



Older Londoners' perceptions of London streets and the public realm

Final Report

April 2016

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Background and approach

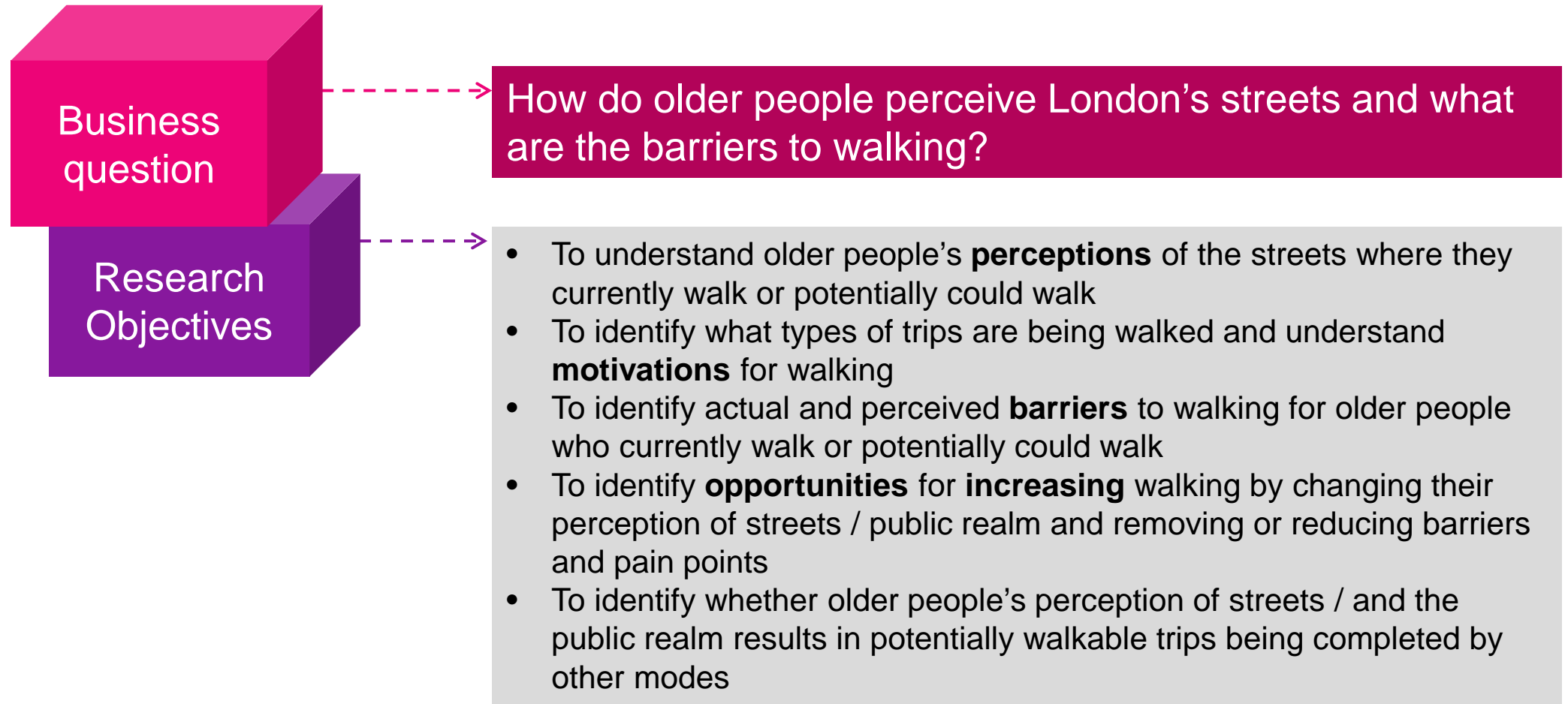
Background



- TfL are developing a new strategic approach to walking and as part of this would like to improve their understanding of the pedestrian experience, particularly among older people.
- We know that walking is good for everyone, helping people to stay active and spend time out of doors, particularly important as people get older and their health becomes more important. As well as being free, easy and environmentally friendly, walking is a great social activity and can improve older people's quality of life.
- With that in mind, TfL are keen to understand how older people feel about walking in London, their perceptions of London's streets and the urban realm and to identify opportunities for more walking trips.
- This research will help inform future projects and policies aimed at increasing the amount of walking done by older people and improving the experience of walking.



Objectives



Our research approach



Desk Research*

Review of all relevant research conducted to date that touched on older people's motivations, barriers and perceptions of walking



20 x 1hr accompanied journeys

Exploring customer perceptions first-hand through immersive customer journeys



3 x 1.5hr reconvened focus groups

Bringing participants together to share and discuss their experience and identify opportunities for new walking trips

*referenced in appendix

Who participated in our research?



	Gender	Age	Journey type	Walking frequency	SEG	Live in London
1	Male	65-74	Utility	At least 2-3-three times a week	BC1	Central/Inner
2	Female	65-74	Utility	At least 2-3-three times a week	C2D	Central/Inner
3	Male	75+	Utility	Walk once/twice a week	C2D	Central/Inner
4	Female	75+	Utility	At least 2-3-three times a week	BC1	Central/Inner
5	Female	65-74	Utility	At least 2-3-three times a week	BC1	Central/Inner
6	Female	65-74	Leisure	Walk once/twice a week	C2D	Central/Inner
7	Male	75+	Leisure	Walk once/twice a week	BC1	Central/Inner
8	Female	75+	Leisure	At least 2-3-three times a week	BC1	Central/Inner
9	Male	65-74	Leisure	Walk once/twice a week	C2D	Central/Inner
10	Male	75+	Leisure	Walk once/twice a week	C2D	Central/Inner
11	Female	65-74	Leisure	Walk once/twice a week	C2D	Outer
12	Male	65-74	Leisure	Walk once/twice a week	BC1	Outer
13	Female	75+	Leisure	At least 2-3-three times a week	BC1	Outer
14	Male	75+	Leisure	Walk once/twice a week	C2D	Outer
15	Male	65-74	Leisure	Walk once/twice a week	C2D	Outer
16	Female	65-74	Utility	At least 2-3-three times a week	BC1	Outer
17	Male	75+	Utility	At least 2-3-three times a week	C2D	Outer
18	Female	75+	Utility	Walk once/twice a week	C2D	Outer
19	Male	65-74	Utility	At least 2-3-three times a week	BC1	Outer
20	Female	75+	Utility	At least 2-3-three times a week	BC1	Outer



Headlines

A liveable city is one in which pedestrians and cyclists can move easily from one place to another and not have their use of the city determined by motorists.

Jen Gehl



Headlines



The older population of London are already primed to walk and walk more. TfL do not need to educate on the benefits – rather it is about how to influence and nudge behaviour to make walking their normal default.

- They know walking is good for them and a great form of exercise
- It is an easy and very cheap way to get around
- And it provides them with lots of benefits: independence/freedom, social connections, seeing new and interesting places, sense of habit and routine

Although they know and recognise the benefits of walking – they have personal, social and environmental barriers that get in the way of walking more often

- **Personal** barriers around their own physical and mental health as well as their own self-enforced routines and habits
- Walking has lost many of the **social** benefits, eg no one to walk with not, seeing familiar faces when out and about
- And **environmental** barriers around the perceived lack of care/consideration of street design and a lack of interesting things to see and do (eg green spaces, street-art, places to stop, rest and take it in, noise and pollution)

Thus in order to make London a true walking city, a strategy needs to:

- Personal – tap into their current habits and routines and see how walking can enhance those everyday experiences
- Social – help enable social connections and interactions
- Environmental – pedestrians do not feel as though they are London's priority. Streets need to feel safer and more inviting to both facilitate walking and enrich the overall walking experience.



What is important as you get older?

Older people in London are a very diverse audience

- Although 'officially' retired and over 65yrs, people in their 60s/70s/80s are not, despite stereotypes, 'all the same'
- They have a broad spectrum of health needs and different physical abilities
- And there is a real difference in their attitudes to being active

Health and physical ability



"I feel too able bodied for this research"



"I've had a hip replacement and bad arthritis"



"It's my fused toe that makes activity painful"



"I keep active, otherwise you get complacent and sit in the house all day"



"I'm just fundamentally a bit lazy"

Initiatives and communications need to reflect this broad spectrum

It is important to look beyond the stereotypes of older people as frail and forgetful



- Of all the stereotypes that we hold in society, our perceptions of older people is the most **strong, negative** and **pervasive***
- One of the main problems with this discrimination is that 'myths of ageing' are perpetuated through all areas of society**
- As early as seven years old, children have been found to hold very negative stereotypic views of older people**
- Society often believes that the process of ageing is a slow and steady decline, whereas in reality, it is often triggered through events or unexpected illnesses.*
- As a result it is often hard for 'older people' to relate to campaigns and messages targeted at older people as they do not often see themselves or want to see themselves in this way*



*Cuddy, Norton & Fiske, 2005; Langer, 2010
**Jantz, Galper & Serock, 1977

Their experience of London varies hugely depending on where they live



- Not as simple as an inner / outer London split
 - It is more dependent on the facilities and infrastructure of the area
 - As well as the services and policy of the local authority

- There is a big difference in how much the local area feels celebrated and loved.
 - Some areas benefiting from a thriving community scene with attractive places to frequent and pleasant local shops
 - Other areas feel more down at heel with less to offer

- There is a huge difference in the relative access to green spaces and parks
 - Eg Peckham and Lewisham feel built up and urban, whereas areas such as Wimbledon and Hampstead are orientated around large open spaces

- Services from different local authorities also vary widely.
 - For some street cleaning is a visible and regular weekly occurrence
 - For other authorities the level of upkeep can feel quite absent



Creating a sense of meaning and purpose in life united all respondents



Staying connected to their local area

- Home is bigger than the physical geography, it is about the memories and associations of a place. Their emotional map
- Feeling that they belong and have a place in their community is so important to this audience. They fear being lonely and invisible

“You want to meet nice people. Stepping out of the door and being able to say ‘Good morning’ to someone and have a response gives you a real boost”

Filling time with rewarding and purposeful activities

- This audience have a lot of time on their hands and they are actively looking for ways to fill their time
- Small tasks can become a catalyst to shape a whole day around

“There is only so much housework someone can do, sometimes I just put my clothes on and get out of the house. Just to go somewhere random. Go and have a cup of tea somewhere”

Staying independent

- Being autonomous and independent is key for this audience
- They are mindful of their age and do not want to become a burden to their family

“My independence is so important to me. I can go out where I want, when I want”

Looking after themselves

- Their health is a top concern
- Whether they are ‘healthy’ or have ‘health complaints’ they are conscious of their age and they want to remain active

“When you’re injured it reminds you just how fragile your health is”

Habit and routine play an important part in their lives and forms the fabric of their week

Taking the dog for a walk



Popping into the local shops, post office



Visiting the family and grandchildren



Visiting friends in the local area



Working part-time or volunteering



Attending church



Attending weekly group activities eg dancing



"I get the bus up the road to go to my dance class"

Browsing/window shopping



Stopping for beer/cake



Spending time and enjoying the parks



- This is the broad spectrum of regular, everyday habitual activities of our older audience. These are the trips they make on a regular basis.
- These habits represent opportunities to build walking into their everyday lives.
- To increase walking trips, potential for TfL to position walking as a way of enhancing existing behaviour / experiences.



How does walking support older people's needs?

This audience is already primed to walk



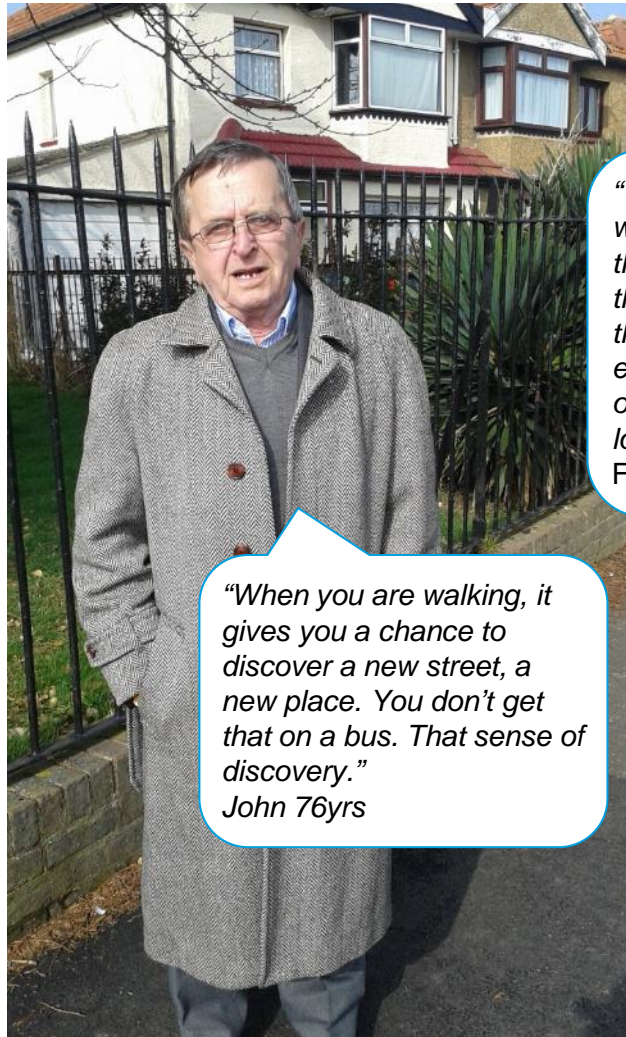
- Naturally, activity levels vary, but everyone knows walking is good for them.
 - Physically: good form of exercise
 - Psychologically: relieve anxiety/stress
 - Emotionally: relieve boredom and isolation. A great way to explore, discover and see more of their environment as well as new environments
- And at a rational level, walking is recognised as a cheap and accessible way of getting around



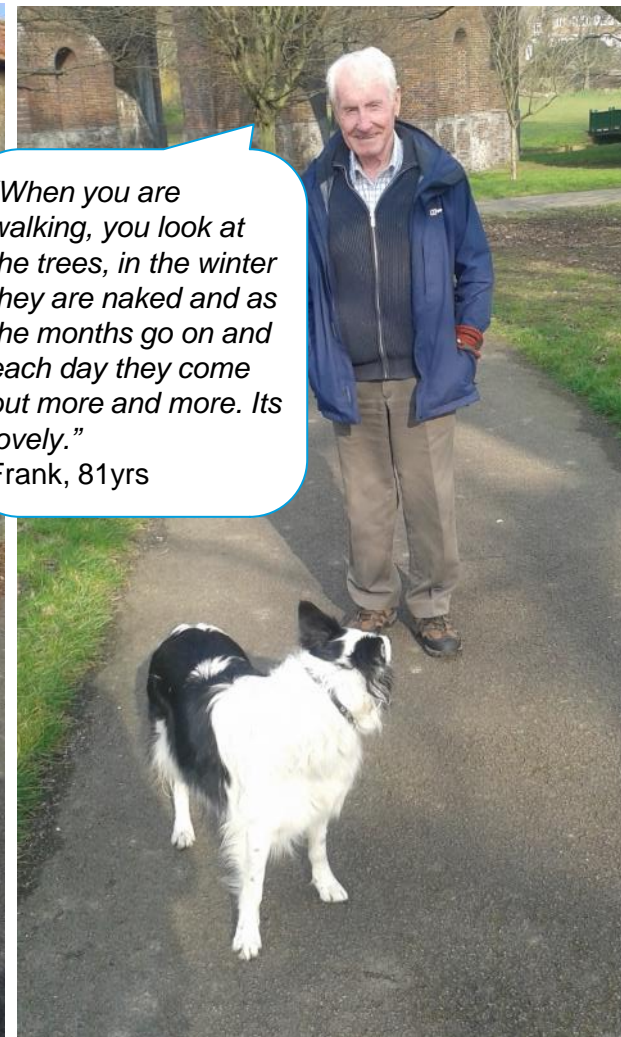
They also recognise that walks go beyond the utility



- Even the most 'functional' walk brings many positive associations to our older people's lives



"When you are walking, it gives you a chance to discover a new street, a new place. You don't get that on a bus. That sense of discovery."
John 76yrs



"When you are walking, you look at the trees, in the winter they are naked and as the months go on and each day they come out more and more. Its lovely."
Frank, 81yrs



"Walking is a celebration of your health and ability to get out"
Frances, 69yrs



"I love the city, the buildings are fascinating, the people are fascinating."
Barbara72yrs

Older people associate many emotional and functional benefits to walking

- Walking is often less about the destination and more about the incidentals along the way.
- London is constantly changing and evolving and walking is a chance to notice the little things around them
- From a new café/shop, to a hidden backstreet gem, to seasonal changes in nature, a walk can be stimulating and enjoyable

"When you walk you discover lots of little roads, beautiful houses and architecture"

Seeing new and interesting places

"You are a free agent, you can just get out of your house and walk"

Sense of freedom and independence

- Making journeys under their own steam is fundamental to feeling free and autonomous
- They are not being told what to do and are in charge of their own destiny

"I don't think I would know who I am if I didn't do my walking"

Sense of routine and habit

- Walking trips can fulfil a backbone to their everyday routine and habits
- Provide a sense of comfort and meaning
- Popping to the shop, collecting the paper, walking the dog can help shape someone's day

- Walking gets them out of the house and integrates them into the broader social environment
- Enables those little social interactions with neighbours and strangers (eg stopping and chatting to other people, ie other dog walkers)

Social connections

"If I couldn't walk I wouldn't interact with people and I think I would feel like a prisoner and feel isolated"

Keeping fit and active

"It does me good to walk, I can't sit down and do nothing, I'll go stiff and get bored"

- Walking is a free and accessible form of exercise
- Regardless of physical health, some form of walking is the easiest physical activity to incorporate into their day



RODNEY

About me:

I am married and 70 years of age. I am semi-retired and still manage to do a bit of consultancy work in London for some old clients. I've lived in Ealing Broadway for 30 years and love the area. It's changed a lot over the years, but it's still a lovely place to live.

"I love walking, it's great for the mind and soul. I'm out everyday to the same place for an hour at least. Sometimes I go out twice."

FOR ME, WALKING IN LONDON...

An absolute pleasure. Everyday I walk an hour, across the road to the local Nature Reserve (Fox Hill Park) and then go to Ealing Broadway to pick up the paper. Sometimes I will stop at the café and get a coffee. It takes about an hour.

I think about doing it every day, it's important to get out and about and keep fit and active.

It helps me to feel part of something. I see people I know in the local community when I walk down to the shops, which is always a pleasure.

When walking further afield it's great to meet new people and learn about the local area from them. I'll get on the tube and go into Hyde park or Kensington High Street. I love seeing London and being part of the city.

WHAT MOTIVATES ME TO WALK...

Knowing that I am getting exercise everyday and keeping up my physical health.

It's good for the mind as well, I love hearing the birds, seeing the changes in seasons. That's why I like the nature reserve so much. You can forget sometimes you are in London. I use the equipment in the park everyday and then I will have a little sprint, just at the very end. It's good to get the blood rushing.

I like the routine of doing this everyday, it doesn't matter what the weather is like, I go everyday.

"Seeing and hearing the birds, it makes you forget you live in a bit city"



WHAT PREVENTS ME WALKING MORE OFTEN

Nothing really, I make sure I fit it in everyday.

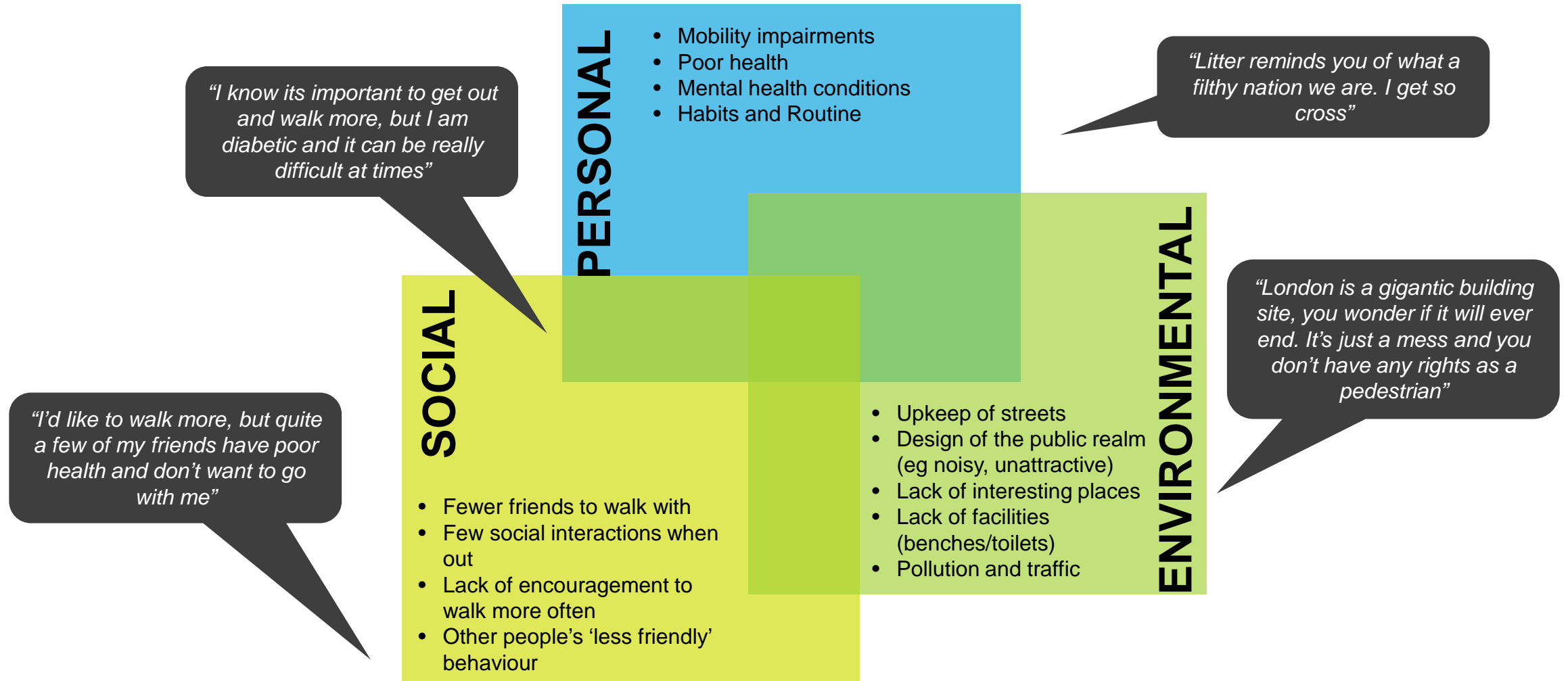
I don't want to moan too much about the streets, sometimes they look a bit scruffy, but it doesn't bother me too much.

It's a shame my wife doesn't like walking with me, it would be nice to go out with someone everyday.



What are the barriers to walking?

Despite many reasons to walk, there are key barriers that prevent more walking and overall enrichment of the experience



Older people recognise that they are moving slower as they get older



- While there is a clear awareness and understanding of the health benefits of walking, an individual's physical health can be a significant barrier
- Many older people lack physical mobility and have begun to rely on walking frames and sticks to help them get around and about
 - This can mean uneven surfaces, steep hills, lack of places to sit and rest, access to public transport can leave them feeling anxious about walking longer distances or more frequently
- In addition, poor health is an inevitable barrier to walking as it impacts their ability to go longer distances, as well as the overall enjoyment and pleasure in the experience
 - Growing number of older people suffering from diabetes due to poor diet / lack of exercise*
 - Arthritic or rheumatic pain
 - Hip / knee replacements
 - High blood pressure / stroke
 - Dizziness / fainting / balance problems



"I can get down to the local shops ok, but I'll get the bus back. The hill is a bit too much for me these days"

"I'd like to get out more, but I just don't have the energy. I have angina and it really affects my breathing"

Onset of mental health conditions can leave older people feeling vulnerable and anxious about walking more



- While no-one in our sample experienced any significant mental health problems, all were acutely aware of how these conditions affect people
- Nearly all agreed that they were generally becoming more forgetful as they got older
 - And they were seeing this among their peers and partners
- They recognised that it could impact confidence in a number of ways
 - Going / walking to new places
 - Going out on longer walks
 - Walking alone



"I try not to think about getting older, but you do forget things more easily. I just hope one day I don't forget how to get home"



BARBARA

About me:

I am 74 years of age and I'm widowed so I live on my own now. I've lived in London all of my life. I'm out and about a lot, I love the "buzz" of the West End and think there is nowhere better than Oxford Street. When I'm not out enjoying London I like reading, gardening and going to the cinema.

"I walk everyday, I can't do long distances or steep hills – like the one to the train station here, but I enjoy what I can do!"

FOR ME, WALKING IN LONDON...

I appreciate being able to walk in London – not everyone is able to at this age so I feel lucky.

Every week I meet up with a friend my age. We take the tube to Oxford Circus and walk up to Marble Arch, going in our favourite shops on the way – we do have to have a coffee break on the way to rest.

I walk to the Post Office once a week to collect my pension. There isn't a bus and it's a nice little walk.

I also visit my sister in Camden once a week and there's a 15 minute walk from the train station. You can get the bus but if the weather is lovely and sunny I like to walk it.

In the summer my friend and I go to Hyde Park, Regents Park and visit Brighton quite a lot – so there's always walking involved in those trips.

WHAT MOTIVATES ME TO WALK...

I go to Slimming World each week and they emphasise the benefits of walking.

On my walks I like meeting people in the area and chatting to the neighbours I know. It's also a good chance to nose around on everything that's going on – like building work and house extensions.

I used to always walk to the local school to collect my grandchildren – I enjoyed doing that, but now they've grown up so they've moved schools.

"I always walk to the Post Office to collect my pension. I pass lots of nice houses and I usually meet a neighbour on route"



WHAT PREVENTS ME WALKING MORE OFTEN

I had a hip replacement a few years ago and since then I've not been as mobile – I can only manage short distances now.

In my area the building work can make the street look messy, I wish they would clear it up after. And I'm always wary about my footing because of loose paving slabs – I know which ones to avoid but they can still catch you out.

In the centre of London there seems to be more people than ever around – they're all rushing and sometimes you can't get on the pavement. It can be a bit frightening.

"When we were younger it was a much more gentler place to be, it has got so busy now with so many buses and people around"



PATRICIA

About me:

I'm 69 years old and I've lived in Lewisham for 48 years. It hasn't changed much. I have 4 children and 6 grandchildren who live in London and Newark. I go to church on Lewisham High Street nearly every morning. It makes me go out instead of sitting here and playing on the computer!

"I notice the man sat outside the betting shop in the mornings and a man sleeping rough outside the pub. And the rubbish outside the estate agents. It's always there..."

FOR ME, WALKING IN LONDON...

I don't enjoy it or not enjoy it, it's just a thing you do. But if it was taken away from me I think I'd miss the freedom and the autonomy.

I don't enjoy walking up Oxford Street because of all the people.

You're always looking down when you're walking in London to make sure you don't trip up. I think the pavements are fairly dangerous. I know people who have fallen and then lost confidence with walking.

I don't particularly like walking in Lewisham High Street because of all the buses – there's a lot of pollution. It's probably my least favourite walk. There's no crossing point and it's very dangerous.

WHAT MOTIVATES ME TO WALK...

I walk more when I visit the grandchildren. We go to Enfield Park and I can't take the car because I don't have child seats. When you get there it's stunning. It's a completely different experience to Lewisham.

If you haven't been somewhere before, walking is more exciting. I've lived here all these years but I haven't seen the other part of the Heath. There's a novelty value. My favourite walk would be one I hadn't done before

There's miles of walking on the tube between platforms. I'd rather do it above ground.

"I walk to mass everyday. It gets me up in the morning and gets me out."

WHAT PREVENTS ME WALKING MORE OFTEN

I'm lazier than I am committed.

I wouldn't walk if it was piddling down with rain or if it was particularly windy

I stopped smoking in January and it's made me feel worse. I'm coughing and wheezing more when I walk.



For many, walking has lost some of its social benefits

- While social aspects of walking are clearly an important benefit, the lack of this can also serve as a barrier
 - London's transient population can result in a lack of neighbourliness / seeing familiar faces
 - Friends / family move away or passing away
- There is also a nostalgia for time gone by where people would be kinder and more friendly
 - No one smiles / says hello
 - People walking with their heads down looking at mobile phones
 - Too many people rushing and barging past
- In addition some older people simply do not have a network of friends that can encourage / motivate them to do more walking
 - Friends may walk less due to health conditions or they simply do not enjoy it
 - Becomes less 'normal' within social groups



"I used to walk everywhere a great deal, everyone did. Whereas now you're often on your own"



GORDON

About me:

I am married and 65 years of age. I am semi-retired, working part-time at the general hospital – it keeps me busy. When I’m not working I enjoy evening events, especially concerts, and during the day I often visit art galleries and music shops. I’ve lived in London for most of my life – 60 years, I couldn’t imagine living anywhere else!

“By far the best way to enjoy this fantastic city is by walking its streets, squares, parks, monuments, museums and art galleries”

FOR ME, WALKING IN LONDON...

A normal part of everyday life, and an enjoyable part at that. I always walk to work and I love walking around central London. My favourite walk there is to Somerset House – I like to make a trip of it, getting off the bus in Cambridge Circus and going to my favourite CD shop on the way.

Walking not only allows me to experience London’s sights but also its ever changing noises, textures and colours.

I read this article recently which talked about looking up and it struck a chord. It’s important to not only look ahead but also up (some of our rooftops are wonderful), down (basements and gutters can throw up the most extraordinary sights) and to the sides.

If you could buy any building in London and live there, which would it be? Cambridge House on Piccadilly. It has great proportions and light. I love living in Central London because the more you can walk, the more you see and understand. It is amazing how many Londoners do not look up above the ground floor of buildings.

WHAT MOTIVATES ME TO WALK...

If you’re walking you can stop at your own leisure and enjoy it all. I like to people watch, see what’s going on and take it all in.

It’s more social as well – you can stop to talk to people and see what’s changing in your neighbourhood.

We’re assured it’s good health wise as well! It keeps you moving and active.



“I always stop and speak to people in the markets. It’s a lively area with lots of interesting people”

WHAT PREVENTS ME WALKING MORE OFTEN

I always walk shorter journeys – if it’s 10-15 minutes nothing would stop me from walking.

If the journey is longer I might take a tube or bus. But sometimes I’ll get off a bit earlier and walk the rest if it’s a nice day and there’s something to see.

Some of the things that do annoy me are litter on the pavement, people spitting and too many street signs – I’m sure they’re unnecessary and they just look untidy!



The environmental barriers fall into two broad areas

PERCEIVED LACK OF CARE / CONSIDERATION

Street maintenance (litter)

Trip hazards

Lack of places to sit and rest

Lack of toilet facilities

Traffic congestion, noise and pollution

Bikes / cars on pavements

Confusing / poor street design (eg lack
of crossing points, narrow pavements)



*Overcoming these barriers will help
facilitate more walking*

LACK OF INTERESTING THINGS TO SEE / DO

Lack of green spaces / planting

Empty / abandoned shops

No local historical points of interest



*Overcoming these barriers will help
motivate more walking*

Many streets in London do not feel easy and safe to walk



Litter



Uneven surfaces pavements / trip hazards / potholes



Traffic / pollution



Narrow pavements



"When I started to really walk, the biggest shock was that people were so irresponsible and chucked all their rubbish out. I get really cross. If it's really bad I get my gloves on and go and pick it up"

Cars parked on grass verges



"When the pavements are smooth you don't have to concentrate as much. When they are like this I worry I am going to fall over"



This does not help to facilitate more walking trips.

Streets in London do not always enrich the walking experience

High streets that have lost independent shops



“Walking down the high street used to be a lovely treat. Rather than a betting shop, Specsavers and countless hairdressers and more betting shops”

Concrete streets, no green spaces



Roadworks



Busy and congested



Cars taking priority



Construction



This does not help to motivate more walking trips.



JOHN

About me:

I'm 77 years old and from Ireland originally but I've lived in Sutton for 50 years. I used to work on Fleet Street printing newspapers and I have a lot of fond memories of it. My wife and I have 2 children and lots of grandchildren to keep us busy!

"I like to chop and change my walks. Sometimes I walk through the woods, I enjoy country walks. When I was young I lived in the countryside and it brings back memories."

FOR ME, WALKING IN LONDON...

I like to walk around Fleet Street. I get a train up to London and then we walk around the Blackfriars area to see how things have changed... There was one time when there were hundreds of people walking about at night time; pubs, cafes and restaurants open all night long. It was a way of life.

I enjoy walking in the West End, seeing the buskers, and looking at some of the fashions. I just hope my wife doesn't buy anything.

I like central London but I wouldn't like to live there. The pace of life would be too quick. It's much quieter walking round here and there's much more scenery.

There are things to see when walking along the Southbank. I enjoy just looking at the buildings and how they're done.

WHAT MOTIVATES ME TO WALK...

You get to know people, especially when you have a dog. It's a chatting subject.

I really enjoy walking in Banstead Woods. You seem to be so far away from the main road, and it's kept neat and tidy. I wouldn't enjoy it as much if the path was full of rubbish.

A nice walk is something to do. Especially when the weather is good. I feel better to say that I've done it. I feel I've achieved something.

"I enjoy looking at things. It would be more enjoyable if I could pick the rubbish up."

WHAT PREVENTS ME WALKING MORE OFTEN

This area is more rubbishy than it was... It really annoys me when people don't pick up their dog's mess.

We wouldn't go out in Sutton at night time, we don't think it's safe.

When I'm walking, people aren't as friendly as they were when I was younger. If you say good morning now they think: "What's he after?".



Access to public transport and the car makes getting around comfortable and easier



- Easy access to public transport (esp. the bus) and the car can **substitute walks**, but public transport can also **create walks**

Substitute walks

- For those that have a car, short drives out and about can be an easy default behaviour.
- And for all, the Freedom Pass makes travel feel free and easy. They can get around London with the utmost ease and convenience.
 - Easier to hop on the bus for a couple of stops vs walk.
 - There is an inherent comfort and security. It is safe, warm, dry, door-to-door transport with a comfy seat.
 - The cognitive effort is removed, someone else is doing all the thinking and effort.

Create walks

- But free access to public transport also encourages trips.
- Can walk to a destination knowing that they can easily catch a bus home (for free).
 - Gives reassurance and confidence that they will be able to get there and back without too much physical exertion.
 - And can rely on public transport for short distances when faced with hills and steep inclines.



The environment suggests that pedestrians are not London's priority

TIME FOR PEDESTRIANS

Waiting a long time for the green man. The traffic light default is green for traffic, red for pedestrian

"I just notice that I'm waiting here for such a long time. It says to me that I'm not as important as the traffic"

Limited time to get across the road

Need to take longer routes as lack of safe crossings on desire lines

SPACE FOR PEDESTRIANS

Narrow pavements for pedestrians vs wide roads for motorists

Parking encroaching on pedestrian / open spaces

High speed traffic alongside pedestrian spaces

Road or building works which impede pedestrian access





Opportunities for more walking trips

What does their ideal walking environment look like?



Places to meet nice people



Somewhere to sit down



Attractive little roads

Minimal or low speed cars

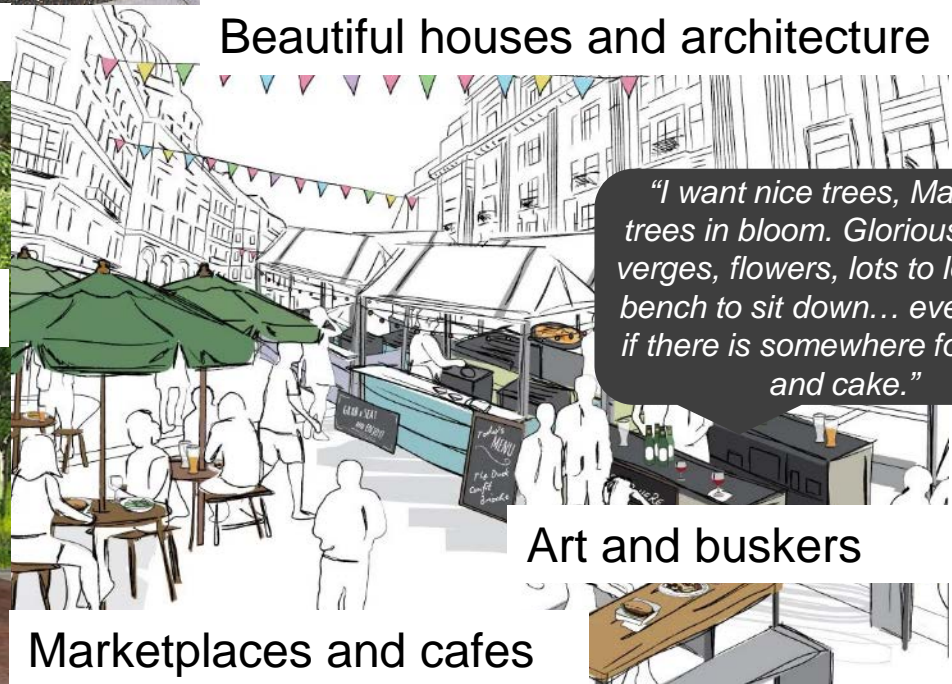


Grass verges and flowers

Little parks and ponds

Gardens and trees

Clean and litter free



Beautiful houses and architecture

Marketplaces and cafes

Art and buskers

"It would be nice to be able to say good morning and have people give a nice response back to you."

"I want nice trees, Magnolia trees in bloom. Glorious. Grass verges, flowers, lots to look at, a bench to sit down... even better if there is somewhere for coffee and cake."

How to make London a walking city



- This is not about making walking a 'bolt-on' activity, it is about incorporating walking into the regular journeys they already make.
- A way to enrich the weekly habits that form part of older people's everyday.

PERSONAL

Build new and more walking into current habits and routines

- Provide spaces where older people can have informal interactions
- Eg as referenced in the Mayor's Design Advisory Group's 'Ageing London' report, intergenerational public spaces – tactical interventions that appeal to and encourage mixed groups to gather together for positive social exchange

SOCIAL

Create more positive experiences and connections

Make walking an easier and more enriching experience

ENVIRONMENTAL

- The environment has a clear role to play in making walking a desirable activity.
- Where public space is considered from the point of view of the pedestrian rather than the motorist.
- Attractive design of streetscape, green spaces, places to sit and public toilets.

Strategy to encourage more walking among the older population of London needs to consider all three pillars to behaviour change

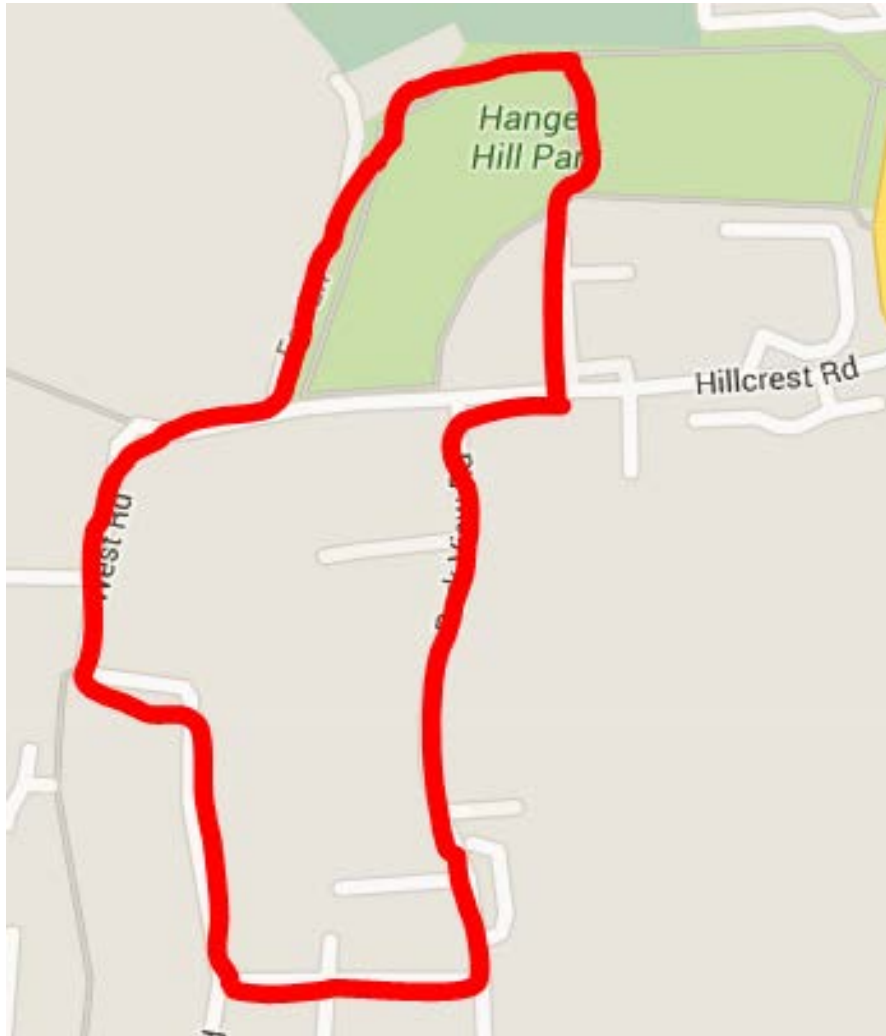


Appendix

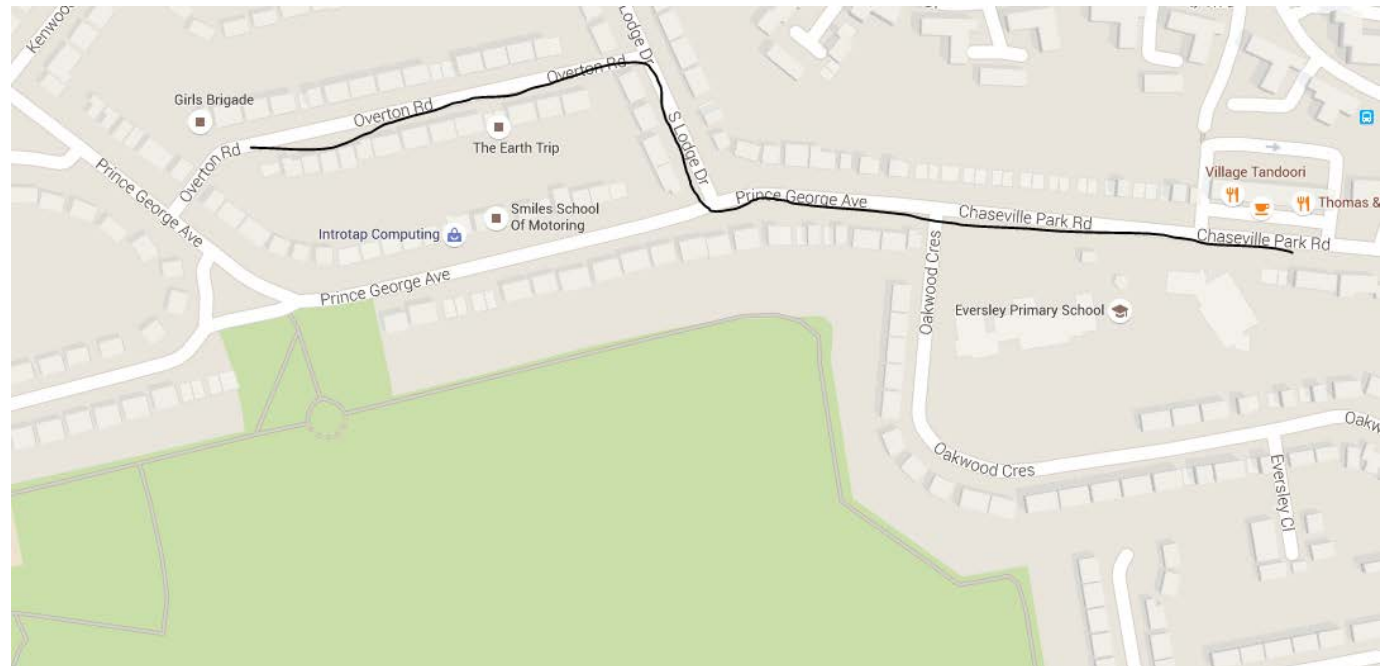
Some of the accompanied walks we went on...



Rodney, 70yrs, Ealing
Broadway



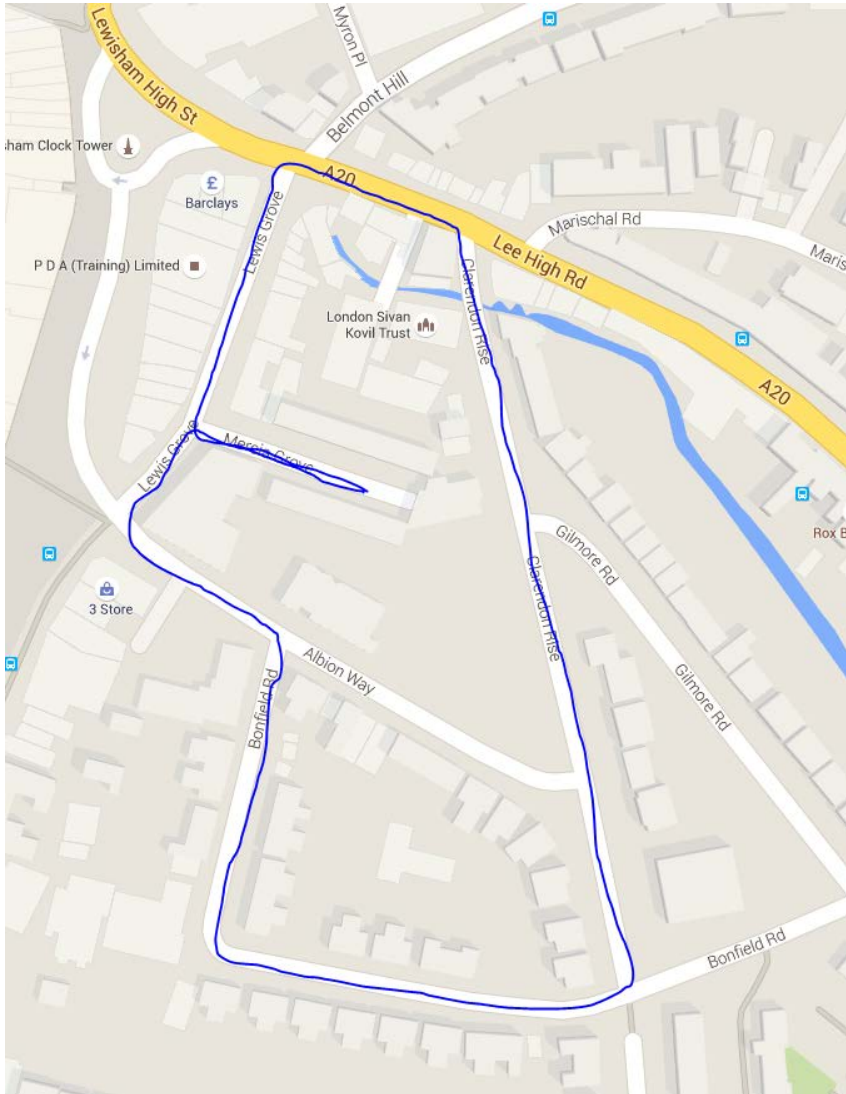
Barbara, 72yrs, Southgate



Some of the accompanied walks we went on...



Patricia, 69yrs, Lewisham



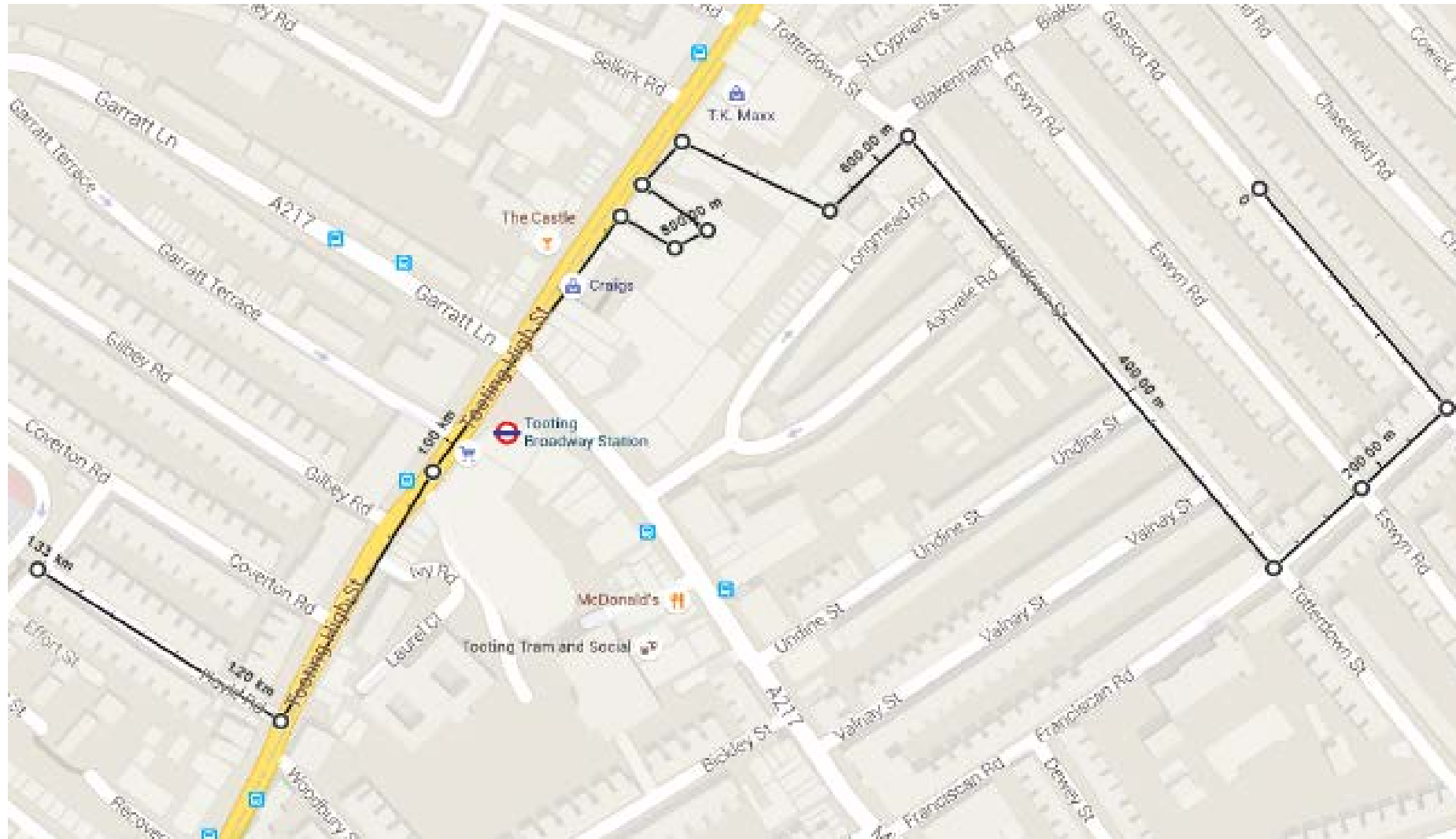
John, 77yrs, Sutton



Some of the accompanied walks we went on...



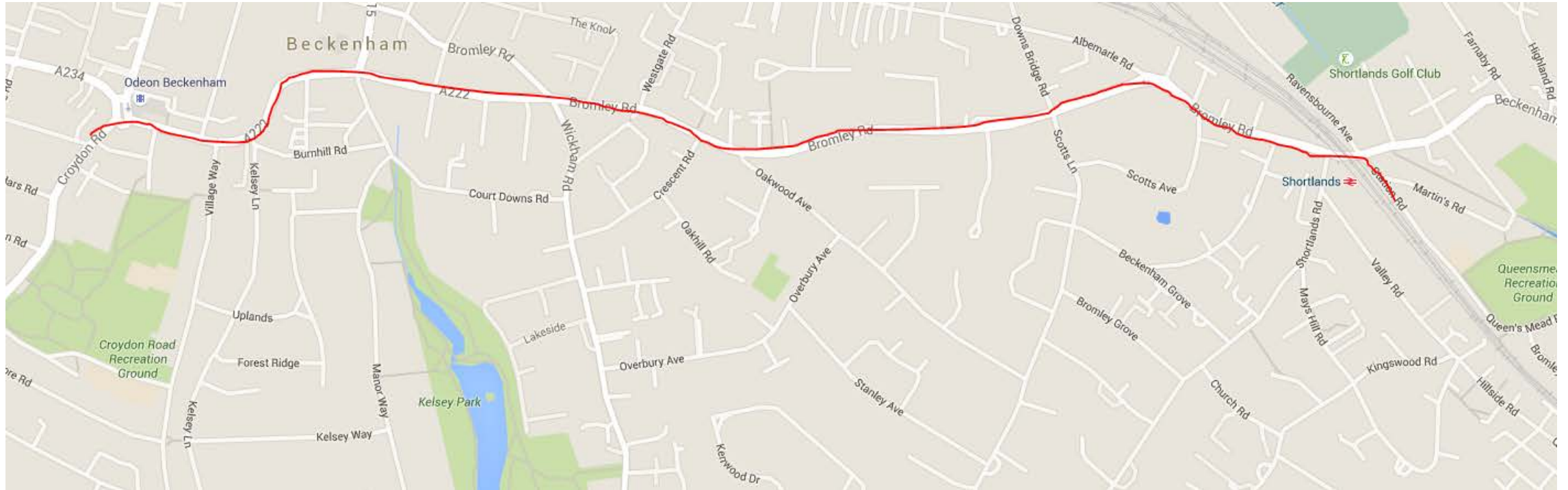
Gordon, 65yrs, Tooting



Some of the accompanied walks we went on...



Bassey, 65yrs, Shortlands





What we learned from the desk research (1)

- **London has an increasingly ageing population.** Recent statistics suggest that 12 per cent of Londoners are aged 65 or over. 40 per cent of older Londoners consider themselves to have a disability which affects the way in which they travel around the city.
- Walking may evoke positive associations with **childhood** in older people, such as **memories of family days out**, and a sense of **freedom** and **independence**.
- Older Londoners are less **likely to walk regularly** than Londoners overall and there has been a slight fall in older Londoners walking between 2014 and 2015. However, **walking** is still the most frequently used method of transport used by this age group.
- Walking in London declines with age, and mobility/disability are key factors in this decline.
 - Those over 65 are the least likely to engage in 'active travel' and there is a need to examine the barriers and motivations that are associated with this. For example, older Londoners have said that they are **less satisfied** with the **quality of pavements** and **ease of crossing** in London than Londoners overall. Additionally, people who used mobility aids feel the least safe from crime and antisocial behaviour when travelling on London streets.
- Older people in London are more likely to walk as part of a longer journey than 16-24 year olds, and are more likely to walk in order to carry out small errands. Although good weather is a key motivator for walking, **bad weather is less of a deterrent to older people than those in the 16-24 age group**.



What we learned from the desk research (2)

- **Time is less of a barrier** for older people using public transport compared to Londoners overall. This suggests that older people are choosing to walk for reasons other than journeying quickly from A to B.
- **Walking** is the main activity that older people in London use to achieve their **physical activity needs**. The health benefits of walking for older people can include **minimising the risk of dementia, depression, strokes and social isolation**, and reducing the risk of **osteoporosis**.
- Older people do not tend to feel they are any more vulnerable than any other pedestrians, unless they have a specific reason for feeling this way
 - They tend to feel more at risk from other pedestrians and the state of the pavements than from crossing the road
 - Crossing the road is something they have done all their lives; few have changed their approach to it in any significant way despite changes in infrastructure and road use
 - Many will 'chance it' by not using formal crossings, often on busy roads;
- As with Londoners overall, attractiveness and enjoyment of London streets is perceived to be important to older people. London's streets are not **widely perceived to be green** by older people.
 - Currently, London is not performing well in terms of providing rest areas for older walkers in the city. There is a need to provide seating at **regular intervals** as a matter of inclusion.
- 70 per cent of older Londoners are **not using the new street signs and maps** that were introduced as part of the Legible London scheme.

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Thank you

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