

# Active Neighbourhoods in Greater Manchester

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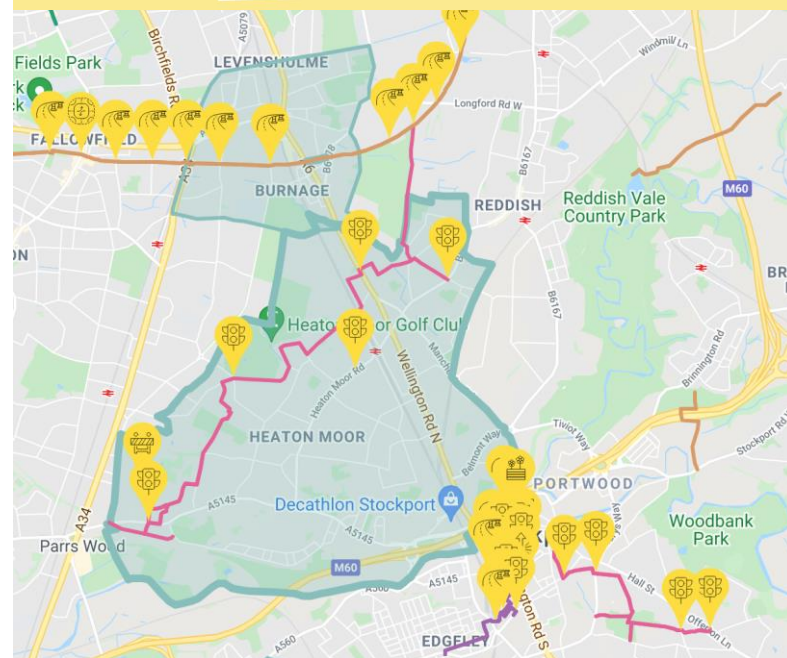


# The Research

- Partnership with TfGM as part of Bee Network
- Active Neighbourhoods / Low Traffic Neighbourhoods part of the strategy
- Opportunity for in-depth qualitative research, not an 'evaluation'
- Explore the nuances behind claims in (social) media
- Covid-19 – methodological challenges and opportunities



**Making Greater Manchester a great place to walk and cycle**





# Media context

*Local traffic changes 'more divisive than Brexit'*

## Motorists take to the streets in battle against Low-Traffic Neighbourhoods

**London goes to WAR with Sadiq's 'illegal' road schemes: Residents in five boroughs take fight to High Court over cycle-friendly 'Low Traffic Neighbourhoods' setup in lockdown**

***The new road rage: bitter rows break out over UK's low-traffic neighbourhoods***

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods: Anger, hate and the politics of the planter

LOW-TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOODS

**Low-traffic neighbourhoods 'squeeze life from historic town centres'**

Tensions rising across the country as drivers complain of a war on the motor vehicle

A map of the Greater Manchester region in England, showing major roads and towns. Three specific areas are highlighted with purple shading: a small area near Bury, a larger area near Stockport, and an area near Cheadle. A white text box is overlaid on the right side of the map.

## Case study ANs

1. Trinity & Islington, Salford
2. Levenshulme, Manchester
3. Garside Hey Road, Bury
4. Cheadle Heath, Stockport

# Methods

- Experienced-based, everyday life understandings
- Walkalongs
- Reference groups
  - Public Health
  - Older people
  - Disability organisations
- Key informant interviews
- Other methods – social media scraping



# Walk along participants

Active Neighbourhood	No.
Trinity & Islington	6
Levenshulme	9
Garside Hey Road	4
Cheadle Heath	4





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Supportive	Unsupportive	Ambivalent
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Position	Primary mode of transport for local journeys		
	Walking	Walking & Cycling	Driving
Supportive	0	10	1
Unsupportive	5	1	1
Ambivalent	4	0	0





# Reflections on participation

- General mixture of positions within ANs
- Exception - Cheadle Heath
- Participation doesn't reflect the polarised SoMe
  - A position created and antagonised through SoMe
  - A position that doesn't feel strongly enough to get actively involved (implications in terms of real participation in consultation & voting etc)
- Positions indicate that people who cycle can more easily see potential of ANs



# Perception of ANs as cycling interventions

“Originally, it seemed like it was more geared towards cycling, and the whole thing - the leaflet that came through seemed like it was all geared towards that, so I didn't get involved.”

“I think the reason why they want to close Mount Street, it's because the crossing Blackfriars Road is dangerous to bikes”

“You've got the cycling lobbyists who want easy access... but no one's actually thinking about [pedestrians] who have got no voice.”

“I think we assumed it was all to do with cycling at first. That was the only Twitter group we found talking about it.”



# The 'cycle lobby'

- Concept strongly propagated on SoMe
- Reality is there are established cycling networks
- Residents finding out information from 'cyclists'

“I feel because there's such a strong community of cyclists, it's easier for that message to get out among cyclists... but then the average residents, we're not able to put our opinion across.”

“It seems to me there is a big cycle lobby and they are very vociferous, and all credit to them. Maybe that's the trouble with pedestrians, we don't speak up often enough.”



# What do people want for walking?

- Reducing vehicle numbers is good but
- Pedestrians still need the pavements & improved walking conditions on filtered roads
- Particularly mobility impaired & visually impaired pedestrians
- Kerb used for navigation, slow mobility
- Also the preference of some parents with children and particularly younger children
- Pavement parking, lack of kerb drops, uneven surfaces

“The pavements are not maintained – I have to walk looking at the floor”

“I am so sick of walking in my area looking at the pavements”

“I don’t drive and it’s impossible for me to walk to the shops because of the state of the pavements”

“What I do find is there’s not enough sloped kerbs. You get them for someone’s drive but if you’ve got a long street area, there’s no slope. Not just for wheelchairs, people with prams, people using walking sticks. They shouldn’t just be on corners. It’s harder to cross the road on a corner”

“I have to take the buggy on to the middle of the road. Sometimes you do get the children, because they have learned, 'Stay with me, follow me on to the road,' and it just feels like you'd have a heart attack.”



# More in common?

- Improved pedestrian conditions are also wanted by people who cycle
- Many more commonalities in perceptions of Active Neighbourhoods
  - Boundary roads and social inequalities
  - ANs as an incomplete solution
  - Communication and Engagement
  - Monitoring and Evaluation
- Too much to cover in the this presentation
- Final report – September 2021



**Thanks for listening**  
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