

University of Hertfordshire Smart Mobility Unit (SMU)

- Teaching, including new MSc in transport planning, and data unit
- Research (developing local, national & international partners/collaboration)
- “Walking the Walk”: UH has its own bus company, Uno, and a travel plan
- Consultancy (e.g “State of the Nations” for the Transport Planning Society)
- Seminars/Workshops – Sharing & disseminating best practice
- Multi-disciplinary: SMU includes different specialists in data, psychology, engineering and business and links with other university teams on climate change and futures studies

We have been running roundtables looking at the future of transport outside cities; there has been little research on this - see <https://www.herts.ac.uk/study/schools-of-study/life-and-medical-sciences/business-support-and-consultancy/smart-mobility-unit/Roundtable-research>

University of Hertfordshire **UH**

The future of transport outside cities: a report on roundtables held by the University of Hertfordshire Smart Mobility Unit

Transport outside cities: directions of travel (1)

- Electric vehicles will be vital for decarbonisation, but need also to reduce vehicle mileage – and improve numbers, quality and accessibility of chargers in rural areas
- There is now a lot of data on transport outside cities and this can be used to design new transport services and tackle decarbonisation
- There are examples of improved public transport networks outside cities, for example in Cornwall
- There are new local transport services in many areas outside cities, including demand-responsive transport, car clubs, employee travel services and car sharing, and these can cut single occupancy car use
- Walking and cycling can be encouraged in small towns and villages and between towns, including with quiet lanes and back roads but also alongside main roads
- New technology can give people outside cities new transport choices, including e-bikes, e-scooters (and hire schemes for these) and new forms of on-demand transport, but there are regulatory and infrastructure needs

Transport outside cities: directions of travel (2)

- Rural hubs – bringing together transport options with services like deliveries, workplaces etc – are being tested out in some areas
- Visitor travel can and should be addressed, especially in tourist “honeypots”; Snowdonia is trying local charging schemes with funding for good public transport
- Planning for transport outside cities needs to be inclusive and cater for all groups, including those with disabilities
- Essential to locate and design new housing with public transport, active travel and local services to avoid car-based sprawl
- Need to plan for resilience of transport infrastructure outside cities with changing climate – warmer and droughts/floods

Conclusions

- It's possible to give people and communities outside cities alternatives to single occupancy car use, and doing this will help decarbonisation, social inclusion, cost of living and businesses (by improving efficiency and increasing access to jobs)
- The Government can help this, through funding, breaking down silos and promoting regulation changes (taxis, buses, community transport etc)
- But places can get on and do things, and in some cases (car clubs, commuting) the private sector and local authorities are already implementing projects

Next steps might include a network of policy-makers, projects and researchers to develop ideas for decision-makers on improving transport outside cities. The SMU hopes to work with others including Transport East to develop this.