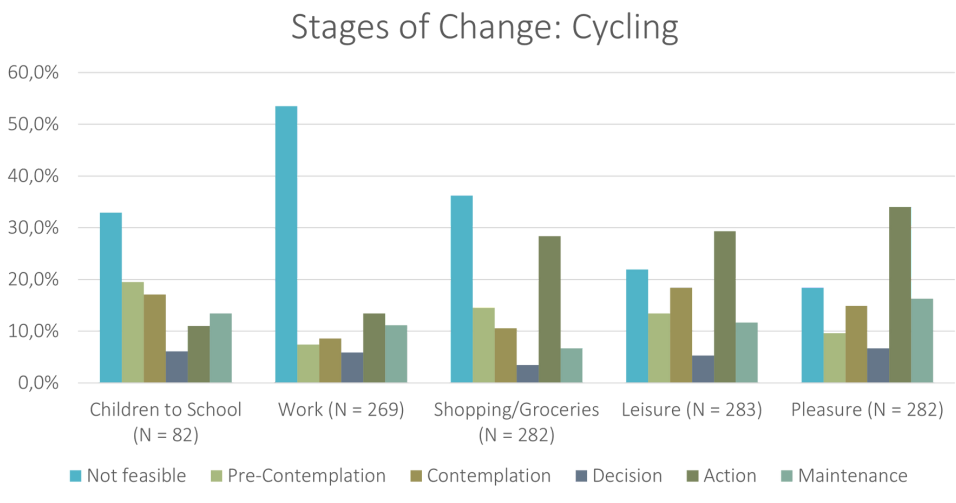




For all types of journeys, a number of people said that walking or cycling to those destinations is not feasible for them. Those numbers are especially high for going to school and work. For walking, people stated that this is mostly due to time and distance, while for cycling, people also mention that it is too dangerous. When looking at participants in the middle stages of change (pre-contemplation – Action), we can find more potential for behaviour change, as people are willing to try walking or cycling to the suggested destinations or already do so frequently. For cycling, this target group consists of more people, as distance to the suggested destinations is less of a challenge. Interestingly the majority of respondents stated that they are at the Action Stage regarding their leisure journeys, which clearly hints that such type of journeys should be among those prioritised by transport planners and local authorities.

The overall responses to the suggested interventions show that most of them are likely to aid behaviour change if they were introduced (see responses to wider footpaths and bicycle lanes).





STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP II

October 18th, 2021

PRESENTATION OF SURVEY RESULTS

The workshop started with a presentation of key survey results, particularly focusing on walking and cycling to work and leisure destinations. The presentation concluded that for both going to work and to leisure places, a large amount of people feel that active travel is not a feasible mode of transport. This seems to vary extensively based on the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics. For walking, this was largely due to distance, while road safety was mentioned more often regarding cycling. However, the people who considered active travel as a feasible mode of transport felt that the suggested interventions (e.g., bicycle lanes for cycling, wider footpaths for walking) would help them change their behaviour increasing active travel.

WHO WAS THERE?

The invitation to the workshop was circulated to the network of stakeholders who were invited for the first workshop, leading to the attendance of a variety of different Boroughs, Districts and other interested businesses, initiatives and community groups across Surrey, e.g.:

- Surrey County Council
- Spelthorne Borough Council
- Runnymede Borough Council
- Waverley Borough Council
- Epsom Business Improvement District

COMMENTS ON SURVEY RESULTS

- Survey findings are similar to the feedback which Surrey County Council and other stakeholders have received in the past, confirming the validity of this survey. Roads being dangerous for cyclists has been a widely raised issue and is recognised as a challenge.
- The time and distance of the journey undertaken is a major factor in whether it is seen to be feasible via active travel. Local journeys are likely to be seen as being more feasible. However, walking and cycling can be part of a longer journey or multi-modal tripchaining (Saud & Thomopoulos, 2021) that includes public transport (e.g., cycle to the station).
- Similar to evidence based on overseas studies, cycle lanes vary in their effectiveness, e.g., dedicated cycle lanes (separated from road traffic) are safer and more effective than a cycle lane simply painted with a different colour on an existing road. Different areas will need different (tailored) solutions depending on their geomorphology, road infrastructure and socio-demographic profile of residents.

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP II

October 18th, 2021

GROUP DISCUSSION

A range of questions were asked to workshop stakeholders to elicit their views and inform the use of the Sustainable Mobility Indicator (Thomopoulos & Grant-Muller, 2013) by local transport officers and policy makers.

WHAT AREAS AND / OR GROUPS WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOCUSSING ON?

- Focus on schools and young people
  - Many parents drive their children to school, which tend to be short journeys
  - Focussing on young people will instil more sustainable long-term habits. The goal is to make walking, cycling and public transport to school the norm.
  - Training in schools, e.g., Bikeability could increase long-term uptake of active travel
  - Assist schools in developing a travel plan, also based on available funding by e.g. Surrey County Council
- Focus on link to NHS – There are strong long-term health benefits from encouraging more active travel (e.g., Social Prescribing of healthy habits)
- Focus on low traffic neighbourhoods
- The Longcross Garden Village
  - This is an opportunity to be involved with a sustainable community from the start, and to monitor the impact of high-quality infrastructure, and how it helps shape more sustainable travel behaviours. Workshop participants agreed to follow up this opportunity and explore collaboration opportunities to meet wider local policy goals.

WHAT ACTIVITIES, JOURNEYS AND IMPROVEMENTS WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOCUSSING ON?

- Focus on holistic solutions in partnership with the impacted community by looking at the place and its function
  - Place-making rather than one-off interventions
  - Designing leisure activities and visitor experiences in collaboration with the University e.g. Department of Tourism & Transport could increase local impact and positive benefits through active travel.
- Focus on door-to-door solutions by linking public transport with local services for active travel
  - Development of "active travel" hubs around public transport points by adopting a tripchaining based multi-modal approach.
- Focus on low traffic neighbourhoods as a low-cost intervention to offer short-term visible impact which will in turn generate more interest and support by local communities.

CONCLUSION

The results of the Active Travel survey are largely in line with the views of key stakeholders and represent what they have been experiencing in their work across Surrey.

The network of key stakeholders that came together for this project has the expertise, capacity, and access to local groups to help move the Active Travel agenda forwards.

The synergies withing the group can be used to create new Active Travel projects and activities.

PROJECT TEAM

University of Surrey: Birgitta Gatersleben, Cat Reeby, Nikolas Thomopoulos, Judith Geusen, Seb Collinson, Ed Nelson
Surrey Climate Commission: Chris Hyde & Richard Essex

REFERENCES

Prochaska, J.O., DiClemente, C.C., 1984. The Transtheoretical Approach: Crossing Traditional Boundaries of Change. Dow Jones/Irwin, Homewood IL.

Thomopoulos, N., Grant-Muller, S. (2013) Incorporating equity as part of the wider impacts in transport infrastructure assessment: An application of the SUMINI approach, Transportation, 40(2), pp.315-345. DOI: 10.1007/s11116-012-9418-5

Saud, V., Thomopoulos, N. (2021) Towards inclusive transport landscapes: Revisualising a Bicycle Sharing Scheme in Santiago Metropolitan Region, Journal of Transport Geography, 92, 103004. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2021.103004

APPENDIX I

Presentation Initial Results

2. Survey Sample

Fig. 1: Gender

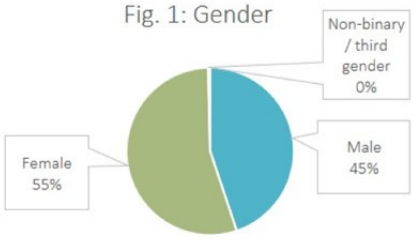


Fig. 2: Monthly income

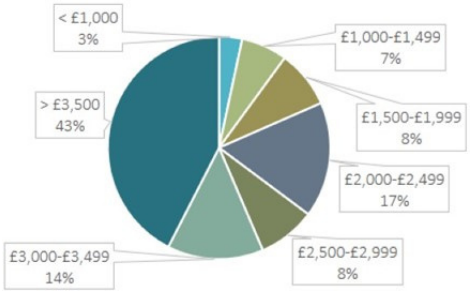


Fig. 3: Age

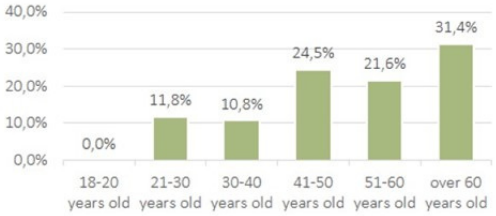


Fig. 4: Borough/District

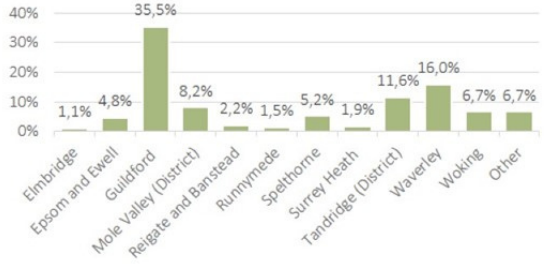
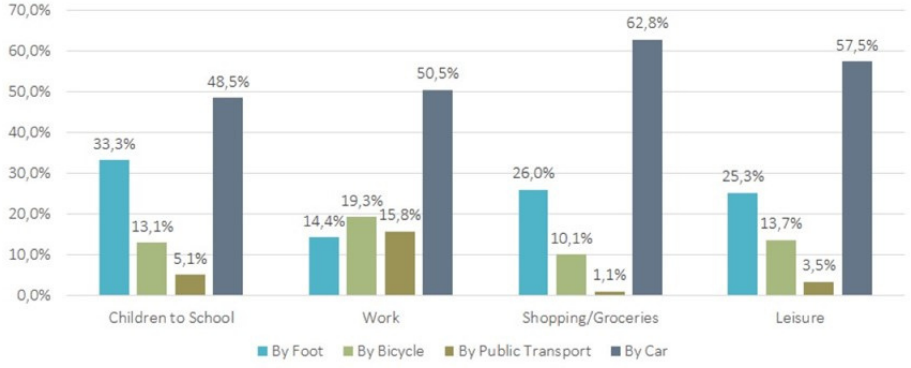


Figure 1: 263 responses, 9 prefer not to say; **Figure 2:** 179 responses, 73 prefer not to disclose; **Figure 3:** 102 responses (age group missing in 2/3 of data); **Figure 4:** 268 responses

3. Transport mode: Status quo

Which mode of transportation do you use for these most of the time? Please consider an average "normal" week, outside (e.g., before) the Covid-19 lockdowns.



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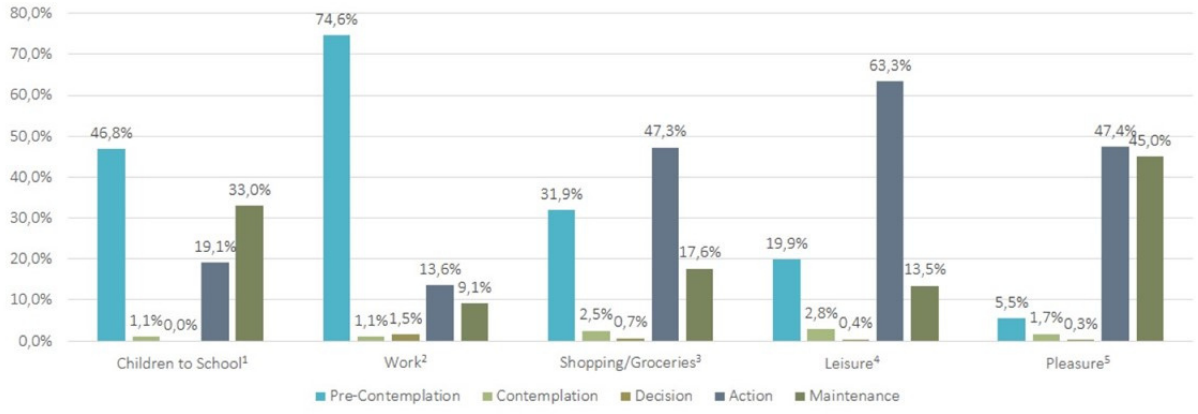
Presentation Initial Results

4. Stages of Change

SoC	*Survey response*
Pre-Contemplation	*"I have not done this and have never thought of doing this" & "This is not feasible for me (please explain why)"*
Contemplation	*"This is something I might be willing to try"*
Decision	*"I have thought seriously about doing this"*
Action	*"I sometimes do this"*
Maintenance	*"I always do this"*

4.1 Stages of Change: Walking

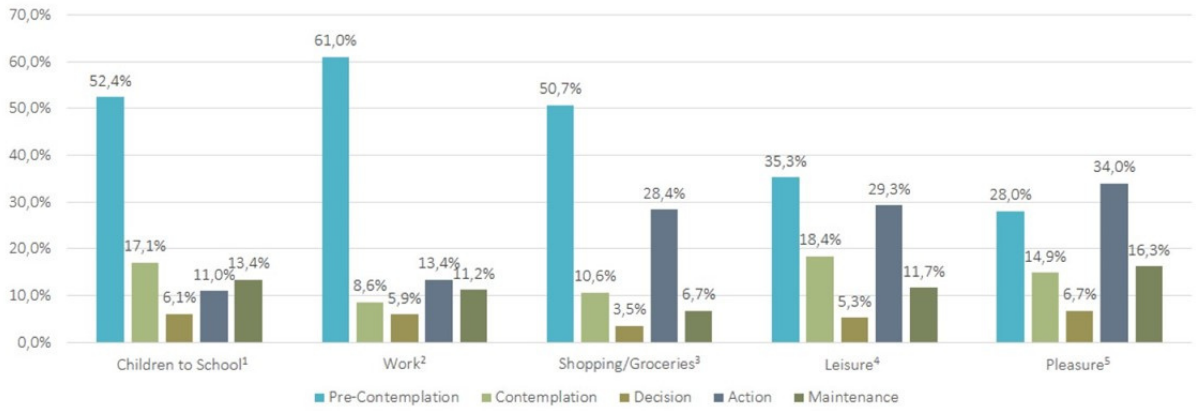


¹based on 94 responses (31,9%); 56,6% "N/A - I do not have school aged children"; Pre-contemplation = 89% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 49% „too far/takes too long")
²based on 264 responses (89,5%); Pre-contemplation = 96% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 56% „too far/takes too long"; 17% „retired/don't work")
³based on 279 responses (94,6%); Pre-contemplation = 100% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 34% „too far/no shops nearby", 31% „shopping too heavy/too much to carry")
⁴based on 281 responses (95,3%); Pre-contemplation = 100% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 52% „too far/takes too long", 16% safety or maintenance issues)
⁵based on 289 responses (98,0%); Pre-contemplation = 100% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 25% medical /health issues, 19% safety or maintenance issues)

APPENDIX I

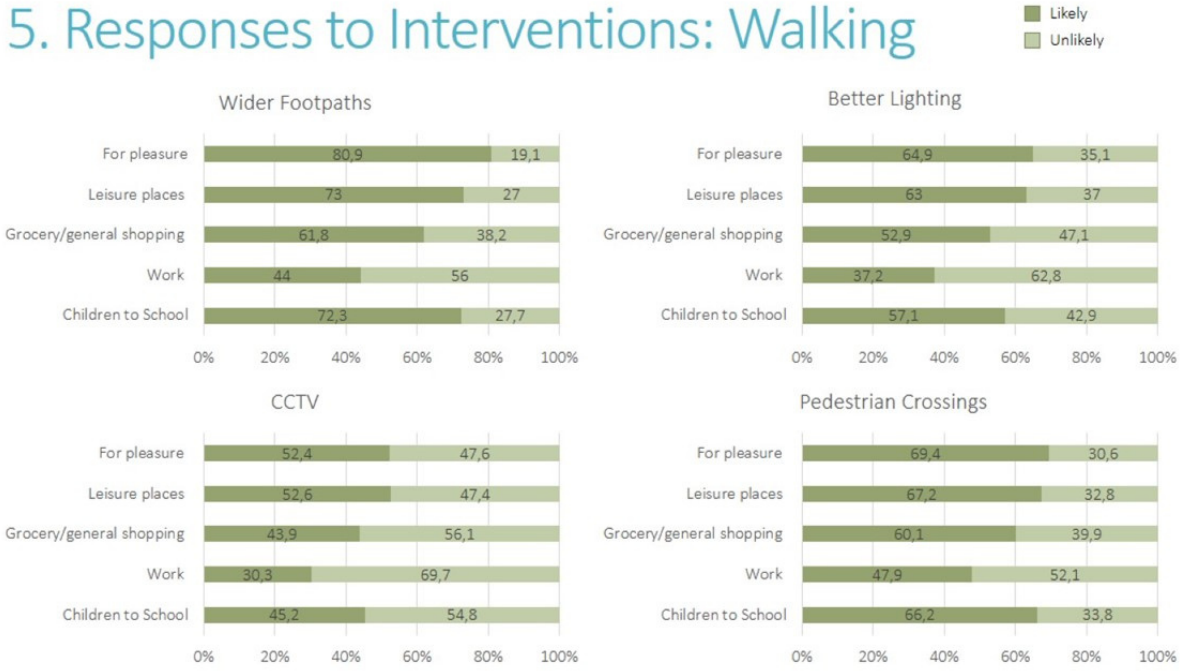
Presentation Initial Results

4.2 Stages of Change: Cycling



¹based on 82 responses (27,8%); 63,7% "N/A - I do not have school aged children"; Pre-contemplation = 63% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 37% „too dangerous", 19% „too far")
²based on 269 responses (91,2%); Pre-contemplation = 87% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 29% „too far", 23% „retired/don't work", 13% „too dangerous")
³based on 282 responses (95,6%); Pre-contemplation = 71% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 38% „shopping too heavy/too difficult to handle on bike", 13% „too dangerous")
⁴based on 283 responses (95,9%); Pre-contemplation = 62% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 21% „too dangerous", 16% „don't own a bike", 15% „too far")
⁵based on 282 responses (95,6%); Pre-contemplation = 66% „Not feasible for me" (e.g. 35% „too dangerous", 23% „don't own a bike", 15% medical/health issues)

5. Responses to Interventions: Walking



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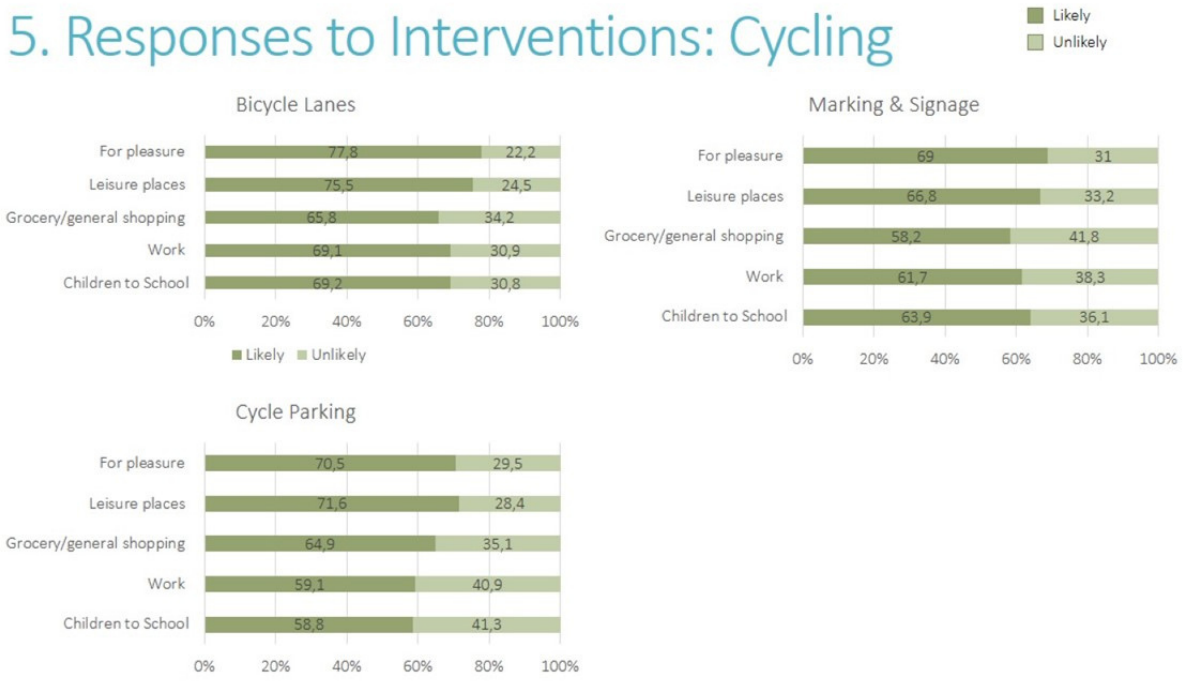
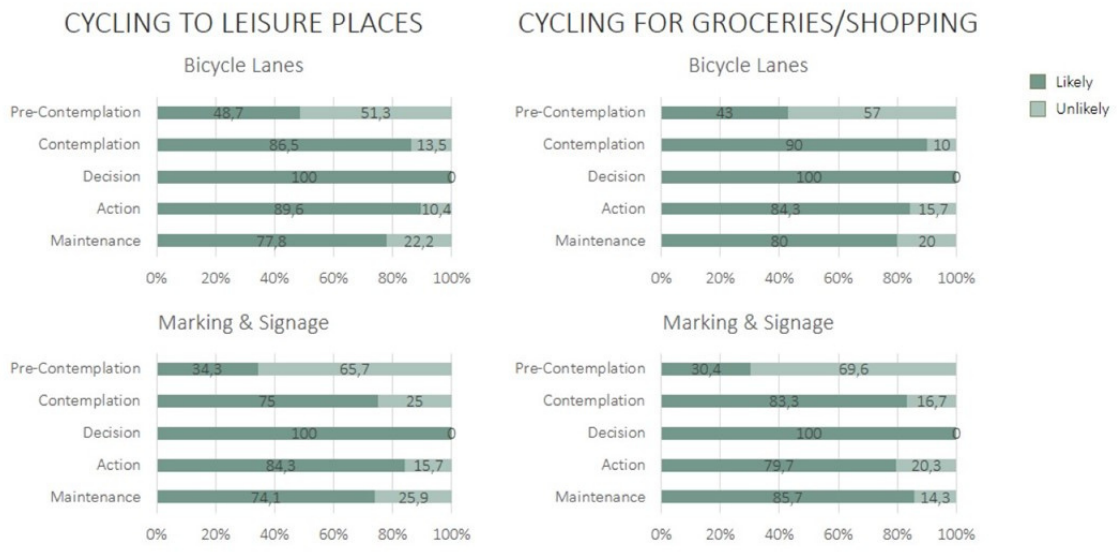
Presentation Initial Results

5. Responses to Interventions: Cycling



6. Stages of Change & Responses to Interventions



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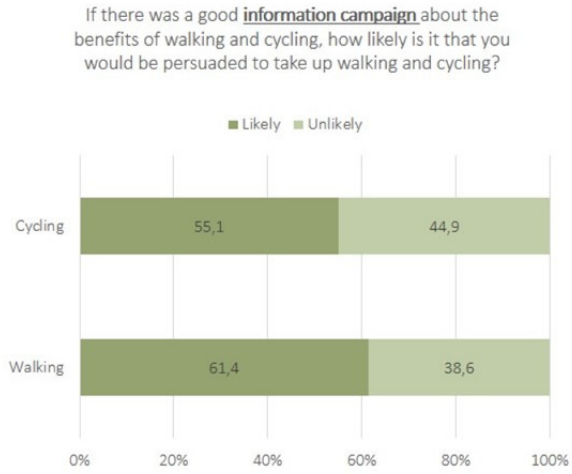
Presentation Initial Results

7. Maps & Information Campaigns



8. Qualitative Analysis

	Open ended question
1.	What makes walking in your area (within a 10 minute walk from your house) **easy/pleasant**?
2.	What makes walking in your area **difficult/unpleasant**?
3.	What makes cycling in your area (10 minute cycle from your house) **possible/pleasant**?
4.	What makes cycling in your area (10 minute cycle from your house) **difficult/unpleasant**?

- The following word clouds are based on all words used in each open ended question. The bigger the word, the more often it was used by participants.

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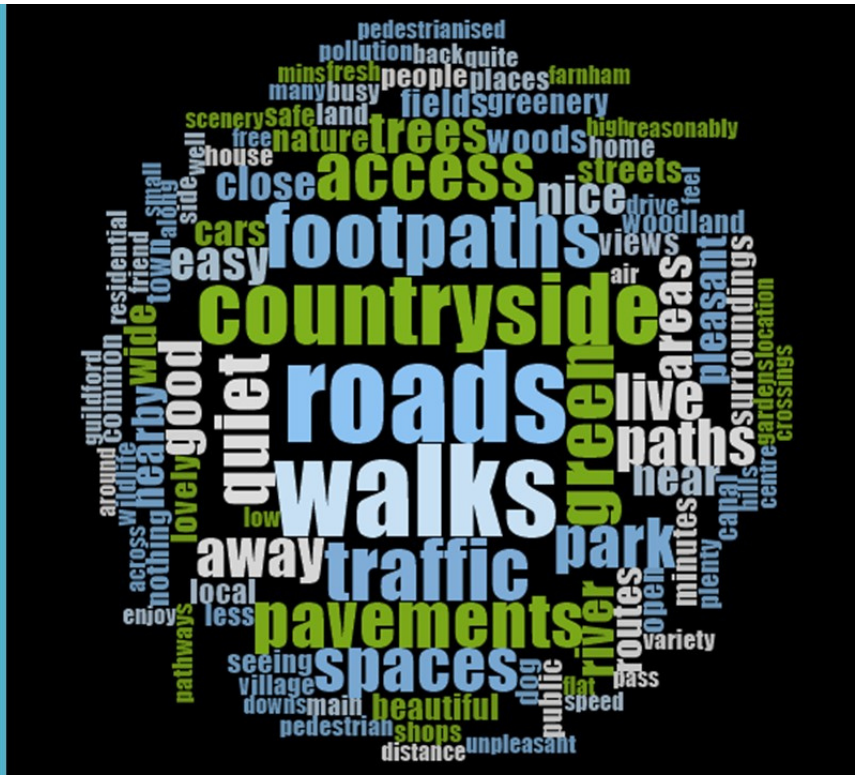
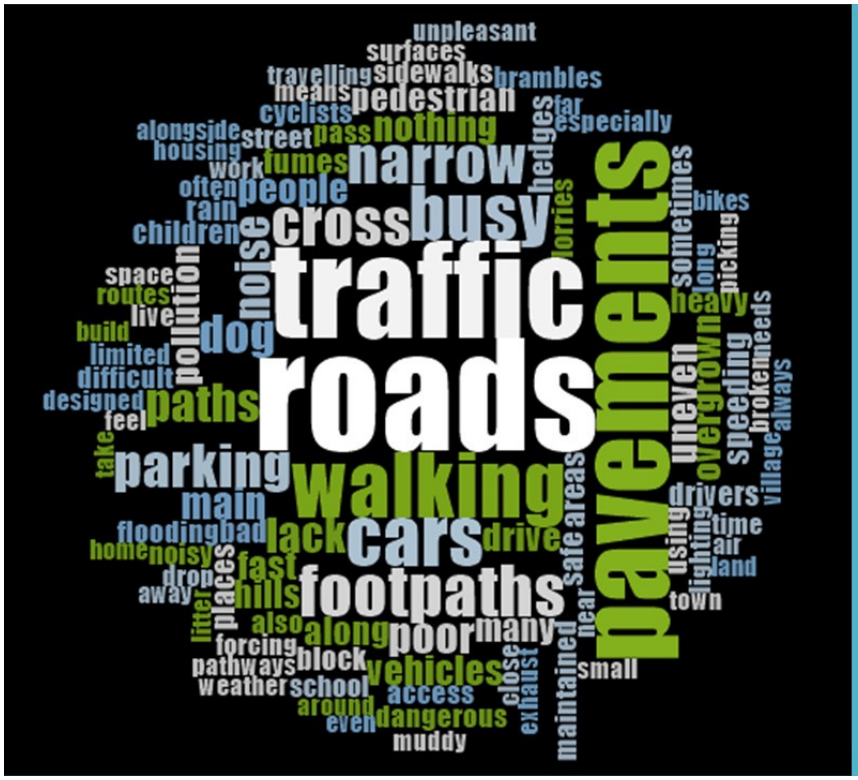
Presentation Initial Results

What makes walking in your area (10 minute walk from your house) possible/ pleasant?

1. Experiencing nature and landscapes
2. Good infrastructure and less traffic





What makes walking in your area (10 minute walk from your house) difficult/ unpleasant?

1. Too much traffic
2. Bad or non-existent infrastructure

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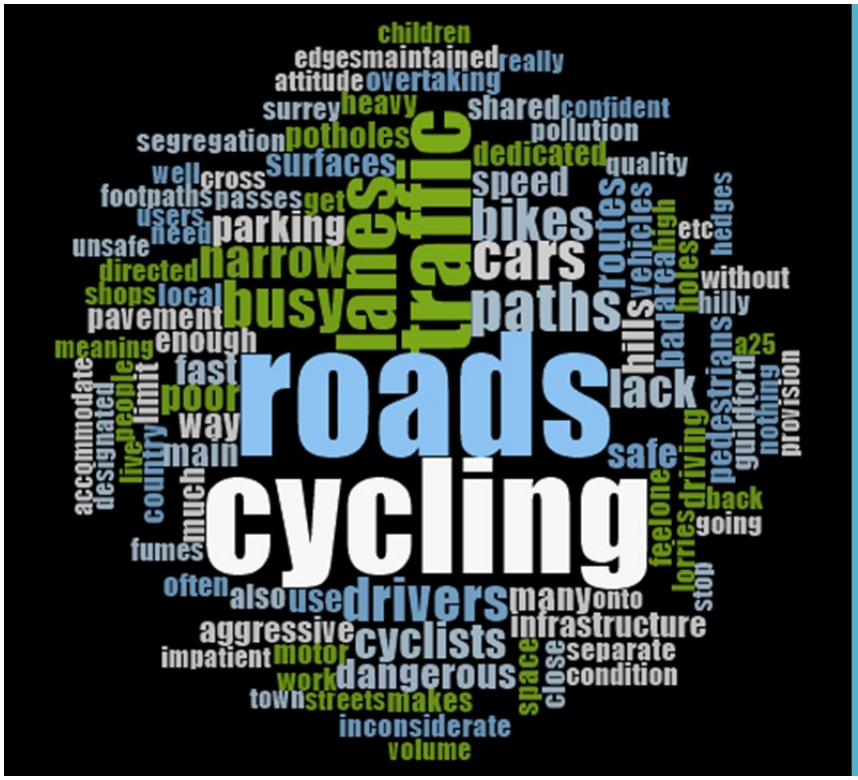
Presentation Initial Results

What makes cycling in your area (10 minute cycle from your house) possible/ pleasant?

1. Good infrastructure
2. Pleasant surroundings (e.g. Park, countryside)



What makes cycling in your area (10 minute cycle from your house) difficult/ unpleasant?

1. Too much traffic
2. Missing infrastructure

APPENDIX II

Presentation Stakeholderworkshop

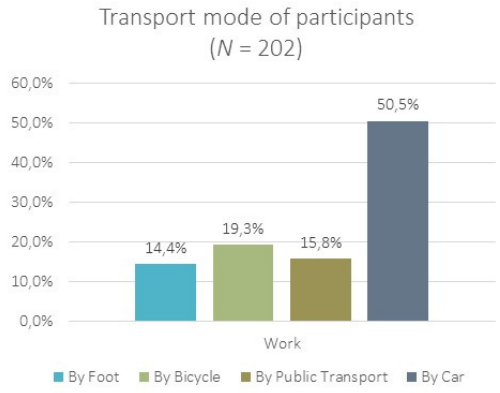
Overview

Aims

- What mode of transport do people use?
- What stage of change are people in?
- How do they respond to different interventions?

1. Walking to work
2. Walking to leisure places
3. Cycling to work
4. Cycling to leisure places

Why do people not *walk* to work?



1. Walking to work

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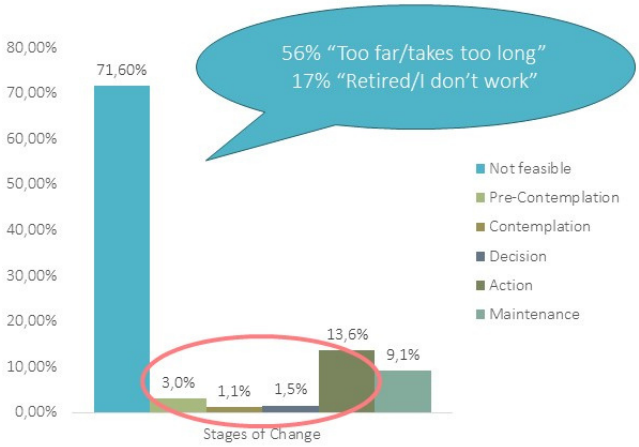
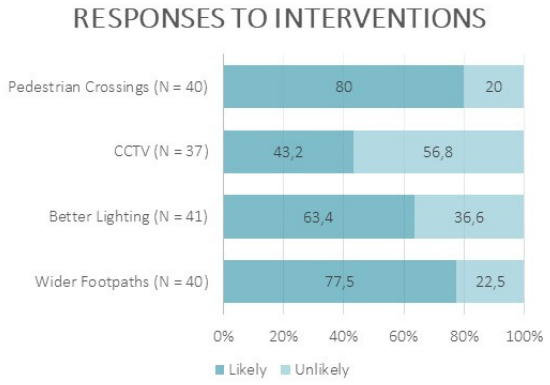
Presentation Stakeholderworkshop

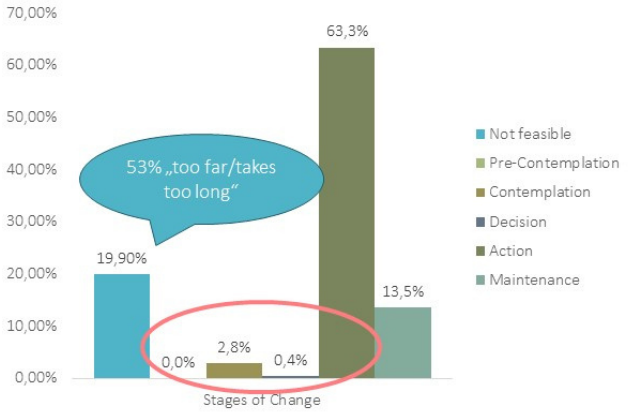
Why do people not *walk* to work?

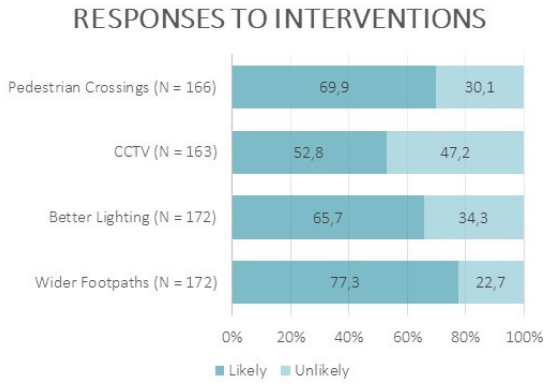




1. Walking to work

Why do people not *walk* to leisure places?





2. Walking to leisure places

APPENDIX II

Presentation Stakeholderworkshop

Conclusion: Walking

Walking to work

- 70% of people say it is not feasible
  - Mostly because it is too far

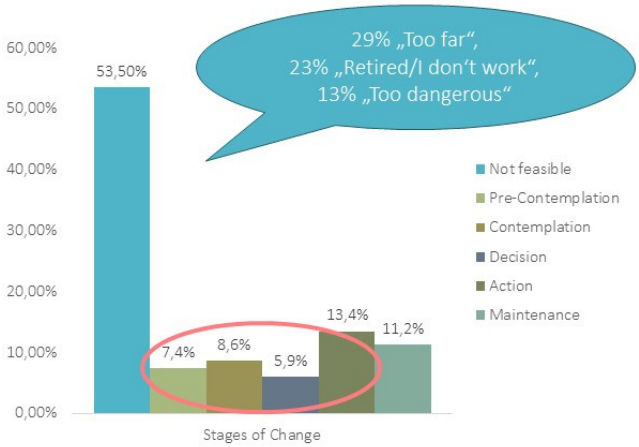
Walking to leisure places

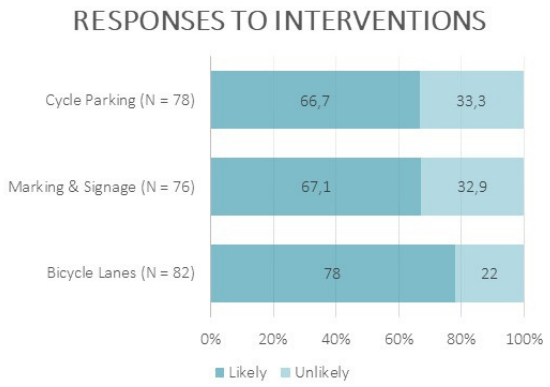
- Only 20% of people say it is not feasible
  - Mostly because it is too far

People who can walk will most likely be persuaded by

- Better infrastructure (wider footpaths, pedestrian crossings)
- Nearby nature and pleasant landscapes

Why do people not *cycle* to work?

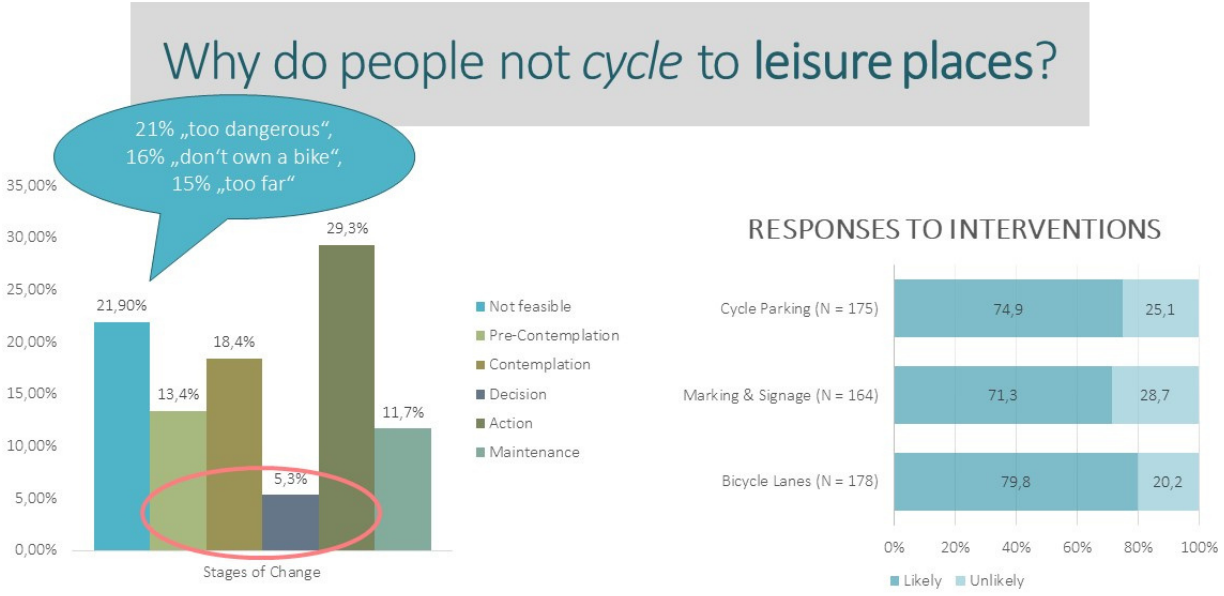




3. Cycling to work

APPENDIX II

Presentation Stakeholderworkshop



4. Cycling to leisure places

Conclusion: Cycling

Cycling to work

- 50% of people say it is not feasible
  - *Because it is too far*
  - *Because it is too dangerous*

Cycling to leisure places

- Only 20% of people say it is not feasible
  - *Because it is too dangerous*
  - *Because they don’t own a bike*

People who can cycle will most likely be persuaded by

- Better infrastructure (e.g., more bicycle lanes)
- Less traffic

APPENDIX II

Presentation Stakeholderworkshop

For both walking and cycling a lot of people say that it is not feasible for them

- No or little potential for behaviour change

Biggest potential for behaviour change

- People who are in middle stages of change
- Leisure destinations (or generally nearby places)

Key things to change

- Infrastructure and safety

Conclusion