The value of new transport in deprived areas

Who benefits, how and why?

Karen Lucas, Sophie Tyler and Georgina Christodoulou

An assessment of the value of new transport services to people living in deprived neighbourhoods in England.

Regeneration strategies for deprived areas are currently under review. To date there has been little if any direct evaluation of the contribution of transport services to local regeneration. This study evaluates the benefits – both monetary and quality of life – of transport services to the people who use them and to the local practitioners responsible for the wider regeneration of these neighbourhoods.

It covers:

- the policy context;

- characteristics of the four case study areas (Braunstone, Leicester; Camborne, Pool, and Redruth, Cornwall; Wythenshawe, Manchester and Walsall, West Midlands);

- key findings from interviews with local professionals;

- information on use of the services and their value to local people;

- an evaluation of the social benefits of the services;

- key messages for local and central government.

JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION

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Foreword

It should be noted that our fieldwork studies took place between September 2006 and March 2007, and our findings relate to this period of project operation only. We have made every effort to update our information for the publication of this report, but we recognise that this is an evolving policy arena and some details may have changed in the period following our research.

The research has required the frank and honest discussion of the experiences and perceptions of local policy-makers and practitioners responsible for developing and delivering the four transport projects on which we focused for this study. The opinions that they expressed and that we quoted in this report are those of the individuals we interviewed and do not necessarily represent the official position of the organisations in which they work.

By combining these interviews with those of local people using the new transport projects that have been delivered in their neighbourhoods, we have tried to ensure that as broad a range of views and opinions as possible have been taken into account, but we do not claim these are necessarily representative of the views of the wider population.

Acknowledgements

List of abbreviations

BCA	Braunstone Community Association
CBA	Cost benefit analysis
Centro	West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority
CO_2	Carbon dioxide
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DfT	Department for Transport
DRT	Demand-responsive transport
GMPTE	Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive
HM	Her Majesty's
IMD	Indices of Multiple Deprivation
NAO	National Audit Office
NDC	New Deal for Communities
NHS	National Health Service
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
ONS	Office of National Statistics
pteg	Passenger Transport Executive Group
RBC	Rural Bus Challenge
SEU	Social Exclusion Unit
UBC	Urban Bus Challenge
UK	United Kingdom

Executive summary

This study was designed to assess what happened in four deprived areas of the UK when new public transport initiatives were introduced: who has benefited, how and why? It is an attempt to raise awareness of the importance of public transport services to social inclusion and the reinvigoration of the local economy in deprived areas. It is hoped that this will encourage national and local policy-makers to reassess their positions concerning the subsidisation of public transport operation and use.

The impact of transport poverty on the lives of people who are already experiencing or who are at risk of social exclusion is now well documented in the UK policy literature. In 2003, the UK Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) reported that transport is 'a significant contributing factor' in the exclusion of many low-income groups and communities (SEU, 2003). It acts as a barrier to the take-up of employment, is also linked with low participation in post-16 education and college dropouts, and can lead to failed health appointments and associated delays in medical intervention. The problem is particularly acute in rural areas but is also prevalent in the urban periphery on low-income estates.

Following this report, the Government introduced policies for all local authorities to undertake *accessibility planning* (Department for Transport, 2004b). This means that each authority is now obliged to assess whether people living in their area, particularly households on low incomes and people without cars, are able to reach key services and activities safely, reliably, affordably and with relative ease by public transport. Each authority must then produce an action plan to identify how they and their partner organisations will improve any gaps in accessibility, as part of their 2006–11 Local Transport Plans.

Nevertheless, there are still significant shortfalls in the delivery of public transport services to support social inclusion in deprived areas. Part of the problem is that, although numerous local transport projects have been initiated in deprived and isolated communities over the years, they have rarely been robustly evaluated. Without the 'hard' evidence of the economic and social benefits of public transport services in deprived areas that such evaluation can provide, local bodies with the power to fund such schemes are reluctant to allocate their scarce resources to them.

This knowledge deficit is increasingly important in light of cessation of the Government's Urban and Rural Bus Challenge Fund and ever-reducing central and local government subsidies to support the public transport network. In addition,

much of the New Deal for Communities and Neighbourhood Renewal Funding money, which has previously been used to support flexible and community transport initiatives in deprived areas will be coming to an end by 2010. The planned introduction of a new system of environmental taxes and charges for urban road users is also likely to impact most negatively on low-income, car-reliant households.

Key findings

Views of local professional stakeholders

The officers we interviewed in the four case study areas were unanimous about the value of new transport projects to both the social inclusion of individuals and the vibrancy of the local area. One officer encapsulated this sentiment as follows:

> If we end up with a diminished bus service we'll have more excluded people, there's just little doubt about it. (Social Inclusion Team representative, Braunstone)

The views of service users

Service users were also unanimous in their support of all four projects.

- A major benefit of all the services has been that people can simply get out and about more. This allows them more choices and opportunities for social networking (which is widely recognised as helping to build social capital). In addition, people felt that the projects were helping to improve their confidence and expand their travel horizons.

- Both of the fixed-route services, the Braunstone Bus in Leicester and the Trevithick Link in Cornwall, are enormously popular as shopper buses, with 56 per cent and 49 per cent of survey respondents respectively stating this is their primary reason for using the services.

- Of the three bus services, the Braunstone Bus in Leicester demonstrated the greatest number of people primarily using it for accessing health care. This is largely because it is the only bus serving the local Glenfields Hospital. In Wythenshawe, Manchester, people said that the local hospital would also be particularly difficult to access without the Local Link service.

- Although not necessarily the most significant use of these services, it was clear from both the surveys we carried out and our interviews with service users that the improved access to work that these services provide was a primary benefit to people who were using them for this purpose. This was particularly evident in the case of the Walsall WorkWise initiative and the Trevithick Link bus service.

Calculating the overall social benefits of these new transport services

The study has calculated the benefit of each trip to the individual user based on the Department for Transport's own WebTag guidance. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to produce a single monetary value of the social benefit of our case study projects. This is because we were unable to identify an approved method for calculating the cash benefit to the Government of a job take-up, health visit or shopping trip in the time frame for this study. Our calculations are based on either the fare saving to individuals where they are existing public transport users and would have had to pay an additional (bus or taxi) fare to get to the same destination or the value of their journey time saving if they previously had to walk.

However, we recognise that there are a number of problems with simply taking these aggregate values as a proxy for the overall social benefit of the new transport service, particularly where they aim to target wider social inclusion. This is largely because they do not capture any additional value to society of the new trip opportunities that are now available as a result of the improved accessibility of the areas they serve. If, for example, these have resulted in the uptake of a job, training or education opportunity, have prevented a missed health appointment or helped to revitalise the local economy through additional shopping trips (and, thus, spending activity), then one could argue a greater societal value than the benefit to the individual user alone.

For these reasons, we have separately identified where such increases in activity have occurred as a result (or partly as a result) of these new services. However, it is outside the scope of this study to determine the monetary value of such additional social benefits, which we understand is the subject of a separate ongoing enquiry by the Department for Transport.

Cost savings to individuals

As each service is operating in different local conditions and offering varying services, the study aimed to demonstrate the value of services to their users in each

area rather than compare the value of services against each other. We calculated that, in one year of operation, each of the four projects we studied is bringing huge cost savings to the individuals who use them. Based on the aggregate value of travel cost and journey savings per annum (see Appendix 2 for a breakdown of the calculations for reaching these totals), this is as follows.

- The Braunstone Bus is worth an estimated £661,000 p.a.

- The Trevithick Link is worth an estimated £80,000 p.a.

- Walsall WorkWise is worth an estimated £21,000 p.a.

- The Wythenshawe Local Link is worth an estimated £88,000 p.a.

Wider social benefits

These cost savings are significantly more than would have been anticipated from the fare reductions and journey time savings that would normally have arisen from the introduction of the service alone (see Balcombe *et al.*, 2004). This suggests that the new services have created the opportunity for people to undertake wholly new activities through improved accessibility. In the case of the Braunstone Bus, approximately 15 per cent of the overall growth in patronage is due to the improved accessibility to key destinations that has been created by the service. For the Trevithick Link, the figure is approximately 5 per cent and, for the Wythenshawe Local Link, a massive 40 per cent of the growth is as a result of the improved accessibility the service brings (this is largely because of the considerable journey time savings from replaced walking trips). It is important to note that much of this growth represents the previously suppressed trips that people were unable to take because of the lack of a suitable service, as evidenced by our surveys.

Table 1 demonstrates the new activities that have resulted from this improved accessibility.

Table 1 Gross number of trips undertaken in one week to wholly new activities resulting from each service based on our survey samples

	Employment	Health	Shopping and leisure
Braunstone Bus	72	430	420
Trevithick Link	100	25	37
Wythenshawe Local Link	2	82	158

Because the Walsall WorkWise initiative does not offer an actual transport service, it is not possible to calculate its social benefit in the same way. However, our study was able to identify that, from the 732 referrals it had supported, 53 per cent of surveyed clients found a new job at a current subsidy per client of £123.

Our conclusions and recommendations

On the basis of the findings from our study, we conclude that public transport for services are a vital component in the social inclusion of individuals and for maintaining the vitality and vibrancy of low-income neighbourhoods. Smaller initiatives offering individuals travel training and advice and help with their travel costs are also important for encouraging socially excluded people to use public transport more. Although our case studies cannot claim to be representative of all new transport initiatives in deprived areas, they serve to demonstrate the considerable value that such projects can have for both the individuals who use them and society as a whole.

Our interviews with service users and local practitioners also demonstrate the enormous disbenefits that would result from the withdrawal of these services. It has not been possible within the scope of this study to consider what happens to people in the many deprived areas where such specially provided services are non-existent or rare, but this is the subject of an ongoing enquiry by the Passenger Transport Executive Group (*pteg*). On the basis of existing evidence, however, it is reasonable to assume that this is likely to be a significant factor in the continuing social exclusion of the people living in these areas.

We therefore recommend that, if the Government is serious about its commitment to reducing social exclusion through improved accessibility in deprived neighbourhoods, it needs to do more to support socially necessary bus services across the UK. We suggest the following.

- A comprehensive national review of both the commercial bus network and publicly subsidised buses, in order to clearly identify where there are shortfalls in existing services and how these might be addressed. As a result, the next HM Treasury Spending Review could consider dedicated resources in this area.

- The Government should also reconsider the balance within the national framework for the provision of concessionary fares and school transport alongside new funding streams for supported public transport services in deprived areas and the fare subsidy of essential trips for low-income individuals and households.

At the local level of delivery, more needs to be done to systematically evaluate and communicate the social benefit of new transport projects and articulate these in terms of wider social policy objectives. This would involve the following:

- better data collection with regards to patronage and use of these services, supported by annual user surveys to determine the social characteristics of users, their journey purposes and the social benefits they are deriving from their service use;

- developing benchmarks from these evaluations to determine refined local criteria for supporting socially necessary services and upgrading local services on this basis;

- better integration of the provision of social necessary bus services with the Local Transport Plan, and in particular, Bus Strategies and Accessibility Plans;

- improved liaison with other local agencies and partnerships that could potentially jointly fund new transport services in deprived areas, such as Jobcentre Plus, NHS hospital and primary care trusts, local education authorities and Learning and Skills Councils, as well as local regeneration and economic development partnerships.

1 Introduction

Over the past ten years, there has been growing policy awareness in the UK of the links between transport and social exclusion. This is generally seen in the context of increasing levels of car dependence among the general population, often at the expense of those who do not have access to a car and must rely on lifts from friends and family or less reliable and usually much slower modes of transport to get from A to B.

The UK National Travel Survey demonstrated that, in 2005, 64 per cent of all trips in the UK were made by car and that travel by car accounted for 61 per cent of all time spent travelling. However, more than a quarter of households in the UK still do not have regular access to a car. Non-car-owning households are overwhelmingly concentrated in the lowest-income quintile of the population, with less than half (47 per cent) owning cars, although car ownership among this sector of the population is increasing more rapidly year on year than for the other income sectors (Department for Transport, 2006). This trend of increasing car ownership even among the lowest-income groups can be taken as an indication of the basic social and economic *need* to own and use cars in highly mobile and affluent societies, such as the UK.

The 2005 National Travel Survey identified that people in the highest-income quintile made 30 per cent more trips overall and travelled three times as far as those in the lowest-income quintile. The number of trips made and distances travelled were strongly correlated with car availability; adults in households with two or more cars travelled over three times as far as adults in households without a car, and nearly one-and-a-half times as far as adults in households with only one car (Department for Transport, 2006). On the whole, households using modes other than the car also generally took twice as long to travel the same distances as those with a car.

Increased car reliance has gone hand in hand with declining public transport services. Outside of London, the last decade has witnessed lower bus frequencies and reliability levels in many parts of the UK (White, 2008) and this has had a particularly pronounced impact on low-income households (SEU, 2003). Over 80 per cent of bus services in England (outside London) are deregulated and most of those that the private operators consider are not commercially viable have been cut in the interests of profit (Department for Transport, 2004a). Fare levels have also been increasing at a greater rate than motoring costs (Lucas *et al.*, 2001).

Cutbacks in public transport services have been compounded by many entry-level jobs and key developments, such as hospitals, colleges and shopping and leisure centres being relocated to areas that are often not well served by public transport. In addition, many low-paid jobs involve working hours that make access difficult by any means other than the car (SEU, 2003). This means that a significant proportion of people living on low incomes in the UK are finding it increasingly necessary to own and drive cars just to maintain a basic lifestyle. Those who do not have access to cars and must therefore rely on public transport might often be excluded from participating fully in the everyday activities that the majority take for granted because of the absence or inadequacy of such services in many deprived areas.

2 The policy context

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has previously raised the increasingly important issue of transport poverty in an earlier study by the authors (Lucas *et al.*, 2001). Up until this point, there had been very little research into the links between transport and social exclusion. The main finding of this earlier study was that transport policies and programmes in the UK were failing to meet the basic accessibility needs of a significant proportion of already disadvantaged people and communities. This was acting as a barrier to their social inclusion. In addition, the study highlighted the fact that transport had not yet been addressed by the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU), despite the fact that a 1998 SEU report had identified poor transport as a key problem for some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in Britain (SEU, 2000).

Partly in response to this criticism and similar findings emerging from other studies (e.g. Church and Frost, 1999; TraC, 2000; Gaffron *et al.*, 2001), in 2002, the then Prime Minister Tony Blair directed the SEU to undertake a study to make evident the links between transport and social exclusion, and to integrate transport and social inclusion policy across Government.

The Social Exclusion Unit study

The 2003 Social Exclusion Unit's final report *Making the Connections: Transport and Social Exclusion* (Social Exclusion Unit, 2003) concluded that transport was indeed a significant contributing factor in the exclusion of many low-income groups and communities. The study identified lack of transport as a significant barrier to the take-up of employment for many jobseekers and also linked it with low participation in post-16 education and college dropouts. It found that getting to hospital is particularly difficult for people who have to rely on public transport, leading to failed health appointments and associated delays in medical intervention. The problem is particularly acute in rural areas but is also prevalent in the urban periphery on low-income estates. The study also found that the most significant difference in people's ability to participate was based on car availability within households, i.e. non car drivers in low-income households found it more difficult to access key services than their car-owning counterparts across all areas of the UK.

The SEU study set in motion a new cross-departmental policy framework called *accessibility planning*, which it recommended should become central to the transport planning process over the next five years.

Government guidance on accessibility planning

Subsequently, the Government has issued guidance on *accessibility planning* to all local authorities (Department for Transport, 2004b). Local transport planners lead this process as part of the development and delivery of their 2006–11 Local Transport Plans. They should work in close liaison with land use planners and the other key service providers and agencies that can have an influence on people's accessibility – for example, NHS primary care and hospital trusts, local education authorities, Learning and Skills Councils, social services, the business sector and key employers. They are also required to validate their action plans with the local communities and key sectors of the population who are currently experiencing transport poverty in their areas.

The key aims for *accessibility planning* are to ensure that local decision-makers have improved information on the areas where accessibility is poorest and the barriers to accessibility from the perspective of the people who are living there. It is also designed to create a more transparent, integrated and equitable process for transport and land use decisions. Transport planners are being encouraged to 'think out of the box' and work more collaboratively with their partner agencies, so that a wider range of solutions to accessibility problems can be identified and greater value for money achieved through their combined and synchronised efforts.

The guidance states that the process of accessibility planning should entail:

- assessments of local need against a set of predefined national indicators to identify and analyse accessibility to the key services;

- option appraisal and identification of existing and potential financial and other resources across the partnership agencies (e.g. land, staff time, information, etc.) that may be available to address the problems that are identified;

- a joint action plan that sets out how transport and land-use planners, those involved in the location and delivery of other local services, and other relevant local bodies will improve the gaps in accessibility identified by the needs audit;

- implementation and monitoring to ensure that delivery is consistent with objectives and that future plans can build on success and learn from failure.

It should be noted, however, that, unlike many previous SEU programmes, *accessibility planning* did not come with its own dedicated funding stream. In addition, both the Urban and Rural Bus Challenge Fund, which had previously

supported the introduction of new transport projects in deprived and rural communities, have since been terminated. Reduced financial support in real terms for buses outside of London (White, 2008) has also meant less funding for new social transport projects from central government. Against this funding background, the guidance anticipates that the necessary resources for addressing accessibility deficits can be secured with monetary savings from the reorganisation of existing services, other non-transport funding streams and other cross-departmental subsidies. However, much of the funding that might have been available for such projects from regeneration and renewal budgets in deprived areas is due to come to an end in 2010. At the time of writing, it is unclear whether the new local authority funding arrangements through Local Area Agreements will continue to support the improvement of public transport in deprived areas.

Since early 2007, the SEU has been replaced by the Social Exclusion Task Force and accessibility issues are no longer part of its current remit (Social Exclusion Task Force, 2007). The responsibility for ensuring that the transport and social inclusion agenda is delivered is now primarily the responsibility of the Accessibility and Equalities Unit within the Department for Transport. This raises questions about how prominent a focus there will be on social welfare and inclusion issues within the future transport delivery agenda.

From policy into practice

Despite this difficult funding situation, numerous transport initiatives with the explicit or implicit aim of facilitating social inclusion are already operating in many deprived areas. They have been funded through a variety of UK government and European Union grants in the recognition by practitioners that improved transport links can significantly contribute to their wider social objectives and the neighbourhood renewal process. However, there has been little, if any, systematic evaluation of the contribution of such initiatives to either the increased participation of individuals who use them or the wider renewal of the areas in which they serve.

Recent case study research carried out in the UK as part of an international study into the role of transport in moving people from welfare to work (Lucas and Tyler, 2006) suggests that some targeted transport initiatives have been successful in enabling people to access new employment opportunities. Anecdotally, they are also often facilitating other important activities, such as health visits, educational attendance and leisure and social activities.

An assessment of the performance of the Kickstart scheme (which replaced Urban and Rural Bus Challenge in 2003 but was terminated in 2005) and the Bus Route Development Grant scheme in Scotland was undertaken for the Department for Transport and the Scottish Government in 2006 (Bristow *et al*., 2007). This identified that many of the schemes that were funded under these programmes had also been successful in achieving patronage growth in the context of an overall declining market.

Nevertheless, many of the bus services and supporting information and advice projects initiated under these funding streams have since been discontinued or are currently under threat because of a lack of ongoing subsidy. The problem appears to be three-fold.

1. Current evaluations (both within and outside the transport sector) fail to capture the non-transport benefits and value of such schemes to wider social and public policy goals.

2. Thus the value of these services to both the end users and local practitioners promoting their social inclusion are not being articulated to key decision-makers within central government.

3. The impact of short-term approaches to funding in undermining the social inclusion goals of transport services do not appear to be acknowledged or addressed by policy-makers.

Capturing the social benefits of transport

The commonly applied method for calculating the benefits of a transport project is cost benefit analysis (CBA). This involves attributing an economic value to all the resources committed to a project and comparing these to the economic benefits that will accrue from the project over its lifetime. According to Root (2003), cost benefit analyses generally involve making a number of often quite flawed assumptions. For example, one key assumption is that it is possible to define the key impacts over time and, in particular, the parties that will be affected by the project. However, there are no hard and fast rules where the geographical boundaries for these impacts should be drawn, particularly when it comes to those relating to the environment or to future generations.

One further assumption is that the user benefits from a scheme can be defined in terms of journey time savings. There are a number of problems with this approach

when considering transport projects in deprived areas. First, journey time savings take no account of suppressed demand, which means that certain journeys may not be being made at all because of the lack of a viable transport service. Second, they do not allow for the benefits of extending service hours (e.g. to meet early and late shift times) to be calculated. Third, even when journey time savings can be calculated, e.g. for fixed-route bus services, they are often not the main policy priority for initiating a project. Enabling access to a greater number of key facilities, meeting the needs of different parts of the community and keeping fare levels down are all usually much higher on the list of priorities.

The projects themselves are also varied in both their objectives and design, ranging from traditional fixed-route bus services to flexible and demand-responsive transport, travel training and advice schemes, motorbike and car loans, and even driving lessons. As such, it is difficult to comprehensively assess the contribution of these projects to the renewal process in the areas they serve or, perhaps more importantly, to the social inclusion and improved quality of life of the people who use them.

The post hoc evaluation of the social benefits of transport projects has also been patchy, with no evaluation at all of some schemes such as the Rural Bus Challenge. For this reason, attempts to quantify and monetarise the more readily available qualitative evidence of their value to communities is considered an essential aspect of current research practice.

Alternatives to the traditional cost benefit analysis approach are currently being developed by the Department for Transport in an attempt to engage a wider stakeholder base in the funding of transport interventions in deprived areas. It is our experience that, to offer any hope of success, the method will need to be widely accepted as valid, simple to apply and easy for potential funders outside the transport profession to understand and engage with.

Communicating the value of transport to non-transport professionals

It is largely because of the way in which the benefits of new transport projects are calculated that it has been so difficult to communicate to policy-makers outside the transport world that, if properly targeted and supported, transport projects could have a significant impact in delivering wider social policy goals. These include improving employment take-up, reducing school truancies, preventing missed health appointments or simply improving people's quality of life.

The value of new transport in deprived areas

The value of transport services to policy-makers from outside the transport sector was explored in the pilot research that informed the development of the Department for Transport accessibility planning guidance for local transport authorities (Department for Transport, 2004b). This study demonstrated that, while the benefits of improved accessibility were evident from project evaluations, transport planners were finding it difficult to engage decision-makers in other key sectors in order to convince them of the value of accessibility planning in the context of their own delivery agendas (Lucas, 2006).

Even among highly supportive organisations, cross-sector working was perceived as threatening to established administrative structures or simply a lower priority. The study recommended that over-reliance on transport authorities to deliver solutions to the problems of poor accessibility in low-income areas would be problematic. This is because of the shift away from the public subsidy of public transport by Government but also because the root cause of the problem often lies in the poor location decisions and delivery patterns of other public sector services. This suggests that establishing and communicating the contribution of new transport projects to the social objectives of non-transport agencies is vital.

Implications of current funding arrangements

The majority of transport schemes addressing social exclusion have been funded via a small number of specific programmes focusing either on neighbourhood renewal or on the introduction of new transport services. These include the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Single Regeneration Budget, Rural and Urban Bus Challenges. In the majority of cases, the lifetime of the funding has only been for three or four years. Thereafter, successful schemes are forced to look elsewhere. As discussed earlier, many of these funding sources are also now no longer available or are due to terminate shortly, which adds to the general instability of such projects locally.

The assumption on the part of Government appears to be that, after an initial pump-priming period, these projects will become financially self-supporting. However, a previous study by the authors (Lucas and Tyler, 2006) suggests that, because of a variety of reasons, including operating times and other operational issues, fare structures, passenger densities and the location of facilities, this is rarely the case and unlikely to become so.

Indeed, past experience has regularly demonstrated that, once the funding period is over, many schemes are terminated or seriously downsized to the point where they are no longer adequately serving their original intended social inclusion function. This

not only has a huge negative impact on the lives of the people who rely on them to access work, school, college, hospital and other activities, but can also undermine the wider regenerative aspirations of the areas they serve, not least by adding to the widely held belief of local people that government has once more failed to respond appropriately to their needs.

The problem has been further exacerbated because funding from other agencies is also being withdrawn. For example, the Jobcentre Plus Transport Project Fund was discontinued in 2005 and local-level funding for transport services from the National Health Service (NHS) has also been unavailable.

Future policy scenarios

Enabling low-income groups to access facilities without the need for a car can be seen as critical at a time when the environmental impacts of car use are under increasing scrutiny. In his report to the UK Government on the economics of climate change, Sir Nicholas Stern highlights how difficult a major reduction in transport-related CO_2 emissions will be to achieve, particularly in the short term, but this will be essential if the necessary overall reductions are to be achieved (Stern, 2006). In this context, minimising the need for 'forced car ownership' among low-income households should be a policy priority for both social and environmental reasons. An increase in viable public transport alternatives to car ownership could contribute to reduced CO_2 emissions, as well as achieving wider social policy objectives relating to social inclusion.

A recent transport study by Sir Rod Eddington noted the potential for public transport schemes in urban areas to have social as well as environmental benefits. He recommended that, in future, the social benefits of transport schemes should be factored into transport spending decisions (Eddington, 2006). It is our intention that this study will help stimulate this long-overdue policy debate.

3 Aims of the study

Our study set out to highlight the social benefits of new transport projects in low-income and disadvantaged communities, and to identify the value of these to service users and local practitioners in these areas. Its underpinning objectives were to:

- identify the changes in travel behaviour and accessibility that have been brought about through the introduction of transport interventions within deprived and disadvantaged communities;

- explore the perceptions of local people in relation to these new services and with the broader aim of identifying the impact of these on the quality of life of the people who use them;

- explore the views of local practitioners regarding the contribution of such projects to the wider process of neighbourhood renewal in these areas;

- offer recommendations to central and local government on how such schemes can be better supported in the context of policies for neighbourhood renewal and the new requirements for accessibility planning in the Local Transport Plans being produced for 2006–11.

The study was primarily qualitative in its methodology, involving interviews with key local decision-makers and practitioners, and surveys and interviews with service users in four case study areas. It has also involved some quantitative analysis of patronage data in the final evaluation stages of the research. For further information on our research methods please see Appendix 1.

4 The four case studies

In all we identified four case studies for in-depth evaluations, these were as follows.

1. The Braunstone Bus, Leicester – a fixed-route service connecting an outlying housing estate with the city centre, and key employment sites and facilities in the urban periphery.

2. The Trevithick Link, Cornwall – a fixed-route service connecting a number of rural conurbations with new employment based on industrial sites and extending the services to cover shift-work patterns.

3. The Walsall WorkWise initiative, West Midlands – a project to assist people with their travel costs in the first weeks of new employment or for interviews and providing travel advice.

4. The Wythenshawe Local Link, Manchester – a flexibly routed minibus service, which takes local people to key destinations in the local and wider area using a booking system.

Case study selection

On the basis of our literature review and the advice of the members of our advisory group, it was decided that the following criteria should be applied to the case study selection process in line with our research aims.

- The projects should have been implemented between 2001 and 2005, and should still be active. This was to allow a reasonable period of operation time to have elapsed, whilst ensuring that local people are still aware of the project's existence.

- The service should be operating in a geographical area that was defined as 'deprived' on the basis of the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) (the 2000 IMD was used as pertinent to the project operating period).

- There should be a good range of different types of schemes, geographical areas and operating contexts.

- The service should have direct links with any neighbourhood renewal and regeneration initiatives operating within the area.

- There should be good availability of pre-existing patronage and other operational data, which the study could access with relative ease.

- The local transport authority and other relevant partners responsible for the service should be actively willing to participate in the study.

On this basis, a 'long list' of 34 potential projects was identified for further inquiry. Through a process of elimination, the final four case studies were selected as offering a good opportunity for fuller investigation. The following sections provide some background information on each of the four services.

The Braunstone Bus, Leicester

Figure 1 The Braunstone Bus (302 service)

Braunstone is located on the south-western boundary of Leicester City, approximately three-and-a-half miles from the city centre in the East Midlands region of England. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004 average rank of deprivation at district level for Leicester is 29 (DCLG, 2004). It is predominantly a residential area, with approximately 70 per cent council and 10 per cent housing association accommodation. This compares to national figures of 70 per cent of households

being owner-occupiers, 18 per cent social renters and 12 per cent private renters (DCLG, 2007). One of the key concerns for transport in the area is the physical North–South divide created by Braunstone Park (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 Braunstone New Deal for Communities footprint demonstrating the physical division created between the North and South side of the estate by Braunstone Park
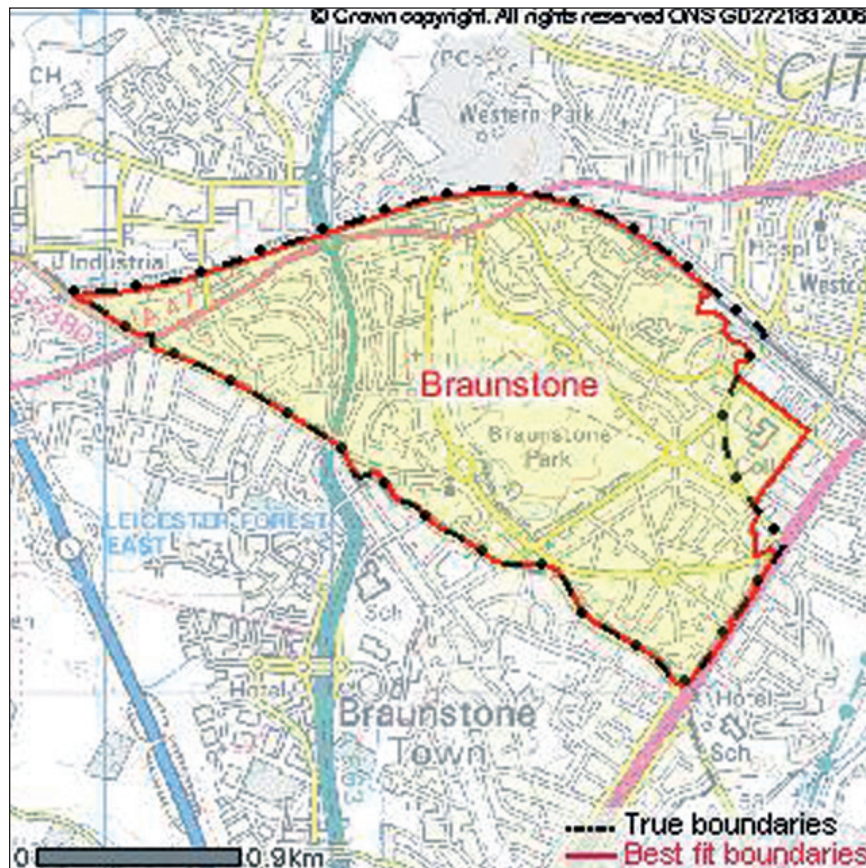
Through their endeavours to reduce the level of social deprivation and exclusion as part of the Government's New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme, Braunstone Community Association (BCA) recognised the need for a better local transport network. Various solutions were considered, but it was finally decided that the most practical was to implement a 'fixed-route' bus service to connect the north and south side of the estate, and give Braunstone residents better access to key activities in the urban periphery.

Pump-prime funding for contracting and running the bus service was obtained from Urban Bus Challenge (2001). Funding for publicity, timetables and salaries was from New Deal for Communities via the BCA. The 'exit strategy' for this scheme was to make the service 100 per cent commercially viable within five years.

Figure 3 Route map for the Braunstone Bus demonstrating the links that it offers to key activities in the wider area
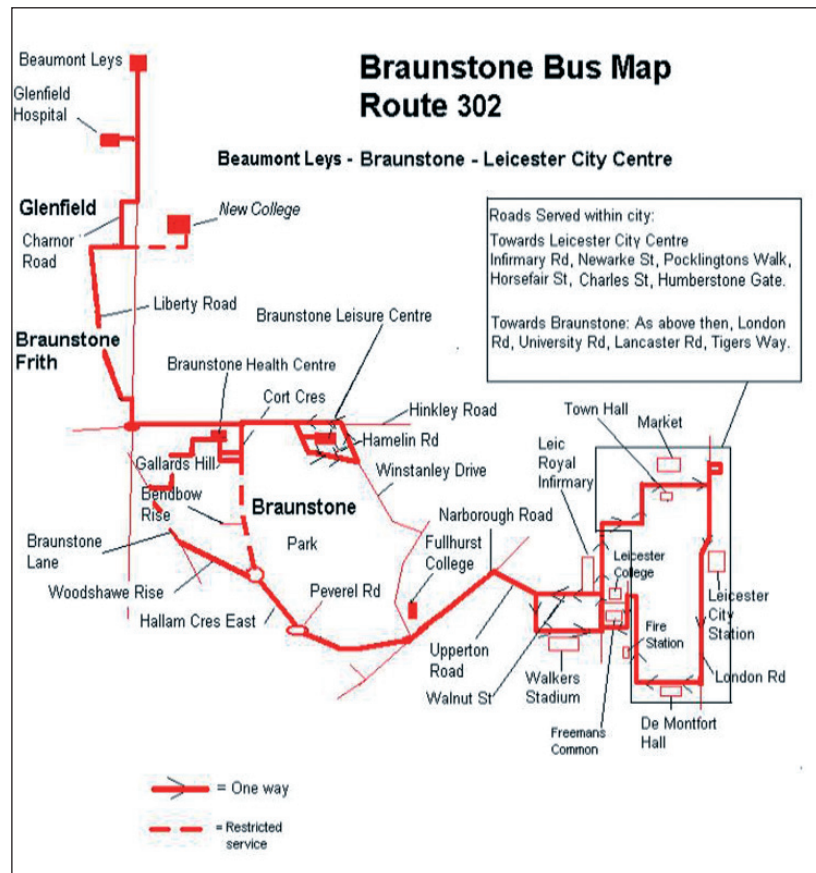
The Trevithick Link, Cornwall

Figure 4 One of the new buses operating on the Trevithick Link service

The Trevithick Link bus route is located in the only part of Cornwall that can be described as an 'urban conurbation'. Camborne and Redruth are two towns, linked by Pool, in the west of the county. The area forms the central part of Kerrier District, which spans the coast to the north and Helston plus the coastal area to the south. Kerrier was ranked the sixty-third most deprived district in the 2004 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (DCLG, 2004).

The area has long been associated with copper and tin mining, and the traditionally linked engineering industry. The last main mineshaft closed in 1998 and engineering has also declined. This means that the area is now dependent on new light industrial and service sector employment. It suffers from a general lack of investment and has been prioritised for regeneration assistance both regionally (from the South West Regional Development Agency) and via European Union Regional Development Objective One Funding.

The Trevithick Link project arose from two studies that identified transport as a major barrier to job take-up in the area. The first was carried out by the local regeneration company, CPR Regeneration, to inform its Urban Framework Plan. The second was a survey carried out by the local Jobcentre Plus. In September 2004, Cornwall County Council made a bid to the Department for Transport Urban Bus Challenge, with support from a number of partners, including Jobcentre Plus and CPR Regeneration.

The service was launched in September 2004 and was funded to 2007 by Urban Bus Challenge. It links areas of housing with industrial estates, other places of employment and educational facilities, in order to improve access to jobs for deprived communities in Camborne, Pool and Redruth. Cornwall County Council oversees this budget and the overall running of the scheme with input from the partners. Although First Group was involved in the initial Urban Bus Challenge (UBC) bid, the subsequent tender was won by Truronian Ltd, which is now responsible for running the service.

Since April 2006, the Trevithick Link route has been fully integrated into a network of services in the Camborne, Pool, Redruth area, extending out to Portreath in the north and Helston to the south. The whole network is branded 'Trevithick Link'. Since summer 2006, funding for the project has come from a new Objective One bid, involving:

- Cornwall County Council;

- CPR Regeneration Company;

- bus operator (Truronian won the re-tender).

This new bid supports an extension of the route to Pengegon, a residential area of Camborne with high levels of deprivation. In addition, it has improved the morning and evening service to provide public transport options to suit shift-working patterns, and to allow greater flexibility in existing services, making it more attractive to potential bus users. This new phase also involves a marketing project via employers, to encourage those already working on the industrial estates to use the bus to get to work.

Walsall WorkWise

Figure 5 Walsall WorkWise advertising material

Walsall lies in the West Midlands region of England with a population of 253,499. Four areas within the West Midlands – Walsall, Wolverhampton, Dudley and Sandwell – are known as the 'Black Country' because of the area's long history of coal mining. The industrial decline and complete economic restructuring of these areas has brought about high levels of deprivation. Walsall is ranked sixty-first most deprived district in the 2004 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (DCLG, 2004).

In January 2004, Walsall WorkWise was set up to support unemployed people living in specific postcode areas, to address the barriers to job take-up that are created by lack of access to, and affordability of, public transport. (Transport had emerged as one of the barriers to employment during the consultation phase prior to the NDC being set up. Both the cost of transport and the perception that many places are inaccessible were identified as barriers to employment.) Walsall WorkWise is a borough-wide initiative, which was part funded through NDC, EU Funding (ERDF) and the local Passenger Transport Association, Centro's Social Inclusion Fund. The NDC funding is for three years. It is linked to a local charity Steps to Work, which offers assistance to unemployed Walsall residents (the two projects refer clients to each other) and is currently based in its offices in Walsall town centre.

In June 2005, a one-stop shop called Work on the Horizon opened in Bloxwich (within the Blakenall NDC area). WorkWise now operates from both premises. Steps to Work delivers a number of the New Deal programmes for the long-term unemployed (over six months' unemployed for those aged 18–24 and over 18 months' unemployed for those aged 25 and over).

Wythenshawe Local Link

Figure 6 One of the minibuses and its driver operating the Wythenshawe Local Link service

Wythenshawe is an area in the south of Manchester, in the North West of England. Manchester was ranked the third most deprived district in the 2004 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (DCLG, 2004). Known at one time as the largest housing estate in Europe, the Wythenshawe area is primarily residential, with few major employers except the local hospital and Manchester Airport to the south. Two industrial sites at Sharston and Roundthorn, and a major supermarket also provide some employment opportunities. While Wythenshawe is linked to other parts of Manchester by a number of bus routes, there is no Metrolink station.

The Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE) obtained funding from the Urban Bus Challenge (2001) to implement a demand-responsive transport (DRT), door-to-door service. The primary objective of the scheme is to provide links for those living in Wythenshawe to Wythenshawe Hospital (for employment and health needs), to Sharston (for employment and access to the employment centre), local health facilities, community centres, educational facilities, Wythenshawe Bus Station and to fill the gaps in evening bus services. It also serves Manchester Airport early in the mornings (until 0730).

The secondary objective of implementing this scheme was to test the use of a DRT service in an area of large population, which may be suitable for replication elsewhere in Manchester. The initiative currently runs four buses that each seat up to nine people and are operated by Manchester Community Transport. Each journey is scheduled through a routing system call MobiSoft, which optimally schedules pick-up and drop-offs with 'maximum time on bus' conditions.

In the original bid, it was estimated that approximately £100,000 per year revenue would be generated, which would cover about 38 per cent of the running costs of the service. Once the Urban Bus Challenge funding runs out in 2008, existing GMPTE contracts in the area will be incorporated into the scheme to cover about 33 per cent of the costs. The remaining 29 per cent of the costs were to be funded from partners benefiting from the service (i.e. South Manchester Hospital Trust, Manchester Airport and a bus company operating services in the Wythenshawe area). As the hoped-for partnership funding was not forthcoming, GMPTE is hoping to continue to subsidise the service using its own funding in the future.

5 Interviews with local professional stakeholders

In summary

- Transport was widely acknowledged as a key barrier to enabling people to find a job or return to work in all four of the case study areas.

- Local professionals emphasised that providing transport services alone cannot address the difficulties caused by a 'workless' culture; this requires a number of different interventions.

- Providing transport to key facilities and services such as shopping and health facilities was seen as important to the more general inclusion of local people, as well as to the vibrancy of low-income neighbourhoods.

- Often it is difficult to separate different types of transport problems (i.e. physical availability, cost of travel, travel awareness and confidence) and it is a question of *developing a process* to encourage the growth of personal confidence at the same time as alleviating the additional financial burden of travel.

- All stakeholders concurred that public transport is an important element in the renewal of low-income communities. In Cornwall, public transport routes like the Trevithick Link are now seen as the key to the future sustainable regeneration of the wider region. The Braunstone Bus has not only opened up opportunities for the residents of Braunstone but also given employers the incentive to come into the area.

- Policy-makers and front-line workers across all four case studies were extremely anxious about the impact that lack of further funding would have on their projects and the opportunity for more like them, as well as the wider negative knock-on effects of this on local communities.

As an initial phase of the research, we conducted a series of in-depth interviews with key professionals in each of the four case study areas. This was in order to better understand local policy perspectives on social exclusion and regeneration, and gather background information on the individual case study projects. In recruiting for these interviews, our aim was to strike a balance between stakeholders that have been directly involved in the development and delivery of the projects, and those that are more removed from this process, but with a budgetary control over local spending streams that could fund or facilitate transport schemes in the future. The

key aim of the interviews was to elicit opinions regarding the value of the project to the regeneration process and the social inclusion of local people.

The local professionals we spoke to emphasised that providing transport services alone cannot address the difficulties caused by a 'workless' culture; this requires a number of different interventions, many of which are not transport related. Nevertheless, transport was widely acknowledged as a key barrier to enabling people successfully to find a job or return to work in all four of the case study areas. Providing transport to key facilities and services such as shopping and health facilities was also seen as important to the more general inclusion of local people, as well as to the vibrancy of low-income neighbourhoods.

In most cases, the subsidised services we were focusing on were filling gaps in the commercial bus network and helping to prevent communities from becoming isolated from key activities and essential services. It was pointed out that providing information and support alongside actual transport services can be equally as important in getting people to access the services that are available to them in the wider area. All the stakeholders agreed that withdrawal of the services they were providing could have a hugely detrimental impact, not just on the lives of local people, but also on the prospects for continued neighbourhood renewal and regeneration of the areas they serve.

Breaking the 'workless' culture

Officers working on the front line in communities to encourage people back into work identified that one of the hardest tasks they face is trying to break down some of the cultural and educational barriers to employment, as the Walsall case study demonstrates:

> Our biggest problem with getting people into work is not around training issues, it's around educational issues … It's not only poor education, it's the fact that they don't feel it's necessary to actually go into work. (New Deal for Communities representative)

In the case of Walsall, this stemmed partly from the town's past as a vibrant manufacturing area, which demanded skilled manual labour rather than literacy and numeracy skills. Similar structural changes in the employment base were noted in the Cornish case study, where mining and related engineering works had once dominated the Camborne, Pool and Redruth area:

> After the closure of the Crofty Mine and there was 300 job losses on closure but there was more as the mine wound down over time … One manufacturing company used to employ 4,000 people in Camborne … The economy was not at all diversified so, when the companies moved away, that was it. (CPR Urban Regeneration Company representative)

In numerous instances, the officers we spoke to expressed the belief that many local people are reluctant to take up the employment that is now available to them either locally or in the wider region:

> We can get them the training they need … we can get them work ready … we can provide them with information on travel … If they don't want to go there is nothing we can do and that's the real barrier to employment is wanting to. (New Deal for Communities representative)

It was clear that transport is not usually the primary barrier to the take-up of new employment. Those working with the unemployed frequently referred to other factors required to keep a job, such as the ability to participate and communicate, as well as core numeracy and literacy skills. Although, in some areas, the unemployment problem has been significantly exacerbated by the physical separation of housing from employment activities.

The importance of transport to job take-up and retention

For example, transport emerged as one of the key issues in surveys of New Deal participants undertaken by the Cornwall Jobcentres:

> … when we surveyed our jobseekers, people that were actively looking for work, 51 per cent said that transport was a barrier, which was quite a shock to us at the time: 49 per cent of 18–24 year olds and 51 per cent of 25+ that we surveyed and that was in Jobcentres across Cornwall. (Jobcentre Plus representative)

Obviously, Cornwall is a rural county and more likely to experience poorer levels of public transport provision. In the Walsall study, which is clearly more representative of conditions in an inner-urban area, one officer felt that it was less to do with the lack of transport provision and more to do with people's willingness to travel outside the immediate area:

> There's a lot of employers in Cannock, which is again five miles down the road, perfectly served by bus services but, 'Oh no, I can't go there, it's too far'. It's people's perception of distance and time. (Work on the Horizon representative)

In numerous instances, the professionals suggested that the problem is one of confidence; venturing into an unfamiliar area or using public transport for the first time was a frightening prospect. The cost of travel relative to the wages that are being offered is also an issue. In these instances, projects such as WorkWise can be of considerable help to build confidence and provide motivation. Often it is difficult to separate different types of transport problems (i.e. physical availability, cost of travel, travel awareness and confidence) and it is a question of *developing a process* to encourage the growth of personal confidence at the same time as alleviating the additional financial burden of travel:

> If they've gone into it [a job] then and found out, well, actually, they didn't really plan it very well or they didn't know what the costs were going to be involved in that job, the first sign of any sort of financial problem they'll tend to ditch it … if you can take any of those pressures off it helps them stay in that job. (Jobcentre representative, Walsall)

Providing links to key services and facilities

In both the Braunstone Bus and Trevithick Link case studies, it was felt that, often, the physical transport links are extremely poor. For example, the commercial bus network does not provide adequate services that link areas of low income and high unemployment to key employment sites and other important facilities such as hospitals and shops:

> It was quite a good transport network … but there was a gap … in linking the new industrial areas that were springing up. People had lack of access in their own area. (Cornwall County Council representative)

Although there was a relatively good transport service between Braunstone and the city centre, buses only went around the outskirts of the estate:

> It suffers because it's between two strong radial routes out of town, so the services that are in there aren't as direct as they might be. (Leicester City Council representative)

The Braunstone Bus has also meant that people can now access a wide range of other facilities outside of the immediate area, including the railway station, the further education college and the universities.

It was emphasised that the Braunstone Bus has not only opened up opportunities for the residents of Braunstone but also given employers the incentive to come into the area:

> We've really tried to exploit the fact that you can transport yourself to work, because of the bus, more employers were able to come into the area as well … our health centre – the PCT [primary care trust] run it but there's 200 people work there and the leisure centre. (Braunstone Working project representative)

In the Wythenshawe case study, the lack of access to health-care facilities was one of the main factors that stimulated the bid for the Local Link initiative:

> [Benchill, in Wythenshawe] was the most deprived ward in the country at the time. There were huge problems in people accessing health care and hospital … They were failing to attend at outpatients, something like 40 per cent I think. (GMPTE representative)

The wider health and social benefits from older people being able to get out and about to visit friends and relatives were also commented on:

> … there was some very positive feedback you know … 'I haven't been able to get out for years and I'm going to go and see my Aunty Flo'. (GMPTE representative)

Regeneration benefits to the wider area

In Cornwall, public transport routes like the Trevithick Link are now seen as the key to the future sustainable regeneration of the wider region:

> Everything we do has to take into account climate change … using this programme will help us do that … this is the start of a good network of public transport in the area that can allow people access to good jobs and be environmentally responsible at the same time. (CPR Urban Regeneration Company representative)

The Sustainable Travel Officer from Walsall Council also explained how schemes like WorkWise can have indirect knock-on benefits for the borough as a whole. Because it is increasing the number of people using the bus rather than cars as a travel to work solution, it has also helped the council meet its transport targets, such as reducing car use and improving sustainable travel.

The impact of current funding arrangements

The 'exit strategy' for most Urban Bus Challenge projects was to deliver commercially viable (or revenue-neutral) projects once the funding had run out. None of the three bus-based initiatives in our study has been able to fulfil this requirement and, in the main, the officers involved feel this is an unrealistic (and even undesirable) expectation in the case of socially necessary services. This means that they must now search elsewhere for the necessary funds to support their continued subsidy – not an easy task in the present financial climate.

Although all four initiatives have been funded from a variety of funding streams, three out of the four projects received key initial subsidy from the Department of Transport's Urban Bus Challenge programme, which has since been cancelled without a designated alternative funding source being made available. Policy-makers and front-line workers across all four case studies were extremely anxious about the impact that lack of further funding would have on their projects and the opportunity for more like them, as well the wider negative knock-on effects of this on local communities.

Officers in the Braunstone regeneration team felt that loss of the Braunstone Bus would have a significant negative impact on the future vitality of Braunstone:

> If we end up with a diminished bus service we'll have more excluded people, there's just little doubt about it. (Social Inclusion Team representative, Braunstone)

All stakeholders concurred that public transport is an important element in the renewal of low-income communities. The sentiment was that of course it is important to have new buildings for housing and for key facilities, but these will remain redundant without the proper public transport to link them to employment opportunities and other essential activities.

The Walsall officers were unanimously agreed that withdrawal of the service would be detrimental to those living in Walsall. As one officer put it:

I think it would be an absolute travesty if it got taken away. There is nowhere else for them to get this assistance, so what are we going to end up with? I mean, I know the unemployment rate is going up, but are we just going to leave these people to fester on benefits for the sake of a bus pass? That makes no sense whatsoever. (WorkWise representative, Walsall)

Another officer felt that it was quite simple. If the service was withdrawn, then a workless culture would return:

If WorkWise was withdrawn, then transport as a barrier to employment would come back. This could be in terms of it being a real problem for people, but also as a perceived barrier. (New Deal for Communities representative)

In Cornwall, it was felt that the withdrawal of the Trevithick Link service would have knock-on implications for the success of regeneration initiatives in the area:

I feel that people living in these areas will feel abandoned by public sector services. I think that it would have a detrimental impact on other programmes that are running … and it will affect the ability to have a local trained workforce to take the jobs that are planned for the area. (CPR Urban Regeneration Company representative, Cornwall)

A GMPTE policy representative involved in the bid for the UBC for the Wythenshawe Local Link expressed the view that there is effectively a moral obligation to keep the service running:

It would be morally wrong to withdraw it because it would be squandering a huge amount of public subsidy in a very deprived [area] … if there was something that we could put on which would provide a similar level of any of this at a cheaper price then why wouldn't we do that? But I don't know what that would be, that's the problem. (GMPTE policy representative)

The importance of joint funding and partnership working

A number of the professional stakeholders noted the importance of working with other sectors, both initially to secure funding and later to ensure the success of its take-up and the inflow of continued subsidies.

In Wythenshawe, there had been attempts to draw some funding from the local hospital. These had not been successful, but there was still a good relationship in terms of promoting the service:

> Yes, now, in fairness, the hospital did some sterling work in terms of promoting the service to the staff … They've stocked publicity materials, they've done very good things, but the impact, we've not been able to assess. (GMPTE policy representative)

Luckily, it was possible for the Trevithick Link partners to successfully apply for European Union Objective One funding to help fund extensions to the service. However, this funding stream will not be available in perpetuity and other solutions will have to be found.

Now that Neighbourhood Renewal funding is coming to an end, the continuance of WorkWise is dependent on finding an alternative funding stream for the travel passes. Although Centro is fully behind the continuation of the scheme for one more year, it is limited in what it can fund. As a transport authority, it has the means to pay for the salaries and marketing of WorkWise, but it cannot pay for the travel cards.[1] So it must find partners who are willing to take on this small element of the total cost of the initiative.

The Braunstone Bus is also under threat, and this is largely because the BCA has found it difficult to secure the support it needs from Leicester City Council and the local bus operator. To date, neither has expressed any interest in continuing the service once its subsidy runs out in 2008.

Having established the views of local professionals, we undertook a series of on-bus, telephone and postal surveys, and carried out some in-depth interviews with people using these services to gather their views on the value of the services to their daily lives.

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1. This is due to the Transport Act 2000 National Bus Concession Scheme, which precludes them paying for tickets for jobseekers. The concession scheme provides only for those over 60 and disabled people. Nor is it possible to offer it under a local scheme administered by a local authority such as a passenger transport authority (under the Transport Act 1985 [s93]). There are defined categories of people who can receive benefits from local authorities under these voluntary schemes and at the moment jobseekers are not an eligible category. The Secretary of State can add other categories, but this must be done by secondary legislation and there are currently no plans to do so.

6 Use of the services and their value to local people

In summary

- Service users are highly dependent on the three new bus services because most do not have regular access to a car within their households. This is reflected in the frequency of their use of these services, with over two-thirds of the people we surveyed using them at least once a week and a majority using them two or more times a week across all three bus services.

- The vast majority of the people using all four services are on low incomes. Our surveys identified that, across all four projects, a large proportion of users were in receipt of welfare benefits, although a far smaller percentage were actually registered unemployed.

- A significantly greater number of women than men tend to use the services (for all but the Walsall WorkWise initiative). Most of the services are catering for a relatively small number of minority ethnic users, although this is in part reflected in the population profiles of the areas in question.

- The Wythenshawe Local Link service attracts a high percentage of people over the age of 65, which is largely a reflection of its door-to-door provision, in contrast to both the Braunstone Bus and the Trevithick Link services, which are fixed route and thus require walking access and egress. A significant minority of users of both the Braunstone and Walsall initiatives are single parents.

- The most commonly stated reason for using the services was for shopping trips. Getting to work or training was the next most popular use of all three bus services, closely followed by accessing leisure and social activities. For the Walsall WorkWise project, getting to work or training was the most frequently stated use of the service because of its remit as an access to employment initiative.

It is clear from our case study descriptions that each of the four transport initiatives we studied is quite different in character and purpose. For example, the Braunstone Bus was designed to provide a generalised public transport service around the estate and connect it with key employment sites and other service activities in the wider area. Similarly, the Trevithick Link was intended as an extension to the existing

public transport network and was routed specifically to link jobseekers with new job opportunities in previously inaccessible locations. Both of these services are run under contract with a local private operator as a socially necessary tendered service.

Conversely, the Walsall WorkWise initiative does not provide an actual transport service but rather offers journey planning advice and assistance with the cost of travel to job interviews and for the first two months of taking up new employment. The Wythenshawe Local Link focuses on access to both employment and health-care services using a small intra-estate, door-to-door minibus service.

For this reason, it is of little value to compare or evaluate these initiatives against each other. Rather, we aimed to capture their intrinsic value to the communities they served as well as their wider contribution to social inclusion through increased access to employment, health care, education services, and shopping and other service facilities. Nevertheless, our surveys and interviews demonstrated marked similarities in the characteristics of the people that were using them, their reasons for doing so and their feelings about the value of these services to their daily lives, as well as to those of their families and neighbours.

Services user profiles and use of the services

Our surveys identified that, across all four services, a large proportion of users were in receipt of welfare benefits, although a far smaller percentage were actually registered unemployed. A significantly greater number of women than men tend to use the services (for all but the Walsall WorkWise initiative). Most are catering for a relatively small number of minority ethnic users, although this is in part reflected in the population profiles of the areas in question.

The Wythenshawe Local Link service attracts a high percentage of people over the age of 65, which is largely a reflection of its door-to-door provision, in contrast to both the Braunstone Bus and the Trevithick Link services, which are fixed route and thus require walking access. We noted that a significant minority of users of both the Braunstone and Walsall initiatives were single parents (see Table 2).

Table 2 Profile of service users based on study surveys

	Braunstone		Trevithick		Walsall		Wythenshawe	
	%	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*
Registered unemployed	15	76	9	13	25	40	0.6	1
In receipt of benefits	41	210	21	31	55	87	49	89
66 years and over	11	56	23	34	0.6	1	51	92
Lone parents	18	91	1	2	15	23	7	13
Minority ethnic	12	59	5	5	21	33	8	14
Women	68	345	62	92	44	70	86	155
No car	80	407	66	98	74	117	82	147
Total surveyed		*511*		*149*		*159*		*180*

The overwhelming majority of service users do not have regular access to a car within their households. As such, most are heavily reliant on the bus services that are being provided through these subsidised initiatives. This is reflected in their frequency of use of these services, with over two-thirds of the people we surveyed using them at least once a week and a majority using them two or more times a week across all three bus services (see Table 3).

Table 3 Frequency of service use

	Braunstone		Trevithick		Wythenshawe	
	%	*n**	*%*	*n**	*%*	*n*
5 or more times a week	42	212	42	62	18	32
2–4 times a week	32	165	46	69	42	76
Once a week	12	62	8	12	19	35
At least once a month	8	43	3	5	9	17
Less than once a month/not at all	4	22	–	–	11	20
Total using service at least once a week	*86*	*439*	*96*	*143*	*79*	*143*
Total surveyed		*511*		*149*		*180*

* Not all respondents answered this question.

   The Walsall WorkWise initiative provides travel cards and therefore has different usage categories than the other services.

As noted previously, the Walsall WorkWise initiative provides travel cards and information rather than an actual bus service. Here, 86 per cent of the respondents stated that they mostly used WorkWise for the travel card so they could get to work, interviews or training and most used this card for the full eight weeks.

During our surveys, people were asked their main reasons for using the services (multiple responses to this question were allowed). It can be seen from Table 4 that, for users of the Braunstone Bus and Trevithick Link, the most commonly stated reason for using the services was for shopping trips. For users of the Wythenshawe

Local Link and Walsall WorkWise, the main stated reason for using the services was to get to work and training. (For Walsall, this was in line with the specific nature of the scheme.)

Table 4 Main reasons for using the services

	Braunstone		Trevithick		Walsall		Wythenshawe	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Shopping	56	285	49	73	27	43	18	32
Leisure and social activities	34	171	35	52	26	41	32	57
Work and training	30	155	45	67	100	159	37	66
Health care	23	115	11	16	1	2	4	8
School/college trips	15	75	7	10	2	3	5	9
Place of worship	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	8
General travel	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	9	n/a	n/a
Total surveyed		*511*		*149*		*159*		*180*

The relatively low number of people using the buses to get to school or college is a reflection of the survey design, which did not target children under 16 years of age. With health visits, however, the low numbers recording this use are because this is not an everyday activity for most people. However, in the case of Braunstone, nearly a quarter of people were regularly using the bus to access health-care services – partly a reflection of the high levels of ill health among the resident population and partly because the Braunstone Bus is the only direct service to Glenfields Hospital.

Whereas the local professionals we interviewed tended to emphasise the value of these services primarily in terms of their contribution to the take-up and retention of employment, and, thereby, social inclusion, local residents talked more about their social amenity value in the first instance:

> Oh God, there'd be a lot of lonely people who are sitting home all day and wouldn't be able to go out and meet people because, when you're on the bus, you talk to each other. So it makes it easier, you know, you get to know everybody and it's good for the old 'uns to hear 'em talking to people because perhaps that's the only bit of freedom they have, they perhaps have nobody to talk to at 'ome. So they talk to people on the bus. (Woman in a couple with children, Braunstone)

In all three of the case study areas, the new bus services have been about more than simply getting people from A to B. They have also helped improve residents' lifestyles and the neighbourhoods in which they live. In Braunstone, a number of people commented that it is a safer place to live because they have better access to

transport. Similarly, with the Trevithick Link in Cornwall, a major benefit of the service is that people can simply get out and about more, which allows them more choices and opportunities:

> Well I can get, well, like I said, I can get around more places and better for me … because I'm not going to walk all the way into town, which I can hardly do, to come over here and stop at Pool and then walk from Pool up to there. So I wouldn't be able to do that. I'd be restricted a lot. (Retired female, Cornwall)

In general, as the case study vignettes that we have extracted from our interviews demonstrate, local people are using these services in a variety of ways to facilitate their daily lives. The networking and 'social capital' value of public transport is something that is hugely overlooked in the traditional evaluation of such services.

Case study 1: Braunstone Bus passenger

Anthony is a 22-year-old white male. He lives in a couple with his three children. He has lived in Braunstone for over a year now and relies heavily on the Braunstone Bus to get him around. On average, he uses the bus six times a day, mainly for taking his children to school but also to visit his sister:

> I've got the older two who are full-time at school, then the younger one is part-time at school, she's to and from the school all day so you're riding the bus don't you.

Before the two bus routes the 301 and the 317 were merged, Anthony extensively used the 317 to do his shopping at Asda at Fosse Park. He now has to take a taxi and misses the service:

> They've cut out the first part of the journey on the 301, which was quite useful because we used to use that to go to Asda but we can't now. That means we have to use taxis and that's it really. We have to, yes, we have to get taxis back because there's no buses that go near enough to the Asda.

Anthony has difficulty taking an alternative bus route because it would involve a 15-minute walk and walking up a hill:

> Without it there'd be a lot of walking. It would be hard work having to get up extra early in the morning, leave extra early to get to the schools, it would be 'ard. If it weren't around we'd 'ave to move out of the area. I'd have to leave Braunstone and move closer to the kids' school.

Continued

He thinks the bus is extremely good value for money, especially as he can get a ticket that covers the whole family's travel:

Well we can do both trips for a fiver. You can get the whole family on for a fiver, me, my partner and the oldest child we have to pay for, for a family ticket, otherwise it would cost in excess of that but a fiver isn't bad all day, all day use of the bus. It costs about £10–15 when we go in taxis, so it does make a difference.

Another important feature of the service for Anthony is that it goes around the whole estate:

Well it's the bus that goes all round in'it, it's not you've got to walk to one side of the estate to get the bus. You can get a bus from pretty much anywhere now. It's easy for everyone in Braunstone.

We asked Anthony what would happen without the bus. He told us:

I wouldn't be able to get all the way over to Beaumont Leys, I wouldn't be able to get up to New Parks to see me sister and it would be awkward to get to the schools so there'd be a few journeys I wouldn't be able to make. I'm guessing most places you can get to in theory, you can get a bus into town and change. I'd have to use two different bus services, it would mean separate tickets. So that would be a lot more expensive for me.

Quality of the services

A frequently commented on feature of the services provided was how helpful the staff who operate them are and how important this is to people using the service and, ultimately, its success:

The drivers are excellent people. I could say they're worth another ten grand a year but they're really worth their weight in gold. (Retired male, Wythenshawe Local Link, Manchester)

In the Walsall WorkWise postal survey, 45 per cent of respondents felt that it is much more than a service that simply issues travel passes and travel information.

Reducing the overall cost of travel

Another clear benefit of these initiatives to the people who use them has been the cost savings that they have been able to realise. Obviously, in the case of the Walsall WorkWise project, this was a recognised and intended aim from the outset.

All the people we interviewed said that if this travel money hadn't been available to them they would have had to borrow the money, use their credit cards, which would have accumulated interest, or struggled financially and, in three cases, not have started their new job at all. One young woman we spoke to said:

> I would recommend it because … I don't have to worry about my travel costs until next month now and I'll be OK now. I'll get my first wage slip and I can sort my travel costs out, it does help, it does. (Single female in college/training, Walsall WorkWise)

Making the transition from welfare into work is hard enough for many people and finding the extra money that you need to get there in the first few weeks before you are paid is an extra worry that people don't need at this time, as our case study vignette clearly demonstrates. It's at times like these that initiatives such as WorkWise can be of enormous benefit to jobseekers.

Even with the Braunstone Bus, Wythenshawe Local Link and Trevithick Link services, which had not so overtly set out to reduce the cost of people's travel, a key 'value' of the services for most of their users has been cost savings. In Braunstone, people no longer have to use two buses (into the city centre and back out again) to get to destinations in the urban periphery around Braunstone or take expensive taxis (e.g. £5 one way to the hospital).

Similarly, in Wythenshawe, the only viable way to get to places if you haven't got a car is by taxi, which many people simply can't afford:

> It would make me, make me a lot worse off financially because I wouldn't be able to travel as much because I wouldn't be able to afford the taxi fare because, if I don't, if I don't get Local Link, it's £2.50 return for there and back. To go to my exercise class on a Monday it's £4.50 there and £4.50 back in a taxi and I don't even know that a bus goes there, so I would, I wouldn't be able to afford to do things. (Single unemployed female, Wythenshawe Local Link, Manchester)

Case study 2: Walsall WorkWise client

Bintou is a young, single, black woman, who has been living in Walsall since July 2005. Prior to moving here, she was studying at Wolverhampton University doing a course in Computer Design. When she moved to Walsall, she found it very difficult to find a job and had to work for six months doing something that was not related to her qualification:

> In terms of job I don't think Walsall is a place but thank God it's not far from Birmingham so you can still commute.

As the type of work that was related to Bintou's qualification could only be found outside of Walsall she discovered the biggest barrier to looking for work was transport:

> Yes I think so, yes I think because like, for instance, I remember when I was looking for a job I was, I couldn't. If I was driving I'm sure I would have had a job quicker but because I wasn't driving it was kind of a handicap for me. Yes if you want to be near your interview it is very difficult, in general transport it is very difficult. I think if I could afford it I would just buy myself a car to be honest.

Bintou finally managed to find a job in Birmingham with the help of WorkWise. She travels to Birmingham using the bus because it is cheaper than the train.

> It's not, to be honest yeah it's not, it's not easy but to be honest when I had that job because it was Birmingham I had the bus pass, that helped me a lot.

When Bintou first started her new job, all her benefits were cut immediately. Commenting on WorkWise she said:

> Yes it is because you know when you just start working they cut your housing benefit, everything, oh my God and you think Walsall Council, for instance, they overpaid my housing benefit. So when I told them that I start working they took the money from my housing association and I had to pay that. You see kind of you just start working and you've got all those expenses ... Yes because that's what, £2.50, that's a lot of money yes, yes it is a lot of money for somebody who just started work because you see I had to wait one full month to get my first wages, so to be honest it was helpful, yes it was.

> The travel pass not only helped her to get to work but also enabled her to do her shopping and gave her the additional incentive of getting up in the morning:
>
> Because at least I knew I could, I had no reason not to go to work every morning you've got a bus pass yes. To be honest I think it was very helpful.

Access to work

Although improved access to work was not the most significant use of these services, it was clear both from the surveys we carried out and from the interviews with service users that it was a primary benefit to a large proportion of them. All four areas have seen dramatic changes in the structure of employment, from a relatively high demand for low-skilled and skilled manual workers to service sector employment. People also generally need to travel further to secure employment, which is often located in the urban periphery in places that are difficult to reach without a car.

In the Trevithick Link survey, 45 per cent of respondents said that their primary use of the Trevithick Link was to get them to their place of work. Furthermore, 65 per cent stated that the bus enabled them not only to get work but also to keep their job and 28 per cent stated that they would not be able to get to work without the bus. This was further supported by our in-depth interviews with passengers:

> Hmm mmm, I wouldn't be able to get to work otherwise … I don't know, I'd probably have to change jobs … I'd have to find another job … I love my job. (Employed female, Trevithick Link, Cornwall)

Similarly, with the Wythenshawe Local Link in Manchester, 37 per cent of survey respondents primarily use the service to access work, of which 30 per cent are shift workers (17 per cent use the Local Link between 5am and 7am and the remaining 14 per cent use it between 9pm and 12am). The Local Link service is fundamental for them getting to work, especially late at night, in the early mornings and on Sundays:

> Because there isn't a bus for instance on a Sunday I could, I start at seven o'clock on a Sunday and if I'm on an early or a long day on Sunday, I can't get a bus to take me to work. Yes, yes it serves the time yes, it serves the purpose and that's what we need and the beauty that it comes to your door and it collects you. (Employed female, Wythenshawe Local Link, Manchester)

In the case of the Walsall WorkWise initiative, a number of people described how the free travel card and travel advice had helped them broaden their travel horizons and look for work in places outside the local area, which previously they would not have considered. Many stated that they would not have been able to get to at least half of the job interviews that they went for without the scheme:

> I wouldn't have gone looking for a job that far and that, that's simple that is. I wouldn't even attempt going 15 miles for a job for that money and transport. (Unemployed male in a couple with children, Walsall WorkWise)

Access to education

Although we did not specifically survey schoolchildren, it would appear that quite a large number of Braunstone residents use the bus to access education either for themselves or to take their children to school. There was a recognition that, if the bus was taken away, this would cause a big problem for parents in Braunstone:

> If the service was taken away, well there'd be bleeding panic stations for the adults with the kids going to school in the mornings and plus at night-time, so if they stopped they'd be panicking. (Female care practitioner, Braunstone)

Reliance on the other two bus services for access to education or training was less evident. In Cornwall, this is probably because most schoolchildren are eligible for free school travel for which there is a bespoke bus service and, in Wythenshawe, because the booking service does not target this journey purpose. Similarly, the Walsall WorkWise programme does not provide travel cards for access to training or education.

Access to health care

Of the four services, the Braunstone Bus demonstrated the greatest number of people using it primarily for accessing health care. This is partly because the bus was specifically routed to serve the local Glenfields Hospital, which was previously without a direct service from both Braunstone and the adjacent Beaumont Leys areas of Leicester. It also services the Royal Infirmary in the town centre.

Out of the 511 respondents to the Braunstone on-bus survey, 42 per cent (214) stated that they would not be able to access health care without the bus. For others,

it is the peace of mind that comes from knowing the bus is there and they can rely on it that is most important:

> Me son's got epilepsy so that's the only way I can get to the 'ospital …
> I don't know, I'm happier because I know I can get to the 'ospital from
> 'ere if you know what I mean cos there's no other way, I'd 'ave to get a
> taxi or I'd have to get into town, in and out of town but at least I can get
> to hospital on the 302, which he goes now once a month. (Single female
> with children, Braunstone)

It is important to recognise that many people living in the Braunstone area suffer from quite poor health and need to visit the hospital on a regular basis. For them and their carers, the service is invaluable, often meaning the difference between relative independence and being housebound.

The Wythenshawe Local Link was also introduced specifically to facilitate improved access to health-care services. In the telephone survey we conducted, 23 per cent (41) of all respondents stated that they would not be able to access health care without the Local Link service. The local hospital is particularly difficult to access from Wythenshawe without a car, despite its relative proximity, as one interviewee pointed out:

> Yes the hospital's actually a nightmare to get to and it always has been,
> there's never been a decent bus route to the hospital so, and I've had to
> use the hospital quite a lot fairly recently, so it was either relying on taxis
> to get me there or using the Local Link. (Employed male, Wythenshawe
> Local Link, Manchester)

The local GP surgery has recently been relocated to the civic centre and, unless people can book the Local Link service, many now have to take a taxi to access their health-care appointments. One interviewee stated that she would need to change her doctor if she didn't have the Wythenshawe Local Link to depend on.

A few of the people interviewed said that they would like to use the service to access health services more but had problems with the booking system. As they have to book in advance, they find it difficult to book a return trip because it is impossible to predict when their appointment will end. This is a generic problem with pre-booked dial-a-ride type services, as they can only offer a specific window of opportunity for carrying out activities at the destination end, with little or no flexibility to build in delays or changes in itinerary. Nevertheless, for many people who find it difficult to get around on their own and cannot afford taxis, the door-to-door service is a lifeline, as our third case study vignette demonstrates.

Case study 3: Wythenshawe Local Link passenger

James is retired and has been living with his wife in Wythenshawe for over 31 years. He has great difficulty getting out of the house and using public transport because he is wheelchair-bound. He has passed his driving mobility test but is unable to buy a wheelchair car because they are approximately £21,000 and he doesn't have the funds. His wife can drive but she's too frightened to take him out on her own. For the last four years he has been housebound. He relies totally on the Wythenshawe Local Link because he has great difficulty using normal public transport and taxis:

> I can't get in a taxi. There's no taxis wide enough, the doors, TX2s, I've tried TX2, TX1s, TX4s they're not wide enough to take a wheelchair. For me the Link is a tremendous, tremendous thing because I've got, I can get out of me chair and come off of me chair and that's half the battle, it's electric so I can go shopping on me own.

The Wythenshawe Local Link has proved to be a crucial element in getting him to key destinations and enabling him to socialise:

> Well I've been to the hospital on it, been to hospital for appointments, I've been to visit friends. I went to a night out, the only night I've had in four years, which a friend of mine was getting married and I went to his stag night in British Hall club we had it at you know. Go to the theatre on me own, where I want.

He felt that the Local Link has had a positive impact on his life:

> Well it's actually improved my life, it's improved the quality of life because without it I wouldn't be anywhere and I do get out as I say the odd occasion, it's very, very good.

If the Local Link was taken away he felt that it would have a drastic effect on his life because other services are unreliable for him:

> I would be completely housebound, I would be yes because I've no other way of going to the park, the hot weather comes I can go out in the park and watch the bowls and do things. Now they've put me on to another service where it's called Wythenshawe Disabled something and there are services, I rang them up, give them the measurement of the wheelchair and they said oh very good, yes we can do that for you, now while Monday to Friday, no weekends. What use is that to me, to anybody? Nine till five, no Saturdays and Sundays.

Access to shopping, leisure and social activities

An improved ability to shop is perhaps not the most obvious benefit in terms of people's social welfare, but being able to easily access a supermarket for food and other general supplies is one of the things most people tend to take for granted. Without a car, however, this is often not such an easy task, especially with small children in tow or if you have a mobility impairment, or simply if you have to carry a lot of heavy bags home from the bus stop. Apart from the work journey, shopping trips are the most regular journeys that most people make and, for this reason, good public transport to and from shops that offer a range of affordable goods and services can be an important indicator of social inclusion.

Both the fixed-route services, the Braunstone Bus and the Trevithick Link, are clearly enormously popular as shopper buses, with 56 per cent and 49 per cent of survey respondents respectively stating this as their primary reason for using the services.

In Braunstone, there are two shopping areas that residents can access directly using the 302: Beaumont Leys and the city centre. The people we interviewed said that they liked having a choice of where to shop without having to pay extra. A number of people commented on how they are able to go shopping more frequently because, with the 302, it is more convenient and cheaper as they only have to take one bus. Regardless of the destination, all interviews stated that access was much easier, not only because it was a direct route but also because the layout of the bus makes it easier for families with pushchairs – they don't have to fold them. For older people, the lower-floor buses make it easier to board the bus and, for people with heavy loads of shopping, there are places to put the shopping and bus stops are near their homes.

The Trevithick Link has also, reportedly, made shopping easier. The main conveniences that our interviewees commented on were the position of the bus stop and the fact that it was right outside Tesco and the bus has a ramp, so passengers do not have to step up into the bus. The low-floor element of the bus means that some people wait specifically for this service:

> And it's lovely because you can literally have your shopping and jump on the bus and that is, to me, that is perfect. Yes, but these buses you can get your kids on, you don't need to take a buggy at all because you get off the bus, you walk from here to say the end of this building here and you're in Tesco's. (Single female with children, Trevithick Link, Cornwall)

A large number of people on all three bus services talked about how the services have allowed them to undertake more social and leisure activities. More regular visits to older family members were particularly noted, but also social trips more generally.

Case study 4: Trevithick Link bus passenger

Miss J from Cornwall is aged 36–45 and a single mother with two children. She has lived in Camborne all her life and relies heavily on the Trevithick Link to visit her mother and for taking her children to school and leisure activities, as she doesn't have access to a car.

On average, she uses the bus two to four times a week, mainly to visit her mother and for shopping:

> Now there's only one First bus that goes round my mum's way and there used to be two and then it stopped and then it got a bit of a problem because I live over a mile away from my mum or Lidl or anything like that and there's a lot of places that we couldn't go, not just to my mum's, it was other places as well. But now these T buses are on, I can go to my mum any time during the day. The only day I can't go anywhere is on a Sunday because they don't run on a Sunday, so it's a bit awkward in that respect because, if I want to take my kids swimming, I've got to make sure I go on a Saturday.

Prior to the Trevithick Link, she used First buses but found them unreliable and more expensive:

> I tried to catch a First and I was waiting for over an hour-and-a-half for these buses and I was getting cross, so in the end I had a taxi and because, you know, my children was quite upset … they are quite nice as well but as well, see, First bus is dearer. There is a difference of about 20, I know it's not a lot, but it's about 20p, 20–30p.

She stated that she would struggle and that it would be very difficult for her, her children and her mother if the service was unavailable because they would have to either walk or take a taxi everywhere, which would become very expensive for them. This had already been the case when the Trevithick Link stopped serving a bus stop near the children's school:

> Before the T buses I used to walk … it was brilliant for my mum, my mum could pick my kids up [from school] and it's actually, I said to her, I said don't worry about it, we'll try and fit something else in. She said no, you know, she usually do it. So she pays for a taxi to bring my kids, which is £4 odd.

Use of the Wythenshawe Local Link service for shopping and leisure activities was seen as less important by survey respondents. This may be largely because there is a good range of local shops and amenities within the neighbourhood.

Non-users of services and wider community benefits

It is clear from our surveys and interviews that the four initiatives we studied have been of huge benefit to the people who use them and who, thus, value them highly. It is not possible to tell how the rest of the people living in communities they serve value these services, as our study did not have adequate resources to explore this issue. However, it is likely that a great deal of the people who live in these neighbourhoods never or rarely use these services because they have their own private transport or do not need or want to travel outside their own neighbourhoods, or because, for whatever reason, the services do not meet their accessibility needs.

We do know that, for reasons of continued viability, since its inception, the Braunstone Bus has had to reduce its coverage and that parts of the estate and Fosse Park shopping centre are no longer served. Some respondents to our survey raised this issue as a problem of the service. We also know from our surveys with users of the Wythenshawe Link service that they are not always able to get a booking for reasons of over-demand and for this reason a number of people felt that the service should be expanded.

The biggest consistent complaint we heard across all four studies was that people wanted more of the same – whether this be increased coverage to other areas or new destinations, greater frequencies of service (especially in the evenings and at weekends) or more vehicles. As one interviewee enthusiastically commented:

> Well give the company more money, more money to carry on or make the company more, better … more buses, more buses on the route would be a lot better. (Single employed male, Trevithick Link, Cornwall)

Clearly, not all people who experience social exclusion have transport problems and not all transport problems lead to social exclusion. Where lack of transport is

an issue, however, projects that aim specifically to reduce the cost of travel, provide personalised travel information and training, and improve access to employment and other key destinations can be a big part of the overall solution, as our interviews and surveys have shown. The big problem is that they are rarely commercially viable and, at present, their 'value' to social welfare objectives is poorly recognised by both central government and local practitioners. For these reasons, in the analytical stages of our research, we attempted to articulate the wider social benefits of our four case studies, which is the key focus of the next chapter of this report.

7 Evaluating the social benefits of new transport initiatives

In general, it is quite rare for new bus projects in the UK to be subjected to any post hoc or ex ante evaluation at all. Urban Bus Challenge initiatives were funded on the basis of the social inclusion and regeneration benefits they would bring to the areas they served, but at no time was this articulated or assessed in terms of monetarised benefits to individuals, or number of jobs or other activity opportunities created.

In most instances, the sole success criterion for these new transport projects was that they would become commercially viable by the end of the stated funding period. Where this has not been the case, further funding support is needed for them to continue to operate. We hope that, by articulating the social benefits of our four case study examples, a benchmark can be developed against which other similar projects of this nature can be evaluated.

There are a number of different ways by which it is possible to evaluate the overall social benefits of new transport initiatives such as the ones we have studied. These can be seen as benefits to the individual in terms of travel cost and journey time savings, or that the service has allowed them to make additional trips that they would not have undertaken without it.

There are also wider benefits to society that can be considered, although these are more difficult to calculate accurately and must be based on estimated figures of option values (i.e. the benefit to the local community of having the additional travel option of that service), which can be vital where no alternative form of transport is available.

There may be additional social values attached to certain types of journeys, where these are considered to be of wider benefit to the UK economy. An example is where someone has been able to take up work or keep a health appointment. The exact calculation of these benefits is even more uncertain and can only be hinted at within traditional cost benefits, such as those recommended by the Department of Transport under its WebTag guidance (Department for Transport, 2007).

Capturing the benefits of improved accessibility to health services

There has been considerable research carried out on behalf of the Department of Health by the Personal Social Services Research Unit at the University of Kent on the unit costs of a huge range of NHS services, from accident and emergency investigation to the cost of a general outpatient appointment for an adult requiring mental health treatment (Curtis and Netten, 2006). However, in so much as it has been possible to assess within the limited scope of this study, there appears to be no commonly agreed formula or unit cost attributed to a hospital outpatient appointment per se or what contribution the ability to physically access an appointment makes to overall service delivery or patient well-being.

Capturing the employment benefits of improved accessibility

Similarly, in the employment sector, there appears to be no agreed method for calculating the cost of enabling an unemployed person to re-enter the labour market. There has been some research to assess the effectiveness of particular parts of the Jobcentre Plus service (e.g. a National Audit Office review of personal advisers) by benchmarking with other comparable agencies. This does include some figures for contractual payments made when clients start a job. However, as for the NHS, a commonly agreed figure for a job start could not be found (Van Stolk *et al.*, 2006). A further complication in this respect is that the improved transport is often only one of a raft of interventions to assist the transition from welfare into work and it is unclear what weighting to attach to its contribution within the overall benefit. It is also unclear from the data collected in our survey how long the people who took up a new job were employed for. This would also have an influence on the social value of that job take-up.

Finally, it is even more difficult to attach a monetary value to the quality of life benefits and social capital that accrue from the introduction of new transport services and the improved accessibility they bring. These can take the form of increased opportunities and activity, reduced isolation and increased feelings of security and confidence that many of the users of the service described to us during our interviews. In some instances, although usually only with major infrastructure projects, there can be secondary neighbourhood effects, such as reduced incidence of crime, regeneration and increased economic activity.

In this section of the report, we have attempted to calculate some of the more easy to capture social benefits to individuals from the new services and provide estimates of what they might imply in terms of the overall 'value' of the service over one year of operation. We have also attempted to assess their value for money in terms of ongoing subsidies and on costs in comparison with similar local services. It should be noted, however, that these are based on very rough calculations using the data and methodologies that were available to us, and should not be considered to represent a full cost benefit analysis of the service. Finally, we have identified the levels of growth in patronage that can be attributed to each service and have offered estimates of the new types of activities that have been undertaken as a result of the improved accessibility or opportunity they provide. More information on the methods used in these calculations can be found in Appendix 2.

Summary of the benefits arising from these new transport projects

It is not our intention to compare the performance of these services against each other, as each is operating in quite a different local context and under different service conditions. Rather our intention has been to demonstrate that, when compared to the initial grants that were allocated to initiate and subsidise the operation of these services over the first five years, they have brought significant social benefits to the people who use them. In addition, they have created the opportunity to access new key activities that these people were previously excluded from.

Table 5 offers an overview of the performance of each service over one year of operation against the total grant subsidy for each of the four projects.

Table 5 Performance figures for case studies based on patronage data 2005–06 and our own surveys conducted in 2006–07

	Total grant (£) awarded	Total trips p.a. (£)	User benefits p.a. (£)	Patronage growth (%)	Employment uptake (%)	New health trips (%)	Other new trips (%)	Current subsidy
Braunstone Bus	1.595m	282,466	661,000	15	7	42	41	52p per trip
Trevithick Link	800,000	59,017	80,000	5	67	17	29	£1.48 per trip
Walsall WorkWise	127,974	732 referrals	21,000	n/a	53	n/a	n/a	£123 per client
Wythenshawe Local Link	682,000	43,946	88,000	40	0.6	23	44	£4.46 per trip

Overall patronage

- Based on on-bus ticket machine data, the total annual number of trips undertaken on the Braunstone Bus for the one-year period April 2005 to March 2006 was 282,466. The current average weekly trip rate is approximately 5,100.

- Based on on-bus ticket machine data, the total annual number of trips undertaken on the Trevithick Link for the one-year period April 2005 to March 2006 was 59,017. The current average weekly patronage for the Trevithick Link service is 993 passengers.

- Including its advice service, Walsall WorkWise helped a total of 732 people in 2005 (one year). Data collected by WorkWise identified that, from January 2004 to September 2006, 654 people were provided with one-day passes to assist them in getting to interviews and 3,554 people were provided with longer-term passes to access new jobs. In addition, 153 passes were issued to those living in the New Deal for Communities footprint. This has far surpassed the annual targets set by Centro, which were 300 passes to access interviews and 200 passes to access jobs.

- The bookings database for the Wythenshawe Local Link service recorded that there were 761 service users in the 26-week period from 21 July 2006 to 9 January 2007. In total, they accounted for 22,852 journeys of the same time period. We grossed this figure up to represent a year's travel (50 weeks), which is equivalent to 43,946 trips.

Cost savings to individuals

- Based on the calculations and figures as described in Appendix 2, the total annual cost savings to individuals arising from the Braunstone Bus as a result of a combination of bus or taxi fare or journey time savings is £661,000.

- The estimated total annual cost savings to individuals arising from the Trevithick Link service as a result of a combination of bus or taxi fare or journey time savings is £80,000.

- The cost savings to individuals figure for the Walsall WorkWise initiative is based on the monetary value of the travel cards that were issued to clients over one year, which was £21,000.

- The estimated total annual cost savings to individuals arising from the Wythenshawe Local Link as a result of a combination of bus or taxi fare or journey time savings is £88,000. Most of this additional value can be attributed to the door-to door nature of the service, which has allowed it to replace far more expensive taxi rides.

Patronage growth derived from improved accessibility

Across all three of the new bus services, the figure for patronage growth is significantly more than could be anticipated from the fare reductions and journey time savings that would normally have arisen from the introduction of a new bus service, which is generally accepted as 30 per cent growth (see Balcombe *et al.*, 2004). This suggests that the new services have also created the opportunity for people to undertake wholly new activities as a result of the increased accessibility they bring. This should be seen as an additional social benefit arising from the service.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to calculate a monetary value for these new activities, as there is no agreed single value for a new employment activity, or health visit, or shopping trip, as noted above. For this reason, we simply provide figures for the level of patronage growth that can be ascribed to new accessibility and use this to calculate the level of new activities that have arisen as a result of this, as follows.

- Approximately 15 per cent of the overall growth in patronage on the Braunstone Bus is due to the improved accessibility to key destinations that has been created by the service.

- On the basis of our calculations, approximately 5 per cent of the overall growth in patronage on the Trevithick Link is solely as a result of the improved accessibility it provides to key destinations.

- It is not appropriate to calculate a figure for patronage growth for the Walsall WorkWise initiative.

- On the basis of our calculations, the improved accessibility as a result of the Wythenshawe Local Link would account for approximately 40 per cent of its overall growth in patronage.

Employment benefits

- Of the people we surveyed on the Braunstone Bus, 34 (7 per cent) said that they were able to get a job as a result of the service. It can also be noted that a further 115 people (23 per cent) were able to keep their job and 7 people (1 per cent) said they had secured a better job because of the service. In addition, of the 155 people who regularly use the Braunstone Bus to access employment, 16 would be unable to get to work without the service.

- Of the people we surveyed on the Trevithick Link service, 100 of them (67 per cent) said that they were able to get a job as a result of the service, a further 44 people (30 per cent) were able to keep their job and one person (0.7 per cent) had secured a better job because of the service. Of the 64 people that regularly use the service to access employment, 28 people said they would be unable to do so without it.

- Of the people we surveyed through our postal survey, 84 (53 per cent) said that they were able to get a job as a result of the Walsall WorkWise initiative, a further 47 people (30 per cent) were able to keep their job and seven people (4 per cent) had secured a better job.

- Of the people we surveyed, only one person (0.6 per cent) said that they were able to get a job as a result of the Wythenshawe Local Link service, but a further 19 people (11 per cent) said that they were able to keep their job and three people (2 per cent) had secured a better job because of the service. In addition, of the 66 people who regularly use the service to access employment, nine said they would be unable to get to work without it.

Health benefits

- Our survey suggests that, in any one week, approximately 146 of the 220 or more people who regularly use the Braunstone Bus to access health care would not be able to do so without it. This is largely because it is the only bus in Leicester that directly serves Glenfields Hospital and also directly links people living in Braunstone with Leicester Royal Infirmary.

- The Trevithick Link on-bus survey identified that 17 per cent of those surveyed would not be able to access health-care services without the service. Ten of the 16 people who regularly use the bus to access health care would be unable to do so without it.

- Promoting health trips was not a feature of the Walsall WorkWise initiative.

- Twenty-three per cent of those surveyed said that they would be unable to access health-care services without the Wythenshawe Local Link service. Of the eight people who regularly use the service to get to their doctor or the hospital, three said they would not be able to make these trips without it.

Wider quality of life benefits

- In terms of wider quality of life benefits, more than 200 people in our survey (41 per cent) said that the Braunstone Bus had allowed them to do a lot more with their leisure time. In addition, 56 people said they would not have been able to make the trip out at all without the bus. These suppressed trips can be considered as a further indicator of transport exclusion.

- Forty-three of the 149 people we surveyed (29 per cent) said they had been able to do more with their leisure time as a result of the Trevithick Link service. Four per cent of people said they would not have been able to make the surveyed trip at all without the service.

- Promoting shopping and leisure trips was not a feature of the Walsall WorkWise initiative.

- Forty-four per cent of those surveyed said that they had been able to do a lot more with their leisure time as a result of the Wythenshawe Local Link service. Sixty of the 180 people we surveyed (33 per cent) stated that they had used the Local Link service because there were no other transport options available to them. What is more, although it is now free for older people with concessionary passes to travel on public transport services after 9.30am, survey figures for the Wythenshawe Local Link demonstrate that more people with concessionary fare passes use the service than single fare users. This implies either that people are prepared to pay a premium for the privilege of a door-to-door service or that the service is capturing people who have difficulty accessing ordinary public transport services.

Value for money

- At its present operating level, the Braunstone Bus receives a per passenger trip subsidy of 52p. This compares with other services operating on similar urban routes and supported by Leicestershire County Council as follows:
  - route 40/41 outer circle = £0.57;
  - route 55 = £1.76;
  - route 162 = £0.72.

- The Trevithick Link is a tendered service. This means that the operator is paid a fixed cost for running the service by Cornwall County Council and is able to retain the fare income. For this reason, it is difficult to calculate a net subsidy per passenger trip cost. However, for the year April 2005 to March 2006, it is possible to arrive at a figure based on the original tender price for the T21 route (£1,677 per week). This is £1.48 subsidy per passenger trip. This compares to the following figures for other bus services in West Cornwall, calculated by Steer Davies Gleave, as part of an overall review of subsidised bus services in Cornwall. The routes selected are those with a similar mileage to the Trevithick Link route:
  - route 38/39 = £1.29;
  - route 41/41b = £1.00.

  Although the Trevithick Link service is costing more per passenger head than these other services, it still appears to offer value for money for Cornwall County Council.

- Cost benefit analysis of the Walsall WorkWise initiative identifies that WorkWise costs on average approximately £123 per successful job entry. This appears to be good value for money, since it costs the Government £187.40 (for those aged 18–24) and £236.60 (for those over 25) just to pay Jobseeker's Allowance to that person over the same period of the travel card payment (four weeks) (Department for Work and Pensions, 2007).

- The Wythenshawe Local Link is also a tendered service, which means that any surplus revenue is retained by the operator. Based on figures provided to us by Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE), the average subsidy per passenger trip is £4.46. This compares with an average cost per passenger trip for all GMPTE-tendered DRT and shared taxi services of £5.50. This again suggests that the service is providing acceptable value for money. On this basis, GMPTE has stated an intention to seek to continue to fund the Wythenshawe Local Link once the Urban Bus Challenge Fund subsidy runs out later this year.

8 Conclusions and recommendations

Our study has looked at four very different transport initiatives out of a potential sample of thousands, so can offer only an indicative picture of the situation across the UK. Nevertheless, some broad conclusions can be drawn from the evidence we have collected and some lessons for future policy and practice can be highlighted.

The study highlights that all the projects are perceived as hugely beneficial to the people who have used them. Where transport is a key factor in a person's inability to participate fully in society, projects like these can make a significant contribution to their social inclusion and quality of life. In the case of major schemes, they can also lead to wider neighbourhood regeneration benefits.

Clearly not everyone who experiences social exclusion has a transport problem and transport is not always the most important issue for people living in deprived neighbourhoods. Our study has not attempted to engage with the people who do not make use of these initiatives (even if they may need to) because it is difficult to identify and track non-users through the surveys we have undertaken. It is likely that the majority of people who have slipped through the net of these services do so because there are other more pressing reasons why they cannot take up employment or training, such as skills shortages, low wages or long-term illness.

In other instances, these services might not be successfully meeting the transport needs of everyone living in deprived communities – for example, some people might already have cars, or have a physical disability that prevents them using such services, or be unable to afford the cost of the fare, or have fears about their personal safety. It should also be noted that the people who do not use the new transport services that have been introduced might well represent the majority of the population in many deprived areas.

Another question is whether those people who are most in transport need are getting to the activities they need for their social inclusion. As this study has an urban focus, it does not address rural transport issues where people's situation might be made worse by a general lack of local facilities. Is public transport the solution in these more isolated areas or do people need better access to cars, either through supported private ownership or membership of community-based car clubs?

Whatever the outcome of these wider philosophical debates, it is clear that public transport does and will continue to have a significant role to play in both the exclusion and inclusion of low-income individuals and communities. Our interviews

with the local professional stakeholders charged with promoting the social inclusion of local people and the regeneration of their neighbourhoods highlighted the fact that providing transport services cannot alone address the difficulties caused by a 'workless' culture; this requires a number of different interventions.

However, transport was widely acknowledged by the officers we spoke to as a significant barrier to enabling people to find a job or return to work. Providing information and support is seen as just as important as bus or other transport services. Providing links to key facilities and other services such as shopping and health facilities was also highlighted as hugely important to social inclusion, building social capital and the general quality of life of people living in deprived neighbourhoods.

In most cases, the services were filling gaps in the commercial bus network and helping to prevent communities from becoming isolated. Generally, all the initiators of these projects identified either crises or, at the very least, difficulties with securing future funding for these services in the context of wider local transport provision in their areas. They simultaneously recognised that their withdrawal could have a hugely detrimental impact, not just on the lives of local people, but also on the prospects for neighbourhood renewal in the areas they serve. We identify this as an important policy dilemma, particularly in the context of the wider imperative to reduce car travel and car dependency in the interests of climate change.

Messages to central government

If the UK Government is serious about its commitment to improving the lives of people experiencing social exclusion through the improved public transport accessibility of deprived neighbourhoods, it needs to wake up to these local difficulties and act quickly, before it is too late. This is increasingly relevant in the context of the global imperative to get people out of their cars in the interests of the environment. Without adequate public transport facilities in these neighbourhoods, people will increasingly see car ownership and use as their only viable way to get around.

A comprehensive national review of both the commercial and socially necessary bus provision is needed in low-income areas to clearly identify where there are shortfalls in existing services. We feel that a new local funding stream should then be identified to address these shortfalls in the next HM Treasury Spending Review and allocate this to the relevant transport authorities as an additional ring-fenced element in their Local Transport Plan allocation. In order to afford this new subsidy, the Treasury

might need to reconsider the national framework for the provision of concessionary fares and school transport, and redirect the focus of funding towards financially deprived individuals and households.

From our interviews with key local stakeholders and the people using the services that they provide, policy-makers and practitioners need to do the following to achieve these outcomes.

- Ensure that there are frequent, reliable and affordable mainstream public transport services to key destinations (not just during the weekday peaks but also into the evenings and at weekends – especially Sundays). For shift workers, very early morning and late night services are also required.

- Provide help with the cost of transport to make it more affordable for people on low incomes to travel, e.g. the scheme introduced in 2007 by Transport for London for people on Income Support, although this may not continue in its present form (and/or set low standard fares generally).

- Offer (personally) tailored travel information and advice about what services are available (and, in some cases, skills training to use these).

- Provide supporting, flexibly routed, door-to-door (or taxi) services around estates in some instances, e.g. for night workers, mobility-impaired travellers and in very high crime areas.

- Consider a range of car- and taxi-sharing and car-club options in low-income areas to supplement the public transport network.

Our study suggests that, in general, the transport needs of socially excluded groups cannot be met through the traditional commercial bus network, as the relevant services are unlikely to be commercially viable and will require revenue subsidies to support them. All four of the projects we researched are under threat from lack of continued funding support. This means that the opportunity to roll out this good practice more widely is extremely limited, despite the clear need for this throughout the UK.

Messages to front-line workers promoting social inclusion

An often hidden, but key element of these projects is how they have helped to address the psychological issues of people experiencing social exclusion over the long term through:

- transport accessibility opening up opportunities to work and demonstrating local journey possibilities in terms of accessing education or other activities;

- educating people on travelling further than their local area;

- raising people's aspirations by enabling them to get out – for example, older people who might otherwise be housebound as they are unable to walk long distances.

Once a service is up and running, the most important journey purposes for those who use the service might not always be the same as those originally targeted when the services were planned. In addition, services can often have secondary or hidden benefits, which are difficult to predict or fully value, but are nonetheless important and highly relevant to social inclusion.

When funding such initiatives, it is necessary to look at the longer-term impacts. Introducing services raises people's expectations. If the service is withdrawn, the risk is that people not only go back to how they were but also feel 'bitterness' about the loss of both the service and the opportunities it generated.

Evidence from the case studies has shown that regeneration and an appropriate transport network go hand in hand, as the following examples show.

- In Braunstone, a new health centre was built without consulting the public transport providers. As a result, the topography made it impossible to redirect the bus services and now everyone has to walk up a steep hill. This is particularly difficult for older people, those who are mobile impaired and those with small children, so they often have to get a taxi.

- Demonstrating that an area has a good transport system can raise the value of property and be used as an incentive to encourage people to move into the area.

- A good transport system is often an attraction for employers coming into the area.

Finally, the success of transport projects in terms of regeneration and improving accessibility relies on the complete dedication of the providers and 'good communication' between all parties.

Further work

Our research suggests that there is a clear and urgent need to establish a robust, easy to apply and commonly agreed method for evaluating the wider societal benefits of public transport services. We would argue that this requires evaluation methodology to do more than capture the journey time and fare cost savings to individuals benefiting directly from the service. In common with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (Transport Scotland, 2006), we feel that there are four key elements that need to be 'valued' in this respect:

1. the frequency with which each service is used – i.e. the demand for that service;

2. the consequences of the person not being able to access the services;

3. the stated concerns of the affected groups about not being able to access the services;

4. the value of equity to the affected community.

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Appendix 1: Research design, methods and analysis

The research was designed to build on and complement our earlier studies of this topic, and other relevant past and ongoing studies. The study took a case study approach involving:

- a review of unpublished or 'grey' literature;

- interviews with key professional stakeholders;

- user surveys;

- in-depth interviews with service users;

- calculation of the benefits of services.

Review of grey literature

To identify the range of different transport initiatives currently funded in the UK for the purposes of social inclusion; key client groups/users of these services; and the overall annual cost to the State of funding such projects and what this represents as a share of the total UK transport budget. Also to identify and inform the selection of suitable case studies.

Case study selection

Four currently operating initiatives were selected for more thorough exploration on the basis of the above review and on the advice of our advisory group and other key 'experts'. The case studies were chosen to reflect:

- a range of different transport interventions;

- the different journey types and destination activities that have been enabled as a result of the transport intervention;

- the different population groups making use of these services, e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, etc.;

- the willingness of the project to participate in the study and a 'reasonable body' of client data in relation to levels of patronage, origin and destination, journey purpose, population group, cost of service, subsidy levels, etc.

Key professional stakeholder interviews

In each case study, six to eight interviews were conducted with key professional stakeholders involved in the delivery of these projects and/or some aspect of administration of the areas they serve in each neighbourhood (26 interviews were achieved in total). Attempts were made to strike a balance between stakeholders that have been active in the development and delivery of projects and those that are more removed from this process, but with a budgetary control over the local spending streams that could fund them or facilitate their future funding.

The key aim of the interviews was to elicit their opinions regarding the value of the project to the regeneration process and the social inclusion of local people. Information was sought on the following:

- location and local context for the project available (e.g. local services, housing tenure, characteristics of local population, extent of public transport network, levels of car ownership, etc.);

- local policy objectives and how transport supports/interacts with these;

- project objectives, operation and user eligibility criteria;

- funding sources, revenue and costs;

- the capacity of the initiative and levels of take-up or patronage by activity type;

- perception of the impacts on individuals (change in employment status, education take-up, health visits, etc.);

- perceptions of the wider benefits and long-term outcomes for the area (neighbourhood renewal/regeneration, reduced health inequalities; prolonged independence, etc.).

Interviews were used to identify where there were problems with, or barriers to the delivery of, these projects and/or the wider roll-out of such interventions, i.e. funding, institutional or organisational structures.

End user surveys

While the main intention of this study has been to give 'a voice' to the people who use these projects, it was clearly impossible to interview every client. For this reason, it was felt important to augment the interview data with information about the overall numbers of people using the service and their reasons, in order to make inferences about the overall 'value' of such projects. This was achieved by undertaking supporting postal, telephone or on-bus surveys with a sample of all users of each service, as follows.

- Braunstone Bus, Leicester: on-bus surveys by the Social Inclusion Team of the Braunstone Community Association over one week with 511 passengers, whose weekly travel (based on their survey responses) represents approximately 43 per cent of the average weekly passenger trips on the service.

- Trevithick Link, Cornwall: on-bus survey by Cornwall County Council travel team of 149 passengers, whose weekly travel (based on their survey responses) represents approximately 86 per cent of the average weekly passenger trips on the service.

- WorkWise, Walsall: a postal survey by the Transport Studies Group research team of 159 beneficiaries of the initiative, which is approximately a 14 per cent sample of all users since the service began in 2004.

- Wythenshawe Local Link, Manchester: 180 telephone surveys were undertaken with service users by a market research company under the guidance of GMPTE and the University of Westminster. This was approximately 24 per cent of all users (761) of the service between 21 July 2006 and 9 January 2007. Their weekly travel (based on their survey responses) represents approximately 48 per cent of the average weekly trips for the service.

Interviews with end users

Between 16 and 25 in-depth interviews were conducted with service users at suitable local settings for each case study (81 interviews overall). Each interview

lasted approximately half an hour and was tape-recorded for transcription purposes. The participants were offered a financial incentive of £10 for attending the interview, to cover the cost of their travel and any other expense they might have incurred (e.g. childcare) by giving up their time. The key aim of these more qualitative interviews was to identify the value of the project to the individual and, where possible, its impact on their quality of life. Information was sought on:

- the personal circumstances and travel choices of the interviewee, e.g. employment status, income, single parent, car owner, etc.;

- their activity patterns, barriers to activity and transport use prior to the project, and their perceptions of the impact of this on their own lifestyle and quality of life, others in their household, their wider circle of family and friends, the local area in general;

- their use of the service (regularity, journey purpose, destinations, etc.) and their perceptions of the impact of this on their own quality of life, others in their household, their wider circle of family and friends, the local area in general;

- what withdrawal of the service/project might mean to their lives and the lives of others around them.

Appendix 2: Cost calculations for social benefits of transport

How figures were derived to calculate overall travel cost savings to individuals from the service, based on the cost of alternative transport options where these were stated

In order to compare the cost savings to individuals using each of the newly introduced services, we used a standard estimation of the weighted average cost per trip with and without the new service. To do this we used estimated number of trips for each ticket type based on standard estimations from Balcombe *et al.* (2004) – see Table A2.4 later in this appendix.

These figures were derived from the responses in our passenger surveys for the Braunstone Bus, Trevithick Link and Wythenshawe Local Link case studies (see Tables A2.1 to A2.3 below). The method was as follows.

- First, the weighted average cost per trip was calculated using the standard 'estimation of number of trips' (column 2) for the different ticket types (column 1) that were used by respondents of on-bus surveys we conducted in each of the three case study areas where new buses were introduced (Balcombe *et al.*, 2004).

- In the tables below, '*n*' (column 3) represents the number of respondents using each ticket type.

- The 'cost' calculation (column 5) is based on the actual cost for each ticket type for 2006–07 (column 4) for both the case study service (columns 1–6) and alternative services (remaining columns) that the respondents stated that they would use if the funded service was unavailable. For example, 239 respondents indicated they had bought a single ticket for the Braunstone Bus (Table A2.1) at a cost of £1.20. A single ticket is valid for one trip only, therefore the total cost calculation is as follows:

  1 x 239 x £1.20 = £286.80.

- For the 'alternative transport option' category, the respondents were further categorised according to the alternative service they said they would use if the case study service was unavailable to them, e.g. bus, taxi, etc.

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- It should be noted that concessionary fares for Braunstone Bus and Trevithick Link were excluded from the analysis because of the difficulty in making direct comparisons with alternative transport services, but were included in the Wythenshawe Local Link analysis.

- The same calculations were not appropriate at all for the Walsall case study, where no new buses were introduced. Here, our cost saving calculations were based solely on the reduced cost of their journey to work fares as a result of the travel vouchers they received (see Table A2.7 later in this appendix).

Table A2.1 Braunstone Bus (using data from survey responses)

	Braunstone Bus						Alternative transport option							
							First bus (2 buses)		First bus (1 bus only)		Taxi			
	1	2	3	4	5	6								
	Est. no. trips	n	Cost (£)	Total cost (£)	Total no. trips	Est. no. trips	n	Cost (£)	n	Cost (£)	n	Cost (£)	Total cost (£)	Total no. trips
Single*	1	239	1.20	286.80	239	1	39	3.00	39	1.50	15	7.00	280.50	93
Return**	2	12	2.00	24.00	24	2	3	6.00	–	–	–	14.00	18.00	6
Day travel ticket***	3	124	3.00	372.00	372	3	19	2.40	26	2.40	13	21.00	381.00	174
Weekly travel ticket***	10	35	12.00	420.00	350	10	9	9.60	3	9.60	1	70.00	185.20	130
Monthly travel card***	42	4	42.00	168.00	168	42	–	35.00	2	35.00	–	294.00	70.00	84
Total				*1,270.80*	*1,153*	*1,153*							*934.70*	*487*

*　There were multiple single ticket prices, therefore used the most common fare price that was identified during the survey.

**　No return tickets available from First buses, therefore double the cost of single ticket.

***　Travel cards cannot be used on buses run by other operators.

The cost per passenger trip for Braunstone Bus = £1,270.80/1,153 = £1.10.

The cost per passenger trip for the alternative transport options = £934.70/487 = £1.92.

On this basis, the net monetarised user benefit attributed to the Braunstone Bus is 82p per user per one-way trip.

Table A2.2 Trevithick Link (using data from survey responses)

| | Trevithick Link | | | | | Alternative transport option | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | First bus (1 bus only) | | Train | | Taxi | | | |
	Est. no. trips	n	Cost (£)	Total cost (£)	Total no. trips	Est. no. trips	n	Cost (£)	n	Cost (£)	n	Cost (£)	Total cost (£)	Total no. trips
Single*	1	96	1.70	163.20	96	1	21	1.70	1	1.30	8	10.00	117.00	30
Return	2	22	2.80	61.60	44	2	5	2.70	0	1.40	1	20.00	33.50	12
Weekly travel ticket	10	1	14.00	14.00	10	10	0	14.85	0	4.30	0	100.00	0.00	0
14 single journeys over 6 weeks	14	7	16.80	117.60	98	14	3	23.80	1	18.20	0	140.00	89.60	56
Total				*356.40*	*248*								*240.10*	*98*

* Taken maximum single fare for ease of comparison.

The cost per passenger trip for the Trevithick Link = £356.40/248 = £1.44.

The cost per passenger trip for the alternative transport options = £240.10/98 = £2.45.

The net monetarised user benefit attributed to the Trevithick Link is £1.01 per user per one-way trip.

Table A2.3 Wythenshawe Local Link (using data from survey responses)

| | Wythenshawe Local Link | | | | | Alternative transport | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | Stagecoach Bus (1 bus only) | | | Taxi | | | | |
	Est. no. trips	Cost (£)	n	Total cost (£)	Total no. trips	Est. no. trips	Cost (£)	n	n	Cost (£)	Total cost (£)	Total no. trips
Single*	1	1.50	76	114.00	76	1	2.00	39	18	7.00	204.00	57
Concessions	1	0.60	104	62.40	104	1	0.00	35	25	7.00	175.00	60
Total				*176.40*	*180*						*379.00*	*117*

* Taken maximum single fare for ease of comparison.

The cost per passenger trip for the Wythenshawe Local Link = £176.40/180 = £0.98.

The cost per passenger trip for the alternative transport options = £379.00/117 = £3.24.

The net monetarised user benefit attributed to the Wythenshawe Local link is £2.26 per user per per one-way trip.

Table A2.4 Weighted average cost per trip

	Funded service, average monetary cost/passenger trip (£)	Alternative services, average monetary cost/passenger trip (£)	Net saving per trip to respondent, the funded service (£)	Difference %	Ratio of demand applying a −0.4 pricing elasticity
Braunstone Bus	1.10	1.92	0.82	43	1.17
Trevithick Link	1.44	2.45	1.01	41	1.16
Wythenshawe	0.98	3.24	2.26	70	1.28

How figures were derived to calculate overall journey time savings benefits to individuals where the stated alternative transport option was to walk

Some survey respondents indicated that their only alternative travel option was to walk. In these instances, individual walk times were calculated for each trip based on bus stop origin and destination data from survey respondents as follows.

- Estimated average walk speed 83 metres/minute (this includes everyone who is aged between 26 and 65 years, and those who did not state their age group or that they were retired); for older people, those with restricted mobility and those whose main use of bus was for shopping 45 metres/minute and 110 metres/minute for younger people (16–25 years) (Transport Studies Group, 2005).

- Bus times were calculated from the bus schedules and additional five minutes was added for waiting time at the bus stop and then an average time for a walk distance of 400 metres (maximum distance to a bus stop), with the appropriate walk speeds applied.

- As per standard Department for Transport WebTag guidance (Department for Transport, 2007), for commuting trips, their time was costed at £5.15 per hour (in vehicle) or at £5.15*2.5 = £12.88 per hour (for walking). For all other trips, their time was costed at £4.55 per hour (in vehicle) or at £4.55*2.5 = £11.38 per hour (for walking).

- Costings for using the bus included an additional five-minute waiting time at the bus stop and a 400 metre walk time to the bus stop (this is a generally recognised standard walking catchment to a bus stop).

- It was not possible to undertake such calculations for the Wythenshawe Local Link, as origin and destination data was not collected in these surveys.

Braunstone Bus

- Ninety-eight people stated that they would walk if the Braunstone Bus was withdrawn. We were able to estimate the distances that they would walk (from origin and destination information given in the survey) for 93 of these respondents.

- The estimated walking time was determined by grouping the respondents to those who were 65+ (retired) or whose main purpose for using the bus was for shopping (55 respondents), and those who were between 16 and 25 years (16 respondents) and 26 and 64 years (22 respondents). The distances, which were in metres, were divided by the appropriate walk speed.

- Total journey time for the 93 respondents without the service = 7,158 minutes.

- Total journey time for the 93 respondents with the service = 2,677 minutes.

- Weighted average journey time without the service for the 93 respondents = 76.97 minutes.

- Weighted average journey time with the service for the 93 respondents = 28.79 minutes.

- Weighted average cost without the service for the 93 respondents = £15.20 per passenger trip.

- Weighted average cost with the service for the 93 respondents = £3.72 per passenger trip.

The net benefit per passenger whose stated alternative is walking is 48.18 minutes, with a net monetary benefit per passenger of £11.48 (time) – £1.10 (average monetary cost per passenger trip) = £10.38.

Trevithick Link

- Thirty people stated that they would walk if the Trevithick Link was withdrawn. We were able to estimate the time it would take them to walk (from origin and destination information given in the survey) for 29 of these respondents.

- The estimated walking time was determined by grouping the respondents to those who were 65+ (retired) or whose main purpose for using the bus was for shopping (16 respondents), and those who were between 16 and 25 years, excluding those whose main purpose for using the bus was for shopping (four respondents), and 26 and 64 years, excluding those whose main purpose for using the bus was for shopping (nine respondents). The distances, which were in metres, were divided by the appropriate walk speed.

- Total journey time for the 29 respondents without the service = 1,267 minutes.

- Total journey time for the 29 respondents with the service = 738.89 minutes.

- Weighted average journey time without the service for the 29 respondents = 43.72 minutes.

- Weighted average journey time with the service for the 29 respondents = 25.48 minutes.

- Weighted average cost without the service for the 29 respondents = £8.74 per passenger trip.

- Weighted average cost with the service for the 29 respondents = £3.46 per passenger trip.

The net benefit per passenger whose stated alternative is walking is 18.24 minutes, with a net monetary benefit per passenger of £5.28 (time) – £0.98 (average monetary cost per passenger trip) = £4.30.

How we calculated the aggregate travel cost and journey time savings benefits

Using these net monetarised user benefits to individuals, we attempted to gauge an aggregate annual user benefit for each service arising from their travel cost savings (see Table A2.6 later in this appendix). This was calculated as follows.

- Weekly patronage figures were obtained for each service. (Note that figures for Wythenshawe were based on an average weekly figure over a 26-week period from 21 July 2006 to 9 January 2007 based on number of journeys.)

- We first deducted the people who had indicated in the survey they would be walkers if the service was unavailable (hereafter called 'walkers') from the total number of current passengers, as these people would not have benefited from fares savings but rather from journey time savings, which were calculated separately (see section on 'How figures were derived to calculate overall journey time savings benefits to individuals where the stated alternative transport option was to walk' earlier in this appendix).

Table A2.5 Annual monetarised journey time savings benefit

	Current estimated patronage per week	Of which stated alternative would be walkers per week =	Net benefit per walker (£)	User benefit (£/week)	Annual (50 weeks) benefit (£)
Braunstone Bus	5,110	971	10.38	10,078.98	503,949
Trevithick Link	993	199	4.30	855.70	42,785

- Estimations of patronage prior to the services being introduced were then calculated based on the methods described by Balcombe *et al.* (2004). This assumes there are variations in the demand for services (elasticity) based on their convenience or attractiveness so, when a new transport service that offers reduced fares for passengers is introduced, it will generate some additional demand. A short-run price elasticity for new bus services of –0.4 may be assumed (Balcombe *et al.*, 2004), e.g. a 43 per cent overall reduction in fare cost, as for the Braunstone Bus, should produce a 17 per cent growth in passenger trips.

- This gave us weekly benefit per user, which was multiplied by 50 weeks (usual average annual operating period allowing for Christmas and bank holidays) to give an annual aggregate monetary benefit from fares savings.

Braunstone Bus

- The net benefit per 'walker' is 48.18 minutes, with a net monetary benefit per passenger of £11.48 (time – as calculated in the section on 'How figures were derived to calculate overall journey time savings benefits to individuals where the stated alternative transport option was to walk' earlier in this appendix) – £1.10 (fare) = £10.38.

- 1.17 (see Table A2.1) = the ratio between current level of use and the theoretical base if growth in demand due to purely the net monetary saving per trip and applying an established short-run price elasticity.

- Calculation for theoretical base: 5,110/1.17 = 4,368; identify ratio between current patronage (5,110) and calculated patronage (4,368), which gives 0.85.

- Therefore, theoretical base: (current patronage (5,110) – 'walkers' (971)) * 0.85 = 3,518.15.

- User benefit = (((4,139–3,518)*0.82)/2) ['new' trips]+ (3,518*0.82)[net monetary savings per trip multiplied by theoretical base demand] + (971*10.38)[net savings to those diverted from walk to bus] = ((621*0.82)/2) + 2,884.76 + 10,078.98 = 254.61 + 2,884.76 + 10,078.98 = £13,218.35 per week.

Note: There is a dominance of benefits to those diverted from walk to bus (76 per cent of the total).

Trevithick Link

- The net benefit per 'walker' is 18.24 minutes, with a net monetary benefit per passenger of £5.28 (time – as calculated in the section on 'How figures were derived to calculate overall journey time savings benefits to individuals where the stated alternative transport option was to walk' earlier in this appendix) – £0.98 (fare) = £4.30.

- 1.16 (see Table A2.2) = the ratio between current level of use and the theoretical base if growth in demand due to purely the net monetary saving per trip and applying an established short-run price elasticity.

- Calculation for theoretical base: 993/1.16 = 856; identify ratio between current patronage (993) and calculated patronage (856), which gives 0.86.

- Therefore, theoretical base: (current patronage (993) – 'walkers' (199)) * 0.86 = 682.84.

- User benefit = (((794–683)*1.01)/2)[new trips] + (683*1.01)[net monetary savings per trip multiplied by theoretical base demand] + (199*4.30))[net savings to those diverted from walk to bus] = ((111*1.01)/2) + 689.83 + 855.70 = 56.06 + 689.83 + 855.70 = 1,601.59 per week.

Wythenshawe Local Link

- 1.28 (see Table A2.3) = the ratio between current level of use and the theoretical base if growth in demand due to purely the net monetary saving per trip and applying an established short-run price elasticity.

- Calculation for theoretical base: 879/1.28 = 687.

- User benefit = (((879–687)*2.26)/2)[new trips] + (687*2.26) [net monetary savings per trip multiplied by theoretical base demand] = 216.96 + 1,552.62 = 1,769.58 per week.

Table A2.6 Annual aggregate monetarised user benefit from travel cost and journey time savings

	Current estimated patronage per week	Of which walkers per week =	Current patronage p(non-walkers) per week	Theoretical base if growth due to lower fares	User benefit (£/week)	Annual (50 weeks) benefit (£)
Braunstone Bus	5,110	971 (19%)	4,139	3,518	13,218.35	660,917.50
Trevithick Link	993	199 (20%)	794	683	1,601.59	80,079.50
Wythenshawe	879	–	–	687	1,769.58	88,479.00

Finally, in the case of Walsall WorkWise, it was not possible to calculate the benefits in the same way. However, using data collected by the scheme, it was possible to place a value on the total number of travel cards issued in the period of a year (1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007) – see Table A2.7.

Table A2.7 List of all tickets issued through WorkWise, 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007

Total number of tickets issued	Type of ticket	Number	%	Cost of ticket (£)	Total cost (£)
95	TWM Daysaver	95	11.56	2.50	237.5
13			1.60	2.45	31.85
19	Centrocard	19	2.32	5.80	110.2
39			4.74	5.40	210.6
171	1-week Black Country Faresaver	171	20.92	10.45	1,786.95
331	4-week Black Country Faresaver	331	40.26	35.75	11,833.25
0	1-week Regional Travel Card	0	0	13.70	0
2	4-week Regional Travel Card	2	0.24	46.50	93
5	1-week nbus	5	0.61	14.90	74.5
14			1.70	14.30	200.2
5	4-week nbus	5	0.61	50.50	252.5
35			4.26	48.50	1,697.5
9	1-week zone 1–4	9	1.09	20.40	183.6
9			1.09	19.60	176.4
10	4-week zone 1–4	10	1.22	71.00	710
28			3.40	68.00	1,904
1	1-week zone 1–5	1	0.12	22.10	22.1
2	4-week zone 1–5	2	0.24	75.00	150
5			0.61	72.50	362.5
5	1-week Birmingham and Black Country Faresaver	5	0.61	12.50	62.5
23	4-week Birmingham and Black Country Faresaver	23	2.80	42.25	971.75
821					21,070.9