

School Travel Plans

How Successful Are They? Factors Affecting Their Success

Louise Smith, Senior Consultant, MVA Consultancy
UTSG Annual Conference
Plymouth, 5th January 2010



Introduction

- TfL Study 'Modes of Study Data Validation' project
- 10 schools in London
- MSc Transport Planning and Engineering –
Research Project

What is a School Travel Plan?

What is a School Travel Plan (STP)?

- Dynamic process produced by schools to reduce congestion;
- Encourages active travel; and
- Removes barriers to sustainable travel, such as safety concerns.

Why are School Travel Plans important?

- Journey to school has caused much concern over recent years;
- Encourage modal shift away from the car to sustainable modes on the school run; and
- Parental choice on schools increases distance travelled.

Scope

Objectives:

- To consider differences between method of transport used and distances;
- Influence of local area and household characteristics on method of transport;
- Quantify effects of road safety on mode choice;
- Consider effect of parents on mode choice; and
- Do different STPs deliver different results?

Methodology

Several sources:

- Primary data collection;
 - Socio-economic characteristics of the local areas and household characteristics; and
 - STP for each school.
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- Sampling strategy – willing schools
 - Surveys undertaken in May 2008

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE (1 DAY SURVEY) - TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT

We would like you to tell us how your child travelled to school today.
Once you have completed this form, please return it to the school reception.
All information you provide will be treated as confidential.

1) School:

2) Date: Day:

3) Child's Name: 4) School Class/Year:

5) Address:
Street:
Area:
Post code:

6) How did your child travel to school today?
Please tick one type of transport for each journey.
If your child used more than one (for example, walked to the bus stop, then took the bus) please tick the one that is used for the greatest distance.

Walk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taxi	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bicycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	Train	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caravan - he/she was the only child	<input type="checkbox"/>	London Underground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caravan - with other child/children	<input type="checkbox"/>	Metro/Tram/Docklands Light Rail (DLR)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bus - public service bus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bus - dedicated school bus	<input type="checkbox"/>		

7) How long did the journey take?
Less than 10 minutes
10 - 20 minutes
More than 20 minutes

8) How did your child travel home from school today?
Please tick one type of transport for each journey.

Walk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taxi	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bicycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	Train	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caravan - he/she was the only child	<input type="checkbox"/>	London Underground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caravan - with other child/children	<input type="checkbox"/>	Metro/Tram/Docklands Light Rail (DLR)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bus - public service bus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bus - dedicated school bus	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Complete the next question only if your child usually travels to school by car:
9) Where does your child get dropped off when coming to school by car?
Just outside the school gates
In the school car park
A few minutes walk away Please describe where:
Other Please describe where:

Thank you for answering this questionnaire. Please return it to the school reception.

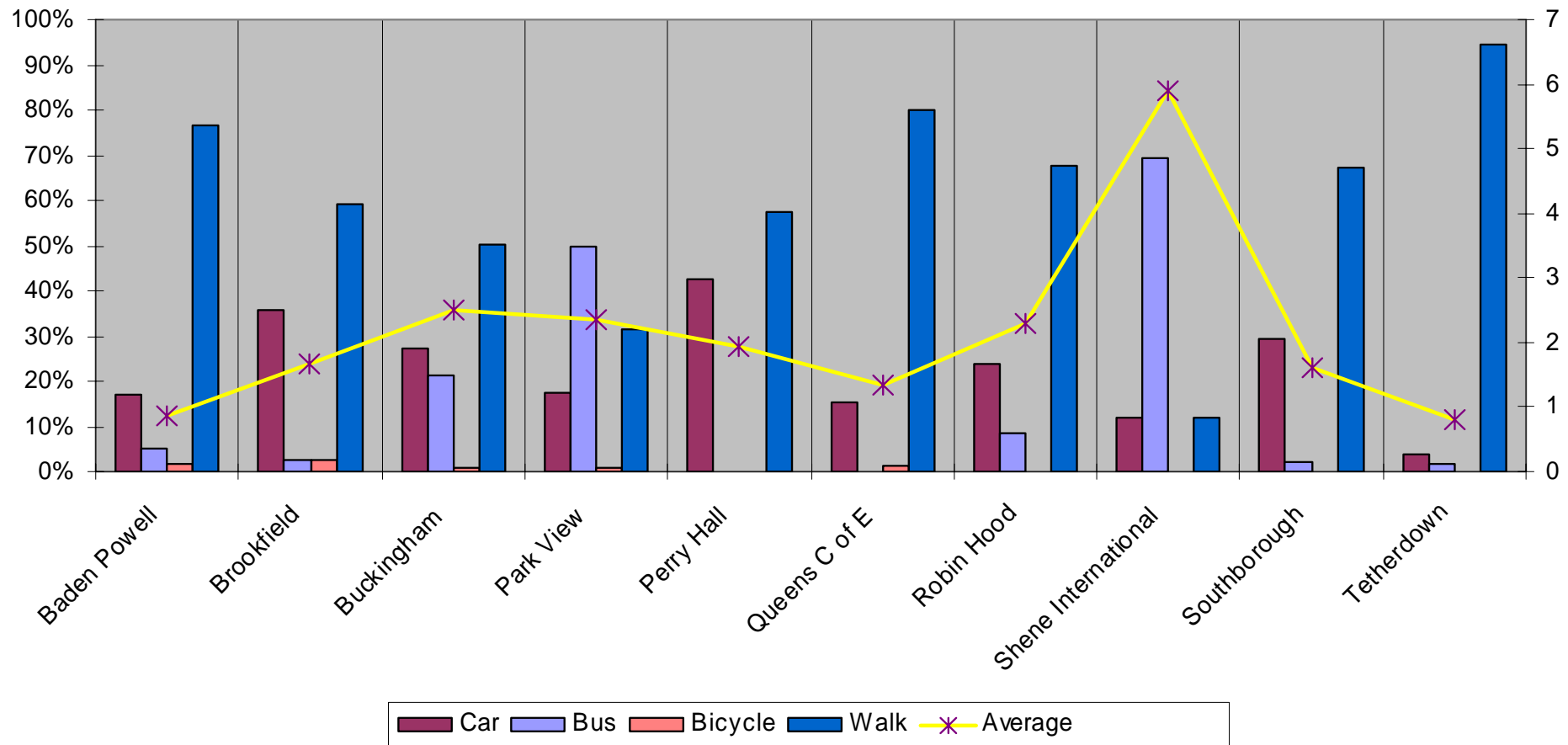
We will process all personal data in accordance with the provisions of good information handling contained in the Data Protection Act 1998. We will not attribute the results to any individual or pass on this information to any third party organisation.

Schools

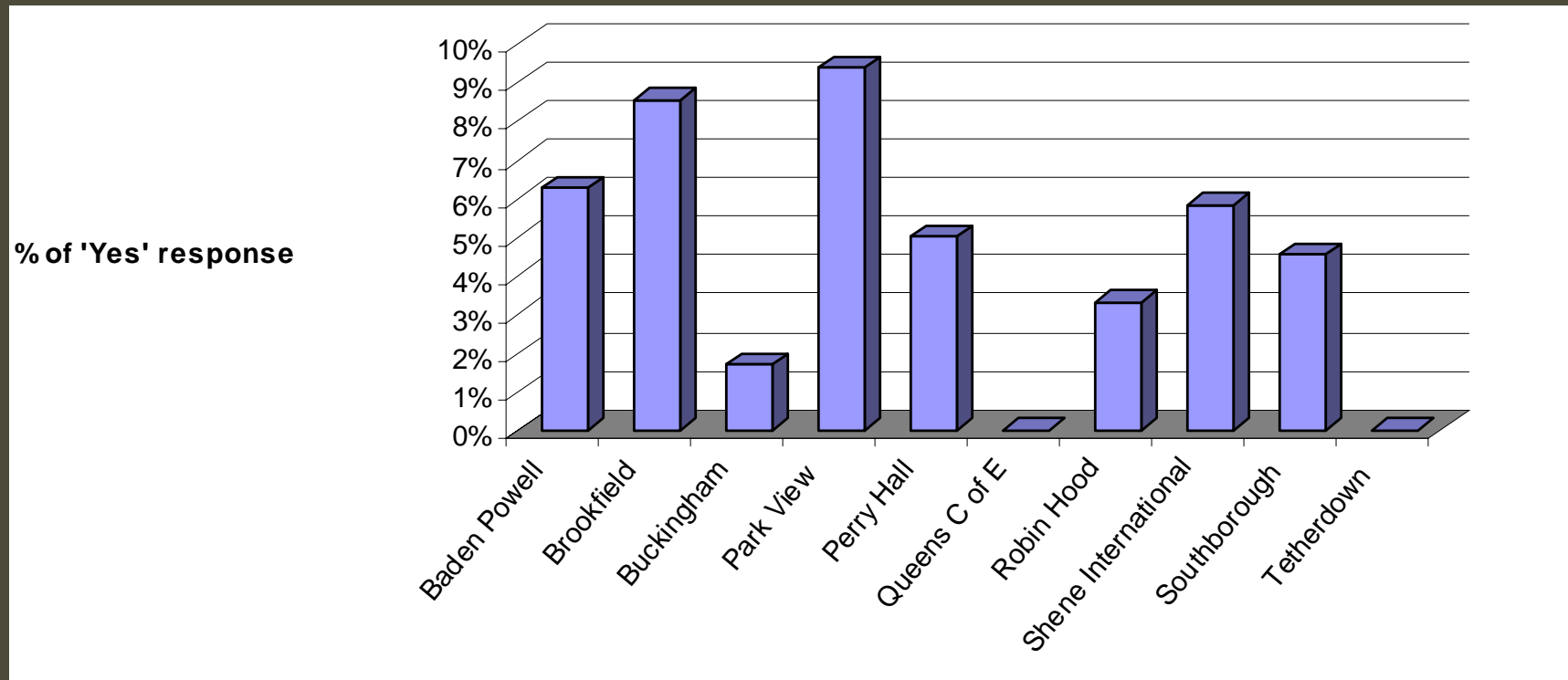
- 8 primary and 2 secondary schools in London;
- Most schools had WOW schemes, walking bus schemes and cycle training;
- A couple had park & stride schemes;
- Travel plans adopted between 2004 and 2007;
- Average 25% response rate – questionnaires; and
- Average 96% response rate – hands up survey.



Results – Method of Transport and Distance Travelled



Results – Modeshift as a result of STP



Key Findings

- Average distance travelled to each school varied significantly;
- Differences in distance walked between the primary schools;
- Economic and social factors had no impact on mode choice;
- Good road safety increased walk distances;
- Car ownership increased car use;
- Walking schemes and levels of walking by parents influenced mode choice;
- Trip chaining i.e. connected journeys impacted on the mode share of a school's travel plan; and
- Consistency between pupil questionnaires and classroom hands-up surveys, but conflicting results between parent interviews and classroom hands-up surveys.

Conclusions

Are School Travel Plans successful?

- Yes, longer established ones are best

Summary

- Distance was the most critical factor on mode choice;
- More crime and higher car ownership created higher number of car drivers;
- Poor road safety discouraged walking over long distances;
- Affluence and deprivation levels did not influence mode choice;
- Parental perceptions affected mode choice; and
- Modeshare figures affected by parental journeys.

Recommendations for the most effective Travel Plan

- Effective measures;
- Relevance to the local area;
- Marketing and publicity;
- Established for a long time; and
- Various monitoring techniques.