



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

RESEARCH REPORT: TALKING THE WALK: UNDERSTANDING ACTIVE TRAVEL IN ORDSALL

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April 2018

This study was funded by internal HEIF monies provided by the University of Salford. The authors also recognise the valuable contributions to the study by the Ordsall community, the organisations and individuals who participated in the project workshops.

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TALKING THE WALK SHORT FILM: AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Talking the Walk was a small-scale research project undertaken between January and July 2017 which sought to understand the enablers and barriers towards active travel (specifically, walking and cycling) in the Ordsall area of Salford. The project, developed and managed by researchers from the University of Salford and St Clement's Community Centre used an engaging, open-ended and innovative approach to understanding active travel. The method involved drawing together the community, practitioners and organisations. Its remit to encourage more active travel, using co-creation workshops to produce the key research questions.

Ordsall is an area which has historically scored low on numerous indicators of health and quality of life. Walking and cycling are emerging as significant areas of health and low-carbon policy, at regional, city and area level. The challenge of achieving increases of active travel in the area lies in integrating this with development, urbanisation and changing transport infrastructure. The 'Ordsall Triangle' is surrounded by major arterial roads: Regent Road and Trafford Road, and the River Irwell; and close to areas of significant regeneration and development, including Salford Quays.

'Talking the Walk' piloted a research approach with the aim of developing it further for a larger project focusing on understanding active travel, which could be transferable to other areas. The research composed interviews, conversations, structured workshops and incorporated an 'ethnographic' element involving walking on routes around the area. Alongside these activities, a film was produced which involved interviewees discussing their travel habits, their area and nearby walking and cycling routes.

Workshop themes:

- The infrastructure in Ordsall needs to be conducive to encouraging walking and cycling
- Other elements of transport provision affect active travel in Ordsall
- Wider geographical and socio-economic issues contribute to preventing more active travel in Ordsall
- Attitudinal barriers are complex and linked to more generalised issues

- Safety and security
- Many initiatives exist already – but how can they be passed on effectively?
- Ideas for research: where are the research gaps which we can fill in this project and future work?

The initial workshop identified broad themes specific to Ordsall and Salford relating to: active travel routes and infrastructure; enablers and barriers to active travel; and suggestions of potential improvements. These themes guided the discussions which arose in the interviews and ethnographic research. As is the case in any other area, walking, cycling and travel in general are often considered in terms of their role in a daily routine. The travelling environment in Ordsall and beyond was another widely discussed element. The infrastructure and the position of roads, cycle-ways and walking routes are all influences on where, when and how much people travel on foot or by bike. As expected, the more cycle and pedestrian friendly roads there are, the more conducive the network is to facilitate active travel. Residents of the 'Ordsall Triangle' found that the heavy traffic on surrounding main roads and disruption to routes by numerous nearby building developments were a major barrier, with safety and air pollution of particular concern. Comparatively, residents of Salford Quays demonstrated a more positive appraisal of their local walking environment.

As the research progressed, residents and practitioners cited particular places in the area and active travel projects which they were aware of. There are numerous initiatives at a regional and more local level to encourage behaviour change such as walking or cycle groups, bike maintenance courses and walking events. Building up the visibility of these measures to residents of communities like Ordsall is crucial. There are nearby areas of green space and green corridors which could perhaps be used more. Aesthetically, the surrounding environment is an important factor.

Interview themes:

- Current travel behaviour
- Walking and cycling environments
- Building development in the area and accessibility
- Environments: pollution and green spaces
- Safety and security

- Encouraging more active travel
- Communication with communities on active travel initiatives
- The role of active travel on wider issues and vice versa
- Effects of rapid changes to parts of Ordsall
- Who benefits from development?

The interviews provided an understanding of community issues which extend beyond walking and cycling, but which are also influential on the likelihood of residents to consider active travel as a realistic trip option. The research highlighted that by adding more understanding of local societal issues, it is possible to appreciate the complexity of changing travel behaviour at a community level. The changing culture of the area, rapid regeneration and a perceived gentrification of some nearby areas were all discussed by community members in conjunction with conversations on day-to-day travel. Some shared feelings of being a closed off community may change as building developments are completed. More positively, the regular focus on discussing active travel through the time-period of the project led to a more positive outlook, with anecdotal evidence from discussions at the final workshop suggesting that residents had started to think more about changing their travel habits.

The open and honest discussions on travel, repeated over time, combined with the production of the film were important immersive elements of the research project. The fact that practitioners, residents and academic researchers came together to guide the research at each stage was a particular strength in this regard. Understanding a community in its entirety can provide more tangible understanding of personal travel. The use of community hubs and locations was also beneficial as it built familiarity between researchers and the community. In research terms this project adds another level of understanding on engaging communities to travel actively which can be explored in future projects. In particular, this approach can be drawn from to use with communities in conjunction with new infrastructure and changes resulting from development. The next step will involve proposing larger-scale research, geographically and of longer duration.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report details the research project '*Talking the Walk*', a collaborative effort between the University of Salford and St Clement's Community Church. *Talking the Walk* was a small-scale exploratory project which aimed to understand the enablers and barriers to active travel in Ordsall, Salford. The project ran between January 2017 and July 2017 and was innovative as it drew together members of the local community; practitioners working in transport, health and development roles; with the researchers, Dr Nick Davies (Salford) and Colleen Donovan-Togo (St Clements), who facilitated the research, but fundamentally were only guiding the participants to shape its direction.

The researchers entered into the project with an open mind and a remit simply to understand active travel better in the area; and through their approach, were able to draw insights into the role walking and cycling play in the community; the ability of '*Talking the Walk*' to understand a community in more depth; and then as a result of being able to talk in more depth about the wider issues, and generate ideas to help increase active travel there in the future.

1.1 ACTIVE TRAVEL IN ORDSALL AND SALFORD

Ordsall is one of two wards in the Ordsall and Langworthy neighbourhood area of Salford. It contains the regenerated Salford Quays area and is bordered by the River Irwell and Manchester Ship Canal on two sides. Data from the Ordsall Ward Profile shows Ordsall has improved six places on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Conversely, the profile also indicates Salford Quays is the '*least deprived part of Central Salford*' and that the Ordsall Triangle (demarcated by Trafford Road, Regent Road, and Ordsall Lane) has three areas '*within the 3-7% most deprived in England*' (Salford City Council, 2016a).

The Ordsall Ward is characterised by higher than average (for both the city of Salford and England) rates of childhood obesity, and shorter than average lifespan for both men and women (Salford City Council, 2016c). Salford Council has recognised these problems, among others across the city, and created the Health and Wellbeing Board as a response, with 'an

increase in healthy life expectancy’ as one of its aims. The board published its strategy which specifically targets childhood obesity as one of its main priorities. The strategy includes good programmes on increasing nutritional awareness and helping children make healthy food choices, and taking more exercise (Salford Health and Wellbeing Board, 2017).

The 2016-21 health and wellbeing plan for Salford, ‘*Start Well, Live Well, Age Well*’ emphasises the role walking and cycling can play in improving and maintaining physical and mental wellbeing (NHS Salford, 2016). Similarly, Salford’s Climate Change Strategy recognises the importance of sustainable and active travel in managing the carbon footprint of the city (Salford City Council, 2010). Reducing congestion and encouraging more sustainable travel is a key requirement of Salford’s Draft Local Plan, a sizeable task, given that the road network is considered as one of the most congested (Salford City Council, 2017c). Additionally, air pollution levels are among the highest in the country (World Health Organisation, 2016). The twin aims of developing more infrastructure which is conducive to active travel and increasing persuasive measures to change travel behaviour are at the core of implementing policy.

Building development in the area is increasing rapidly. The ‘Heart of Ordsall’ framework has to an extent driven this for around the last ten years. This presents more challenges for transport infrastructure and the Local Plan states that: ‘*the main focus will be around maximising the capacity and efficiency of existing infrastructure, and delivering new infrastructure only where this is required to serve major new developments or address identified problems on the existing transport network* (Salford City Council, 2017c).’ Salford’s Locality Plan, operational from August 2017, makes the point that a number of key areas of the city are within walking distance (Salford Health and Wellbeing Board, 2017). Much of the policy is underpinned at the Greater Manchester region level, and most significantly, at the time of this report being finished, the ‘Made to Move’ report by Chris Boardman (2017), Greater Manchester’s walking and cycling commissioner, was released. This key report recommends significant changes and improvements in the walking and cycling environment in Greater Manchester to increase active travel on a regional scale.

More visible and accessible information for Salford residents and visitors to choose active travel options are increasing. Transport for Greater Manchester’s (TfGM) ‘*GM online cycle map*’ provides a resource for knowing where cycle routes are in the area (TfGM, 2017), and the walking route planner delivered by Walkit (2017) indicates the urban walking routes in

Salford. Initiatives in the area include free cycle training, organised by TfGM (Salford City Council, 2017a), a number of organised health walks across the city (Salford Community Leisure, 2017), and a wider range of organised walks which include history themed walk designs (Salford City Council, 2017b).

Green space makes up over half of the city's total area, and the expansion of the active travel opportunities it provides includes the new Royal Horticultural Society's (RHS) garden at Worsley New Hall (Salford Health and Wellbeing Board, 2017). The Salford Trail, formally opened in May 2017, links many of the green spaces and corridors to provide a continuous walking route for residents and visitors within the city boundaries (Visit Salford, 2017). Likewise, the Irwell River Park will provide a key resource for walking and cycling, offering better connectivity and options for traveling away from roads, in addition to boosting the local economy (Salford City Council, 2016b).



Salford is green: Bluebell Woodlands in Salford, photograph from Luke Blazejewski

1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION: TALKING THE WALK

The project that became ‘Talking the Walk’ grew out of a desire to better understand the role of active travel in the neighbourhood of Ordsall, Salford, and to discover more about local residents’ experiences of active travel, including the reasons they choose or reject it as a means of transport.

This study received funding and support as part of the University of Salford’s ICZ (Industrial Collaboration Zone)¹ project ‘*Enabling Ideas*’, running from January to July 2017. The ICZ agenda at the university promotes experimentation, incubation of ideas, the co-creation of research with local communities and organisations and aligns with the ethos of participatory action research. At its core are the key aims of making real-world impact to 21st century communities and sustainable and socially responsible development in a rapidly urbanising and globalising world.

‘*Enabling Ideas*’ was designed to bring academics and community members in Salford together to research issues and ideas relevant to the residents and location, drawing from the ‘*Ordsall Method*’ (Symons, 2017)² It highlighted the importance of harnessing the influence of a university, in this case the University of Salford; as a platform to amplify the voices and ideas of its neighbouring residents and bring ambitious, fresh ideas with strong local resonance to the attention of researchers, government and statutory bodies, and industry.

From the beginning, ‘*Talking the Walk*’ was about representing local voices and academics working together with residents to ensure their message and their experiences were reaching stakeholders and decision-makers. The aim was to design an accurate representation of people’s views as well as a written summarisation of the factors that would encourage Ordsall residents to continue to travel on foot or bicycle and would help others choose active travel with greater frequency. The project was influenced by a Participatory Action Research (PAR) framework—that is, a collaborative, ‘co-learning’ process where researchers and community

¹ ICZ is underpinned by Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) funded by HEFCE (The Higher Education Funding Council for England): <https://www.salford.ac.uk/icz>

² This project emerged from the ‘Ideas 4 Ordsall’ project, a project that saw academics working with ‘cultural intermediaries’ to bring local ideas to fruition: <http://www.thisisordsall.org/>

members are equals in planning, design, implementation, and production of projects (Minkler, 2000). The research team worked with interested residents from the start to plan the scope and research design, and receive feedback about the design and prospective participants.

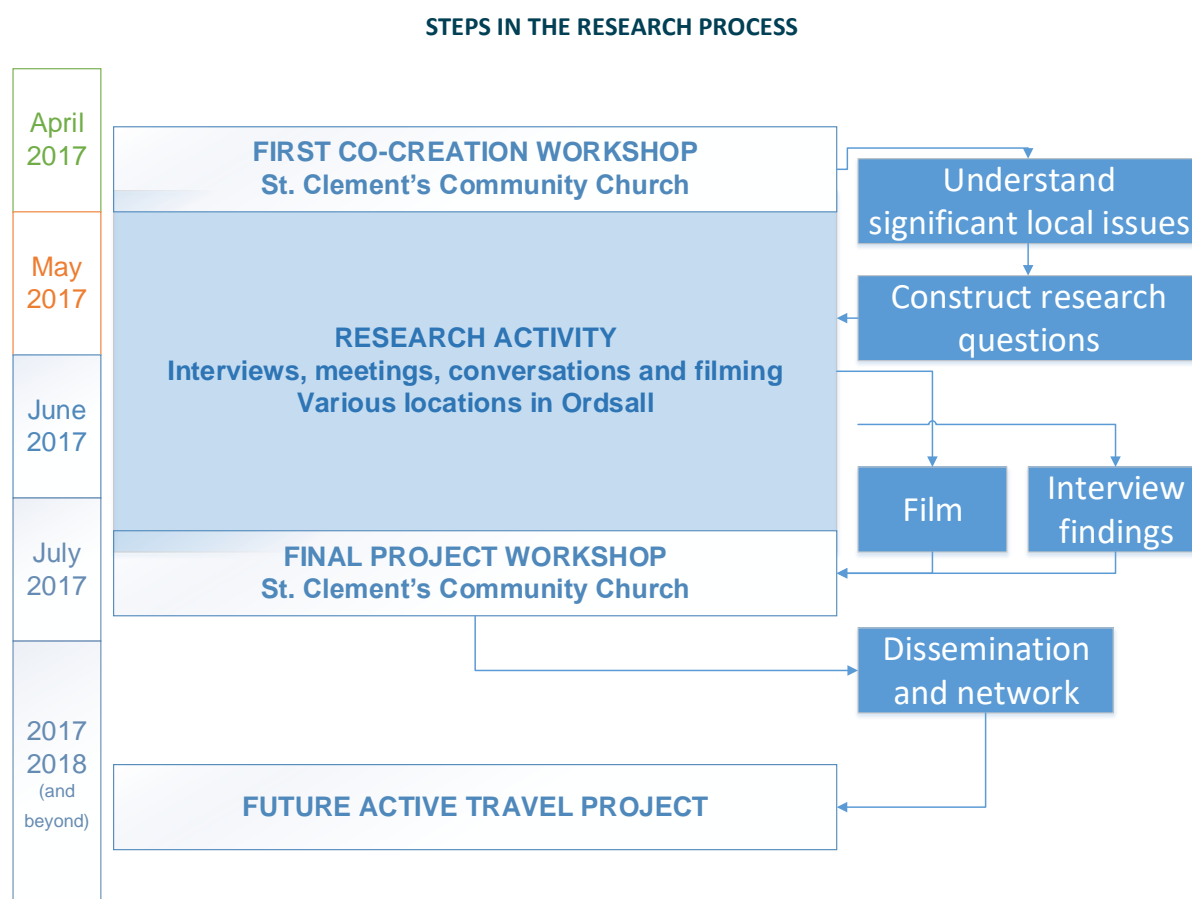
The relatively short timescale and modest financial resource available determined that it would serve as a 'kick-start' project to generate the important research questions in Salford going forward, in order to plan and inform future research on a wider scale. Ultimately, the aim was to trial a method of understanding active travel in a community, which could potentially be used in other areas besides Ordsall.



Green / urban off-road route in Ordsall near Robert Hall Street. Photograph from Zodiac

2 RESEARCH METHOD

'Talking the walk' used an exploratory approach, in which the research aims and questions coalesce during the research process (detailed in figure 1, below). Crucially, at each stage, the community and organisations who are invested in encouraging active travel were involved. This ensured that the research was grounded in local needs, and would therefore produce outcomes more valuable to stakeholders.



2.1 INITIAL CO-CREATION WORKSHOP

The first stage, following gaining ethical approval from the university to conduct the research, was to draw together Ordsall residents and practitioners from key organisations in the local and regional area to participate in shaping the research. This process involved snowballing

recruits from the researchers and community centre for a 2-hour workshop, held in St Clement's Community Centre, on the 20th April, 2017.

The workshop aimed to use open questioning to generate group discussion. Workshop attendees were mixed up and arranged on several tables and provided with a series of questions about active travel in Ordsall and Salford.

Discussion 1 – Active travel, the issues and Salford

Q) What are the main issues for active travel in your area? In your role / experience?

Q) What does Salford need in terms of developing active travel schemes?

Discussion 2 – Barriers and enablers of active travel

Q) What stops people from travelling actively?

Q) What enables them?

Discussion 3 – understanding and researching active travel

Q) How do we effectively understand the factors underpinning active travel choices?

– for individuals?

- For communities such as Ordsall?

- For long-term changes?

Following the workshop, the written record of the themes and ideas arising from the discussion questions was analysed and split into several broad areas of questioning to take forward into the interviews.

2.2 INTERVIEWS

The interviews were unstructured – meaning that, aside from having a few overarching areas to base discussions on, the interviewers allowed discussions to flow freely, with the aim being that interviewees could talk about any aspect which they considered relevant. The interviews took place at several locations in Ordsall: the community café, St Clement’s Church and Salford Community Leisure at Ordsall library. Because of the need for participants to feel relaxed and enter into meaningful discussion, some of the interviews took the form of a ‘group interview’, as individuals preferred to discuss their ideas with more than one person. These actually resulted in some of the longest discussions.

All interviews were recorded, and most were visually filmed. The film element of this project was significant as it provided a record of the project: the Talking the Walk short film. Once completed, all interviews were transcribed and coded, and the themes were disseminated at the project end workshop.

2.3 FINAL PROJECT DISSEMINATION WORKSHOP

The final project workshop was held at St Clement’s on the 13th July. The main aims were to summarise the themes arising from the interviews, show the short film to those who had contributed to it, further the discussion on active travel needs in Ordsall and identify future research areas which would develop the idea. This time three questions were asked which guided the discussion:

1. What is special about this area and what can be highlighted for future improvements for active travel?
2. Where would you like to see more research done?
3. What could be done with a larger budget (design an innovative project to increase active travel in the local area)?

3 FINDINGS

3.1 INITIAL CO-CREATION WORKSHOP

The first workshop was attended by 25 participants from Ordsall and the wider region, who were a mix of practitioners and the local community. The discussion produced an array of themes. The workshop considered some general barriers and enablers to walking and cycling; some further issues which were more specific to Salford, and Ordsall in particular; and some areas where improvements might be made. Participants included practitioners involved in active travel projects, organisations and roles tasked with encouraging more walking and cycling, and residents from the community. These are listed in the appendix.

The seven broad themes arising from the workshop are summarised below:

Theme 1) The infrastructure in Ordsall needs to be conducive to encouraging walking and cycling.

It was felt that Salford in general needs more routes which are connected and continuous. Additionally, walkers need more crossing points. In general, walking and cycling areas can be improved, with better lighting and access to secure cycle storage. The surrounding busy roads can be a barrier to walking in Ordsall; and where cycle lanes do exist, they are sometimes not clearly signposted, and do not run continuously. Access for mobility scooters can be an additional issue.

The road layout in particular can have an effect of severing the community from other areas in Salford; and has influenced peoples' willingness to walk and cycle from Ordsall to elsewhere. There are many nearby urban green areas such as Peel Park, less than a mile away. Ordsall residents suggested that it can be difficult to reach.



Salford Meadows: there are many green areas near to Ordsall, but are not being used by Ordsall residents.

Photograph provided from Luke Blazejewski

Theme 2) Other elements of transport provision affect active travel in Ordsall

There are a number of interlinked reasons why some people are not walking or cycling as much as they could. Buses and public transport (travel modes which include some walking to reach) are seen by some as infrequent and too expensive, and access to key locations such as Salford Shopping Centre can be difficult.

A lack of bike shops, tools and knowledge of bike maintenance are also considered as potential problems. Parking on pavements also deters walking. The feeling was that parking officers won't often come into Ordsall, which compounds this.

Provision of more buses would be one potential solution and (more) space for bikes on buses, trains and trams was also suggested. Intermodality is important: it can and should be easier to use multiple modes on one journey and route-planning can be improved to combine trams and other public transport with walking and cycling.

Theme 3) Wider geographical and socio-economic issues contribute to preventing more active travel in Ordsall

The socio-economic conditions in Ordsall can be considered as synonymous with lower active travel participation. This manifests in a number of ways including not being able to afford bicycles, safety and a lack of access to information (ie from not having internet availability or literacy). A lack of investment and resources were cited as potential barriers to combatting these issues. Additionally, the ongoing redevelopment work surrounding the local area, has had a compounding effect on available space and use of the area. It was also suggested that the lack of parking officers penalising cars parked on the pavement means that bin collections do not always happen, which in turn makes the area less aesthetically pleasing.

Possible solutions include more effort to include active travel provision in the planning stage of developments. Additionally, more support for the 'Friends of the Park' scheme may offset problems of litter and increase awareness of active travel. Joined up thinking on the implementation of policies and projects (ie combine health and community cohesion) is another potential approach which can improve the situation.

Theme 4) Attitudinal barriers are complex and linked to more generalised issues

Some barriers are universal to many areas, not specific to Ordsall. They work in conjunction with more area-specific barriers. They range from people's engrained habits of car-dependency to general apathy to change. Some people find it hard to make changes due to low self-confidence, or the potential for embarrassment, if they feel they are perceived negatively (obese or unfit). In some cases, it was felt that there were outside influences such as available time (for example parents having to combine school runs with getting to work). Weather and seasonality can also have an influence - arriving to work soaked; or ice on the roads and shorter days.

Incentives including more walking / cycling to school can help. Starting projects off in the spring can have stronger and longer lasting effects. Other ideas include:

- Shower facilities at work

- Measured mile in the park
- Setting targets
- People are more enabled to walk by the social aspect (ie walking groups)
- Local champions
- Gameification (example – Beat the Street campaign).
- Organised events
- Cycle skills courses

Theme 5) Safety and security

Concerns over safety and security manifest themselves in a number of ways. Fears of personal safety which deter walking and cycling can be either perceived or actual. The danger is associated with cars or other modes of travel, assault, or theft of bicycles. The workshop discussion on solutions to this revolved around the increase of safer areas to walk or cycle. It was also highlighted that this issue is made worse in the winter months when there is less daylight, and adequate lighting was another potential solution discussed. Air pollution on busier routes was also considered as a very real and visible problem.



Air pollution is increasingly considered as a problem by the public. Photograph from Zodiac.

Theme 6) Many initiatives exist already – but how can they be passed on effectively?

There are numerous initiatives, activities and information sources to support individuals' switch to active sustainable travel in Salford and Greater Manchester. One potential problem in Ordsall (and elsewhere in the region) is how to transmit the information effectively to wider audiences, for longer-term, effective behavioural change.

The workshops highlighted that awareness of options and eventual travel behavioural change can be increased in a number of ways:

- by raising awareness of cycle and walking routes
- running more health walks and heritage walks
- incorporating more journey planners
- better wayfinding, finger posts and increased signage

Targeting hard-to-reach groups was seen as of significant concern in addition to those with more engrained car-dependence. A novel suggestion was to take efforts on a city wide level down to a street level as a demonstration to other areas, but this requires community will to take it forward.

Put simply, community engagement is key

- To ensure people use existing / new facilities
- To ensure facilities meet community needs
- Talking to existing walkers and cyclists
- Talking to non-users, and ascertaining why they are not using facilities

Theme 7) Ideas for research: where are the research gaps which we can fill in this project and future work?

Some research areas were identified to be covered in the interviews (and in future research):

- Understand the resistors to change – eg. guilt that ‘I am not doing enough exercise’
- Understand better the terminology that triggers resistance – are people more defensive if you say ‘get active’, for example?
- Is there a difference between what people do and say they do in terms of walking and cycling.

These themes were then used to feed into the interviews, the findings of which are detailed in the next section.

3.2 INTERVIEW FINDINGS

3.2.1 Current travel behaviour; enablers and barriers

Current travel behaviour

The interviews generally began with a broad discussion on current travel habits. Respondents showed a range of engagement with walking and cycling from short distances....

‘The furthest I go is Sainsbury’s and back. And I walk around this area, around the allotments.’

....to longer distances

‘We walk for miles....because the roads are flat and reasonably safe.’

Additionally for some, the range of public transport alternatives available makes it easier not to drive.

‘Why we like living in this area, is because we don’t have to drive. You can get a bus or tram.’

Respondents spoke about the role walking and cycling play in everyday life, as part of a routine each day, and in connection with other experiences in life. They also noted walking and cycling as part of experiencing their local surroundings. Some felt as though there are visibly more cyclists on the roads now.

'I see a lot more cyclists now than I have done'

Weather is an influential factor on when people are more likely to walk or cycle:

'I used to walk the school run, but then winter came along, so we have been using transport really. Our school is quite a distance away. We have periods where we will cycle there – in the nicer weather usually.'

Walking and cycling environments

The walking and cycling environment was a key discussion point; often by differentiating aspects considered as positive or negative such as architecture or litter.

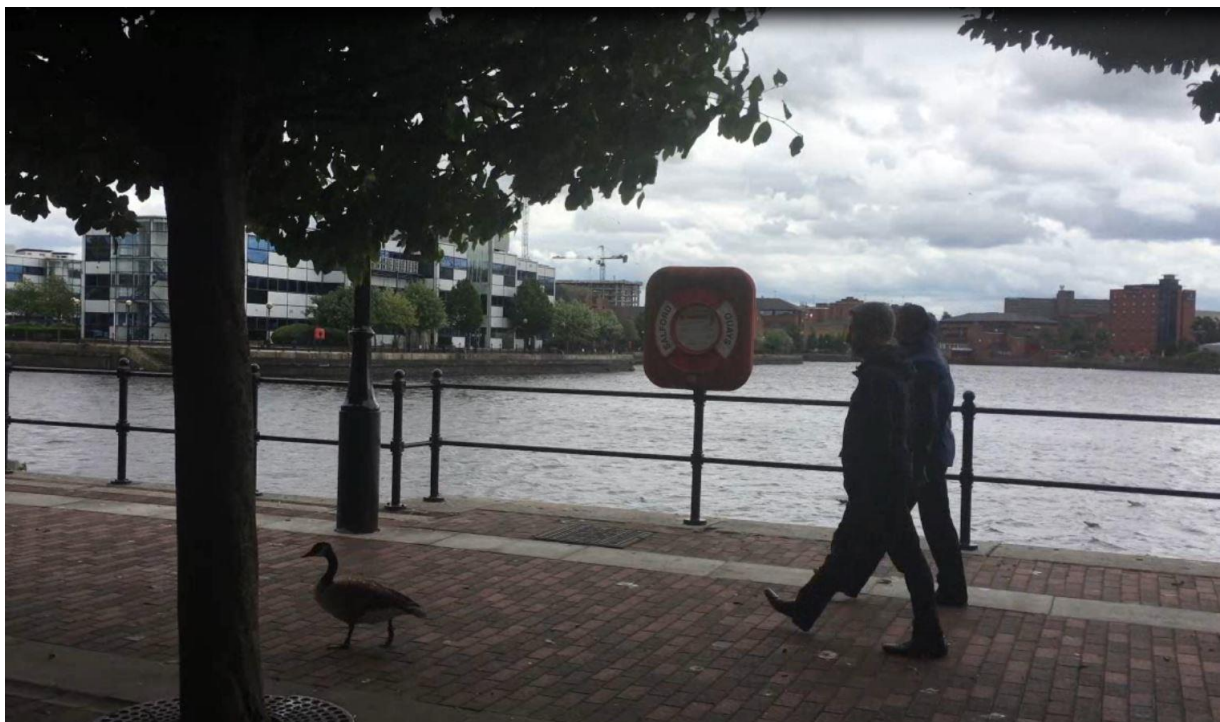
'I think the architecture is very attractive. The pathways we have to use are very unattractive.'

It was made clear that making areas more pleasurable to walk in is an important enabler of active travel. For residents of Salford Quays, the environment was considered as very conducive to walking, a better alternative than driving in some senses, and well kept.

'We just walked from Ordsall Hall, and it was easier than driving'

'The signage is excellent. Almost everywhere there is one of those grey signs'

'It's lovely because it's flat. For elderly people it's flat. We can walk for miles, can't we'



Residents from Salford Quays generally spoke positively about their walking experience. Photograph from Zodiac

'Driving is like a magical mystery tour – it takes us ages just to get anywhere. Walking is easy in comparison.'

For residents living closer to the Regent Road area, residents have different walking experiences:

'I don't know how you solve that, because obviously it is a major artery into town. It's going to be backed up, especially because of the roadworks in town.'

Busy roads in general were considered as significant barriers to accessing adjacent and nearby locations on foot or by bike. The Oldfield Road junction (crossroads near Sainsbury's) was cited as an example of a difficult part of the route to negotiate:

'In a way I have no choice but to walk across it. I absolutely hate it because you press the button to wait for the green man. And you can be stood there nearly five minutes.'

Although, the argument to keep traffic moving favours giving a longer period of time at the lights (and a small window for pedestrians to cross), the discussion highlighted the pedestrian's perspective – in this case a deterrent for encouraging more walking in the area. The interview findings backed up the themes arising from the workshop in this regard. Often, respondents felt as though they had to alter their course to make the least problematic trip. High levels of building development in the area compound the problem of motivating people to walk and cycle.

'There's nothing to see when you come out. There's nothing that makes you want to go for a walk. Because it's all the same built up area'

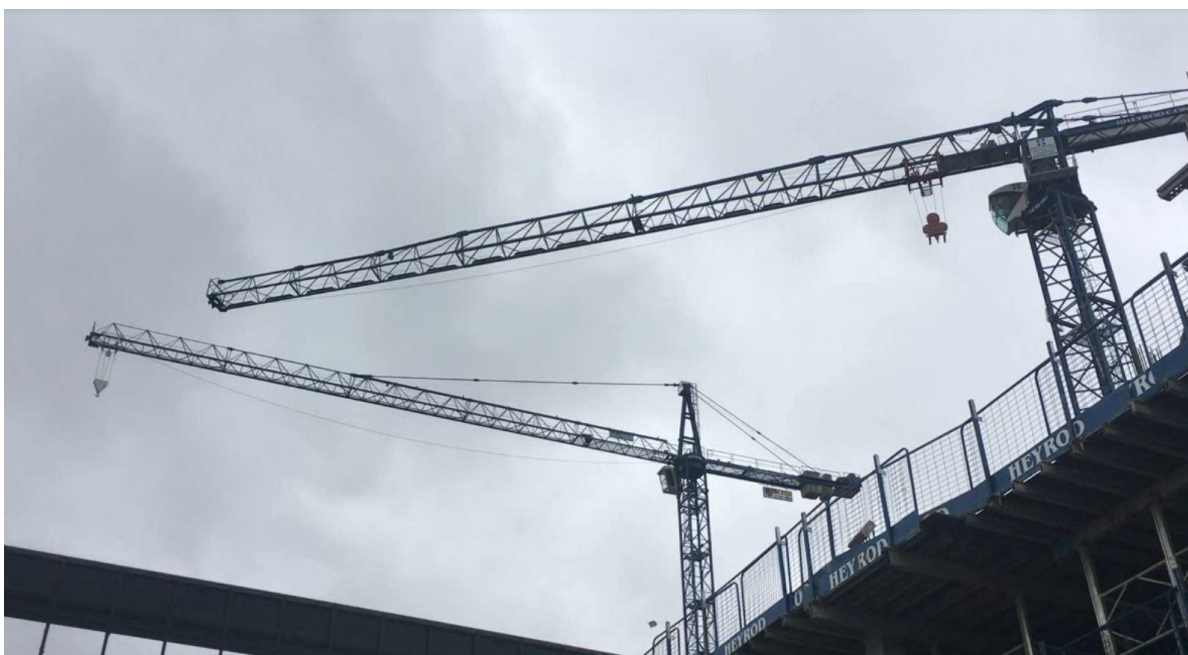
Building development in the area and accessibility

In some cases, development causes pavements to be narrowed or temporarily not accessible, which often brings pedestrians (and cyclists in some cases) closer than they normally would be to the traffic.

'The only places where they are doing building work, which is a lot of places, where the pavements are narrowed because of barriers. And then you have a problem because you can't get past people, but apart from that, the pavement is good'

The rapid regeneration in the area might be better received and adapted to by walkers and cyclists if they can engage more with information on alternative safe routes. The big changes in the landscape of the area, quite understandably, are a significant issue in the minds of Ordsall residents and it was not difficult to see why those topics were often brought into the discussion. However some respondents noted the temporary nature of travel problems near developments:

‘But that will be cured when they take the boardings down’



Building development in the area has in some cases made walking and cycling more difficult. Photograph from Zodiac

Additionally, when prompted, some residents were able to cite areas where there are good examples of provision:

‘On Liverpool Road, at the beginning of that they have just introduced a cycling lane, where there are these bumps, so that people can’t park across the cycle lane’

Car parking, especially in restricted areas, was discussed on a number of occasions during the interviews.

‘If you come out of Sainsbury’s there are always cars parked there’

Respondents considered commuters using locations in the area to park whilst accessing Manchester town centre as a key problem, for example near the development on Oldfield Road:

'They've started parking on the side of the road in the morning'

'There's a lot of illegal car parking – people who are working either in Manchester or over at Media City.'

In some parts of Ordsall, peripheral residential areas without restrictions appear to see the worst of this.

'We do have a lot of problems with people parking on our estate, to walk into town'

'On Gloucester Street, they are always parking – 6 or 7 just on that street. But then you also get the Uber taxis. Who are waiting for pick-ups so they park opposite them. And coaches too. And we have only got one way into our estate'

The presence of parked cars is considered as restrictive for people accessing pavements:

'There's a big one [Dropped curb] outside the shop, but straight away people (in cars) just pull in front of that, so that's blocked.'

In terms of accessibility for people with limited mobility, perceptions were mixed. People on scooters can have problems with the curbs, but in some areas there are dropped curbs on almost every junction. One respondent described crossing the road on Robert Hall Street, near to an area of recent development.

'Sometimes they go down this little pavement where it is flat. The other side you're looking at a pavement which is that steep (indicates a height of about half a foot).'

In general, routes must be intuitive and respondents feel that better indication of where to go would increase their confidence to walk or cycle.

'We've been to the museum up there (Salford) There are lots of roads to cross, which are a bit complicated, so last time we went, we drove, because the walking wasn't easy. If you're going North from the quays, there are a number of major roads to cross before you get to the museum or Peel Park.'

This is variable in the Ordsall area, and some routes are more useable than others

'You go along a cycle lane, and suddenly it ends'

'When I used to live in Langworthy, I used to cycle round the Quays. I very rarely do, from Ordsall. I don't know why that is. It was just easier access I think from that end'.

Additionally, in some areas, there are problems where walkers and cyclists encounter each other.

'Cyclists going the opposite way to where they should be.'

Environments: pollution and green spaces

Whilst interviewees generally made it clear that there was green space in Ordsall, they differed in their opinions of how usable it was, and whether it is increasing in total area or not.

'There's no green space....that's going, so you're going to have nothing'

Describing a small green area adjacent to Ordsall café, one respondent noted:

'You do see people walking, kids playing football....in Summer people sit out there'

Another respondent suggested that the same area is not used frequently for recreation, and it is better to venture further afield:

'I think there's loads of green space...but do we class green space as...(points to grassy area outside café) is this classed as a green space. You're not generally going to get somebody walking laps around here. Is a park classed as a green space....that is generally used by kids playing. If I'm going walking, I don't want to be walking around the same places that I see every single day. The same things over and over again. That's why I choose now to go up to Clifton....and have a nice walk through natural environments. It's the only way.'



There is green space in Ordsall – but is it being used? Photograph from Zodiac

However, having a green alternative route is generally preferable to busy routes near roads:

‘When we walk to church from the town, we always walk across the park. It’s the most pleasant route’

‘I don’t go on Regent Road because when I get close to it, all the pollution, I start coughing.’

Indeed, air pollution is increasingly considered as a key deterrent to walking and cycling alongside busy areas of traffic, but although alternative routes can be altered to minimise contact, it is difficult to avoid it completely.

‘So I have to go down the side streets to get where I want to go. I have to cross the road eventually to get where I want to go, but Regent Road is bad for coughing.’

‘You can actually see the pollution on a hazy sunny day. If the wind blows, it blows it down our street’

‘I’d say an overload of traffic, cars parking. The air pollution on Regent Road is one of my main issues.....coming from stationary traffic all of the time. That’s the main route on and off the estate really. You have to go there in order to get to Salford Shopping Centre. I have to go across there every day to go to school anyway.’

Safety and security

Considerable attention was given in the discussion towards safety and security. This was mostly in terms of personal safety; including that of children, but was considered as a matter of exercising common sense on staying safe:

'In general, we've all got to be careful (...) I try ...not to let the kids see that fear. But just make them well aware that they have got to be careful as well. And that's not just with this area – that's with any area. No matter where you are – I would say the same thing.'

Lighting is a significant barrier for feelings of safety; in a number of areas, and particularly at night, in winter months, or at weekends.

'I believe that the yellow lighting is the key to why people feel intimidated. If you see a group of people under yellow lighting and you can't describe them, you can't tell what colour clothing they are wearing.'

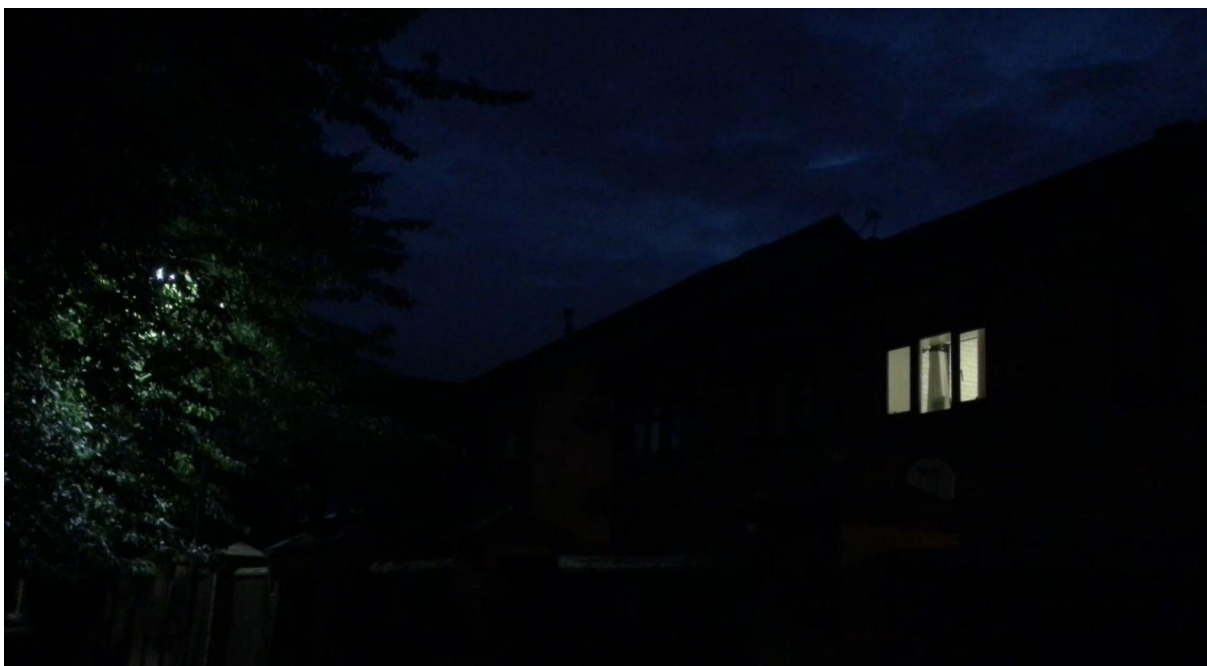
'You have the top half of the street that is lit but then you have the bottom which is in complete darkness'

'I think it is simply because...none of the councillors walk around here at night'

Some respondents from the Salford Quays area mentioned that they walk a lot in the evenings, adding that it was a nice place to walk. There was a juxtaposition between these experiences and those from other areas in the ward.

'You don't on the Quay's. The lighting there if anything is too bright.'

'Not very often. Round the Quay's a bit. We don't walk in [other parts of] Ordsall'.



Poor lighting in some areas of Ordsall is a deterrent to walking and cycling. Photograph from Zodiac.

Other elements of security focused on the security of bikes, and the effect this has had on their propensity to cycle.

'I'm a bit reluctant to use the bike. (...) There's never a safe place to store the bike – it's always outside the building.' 'I think we all are very aware that someone can steal a bike even with the best lock on it.'

3.2.2 Moving forward: encouraging more walking and cycling in the area, and wider related community issues

Encouraging more active travel

A number of suggestions were made on how to increase active travel in the area. One frequent walker, a car owner who prefers to walk everywhere, demonstrated a degree of confidence to walk long distances. He suggested that it helped to set objectives first, for example: to reach a café or bar, reach the quays, see sights on the canal or visit Peel Park. In a geographical sense, Ordsall is well placed to reach many such destinations. The enjoyment factor is considered particularly important.

'You have to enjoy it. Otherwise you're forcing someone to do something they don't want to do.'

Other aspects of the discussion focused on the individual's likelihood to undertake active travel, which varies for each person. Whilst some people are more prone to being affected by barriers to walk or cycle, others are more adventurous and less affected by situational barriers such as weather.

'I like to cycle in the rain and mud and get wet. I'll deliberately put on my clothes to get wet and muddy on my bike. That's just me though. I have always been active.'

Discussion also suggested that cycling in particular is important for encouraging children to be more active. For one resident, walking was something they did on a regular basis, but cycling was still only something they had thought about and were not sure if they ever would. This perhaps demonstrates that walking is an easier step to being more active for some people. A fitness instructor for the community who was interviewed suggested that people

should start with the bare minimum: the biggest step is going from nothing to even the smallest activity (he suggested 15 minutes), but he emphasised that age should not be a barrier.

The role of the community was discussed in terms of residents encouraging each other to travel actively.

'We need to encourage each other – I think that is key. It just takes a little push sometimes to get you started. Because, once you start exercising, you have got to make it part of your life.'

'It is a community thing. Once one person starts, it like a domino effect'

A further point of discussion rested on the need for more cycle routes which feel safe, and the dialogue suggested that the more that people know about safe routes, the better for encouraging more cycling.

(On cycling next to busy roads) 'I wouldn't feel comfortable cycling down Regent Road. (...) you get a lot of people who are frankly scared when they are cycling and you can understand why when there are cars speeding past them at 40 miles an hour.'

'Really the people of Langworthy and Ordsall haven't got a dedicated cycle trail they can use.'

Communication with communities on active travel initiatives

There are numerous existing measures and projects to encourage more active travel, including organised walking and cycling groups. Better publicity and community visibility for these initiatives for these initiatives are required to encourage participation. Printed communication such as community notice boards was mentioned as one potential strategy to do this. However, respondents felt that the issues which affect the take-up of walking and cycling projects can be more complex and that more dialogue and face-to-face measures are needed. Lifestyle factors such as available free time and daily routine and the mechanisms to convey active travel programmes to a wide audience were cited as part of this complexity.

'The problem is, a lot of people are working, The time that people have, a lot of people choose to use their cars....just to go around the corner....timescales, picking up children from school for instance. (...) Sometimes, people are too rushed with life to even think about having these conversations. I think it needs somebody to make that

happen....to mediate between it [community and the authorities / active travel organisations].'

There is an additional factor which surrounds the receptiveness of individuals to community-based initiatives. Many people are not engaged, and thus are potentially harder to reach.

(On transmitting existing engagement projects to a wider audience) 'That's again the services and their advertisement. They tend to just advertise between the community venues which are already being used. There's a good 80% of the population that aren't using community venues anyway...so that information isn't getting to those people – at all.'

The role of active travel on wider issues and vice versa

As the discussions progressed, interviewees would generally start to relate active travel to other social issues in the Ordsall area. In some cases it would be the transport system more generally. It was perceived by some that improvements were required on public transport in the area, and that problems of congestion on the roads surrounding Ordsall were key areas of concern for travel in the area.

'Because it might take more traffic off the road if there was a better service'

'And then of course there is the pollution problem on Regent Road, because it is congested from very early on in the morning, right throughout the whole day.'

For some interviewees, walking and cycling acts as a vehicle (literally and metaphorically) for understanding and identifying changes in the area over time. A resident who had been born in Ordsall suggested that regular walking around the area over a number of years had allowed him to experience the changing area: physically, culturally and demographically. Many of the conversations on walking with residents elicited memories of how the area had changed and gave a greater sense of how Ordsall as a place is changing.

'The places where I grew up have all gone'

'Ordsall is the quays in a sense. The quays are Ordsall. Ordsall was here before the Quays. It was here before Manchester got started.'

One interviewee remembered a canal walk which has since been sectioned off:

'There used to be a really nice walk along the canal which has now been sectioned off for building work along there.'

Another recalled the shops which had been on Regent Road – and how they were accessible to residents in previous years:

'You didn't have to drive. You could walk round the corner to the shops'

The changing environment held different meanings for respondents. Particularly of relevance was community severance in the cultural and physical sense, caused by roads becoming busier and rapid building development. It was difficult for some respondents to see a better future for travel around the area following the development work:

'I think it is going to be worse. The people who live on the Barrack's estate. They only have one way in and out with their cars. Then there is the top half of Regent Road, and then the roundabout. The difference with that is that there you have the subways. If there were subways near Sainsbury's, like there was in the 60s, that would be better....or a bridge? The subway was actually alright, because that was near the road. And everyone used it.'

Effects of rapid changes to parts of Ordsall

Due to its proximity to central areas of the Greater Manchester conurbation which are under considerable regeneration, Ordsall itself is a rapidly changing area. Some of the residents perceive that this has led to their neighbourhood being encroached upon by through-traffic and increased illicit parking.

'Ordsall Lane when there's a match on, or something on at the MEN. Ordsall Lane is chockablock with cars....The reason why they're doing that, is because it is free. Parking in Manchester is dear. There was one [at] Castlefield....going back 3-4 years....it was charging £2.50. But then Salford Quays got their act together. It [prices] started shooting up.'

The feeling from some respondents was that the redevelopment of more 'attractive places' has had a knock-on effect – the rising car-prices push parking into a less central area.

'They forget that there are people from Manchester and Salford, who can't afford it. So where are they supposed to go.'

One respondent added that the increased likelihood of visitors to central locations to park in Ordsall (to avoid more expensive charges for parking in the centre) leads to additional problems such as creating litter:

'A lot of it comes from the people who are just visiting. For us, our little town, it's home. To these people it's just like a dumping ground. So they think, if they think that, then what are our own people going to think?'

The uneven development of parts of Ordsall has led to feelings of division (physically and culturally), which extend to perceived transport inequality – both for active travel modes and public transport:

'It's definitely an area of two halves. You've got less traffic, good public transport on the Quay's bit. You've got really poor public transport on the Regent Road bit.'

'I love walking around the quays...but I wouldn't necessarily leave my house, where I live now [St Ignatius Walk] I wouldn't go for a walk around where I live...but whereas if I lived on the Quays I would.'

One respondent suggested that the severance restricted the flow of pedestrians and cyclists from some parts of Ordsall to the Quays.

'If you look at the area from above.....roadblocks, tower blocks and every sort of barrier. Because it's nearly impossible to get to the quays unless you zigzag miles out of your way.'

However, given all of this, interviewees were aware that from the rapid changes a new fundamentally different Ordsall will emerge – for better or worse.

'Ordsall is the biggest constituency in Salford by a mile, and it will double in the next two years. We'll have 21000 people in Ordsall....I think Ordsall [has always been] the poor relative of Salford. We've had gun crime, car crime, muggings, robberies. They use Regent Road to hijack cars at lights, and it's always [been] a negative portrayal of Ordsall'

Respondents found it difficult to accurately predict how the character and culture of Ordsall will look in the medium to long-term, such is the nature of the rapid development there.

Who benefits from development?



Some areas of Ordsall have recently undergone significant development. Photograph from Zodiac.

There was some scepticism on where development would benefit the residents of Ordsall, and whether it is going to provide a more liveable area for all residents. Respondents considered that some areas are likely to improve quality of life more than others:

'There was talk many years ago when they were doing the quays, that it would benefit the whole of Ordsall. But instead it's kind of just benefitting...basically, the quays and parts of Manchester...you get a sense of being closed in'

When travelling within Ordsall residents feel that the development around them hems them in: in terms of where traffic is routed and where walking and cycling routes are made pleasurable; and in terms of places which feel friendly, healthy and being looked after. The patchy and uneven nature of development and improvement of the area is detrimental to the walking and cycling environment. A more continuous feel to routes across Ordsall would increase community cohesion, and thus provide a perceptively better place for active travel.

'If they were to do what they are doing on the Quays, and in town, on Liverpool Street, Regent Road, parts of Oldfield Road...because, you go from Regent Road, and you turn left towards Liverpool Street and Oldfield Road, you get the Crescent at the very end. That's all done up, but in the meantime, from one end to another, it's practically derelict.'

'The simplest solution would be.....Give us our community back and we'd enjoy walking around it more....'

How the community can help to make Ordsall better for walking and cycling

Some of the discussion focused on the local community and the friendliness of the area for walking and cycling. Some wider societal trends, such as the culture of people (and in particular children) being less likely overall to leave their home for a walking or cycling trip were mentioned. This extends to parents being less likely to encourage children to travel too far from home.

'Well, I think that's part of the problem. You've got the elderly who don't go out as much. You've got children whose parents don't allow them to play out. I know if I had children round here, I'd want to know exactly where they were at all times, because it can be quite a frightening place. So all of these people become housebound really.'

'It's easier for parents to let their kids play on a computer because they know where they are all the time, whereas when I was a kid, they didn't have computers, and I would be out all night.'

In an area with higher than average levels of crime, there are a different set of problems to encouraging the active travel agenda – barriers such as personal safety can be amplified, which leads to a 'double transport poverty', which is intertwined with wider social problems such as quality of life. This also leads to less friendly, quieter streets, increasing the barriers to cycling and walking.

To address this, some respondents felt that part of the responsibility lies in building a more cohesive community in the first place – one which looks after their surroundings and take part more in the 'place-making' of the Ordsall area. A pleasant area for walking and cycling relies on this to some extent. A lot of the discussion on this surrounded litter and the responsibility of residents, shops and businesses in keeping walking and cycling routes clean.

'I think the shops should be fined – I don't think it should be the problem of the council solely.'

A separate problem, fly-tipping, was addressed by one interviewee who argued that sometimes people without a connection to the place come from outside and make the environment worse. Another respondent noted the role of adults in showing an example to the younger generation:

'If you look at school children, they are engaged in this save the planet mentality. But you have to start with: outside your front door. Perfect example of that is Coronation

street. Because you see all of the kids, with their mums and dads, sat on the curb, and they throw their litter.'

Areas of significance to the culture of the area, such as the Salford Lads club were considered significant in this regard:

People should take a pride in it, because it is a beautiful area.'



Respondents felt that litter, whilst being a potential deterrent to active travel is the responsibility of everybody. Photograph from Zodiac.

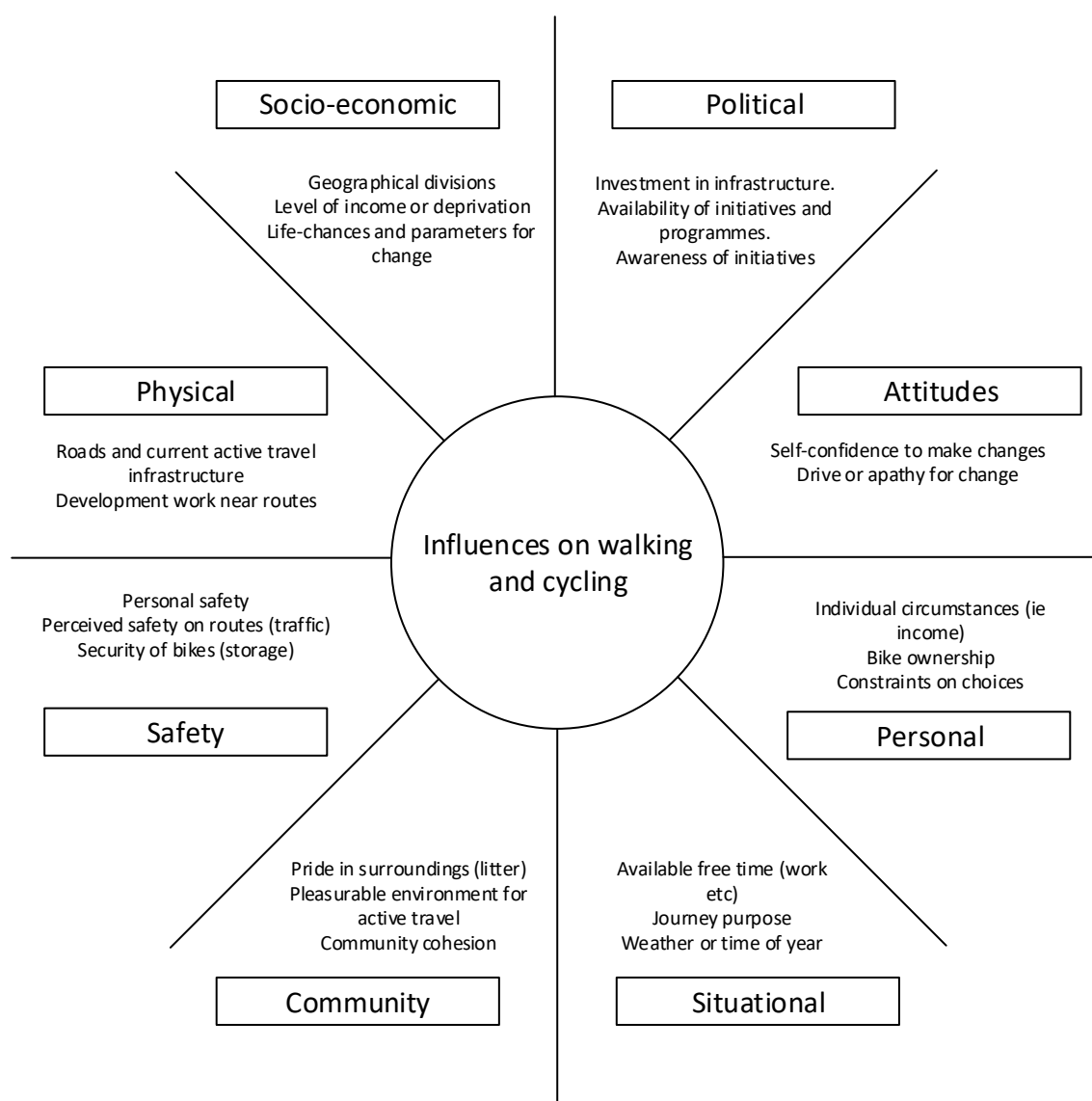
Whilst the council are sometimes blamed for not keeping areas litter-free, in part because of stretched resources; it was suggested that the culture within the community can change in terms of what is acceptable, and by extension improve the potential for attractive walking and cycling routes.

'At the end of the day they are paying their council tax for the authorities to come and pick up the litter that they have just dropped. It doesn't make sense.'

Ultimately many of the conversations on walking and cycling in the area demonstrated how encouraging active travel is intertwined with promoting pride in the community and community cohesion.

The main themes arising from the workshops and interviews are summarised in the working conceptual framework below:

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF INTERVIEW AND WORKSHOP THEMES



3.3 FINAL PROJECT DISSEMINATION WORKSHOP

The final workshop, held at St Clement's on the 13th July 2017, involved the presentation of interim results of the interviews and the screening of the film to 31 residents of Ordsall and practitioners whose job-role focused on active travel. There was an additional discussion following the presentation, but this was more minimal than the initial project workshop. The key themes which arose were as follows:

- Many of the issues and ideas highlighted from the interviews were considered relevant. In terms of increasing active travel, there is a significant improvement

needed for infrastructural improvements and behavioural change measures to raise awareness and increase participation. This comes at a cost in terms of resources.

- The measures that are already in place are a positive element, which should be maximised by greater engagement and visibility.
- Given that the interviews highlighted the importance of developing a sense of place for Ordsall in order to encourage more active travel, participants were asked what made the place special.
 - The history of the area was a key element and can be dated back to Roman times. Respondents suggested that aspects such as the slums and subsequent clearance, the heritage of long-standing families who had remained for decades, and the 'unique buildings' including Ordsall Hall, St. Ignatius, Salford Lads' Club, St. Clement's and St. Joseph's' were important parts of the fabric of Ordsall.
 - They also pointed out that the area had changed very quickly, with many buildings and streets lost (and parts of the docks).
 - However, the community spirit and generosity of residents was maintained.
 - New aspects such as the redevelopment of the Quays, the BBC and new housing, were changing the character of the area.
 - Participants suggested that Ordsall is a 'triangle island surrounded by roads and canals', but that the presence of so many waterways large and small make it unique.



St Clements from above. Juxtapositions between green space and the built environment and between old and new. Photograph from Zodiac Films

- The film was received well and provided a means for both community members and the attendant practitioners to understand the complexities of encouraging active travel in the area. This medium of conducting and representing research interviews on active travel has proven to provide a different dimension in terms of how it is received and understood, and there is potential therefore, for using it in the future (perhaps in other localities).
- Additionally the techniques used in Talking the Walk were given considerable praise: inclusive workshops bringing together practitioners from the range of organisations invested in active travel, members of the community and local academics; sustained time spent talking about active travel individually and in groups at key locations in the area, and whilst walking in between. The researchers spent a number of half-days within the community during the period of the interviews, which allowed a rapport to build over time –it was suggested that this factor was instrumental in gaining the depth of understanding which resulted from the dialogue.
- Furthermore the interviewees who were a regular part of all of the activities stated that not only were they more aware of and favourable to more active travel following the process, many of them were now undertaking more walking and / or cycling than

they had done at the start. This has a knock-on effect to friends, family and other community members.

- Suggestions for further application of the project included taking it to other areas of Salford and Greater Manchester, and looking to expand the idea further to include more people.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Talking the Walk sought to identify enablers and barriers to both walking and cycling, plus related issues in the Ordsall area of Salford. Ordsall, like some other parts of Salford, is lower than average in the indices for deprivation, which encompass key indicators of quality of life. Therefore encouraging active travel can play an important part of addressing societal problems. However much of the discourse displayed in this study shows how these problems compound issues of inactivity and make increasing active travel a more complex problem to understand and assess.

It used a methodology which was based around guiding community members and practitioners involved in encouraging active travel to shape the research based on community-specific elements. Because of this, Talking the Walk achieved a number of things over a relatively small space of time, with limited resources.

The workshop preceding the interviews brought together practitioners and community members from Ordsall to identify the most relevant parameters for the research. This event produced a number of key themes which were taken forward for further exploration in the interviews. A variety of barriers exist which affect whether people walk or cycle. They are complex and range from personal safety concerns, to low-confidence, apathy and everyday life. The workshop highlighted that, although there are numerous organisations, initiatives and projects in Salford and the wider region (and some local to Ordsall), plus higher than average areas of green space and crucially, the desire to walk and / or cycle more, a significant part of the problem lies in reaching people, conveying information and the overall visibility of active travel initiatives.

The walking and cycling environment is extremely important, as much of the discussion focused on obstructions and barriers. These included building development work restricting routes, large and busy roads which dissect the community, litter and car parking in residential areas (often by visitors or commuters to Manchester centre who are deterred by high parking prices there). Overall, the discourse showed that any infrastructural changes which would make the environment more friendly to walking and cycling would have a positive effect on participation.

Where active travel infrastructure does exist, better signage would help to encourage more usage. Similarly, where there are initiatives to encourage more active travel, better publicity would increase the potential for participation by the community. Additionally more and better information on how to combine active travel modes with trams, buses and trains would be of value.

From the interviews there was a discernible difference between the experiences of and attitudes towards active travel of residents of Salford Quays and some other parts of Ordsall. The road layout has a significant effect in terms of the division of the community, and the likelihood of residents of the 'Ordsall triangle' area to venture further afield on foot or by bike.

The community element cannot be understated. Through both the workshops and interviews, participants generated numerous ideas and suggestions for increasing active travel, including friends of the park schemes, training and events. It shows that with more engagement, complex community-related issues can be explored and addressed.

The process of Talking the Walk involved several half-days of the researchers immersing themselves within the community, talking to residents at community hubs and walking in and around walking and cycling locations in the area. This element was crucial. The showing of the film documenting the research to the community following the project was also effective. Not only did it increase awareness of walking and cycling within the community – it encouraged residents to think more deeply about their travel habits and provided a mental link to the organisations and initiatives in Greater Manchester who are involved in active travel. Following the project, many of the participant residents anecdotally stated that they were walking or cycling more following their involvement in the interviews and events.

Each community or group of people have their own unique characteristics. Therefore, Talking the Walk approach to understanding active travel – entering the process with an open mind and allowing the community and practitioners to drive the process – will result in a project which draws out community specific issues and can then build accordingly.

Wider socio economic issues and the changing environment through regeneration and development were highlighted by residents in the interviews as having links to attitudes to

active travel. Taking these issues into account can provides a better picture for those involved in encouraging walking and cycling in order to plan future strategies.

The project highlighted that, where active travel policy often targets resources on a regional level, initiatives can focus on a small-scale, and consequently, more can be understood about the wider issues affecting communities and how they affect the way that people move. These will sometimes be transferable to other communities, or there will be elements which are understood from one small area which can be explored in others nearby. In this sense, Talking the Walk, if taken forward into other places, or on a larger scale, builds understanding of issues cumulatively and adds to the body of knowledge. Ultimately this can help to build up a picture so that practitioners and communities are better informed to affect change.

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APPENDIX

List of participants in the workshops and interviews

The community of Ordsall
Living Streets
Love your bike
LPC Living
Manchester and Salford Ramblers
Ordsall Allotment Group
Ordsall Café
Sacred Trinity Church, Salford
Salford City Council
Salford Community Leisure
Salford Council Neighbourhood Team
Salford Health Improvement Team
St Clement's Community Church
Sustrans
The community of Ordsall
Transport for Greater Manchester
University of Salford
Urban Vision
Zodiac Films