

National Travel Survey

Statistical Release

30 July 2013

Revised 19 September 2013



Department
for Transport

National Travel Survey: 2012

This Statistical Release presents information on personal travel by residents of Great Britain during 2012.

The 2012 National Travel Survey (NTS) is the latest in an established series of household surveys of personal travel in Great Britain. The survey is primarily designed to track long-term development of trends in travel, although short-term changes can also be detected.

NTS data is collected via two main sources - interviews with people in their homes, and a diary that they keep for a week to record their travel. The NTS covers travel by all age groups, including children. In 2012, diary data was collected from 8,200 households, covering over 19,000 individuals.

There are some revisions to the time series results. See Background Notes section and the [Notes & Definitions](#) document.



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The key findings from the 2012 NTS include:

- Over the long term, trip rates increased until the mid-1990s, but have since fallen back to the 1970s level. In 2012, the average person made 954 trips per year compared to 956 in 1972/73 and 1,086 in 1995/97.
- In 2012, the average distance travelled was 6,691 miles which is 49% higher than in 1972/73, but 4% lower than in 1995/97. Average trip length was 7 miles.
- Since 1995/97, trips by private modes of transport fell by 14% while public transport modes increased by 2%. Walking trips fell by 27%.
- Most of the decline in overall trips rates between 1995/97 and 2012 is due to falls in shopping, visiting friends and commuting purposes.
- In 2012, trips by car (as a driver or passenger) accounted for 64% of all trips made and 78% of distance travelled.
- On average, females make more trips than males, but males travel much further each year. The average number of car driver trips and distance travelled by men is falling while those by women are increasing.
- Concessionary travel pass take-up was 79% of those eligible (82% of females and 74% of males); ranging from 66% in rural areas to 88% in London.
- People in the highest household income quintile group made 28% more trips than those in the lowest income quintile and travelled nearly 3 times further.
- Estimated average annual car mileage was 8,200 miles.

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Note: The National Travel Survey from January 2013 covers England residents only. Therefore, the 2012 results presented in this Statistical Release are the final set for Great Britain as a whole.

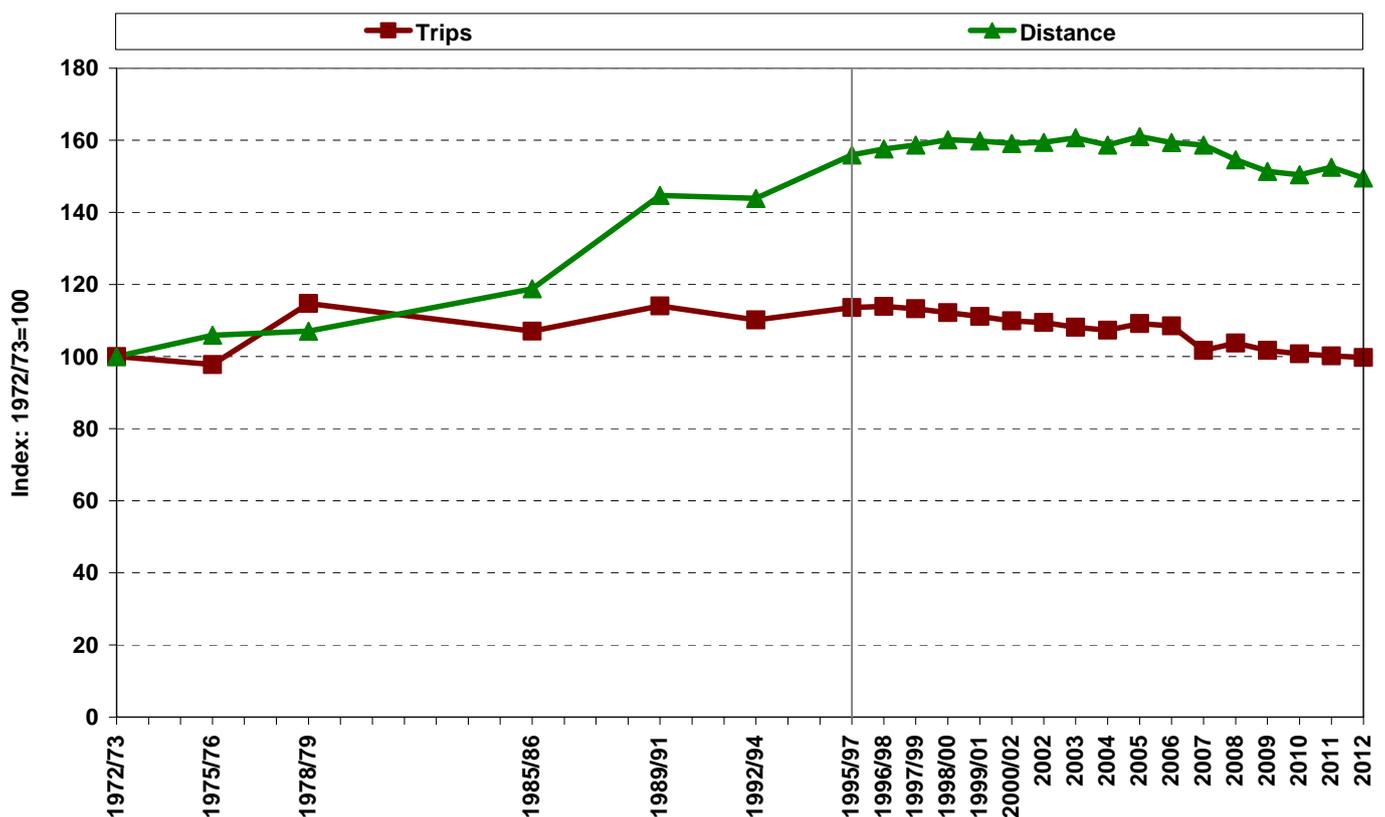
1. Trends in personal travel

The basic unit of travel in the National Travel Survey is a trip, defined as a one-way course of travel with a single main purpose.

Since the early 1970s, the average **distance** people travel per year has increased by 49%. Most of this growth occurred during the 1970s and 1980s and was largely due to an increase in average **trip lengths**, which have risen by 50% since the early 1970s. **Trip rates** increased until the mid-1990s, but have since fallen back to the 1970s level. However, looking at trips of over a mile only, these have increased by 29% since the early 1970s. Since the late 1990s, the average distance travelled and average trip lengths have generally levelled off.

Trips and distance travelled - index: Great Britain, 1972/73 to 2012

(NTS web table [NTS0101](#))



Note: NTS data from 1995 onwards are weighted, causing a one-off uplift in trips and distance travelled between 1992/94 and 1995/97. Data prior to 2002 are based on combined survey years as the annual sample size was smaller. Time series comparisons in the rest of this Statistical Release will mainly be based on 1995/97 or 2002 to 2012.

Between 1995/97 and 2012 there was a steady falling trend in **trip rates**. In 2012, the average person made 954 trips per year compared to 1,086 in 1995/97 – a fall of 12% and the lowest trip rate recorded over this time period. For trips over one mile in length, there was a fall of only 4%.

The average **distance travelled** per person per year was 4% lower in 2012 than in 1995/97 – 6,691 miles compared with 6,981 miles. Distance travelled peaked in 2005 at 7,208 miles.

The average **trip length** increased by 9% from 6.4 miles in 1995/97 to 7.0 miles in 2012.

Time spent travelling remained fairly static over time at around an hour a day. In 2012, residents of Great Britain spent an average of 361 hours per year travelling compared to 369 hours in 1995/97. Average trip time has increased by 11% over the period, from 20.4 minutes to 22.7 minutes.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “trends in travel patterns” can be found on the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers [NTS0101 to NTS0108](#).

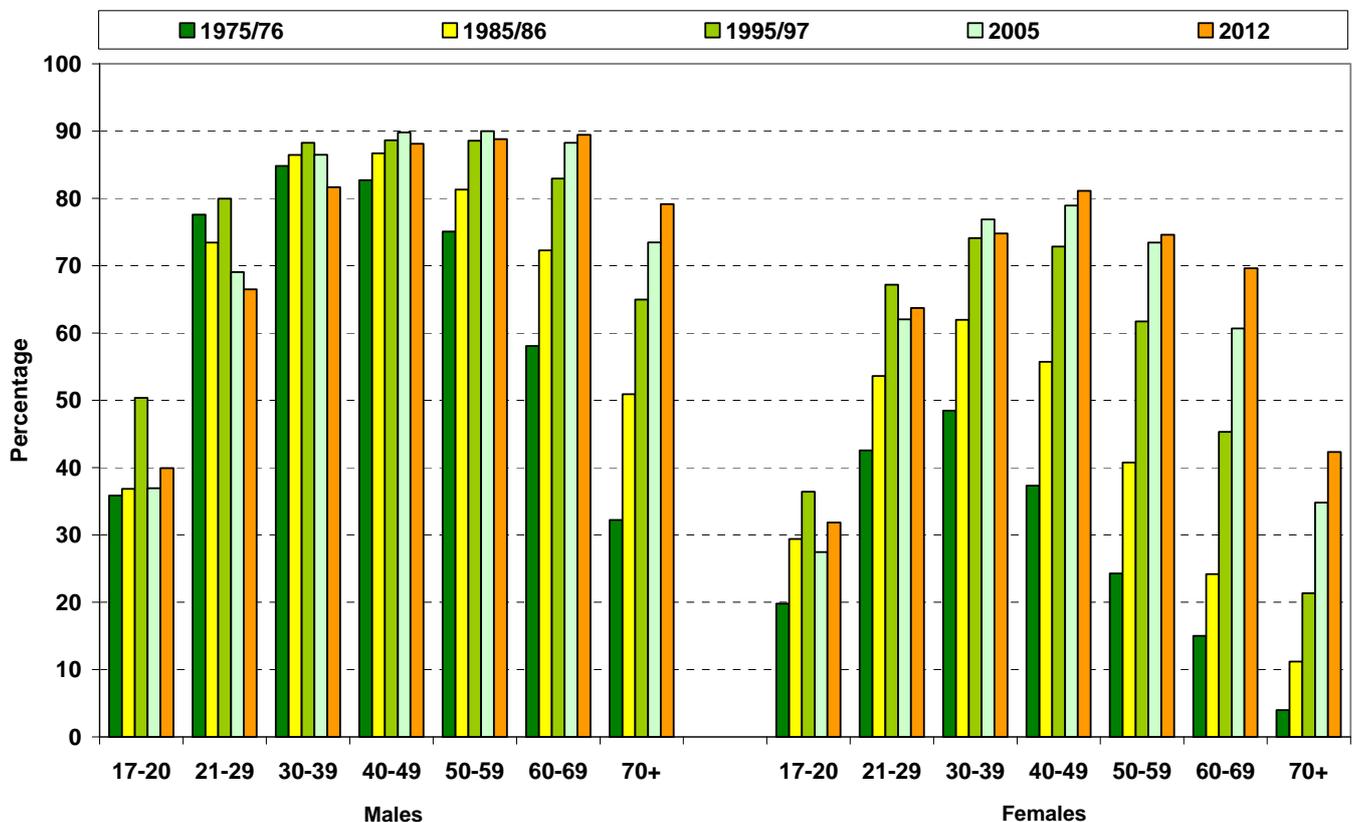
2. Trends in driving licence holding and vehicle availability

This section shows the trends in driving licence holding and in car and motorcycle availability, both of which influence changes in personal travel patterns.

Driving licence holding by age and gender

The NTS estimates that 36 million residents in Great Britain held a full car driving licence in 2012. Of these, 19 million were men and 17 million were women.

Full car driving licence holders by age and gender: Great Britain, 1975/76 to 2012 (NTS web table [NTS0201](#))



As the chart shows, over the long term there has been an increase in the proportion of both males and females holding a full driving licence for most age groups.

In 1975/76, 69% of males and 29% of females had a licence. In 2012, 80% of males and 66% of females had a licence. While the proportion of males holding a full driving licence remained fairly stable since the early 1990s, the proportion of females with a licence continued to increase.

The proportion of young adults (aged 17-20) with a full driving licence has decreased since the early 1990s where driving licence holding for this age group was at its highest, although the level does fluctuate year-on-year. In 1995/97, 43% of those aged 17-20 held a full licence, compared with a low of 27% in 2004 and 36% in 2012.

There has been a large increase in the number of older people holding a full driving licence. Between 1995/97 and 2012 the proportion of people aged 70+ holding a licence increased from 38% to 58%. Over the same period, the proportion of people aged 60-69 holding licences has increased from 63% to 79%. The increase among older women is particularly notable: 70% of women aged 60-69 and 42% aged 70+ held a licence in 2012 compared with 45% and 21% in 1995/97 respectively. This is due to ageing of existing licence holders rather than large numbers of newly qualified drivers in older age groups.

The NTS monitors the reasons why people are choosing not to drive and the likelihood that non-licence holders will acquire a licence. Overall, the most common reasons mentioned for not learning to drive were 'cost of learning to drive' (32%), 'not interested in driving' (29%) and 'family and friends drive me when necessary' (29%). In younger age groups, cost factors remain the main barrier to learning to drive. Of those aged 17-20, 59% mentioned 'cost of learning to drive' as a reason, 46% said the 'cost of insurance' and 42% said 'cost of buying a car'. When asked for the main reason the majority of 17-20 year olds said 'cost of learning to drive' (35%).

Of all non-licence holders the majority (60%) said that they never intend to learn to drive. This proportion increases with age, 4% of non-licence holders aged 17-20 said they never intend to learn compared to nearly all of those aged 60+ (99%).

Car and motorcycle availability

The proportion of households in Great Britain which did not have access to a car fell from 38% in 1985/86, to 30% in 1995/97, and to 25% in 2005. It has remained at this level up to 2012. The proportion of households with two or more cars has increased from 17% in 1985/1986 to 25% in 1995/97 and to 31% in 2012. Since 2000, there have been more households with two or more cars than households with no car.

In 2012, 80% of adults lived in a household with a car compared to 59% in the mid-1970's, 69% in the mid-1980's and 77% in the mid-1990's. In 2012, 82% of men and 78% of women lived in a household with a car.

Households with a car are more likely to own a motorcycle as well than households with no car. Overall in 2012, 2.6% of households owned a motorcycle.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “trends in driving licence holding and vehicle availability” can be found on the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers [NTS0201 to NTS0207](#).

3. How people travel

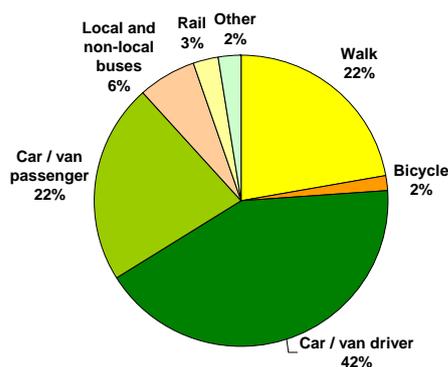
This section presents statistics on how residents of Great Britain travelled in 2012. The statistics include a breakdown of trips and distance travelled by private and public transport modes.

Overall in 2012, there were an average of 954 trips per person per year, 1,054 stages¹, 6,691 miles travelled, and an average trip length of 7.0 miles. Of all trips made in 2012, 20% were less than one mile in length, 66% less than 5 miles and 95% were less than 25 miles.

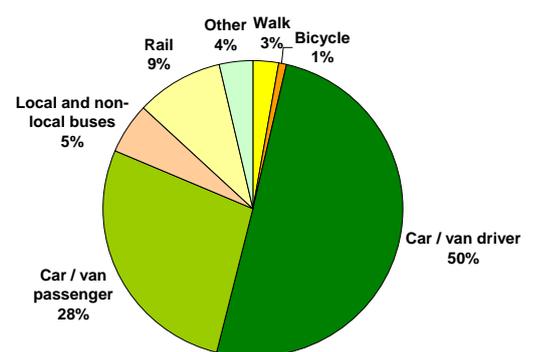
Mode share: Great Britain, 2012

(NTS web tables [NTS0301](#) and [NTS0302](#))

Average number of trips



Average distance travelled



The mode share chart on the left shows the proportion of all trips taken by different modes of transport. In 2012, 64% of all trips were made by car (as a driver or a passenger).

Car travel again forms the largest proportion when the mode share chart as presented in terms of distance travelled. In 2012, 78% of total distance travelled was by car.

Buses (both local and non-local) account for a greater proportion of all trips than rail (both surface rail and London Underground) at 6% and 3% respectively. However, as bus trips on average are shorter in length, they account for only 5% of total distance travelled whereas rail accounts for 9%.

Private modes of transport

In 2012, 89% of all trips were by private transport modes. Trips by private transport modes have made the largest downward contribution to the decline in overall trip rates since 1995/97 with a

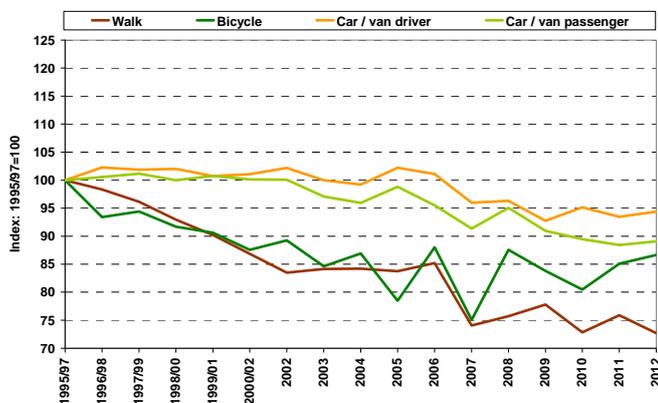
¹ A trip consists of one or more stages. A new stage is defined when there is a change in the form of transport or vehicle requiring a separate ticket.

14% fall; walking trips in particular fell significantly. In 2012, the average number of walking trips was 212 trips per person per year compared with 292 trips in 1995/97, a decrease of 27% and the lowest trip rate over this time period. Of all trips less than one mile in length 77% were walking trips.

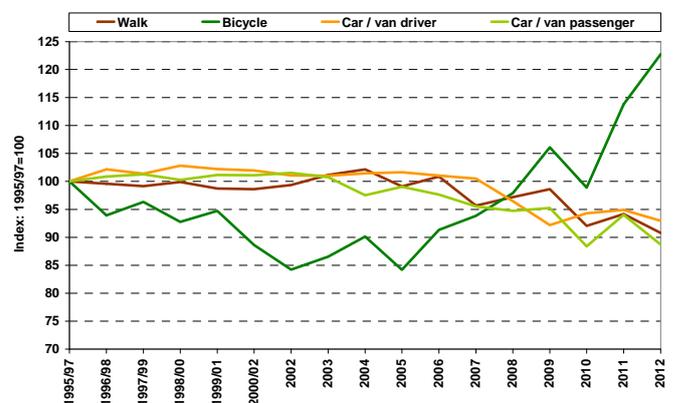
Presenting trip rate and distance travelled data as indices means that the change in the number of walking trips since 1995/97 can be compared with the change in other private transport modes such as car/van travel (as a driver or passenger) and cycling.

Selected private transport modes - index: Great Britain, 1995/97 to 2012 (NTS web tables [NTS0103](#) and [NTS0105](#))

Average number of trips - index



Average distance travelled – index



The index chart on the left shows that between 1995/97 and 2012 the average number of car/van driver trips (orange line) and passenger trips (light green line) has fallen by 6% and 11% respectively. In terms of distance travelled, the number of car/van driver miles per person per year has decreased by 7% between 1995/97 and 2012. Across the same period, the average trip length for car/van drivers has remained constant at around 8.5 miles along with an average trip time at around 21 minutes. Looking at trips of London residents only, the number of car/van driver miles per person per year has decreased much more than the national average - down 37% between 1995/97 and 2012.

Changes in car usage tend to be affected by wider economic factors, such as the state of the economy and fuel prices, which influence car ownership and the trip behaviour of car owners. Increases to the cost of motoring could be expected to have a negative effect on car use. Additionally, there is evidence that motorists are continuing to move towards cars with greater fuel efficiency and lower rates of Vehicle Excise Duty. The proportion of diesel, small engine and low CO₂-emitting cars are increasing, especially in the new vehicle market².

² Table VEH0255: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/veh02-licensed-cars>

There is annual volatility in the cycling data (dark green line) because of the relatively small number of cyclists in the NTS sample. The volatility reflects the difficulty in measuring this relatively uncommon mode of transport. In 2012, only 2% of all trips were made by bicycle. There has been a small drop in the number of bicycle trips per person per year from 18 trips in 1995/97 to 16 trips in 2012. However, in terms of distance travelled, the average number of bicycle miles has increased by 23% from 43 miles in 1995/97 to 53 miles in 2012 – the highest level recorded over this time period. The decrease in the average number of bicycle trips and the corresponding increase in the average number of bicycle miles has resulted in the average bicycle trip length increasing from 2.3 miles in 1995/97 to 3.2 miles in 2012. The average distance travelled by bicycle by London residents has increased by 63% since 1995/97; nearly three times the national percentage increase.

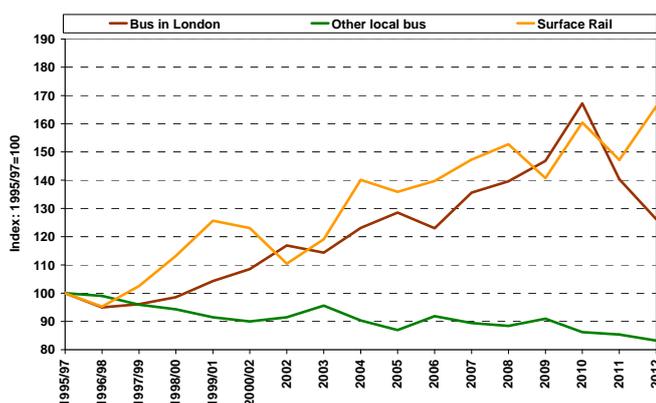
People who recorded at least one bicycle trip in their travel diary made 6 trips *per week* by bicycle in 2012, spent over two hours cycling and covered 20 miles. People who recorded at least one motorcycle trip made 8 trips *per week* by motorcycle, spent three and a half hours travelling and covered 85 miles.

Public modes of transport

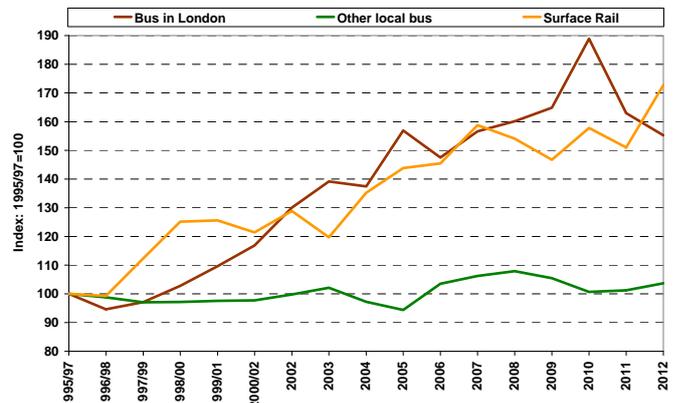
Public transport's share of all trips has increased slightly from 9% in 1995/97 to 11% in 2012. Total trips by public transport modes increased by 2% over the period.

Selected public transport modes - index: Great Britain, 1995/97 to 2012 (NTS web tables [NTS0104](#) and [NTS0106](#))

Average number of trips - index



Average distance travelled – index



The largest upward contribution to the increase in public transport's share of all trips comes from London buses and surface rail. The index chart on the left above shows that the average number of London bus trips (red line) and surface rail trips (orange line) has increased by 26% and 66% between 1995/97 and 2012 respectively. Across the same period, other local bus (buses outside of London) trips have decreased by 17%. In terms of average distance travelled (chart on the right), London bus has increased by 55%, surface rail by 73% and other local bus by 4%.

However, London bus data from the NTS shows a peak in 2010 followed by two years of decreases. These results are not observed in other data sources. Prior to 2010 the longer-term upward trend in London bus trips and distance travelled are clearly shown in the NTS and other data sources.

Long distance trips

In 2012, 2% of trips were over 50 miles in length. Over the 5-year period 2008 to 2012, 80% of all long distance trips were made by car, a further 14% by rail, and 4% by bus (both local and non-local). Air travel was the majority mode only for domestic trips over 350 miles.

In 2012, 43% of people said they had made at least one international flight in the last 12 months, with 10% flying abroad three or more times.

Related statistics

In addition to National Travel Survey statistics presented here, DfT publishes a range of statistics related to modes of transport. Detailed comparisons between the NTS and other sources are not always possible because of differences in collection, coverage and measurement. However, where the NTS and other DfT statistics refer to the same phenomenon, a degree of coherence between different sources can be observed over time, although year-on-year changes can vary.

- The volume of road traffic from **DfT's Road Traffic Statistics** can be compared with distance data from the NTS for selected modes of transport. These statistics are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/road-traffic-statistics>
- Passenger journeys and passenger miles on local bus services from the **DfT's Bus Statistics (Public Service Vehicle Survey and Transport for London (TfL) data)**, surface rail data from the **Office of Rail Regulation (ORR)** and London Underground data from **TfL** can all be compared with trip and distance data from the NTS. These statistics are available at:
DfT Bus Statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/bus-statistics>
ORR: <http://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/>
TfL: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/publications/1482.aspx>

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on "how people travel" can be found on the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers NTS0301 to NTS0317 .

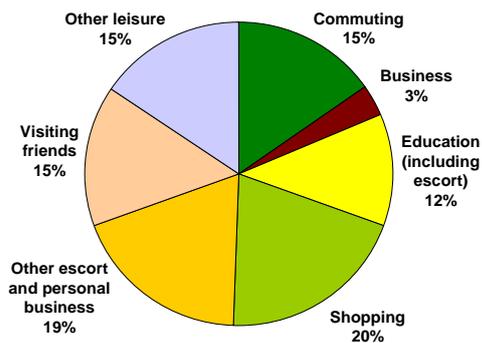
4. Why people travel

This section presents statistics on why residents of Great Britain travelled in 2012. The statistics also include how people choose different modes of transport for different trip purposes.

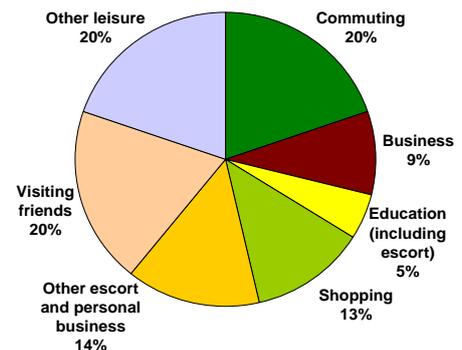
Purpose share: Great Britain, 2012

(NTS web tables [NTS0401](#) and [NTS0402](#))

Average number of trips



Average distance travelled



The purpose share chart on the left shows different trip purposes as a percentage of the total number of trips a person makes in a year. In 2012, 20% of trips were for shopping, unchanged from 2011, but two percentage points lower than in 1995/97.

In the NTS a commuting trip is defined as a trip from home to work, or from work to home. In 2012, 15% of trips were for commuting, while 20% of the average distance travelled per person per year was for commuting purposes.

Since 1995/97, the average number of trips and average distance travelled per person per year has decreased by 12% and 4%, respectively. Commuting trips have seen a larger decrease than the average with falls of 16% and 8%, respectively. The average commuting trip length has increased by 0.8 miles between 1995/97 and 2012 to reach 9.0 miles.

The largest downward contributions to the overall fall in the average number of trips between 1995/97 and 2012 have come from three trip purposes: shopping, visiting friends and commuting. In particular, trips to visit friends at a private home (part of the visiting friends category) have fallen by 30%.

In 2012, the average number of shopping trips was 189 trips per person per year compared with 237 trips in 1995/97, a decrease of 20%. The trend of falling numbers of shopping trips during this period is associated with a switch from more frequent, short shopping trips on foot, to longer, less frequent car trips. It may also reflect an increase in online shopping.

Trips for other leisure purposes (entertainment, sport, holiday, day trip and just walking), which currently make up 15% of all trips combined, saw an increase between 1995/97 and 2012 of 8% to

reach 147 trips per person per year. The majority of this increase is due to more entertainment and day trips; the others purposes in this category have fallen.

How people choose different modes of transport for different trip purposes

In 2012, on average, a person made 64% of all trips by car (as a driver or passenger). However, the percentage of trips made by car differs depending on the trip purpose. For education and escort education trips, 46% were by car in 2012, with 38% by walking and 10% by local bus.

Although only 8% of commuting and business trips were by rail (surface rail and London Underground), this represented 52% of all rail trips in 2012. Shopping was the main trip purpose for travelling by local bus (26%).

Long distance trips

Over the 5-year period 2008 to 2012, 21% of all long distance trips (50 miles and over) were for visiting friends at a private home. As trips increase in distance they are more likely to be for business or holiday purposes. In 2008/12, 16% and 9% of trips between 50 and 75 miles were for business and holiday purposes, respectively, which increase to 26% and 38% for trips 350 miles and over.

Sequences of trips (“Trip chaining”)

The NTS defines a trip as a one-way course of travel with a single main purpose. The majority of trips start or finish from home but some travel involves more complicated sequences of trips. In 2012, 43% of all trips finished at home. Of all escort education trips, 72% were followed by a trip to home and 8% were followed by a trip to work or business. The results are similar for men and women.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “why people travel” can be found on the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers NTS0401 to NTS0410 .

5. When people travel

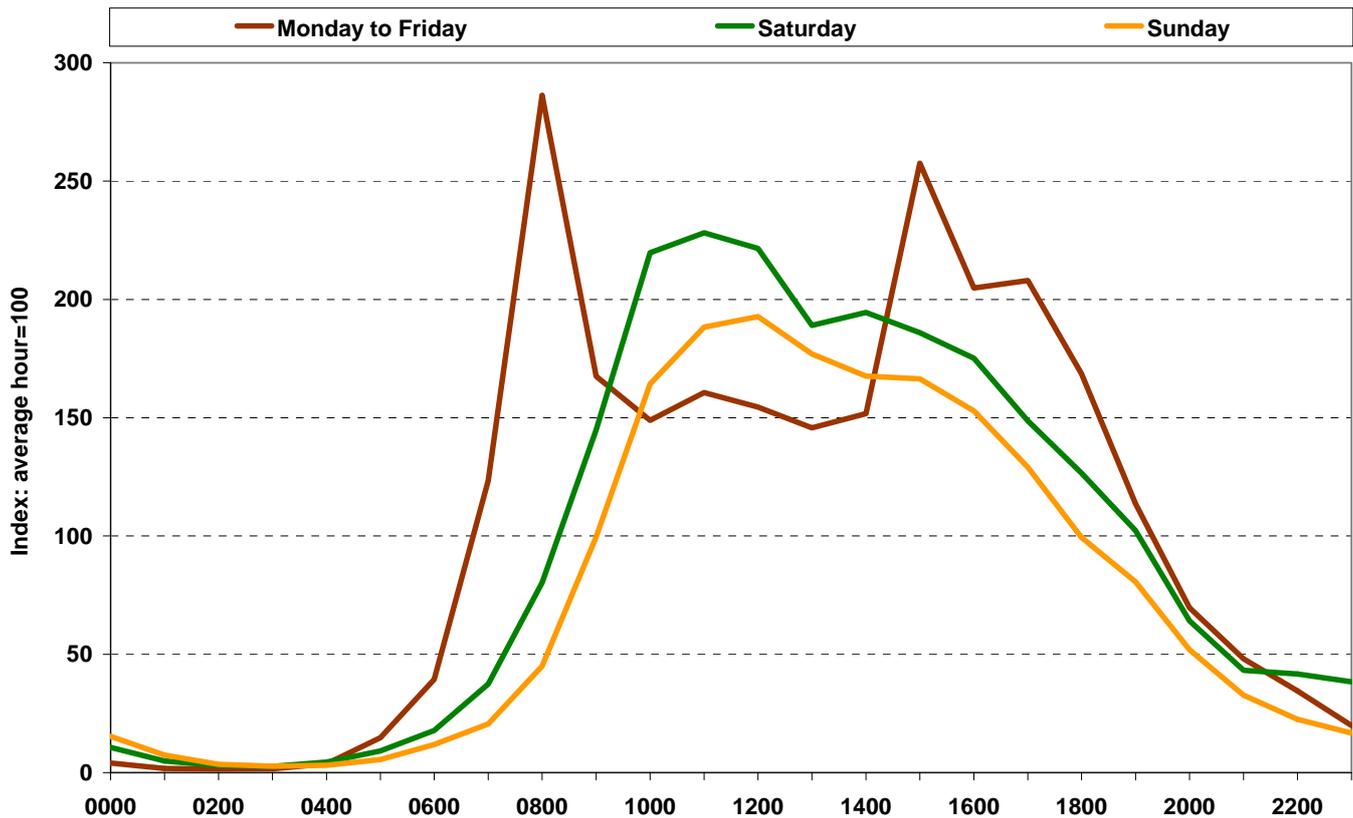
This section presents statistics on how travel patterns change over the course of 24 hours, day of the week and month of the year.

Time of day

The chart below shows how the number of trips in progress changes over the course of 24 hours for different days of the week. The chart is presented as an index, which compares the number of trips in progress per hour on a weekday, a Saturday and a Sunday with the *average* number of trips in progress per hour across all hours in a week.

Trips in progress by time of day and day of week - index: Great Britain, 2012

(NTS web table [NTS0501](#))



The chart shows two peak hours for the number of trips in progress on a weekday (Monday to Friday). The first (and highest peak) is in the morning between 8:00 and 8:59 when there are nearly three times as many trips in progress when compared with the average hour. The second peak is in the afternoon between 15:00 and 15:59. Both peaks are driven by education related trips.

There is only one peak hour for trips in progress at the weekend. On Saturday the peak hour is between 11:00 and 11:59 and on Sunday the peak hour is between 12:00 and 12:59. Overall the number of trips in progress on a Sunday is 24% lower when compared with the average day.

Trips by start time and purpose (weekdays only)

Over the 5-year period 2008 to 2012, on the average weekday, the majority of trips starting between 01:00 and 07:59 were for commuting purposes and again between 16:00 and 17:59.

From 18:00 until 00:59, the majority of trips are for visiting friends, entertainment and sport purposes. 36% of shopping trips start between 10:00 and 12:59. 40% of education trips start between 08:00 and 08:59 and 32% start between 15:00 and 15:59.

Business trips are more evenly distributed throughout the daytime, as are personal business trips (such as visiting the doctor, hairdresser or a library) and holiday/day trips.

Daily trip patterns

Over the 5-year period 2008 to 2012, on average, the busiest day of the week in terms of the number of trips was Friday with 150 trips per person per year.

On average, more commuting trips take place on weekdays than the weekend but a small variation exists between weekdays. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday there are an average of 28 commuting trips per person per year, compared with 26 trips on Monday and Friday.

Saturday is the most popular day for shopping and sport or entertainment trips with an average of 42 and 12 trips per person per year, respectively.

Monthly trip patterns

The average number of trips varies across different months of the year according to trip purpose. Patterns of work, education and holiday trips reflect the influence of school and other holidays.

In 2008/12, on average, more trips take place in March than any other month with 85 trips per person per year. December had the fewest number of trips with 74 trips per person per year.

Corresponding with the school holidays in August, trips for education purposes are very low and the number of trips made for holidays or day trips peaks.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “when people travel” can be found on the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers [NTS0501 to NTS0506](#).

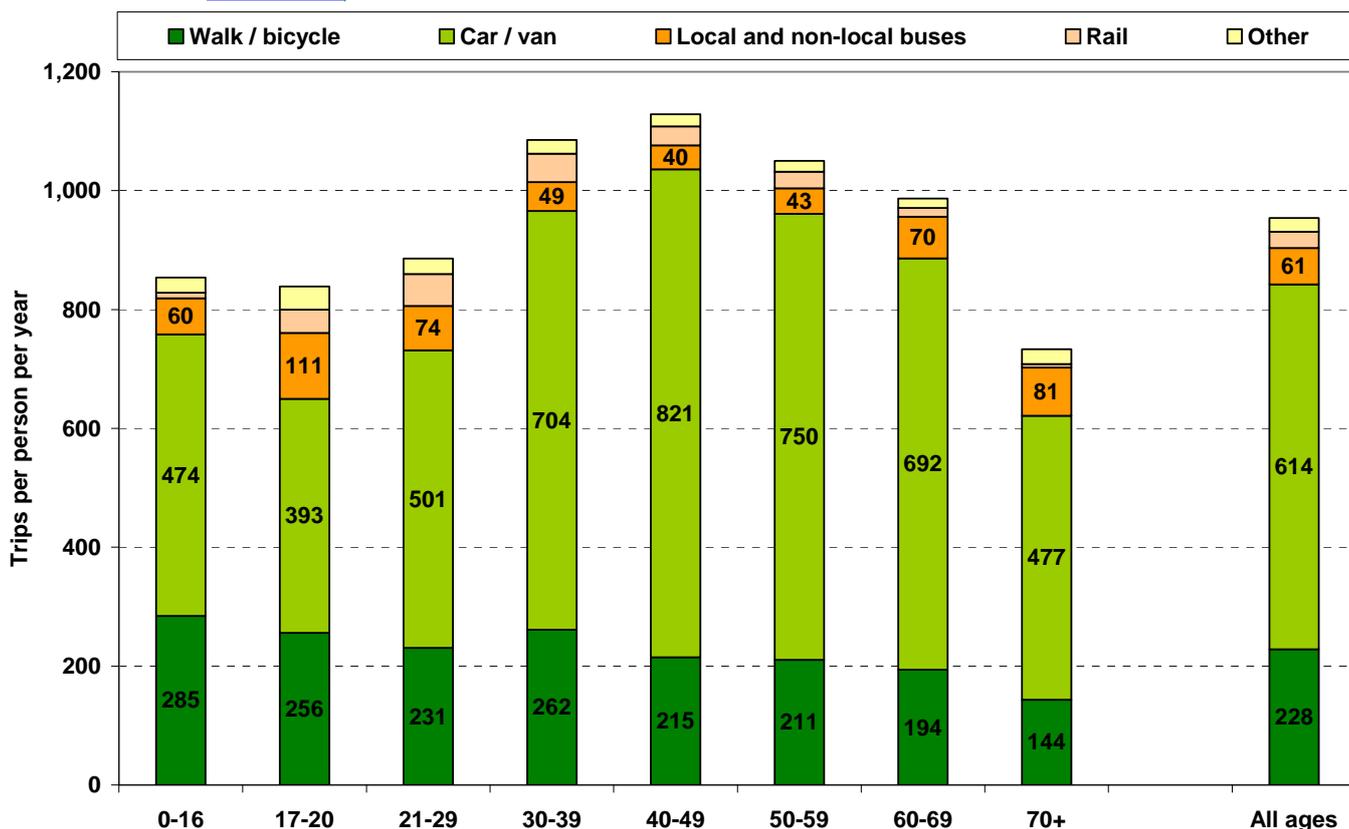
6. Travel by age and gender

This section highlights the differences in travel patterns by mode and purpose according to age and gender. Additionally, it contains information on school travel, children’s independence, concessionary travel, mobility difficulties and road safety.

Mode by age and gender

Children (aged 16 and under) made 55% of their trips as car passengers, with most of the rest on foot (32%). There was little difference in the proportion of usage of different modes by boys and girls. As the following chart shows, the amount of trips broadly increases with age up to 40-49 and then decreases among older age groups.

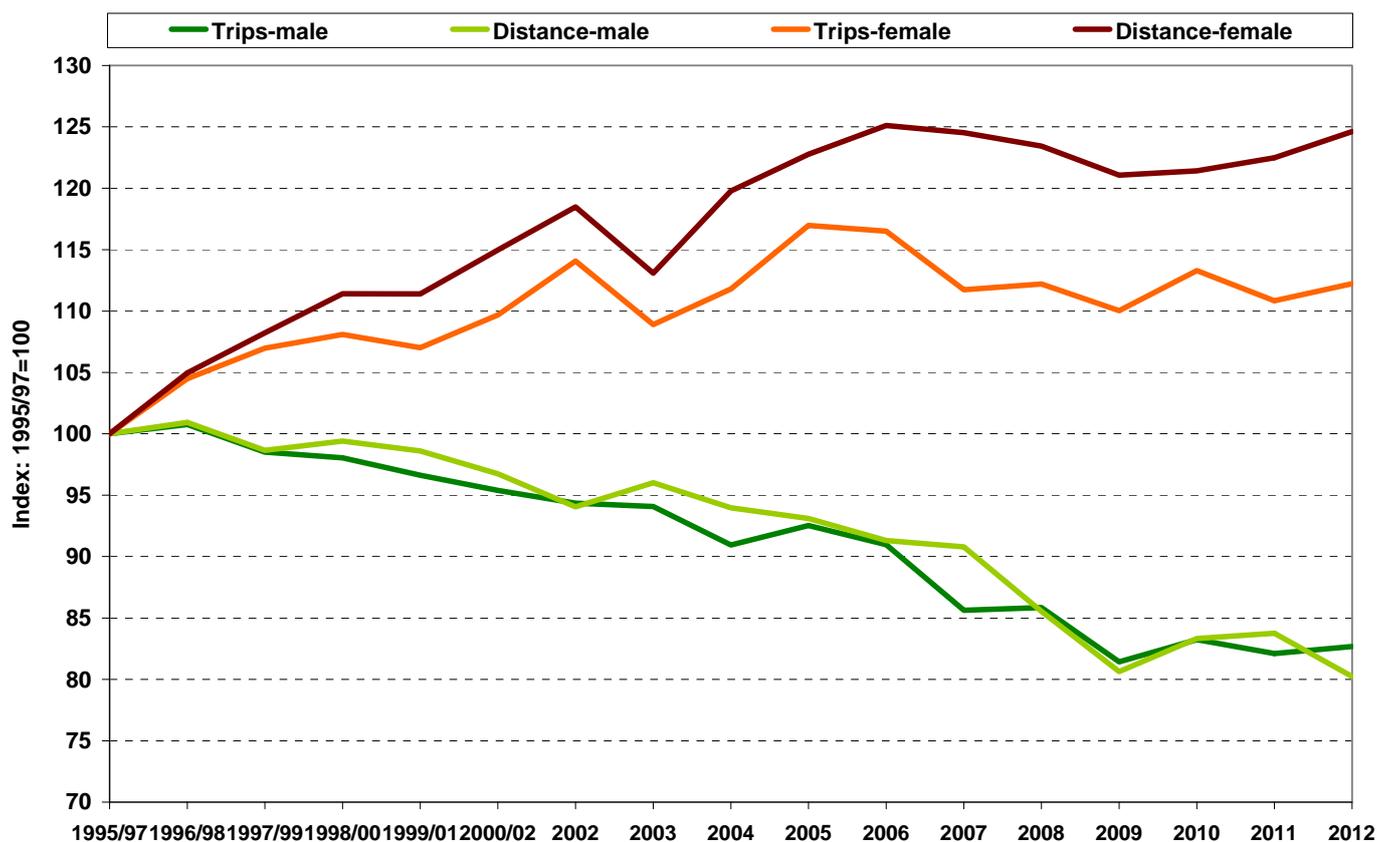
Average number of trips (trip rates) by age and main mode: Great Britain, 2012
 (NTS web table [NTS0601](#))



In 2012, females made 4% more trips than males (972 per year compared to 935), this difference is highest in the 40-49 age group where females make 18% more trips than males. While females aged 70 and over make 25% less trips than males of the same age group. In terms of distance travelled, overall females travelled 17% less than males, averaging 6,093 miles a year compared with 7,310 miles respectively.

As the following chart shows, since 1995/97 the average number of car driver trips by men has fallen by 17% and average distance travelled fell by 20%. This compares to a 12% increase in car driver trips and a 25% increase in distance travelled by women. However, men still drive nearly twice as many miles per year than women (4,291 miles compared with 2,475 miles). Differences in car usage over time are closely related to the differences seen in licence holding.

Average trips and distance for car drivers by gender - index: Great Britain, 1995/97 to 2012
 (NTS web tables [NTS0602](#), [NTS0603](#), [NTS0606](#) and [NTS0607](#))



Cycling is most prevalent among men (23 trips person per year compared with 9 trips by women). However, cycling only makes up 2% and 1% respectively of their total trips. Women make more bus trips on average (69 trips per person per year compared with 53 trips by men).

The proportion of trips made by bus was highest among those aged 17-20, accounting for 13% of all trips in this age group. Bus use was higher for those aged 60+ than in middle age groups, particularly among females, reflecting the availability of concessionary travel schemes for older passengers and differences in driving licence holding across age groups. Women of all ages used buses more than rail, but men in the 30-39 and 40-49 age groups used rail more than buses, reflecting the more widespread use of rail among commuters.

Purpose by age and gender

Of all trips made by males, an average of 168 trips per year were for commuting with an additional 37 for business purposes, compared with 125 and 25 respectively for females. The highest proportion of commuting trips for both men and women were amongst those aged 21-29 (34% and 24% respectively).

The average distance travelled for the purpose of commuting by males is just over twice that of females (1,780 and 873 miles respectively in 2012). Commuting accounts for 24% of distance travelled by males and is the most prevalent purpose, compared to 14% of distance travelled by females. The greatest distance travelled by females is for the purposes of visiting friends at home

(17%), followed by shopping (15%). These differences in trip purposes are the main drivers to the differences in total distance travelled by gender.

On average, females made 17% more shopping trips each year than males (204 trips compared to 175). Females also made more escort education trips per year than males (71 trips compared to 32) and slightly more visiting friends at home trips (110 trips compared to 91).

School travel

In 2012, 47% of trips to and from school by primary school children (aged 5-10) were made on foot. This was lower than in 1995/97 when 53% of trips were made on foot. The proportion of trips by car for these children increased from 38% to 44% during the same period. Among secondary school children (aged 11-16) in 2012, 38% of school trips were on foot and 26% were by car, compared with 42% and 20% respectively in 1995/97. For secondary school children, the proportion of trips by bus (including school bus/coaches) was 29% in 2012 and 2% were by bicycle.

For trips to school less than 1 mile in length, walking was the most prevalent mode of travel for both primary and secondary school children, accounting for 79% and 89% of trips respectively. For longer school trips, the most popular mode for primary school children is by car, with 82% of 2 to 5 mile trips, and 71% of trips over 5 miles made by this mode. For secondary school pupils, 42% of all trips of 2 to 5 miles in length, and 61% of trips over 5 miles are made by bus.

The average length of a trip to school increased from 2.1 miles in 1995/97 to 2.6 miles in 2012. During this period, the average trip length for primary school children increased from 1.3 to 1.8 miles, and for secondary school pupils from 2.9 to 3.4 miles.

Concessionary travel by older people

The Transport Act 2000 required all local authorities in England to provide a minimum standard of a half fare for women aged 60+, men aged 65+ and disabled persons. From 1 April 2003, the eligible age for these schemes was equalised to 60+ for men and women. From 1 April 2006, free local concessionary bus travel was introduced in England for disabled passengers and those aged 60+ within their local area and from April 2008 this was extended to cover bus travel throughout England. From April 2010 the eligibility in England for men and women is equivalent to the pensionable age for women, therefore gradually increasing. In Scotland and Wales the eligibility remained at aged 60 for men and women.

The proportion of eligible older people with a concessionary travel pass in Great Britain increased following the introduction of the minimum standard of a half fare. From 1998/00 to 2002 take-up rates among men 65+ and women 60+ increased from 49% to 58%. There was a further increase in take-up in 2006 to 62% which was associated with the introduction of free local concessionary bus travel in England and this continued to increase year-on-year until it started to level off in the last couple of years. In 2012, 79% of eligible older people had a pass (82% of females and 74% of males).

There is considerable variation between area types with take-up ranging from 66% in rural areas to 88% in London in 2012. This gap has narrowed over time due to the take-up rate among rural residents increasing more than in other areas. However, rates in rural areas have remained constant for the last few years.

This trend in take-up of concessionary travel is consistent with DfT's published report '**Concessionary Travel: 2011/12 and 2012/13**'. This report also contains information on passes issued by each Travel Concession Authority, expenditure and reimbursement, and can be found online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/concessionary-travel-statistics-england-2011-12-and-2012-13>

Mobility difficulties

The NTS asks adults (aged 16+) whether they have difficulties travelling on foot, by bus or getting in/out of a car. Those who say they have difficulties travelling on foot, by bus or both are classified as having mobility difficulties.

The proportion of adults with mobility difficulties increases greatly with age. In 2012, 39% of individuals aged 70+ had problems walking or using a bus, compared with 4% of those aged 16-49. This increase with age is more marked among women than men, although the proportion of women 70+ with mobility problems may be increased by the higher number of women than men living to very old age.

Among people aged 16-69, those with mobility difficulties make around 30% fewer trips than those without difficulties. This difference increases to 41% among people aged 70+.

Road Safety

Since 2007 the NTS interview has asked adults (aged 16+) whether or not they have been involved in a road accident in the previous 3 years and/or in the previous 12 months and if so whether or not they had been injured. In 2010 the NTS also asked whether children in the household had been involved in a road accident.

In 2012, 11% of adults said that they had been involved in at least one road accident in the last 3 years including 4% who had been injured in a road accident. Males were slightly more likely to say that they had been involved in a road accident than females. Involvement in road accidents was highest for those aged 20-24 (16%) and lowest for those aged 60+ (8%).

Averaged over the period 2010 to 2012, in the majority of incidents the respondent was a car occupant at the time of the accident (70% of injury accidents and 91% of non-injury accidents). According to respondents the police were made aware of 55% of injury road accidents and 28% of non-injury road accidents.

In 2012, 5% of children had been involved in a road accident in the last 3 years, of which 2% had been injured.

These results will be used to produce an overall estimate of total road casualties in ‘**Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report 2012**’ in September 2013. More information and statistics on Road Accidents and Safety can be found at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/road-accidents-and-safety>

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “travel by age and gender” can be found on the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers [NTS0601 to NTS0625](#).

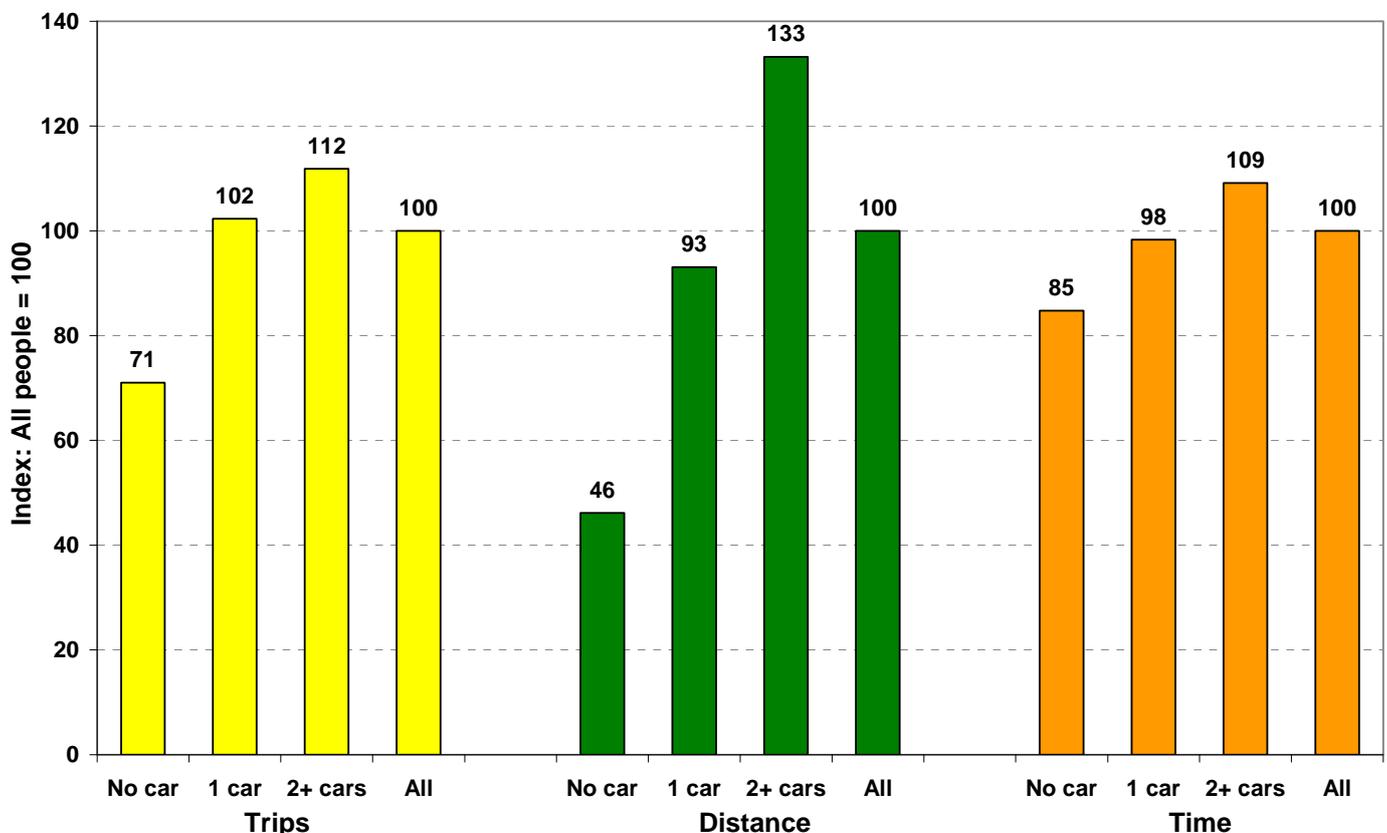
7. Travel by car availability, income, ethnic group, household type and NS-SEC

This section highlights the differences in travel patterns according to car availability, income group, ethnic group, household type and National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC).

Car availability

Access to a car is the most important factor affecting travel. On average in 2012, members of car-owning households made 51% more trips than people living in non car-owning households, and travelled over twice as far per year.

Variations in travel by household car availability - index: Great Britain, 2012 (NTS web table [NTS0701](#))



There are also marked differences in travel between people in car-owning households according to their driving status. In the NTS, each car is identified with a main driver, which is the household member that drives it the farthest in that year. 'Other drivers' are people in car-owning households who have a full car driving licence but are not main drivers of a household car. In 2012, main drivers travelled an average distance of 9,532 miles per year, while other drivers travelled 6,907 miles on average.

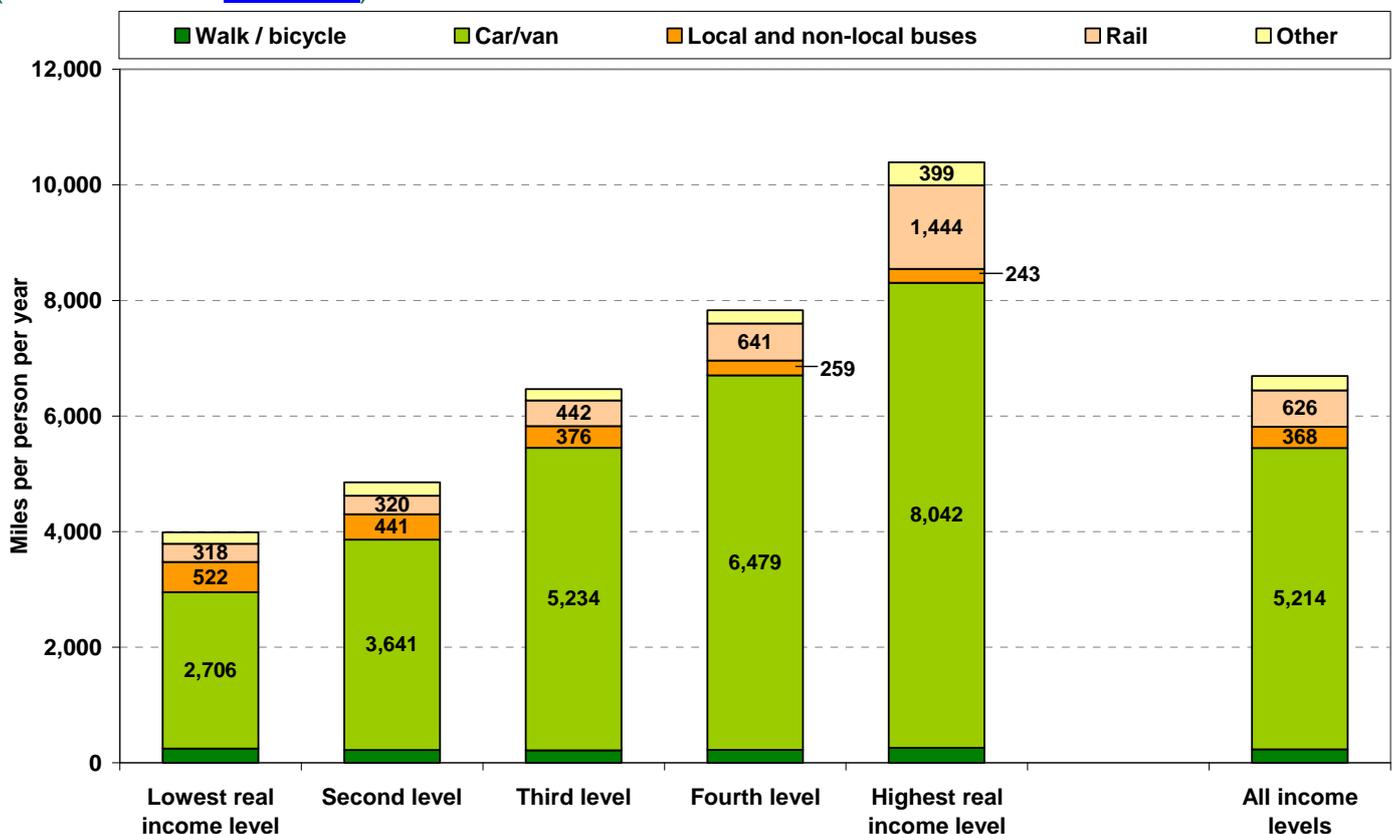
In car owning households, non-drivers made fewer trips overall than main drivers (849 and 1,147 trips per year respectively), though these non-drivers still made 25% more trips than people in households without a car.

In 2012, people living in households without a car made nearly five times as many trips by bus, four times as many trips by taxi, and one and half times as many trips on foot than people in households with a car.

Income group

Car availability is the most important factor affecting travel and this is strongly related to income. Therefore, both the number of trips a person makes and the distance they travel are strongly influenced by that person's level of income. In 2012, on average, people in the highest household income quintile group made 28% more trips than those in the lowest income quintile group and travelled nearly three times further (6,400 miles more).

Average distance travelled by mode and household income: Great Britain, 2012
(NTS web table [NTS0705](#))



In 2012, 48% of households in the lowest income quintile had no car compared with 11% in the highest income quintile. In 1995/97 this was 66% and 7% respectively. In 2012, 50% of households in the highest income quintile had 2 or more cars compared to 11% of households in the lowest income quintile.

Car travel accounts for the greatest proportion of trips and distance travelled in every income quintile group. In 2012, 49% of trips among the lowest income group were by car compared with 70% among the highest. Households in the highest income quintile travel almost three times further by car than the lowest income quintile.

Use of public transport is also related to income. From the lowest to highest income quintile, the average number of trips by bus decreases (101 bus trips per person per year in the lowest income quintile compared with 32 bus trips in the highest). However, rail use is highest in the top income quintile with just over three and a half times more rail trips than the lowest quintile. This is partly because commuters to London in the highest income band account for a considerable proportion of rail travel.

Household type

On average in 2012, more trips were made by people in households containing 2 adults with children than any other household type (1,050 trips). However, households consisting of just 2 adults travel further (7,631 miles per person) than other household types, of which 79% of the distance travelled is by car.

Ethnic group

The proportion of adults (aged 17+) in 2012 living in a household with a car was highest among those from White backgrounds (81%), while non-White backgrounds range from 59% to 71%.

The variation in car availability contributes to differing travel patterns across ethnic groups. In 2012, the average number of trips per person ranged from 773 for those from other ethnic backgrounds, to 998 trips for adults from White backgrounds. However, travel differences between ethnic groups may to some extent be a result of the distributions of these populations between urban and rural areas.

National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC)

NS-SEC is an occupationally based classification, but has rules to provide coverage of the whole adult population.

Those in managerial and professional occupations in 2012 made the most trips (1,119 per person per year) and travelled the greatest distance (10,582 miles) of the NS-SEC groups. People who had never worked or were long-term unemployed made the fewest trips and travelled the least distance (705 trips and 3,324 miles on average per year).

Respondents in managerial and professional occupations travelled the farthest by car (8,321 miles) and by rail (1,307 miles). While they made the greatest number of trips per person by car

only 16% of these trips were as a passenger. Those people who had never worked or were long-term unemployed had the highest proportion of car travel trips as a passenger at 53%.

Those not classified by NS-SEC (mainly full-time students), were the biggest users of public modes of transport, on average making 170 trips per person per year, with the majority by bus.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “travel by car availability, income, ethnic group, household type and NS-SEC” can be found on the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers [NTS0701 to NTS0708](#).

8. Accessibility

This section provides information about access to public transport services, journey times to local facilities and people’s usual place of work.

Bus and train service access, frequency and reliability

85% of households in Great Britain lived within a 6 minute walk of their nearest bus stop in 2012, and a further 11% of households lived within a 13 minute walk. Similar proportions to those in 2002 (86% and 10% respectively). Overall, 91% of households were within 13 minutes walk of an hourly or better bus service (bus availability indicator).

There is variation in the results by area type. In 2012, 69% of households in rural areas lived within a 6 minute walk of their nearest bus stop, compared to 90% households in medium sized urban areas (settlements with 25,000-250,000 population). Between 2002 and 2012, the proportion of households in rural areas that were within 13 minutes walk of an hourly or better bus service increased from 48% to 61%. All other areas in 2012 had 90% or more households.

Between 2002 and 2012, the proportion of households rating their local bus service as ‘frequent’ has risen from 77% to 80%. Similarly, households reporting local bus services as ‘reliable’ has increased from 80% to 83% during this time.

The proportion of households rating their local train/underground/metro service as ‘frequent’ has increased from 81% in 2002 to 86% in 2012 and the proportion who said it was ‘reliable’ has increased from 75% to 87% over the same period.

Time to local facilities

In 2012, a large majority of households were able to travel within 15 minutes by foot or public transport to a shop selling groceries (92%), a chemist (84%), a post office (83%) and a doctor’s surgery/GP (80%). Of households with children of the relevant ages, 91% were within 15 minutes of a primary school and 61% within 15 minutes of a secondary school.

Workplace and working at home

In recent years, the proportion of employed people who work at the same place every day has reduced to 74% from a high of 77% in both 2003 and 2004. Correspondingly, the proportion

usually working from home rose to 5% from 3% over the same period.

There is a difference between genders; men were less likely to work at the same place every day (68%) than women (80%) in 2012. Self-employed people were more likely to work from home (23%) than other people in employment.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “accessibility” can be found on the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers [NTS0801 to NTS0806](#).

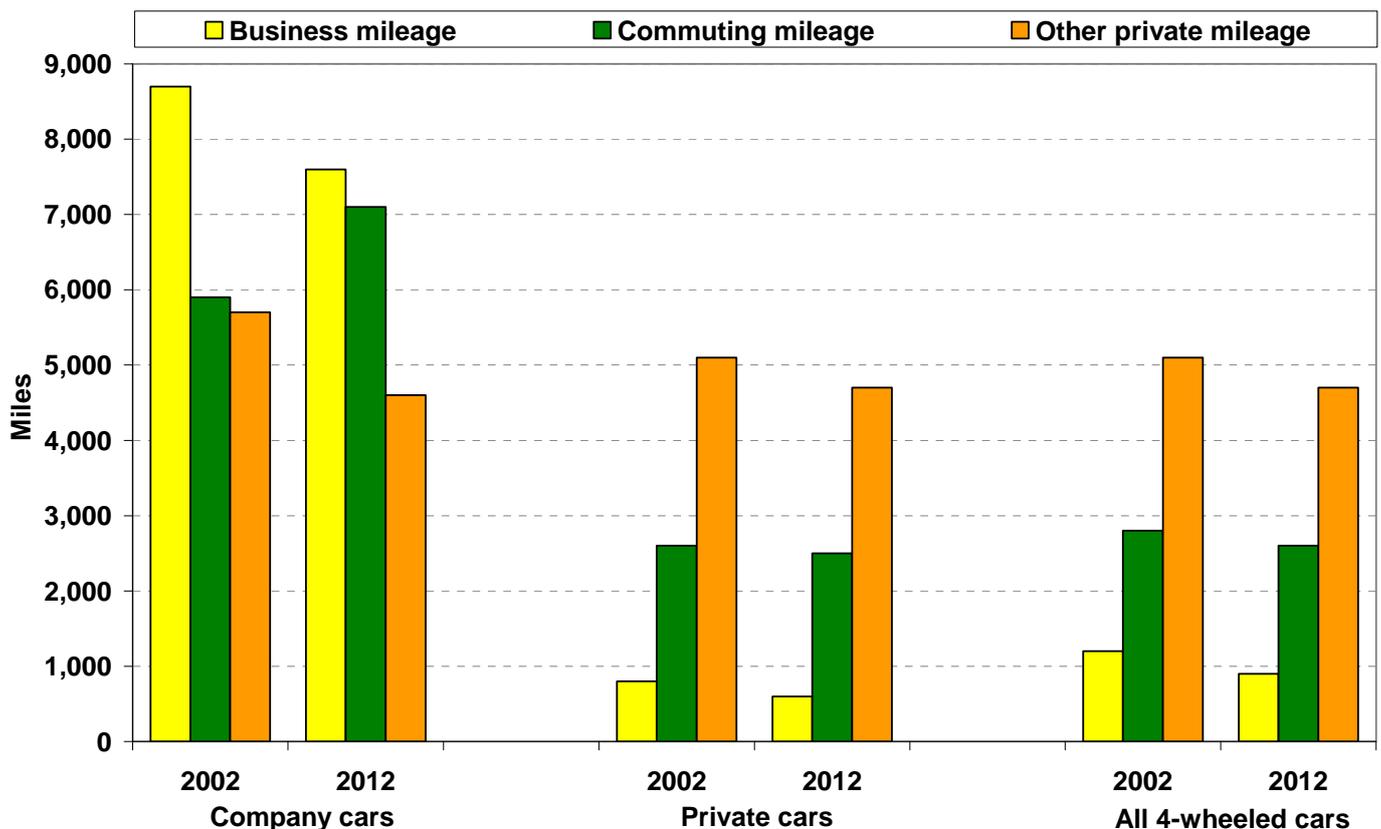
9. Vehicles

The NTS collects information on all vehicles to which the household has access. This section contains data on annual car mileage, car occupancy, satellite navigation technology and parking.

Mileage

The estimated average annual mileage per car³ has decreased as the number of cars per household has risen, falling from about 9,200 miles in 2002 to 8,200 miles in 2012.

Annual mileage of 4-wheeled cars by ownership and trip purpose: Great Britain, 2002 and 2012 (NTS web table [NTS0901](#))



Note: From 2008 a new imputation methodology was applied to estimate missing mileages.

³ These mileage estimates are for 4-wheeled cars only (excluded are 3-wheeled cars, 4x4 vehicles, light vans, minibuses, dormobiles and motorcaravans).

In 2012, the average company-owned car travelled more than twice as far as the average privately owned car (19,400 miles and 7,800 miles respectively). The proportion of cars which are company owned has fallen slightly in the NTS sample from 6% in 2002 to 4% in 2012.

Estimated annual business mileage of all 4-wheeled cars has fallen by 300 miles from 1,200 miles in 2002 to 900 miles in 2012. For company-owned cars only, business mileage has fallen from 8,700 miles in 2002 to 7,600 miles in 2012.

Estimated annual commuting mileage of all 4-wheeled cars has fallen slightly from 2,800 miles in 2002 to 2,600 miles in 2012. For company-owned cars only, commuting mileage increased from 5,900 to 7,100 miles between 2002 and 2012.

In 2012, the estimated average annual mileage was higher for diesel cars than petrol cars, at 11,200 miles and 6,900 miles respectively. The highest annual mileage for petrol cars occurs in those vehicles 3 to 6 years old (7,800 miles), while for diesel cars it is those under 3 years old (13,900 miles).

Total annual car mileage was estimated to be in the band 5,000–6,999 miles for 22% of all cars. The second most common band was 9,000–11,999 miles (18%). Overall, one in five respondents estimated that their car's annual mileage was 12,000 miles or more.

In June 2013, DfT published some experimental statistics on vehicle mileages derived from odometer readings recorded at MOT tests in '**Analysis of vehicle odometer readings recorded at MOT tests**'. More information on these experimental statistics and how this area of statistics will develop can be found online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/vehicle-licensing-statistics>

Car occupancy

Occupancy rates have remained fairly stable since 2002 at around 1.6 occupants per car driver stage. However, occupancy rates vary by purpose, being lowest for commuting and business (1.2 in 2012) and higher for holidays/day trips and education (2.0 persons per vehicle).

The 'single occupancy rate' is defined as the proportion of car driver stages in which the vehicle had only one occupant. This shows a similar pattern to car occupancy, remaining fairly constant over time but varying by journey purpose. In 2012, 61% of car driver stages were single occupancy. This figure was much higher for commuting and business trips (with 86% and 87% respectively) and much lower for education (37%).

Satellite navigation technology

In 2012, 44% of cars had satellite navigation technology; most of which were hand-held/plug and go systems rather than integrated systems. This has risen from 31% of cars in 2009.

Parking

In 2012, 58% of household vehicles were parked overnight on private property but were not garaged. This proportion is highest in rural areas (69%) and generally declines as settlement size increases, down to 47% in London. Conversely, the proportion of vehicles parked on the street overnight ranges from 41% in London to 13% in rural areas.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “vehicles” can be found the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers [NTS0901 to NTS0908](#).

10. Travel by region and area type of residence

This section presents statistics on how the NTS informs transport users and the wider public through one of the Department’s impact indicators. Also presented is the variation in personal travel behaviour across different regions and area types in Great Britain.

DfT Business Plan impact indicator

The use of sustainable local travel contributes to improvements in road safety and in public health. Using NTS data, this impact indicator shows the proportion of all trips under 5 miles by English residents living in an urban area (settlement over 3,000 population) where the main mode of transport was walking or cycling and public transport.

In 2012, 39% of urban trips under 5 miles in England were taken by walking or cycling and 8% were taken by public transport. Since 2002, the proportion of urban trips taken by walking or cycling and public transport has fluctuated with no clear trend.

In 2012, based on the impact indicator, the highest proportion of walking or cycling trips was in the North West and London (41%). The lowest proportion was in the West Midlands (34%). The highest proportion of public transport trips was in London (18%) and lowest in the South East and the South West (4%).

More information on the impact indicator and an interactive chart can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proportion-of-urban-trips-under-5-miles-taken-by-i-walking-or-cycling-ii-public-transport>

Travel by region and area type

By combining two years of NTS data (2011 and 2012) to increase the base sample size results can be shown by region and type of area.

In 2011/12, on average, London residents made 808 trips per person per year, which was the lowest in Great Britain. South West residents made the highest number of trips, on average making 1,033 trips per person year.

In London, on average, 40% of all trips were by car (as a driver or a passenger). This compares with the South East and South West where 69% of all trips were by car. Indeed, London is the only

region in Great Britain where the percentage of households without a car has increased between 1995/97 and 2011/12, from 39% to 45% in 2011/12. Over the same period, the North East has seen the largest change in the percentage of households owning two or more cars, from 14% to 30%.

In terms of area type, in 2011/12, only 9% of households in rural areas do not own a car. Also in rural areas, average distance travelled per person per year (9,764 miles) is around double the distance travelled by London residents (4,687 miles) and residents in Metropolitan built-up areas (5,276 miles).

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “travel by region and area type of residence” can be found on the National Travel Survey web page in table numbers [NTS9901 to NTS9916](#).

11. Background notes

1. The National Travel Survey web page at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/national-travel-survey> provides a set of results tables containing the key findings presented in this Statistical Release. The topics covered are:

- Trends in travel patterns (Tables [NTS0101 to NTS0108](#))
- Trends in driving licence holding and vehicle availability (Tables [NTS0201 to NTS0207](#))
- How people travel (Tables [NTS0301 to NTS0317](#))
- Why people travel (Tables [NTS0401 to NTS0410](#))
- When people travel (Tables [NTS0501 to NTS0506](#))
- Travel by age and gender (Tables [NTS0601 to NTS0625](#))
- Travel by car availability, income, ethnic group, household type and NS-SEC (Tables [NTS0701 to NTS0708](#))
- Accessibility (Tables [NTS0801 to NTS0806](#))
- Vehicles (Tables [NTS0901 to NTS0908](#))
- Travel by region and area type of residence (Tables [NTS9901 to NTS9916](#))

In addition, there is a one page ‘**key facts**’ infographic showing the main results for 2012 at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-travel-survey-2012>

2. Since 2002, the Department for Transport has commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) as the contractor for the NTS. Full guidance on the methods used to conduct the survey, response rates, weighting methodology and survey materials can be found in the **National Travel Survey 2012 Technical Report** at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-travel-survey-2012>

During 2012, NatCen were confirmed as the contractor to conduct the NTS from 2013 to 2017. The survey from January 2013 covers England residents only. Therefore, the 2012 results presented in this Statistical Release are the final set for Great Britain as a whole.

3. Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the **Pre-release access list** at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-travel-survey-2012>

4. A **Notes & Definitions** document which includes background to the NTS, information on revisions, response rates, sample size & standard error information and a full list of definitions can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-travel-survey-2012>

5. Sample sizes are included in all the individual web tables. As estimates made from a sample survey depend upon the particular sample chosen, they generally differ from the true values for the population. This is not usually a problem when considering large samples but may give misleading information when considering data from small samples, such as cyclists in a particular age group.

Tables of **standard errors** for selected key statistics derived from the 2009 NTS are published at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/49699/StandarderrorsAnalysis2009NTS.xls

A note explaining the methodology used to calculate the 2009 NTS standard errors is published at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/49698/StandarderrorsMethodology2009NTS.pdf

6. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The National Travel Survey was assessed by the UK Statistics Authority against the Code of Practice and was confirmed as National Statistics in July 2011.

Revisions

19 September 2013: Statistical Release revised because of an error found in the data processing and calculation of household income quintiles. This corrected version of the release replaces previous versions. The error identified affected tables [NTS0703](#), [NTS0704](#) and [NTS0705](#). These tables have been corrected.

The NTS team in DfT have been redeveloping the database in which all NTS data is held. We have now fully moved historic data (2002-2007) from the old system into a new SQL database. The NTS data from 2008 to 2012 has been fully processed in SQL, and this has overwritten previously processed data for years 2008 to 2010. As part of the database redevelopment we have reviewed all processing methods, including imputation of missing data for some variables. Improvements and corrections have been made which has resulted in some minor revisions to all data published from 2002. There is more information about the reasons for these revisions in the Notes & Definitions document.

Key Definitions

(A full list of definitions can be found in Appendix A of the Notes & Definitions)

Travel: only includes personal travel by private household residents of Great Britain along the public highway, by rail or by air within Great Britain.

Trips: The basic unit of travel, a trip, is defined as a one-way course of travel with a single main purpose.

Stages: A trip consists of one or more stages. A new stage is defined when there is a change in the form of transport or when there is a change of vehicle requiring a separate ticket.

Mode/main mode: Trips may include more than one mode of transport, and each mode is recorded as a stage within that trip. When 'main mode' is used in the title of a table or chart this allocates information for the whole trip to the stage used for the greatest length (in distance) of the trip. When 'mode' is used this refers to information for individual stages of trips.

Car and car/van: both include 4-wheeled and 3-wheeled cars, 4x4 vehicles, light vans and lorries.

Rail: includes surface rail (National Rail) and London Underground, unless otherwise specified and excludes light rail and other rail systems (e.g. Tyne and Wear Metro), which are included under 'other public transport'.

Walks: Walks of less than 50 yards are excluded.

Adults: Normally persons aged 16+. For some tables (e.g. car driving licence holding and car ownership), analyses are restricted to those aged 17+.