

Women Gain Confidence, Exercise, Time & Freedom From 20mph

A 20's Plenty for Us Briefing Feb 2019

www.20splenty.org/women_20

Both genders enjoy a better quality of life in wide area 20mph, with women benefiting most. Calmer speeds lead to greater street confidence, freedom from some child escort duties, a greater ability to exercise safely and more time due to less escort duties.

20's Plenty for Us

...making your place a better place to be

20mph is a feminist issue. Surveys consistently find women more in favour of 20mph than men with overall support consistently around 70%. Yet men are more often the ones in power making transport decisions.

Women own fewer cars than men. 39% of privately registered cars are female owned (61% male) - in part explained by the 18% gender pay gap where women earn less. Women travel by car about a third less than men. Ladies don't commute as far or as many business miles. Men drive more whilst proportionately more women walk or take public transport. 20mph especially benefits vulnerable road users - ie those outside of a car whose exposure to risk dramatically falls. Car passengers gain huge casualty reductions too.

Parental permission to play out doubled in Edinburgh's 20mph area. Allowing children to play or travel independently of an adult escort is enormously emancipating for parents— especially mums. Child escort trips for instance peak in women's 30's. Twice daily for 190 days a year (380 trips) with an average distance of 2.7 miles (1.6 for primary and 3.7 secondary schools), is very costly in time! Since time is money, child escort trip duties are a factor explaining the gender pay gap, especially when cohabiting women are short of time for paid work, as they do 70% of unpaid household work. Women also take on more escort trips for other reasons, eg leisure trips and for elderly and disabled relatives.

In Bristol and Edinburgh 20mph was associated with more active travel. Health gains especially accrue to those who were under-active. As 40% of British women don't do enough activity (compared to 32% of men), there's greater potential for females to gain from getting more physically active.

Men make up 72% of cycling trips in the UK. In the Netherlands its 55% women. This suggests great potential for more ladies to bicycle. Fear of speed and volume of traffic are the key deterrents. Fortunately, 20mph limits reduce both fear and traffic volumes. Latent, or infrequent, women cyclists currently face suppressed demand for cycling that could be unlocked by wide area 20mph.

British girls and women are conditioned to gender stereotypes such as being mindful to protecting themselves from risks outdoors and to higher dress standards (e.g. harder to walk in shoes, fancier hairstyles etc). Both reduce active travel demand from women. However, with more cyclists and pedestrians about in 20mph areas, there's potential for a community safety benefit from streets beginning to feel friendlier. Donald Appleyard proved that people had better social networks when resident on low traffic, low speed roads. Overcoming fear is key to coaxing more women to travel using their legs or public transport to get about.

Anna Semlyen, Campaign Manager of 20's Plenty for Us said:

"Women love 20mph because they care about their safety and those they love. 20mph helps women especially to lead freer, more independent and active lives. Time available to work increases for mums too. Transport decision makers, who are often men, can choose to improve all women's and children's lives with 20mph."

20's Plenty for Us campaigns for a 20mph default speed limit in built up areas without physical calming.

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