Source: Lucy Saunders

What prevents city planners monetising the benefits of active travel through a widely available online tool?

Chris Billington, Public Health Specialis[1]
Transport for London.

Aims of the presentation:

- Why are Transport for London (TfL) even talking about Health?
- What is TfL's Active Travel Target for London?
- What is preventing transport planners including health economic assessments in business cases for proposed projects?

Why are TfL even talking about health?

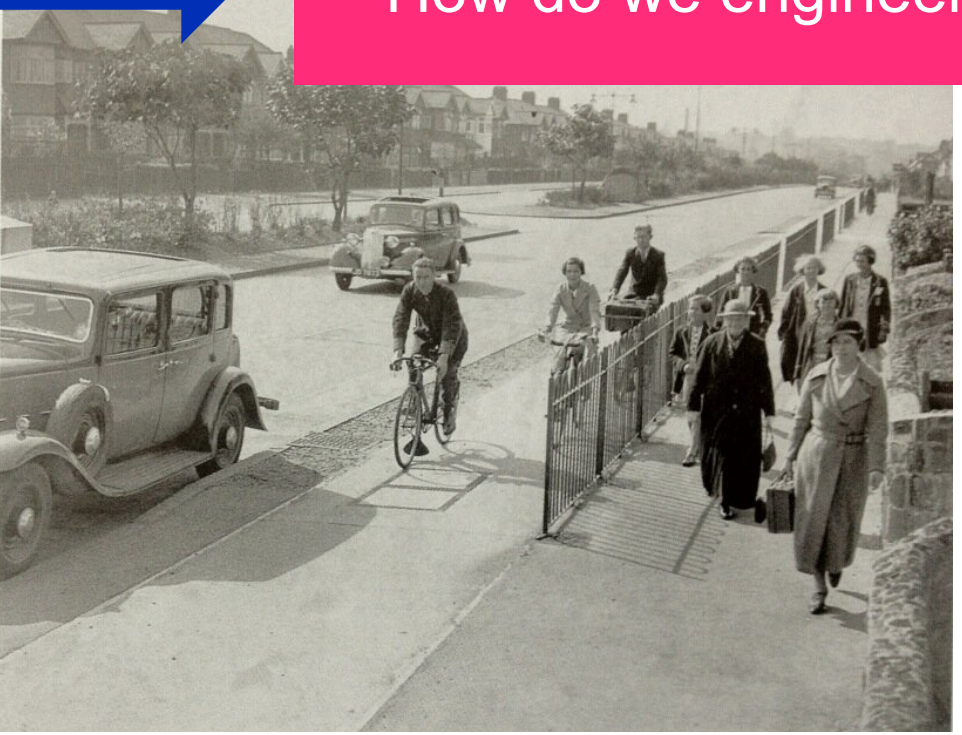
Hard not to know about the **obesity crisis**...

Hard not to know about the obesity **crisis**...

But what does the data tell us?

Is it us or the environment?

How do we engineer activity back into our lives?



1937

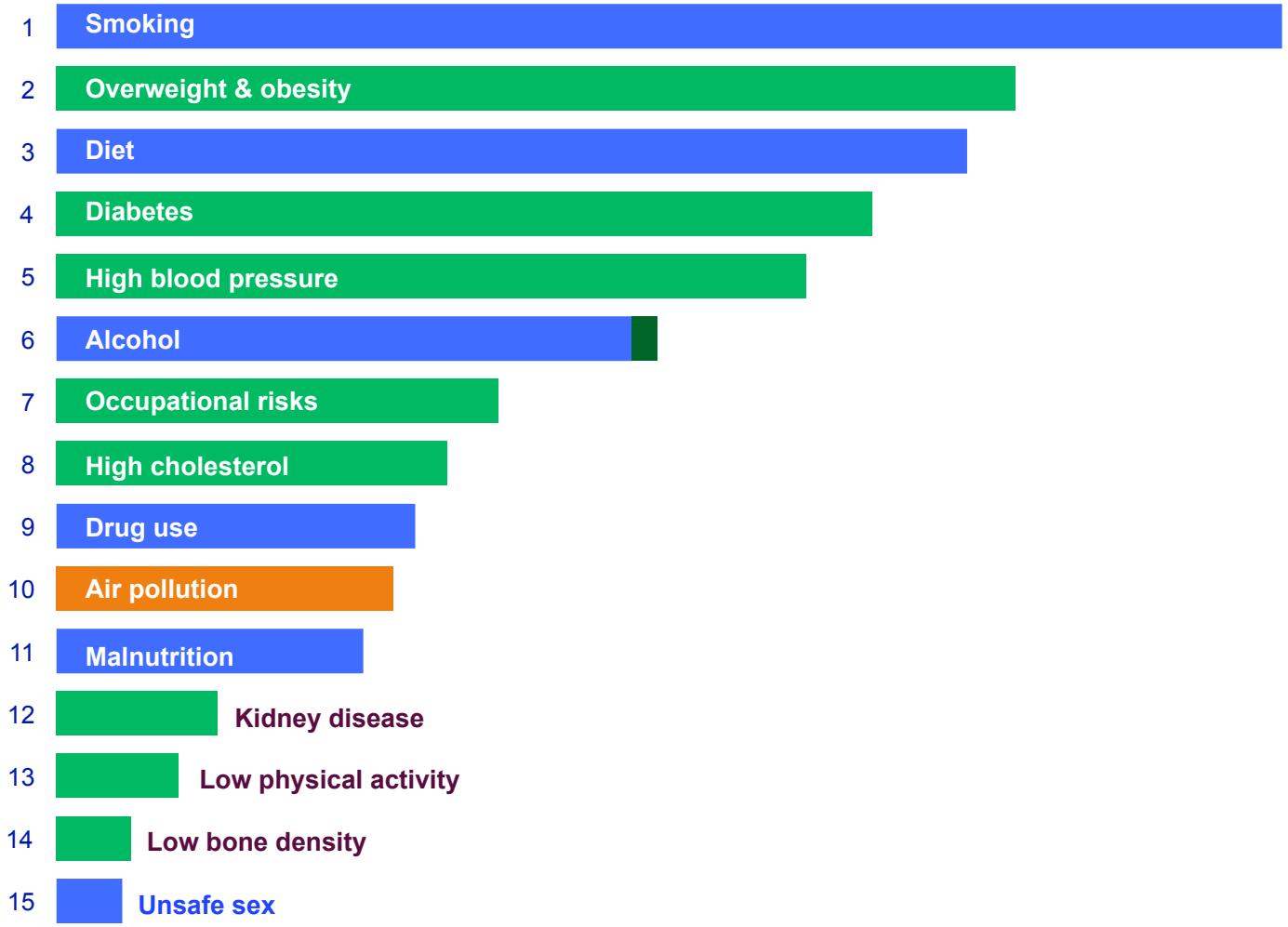
2017

Eastern Avenue, Ilford

Imagine a drug that could achieve this:

Type 2 diabetes	Depression
35-50% ▼	20-30% ▼
Coronary heart disease	Alzheimer's disease
20-35% ▼	20-35% ▼
Hip fracture	Breast cancer
36-68% ▼	20% ▼
Death	Colon cancer
20-35% ▼	30-50% ▼

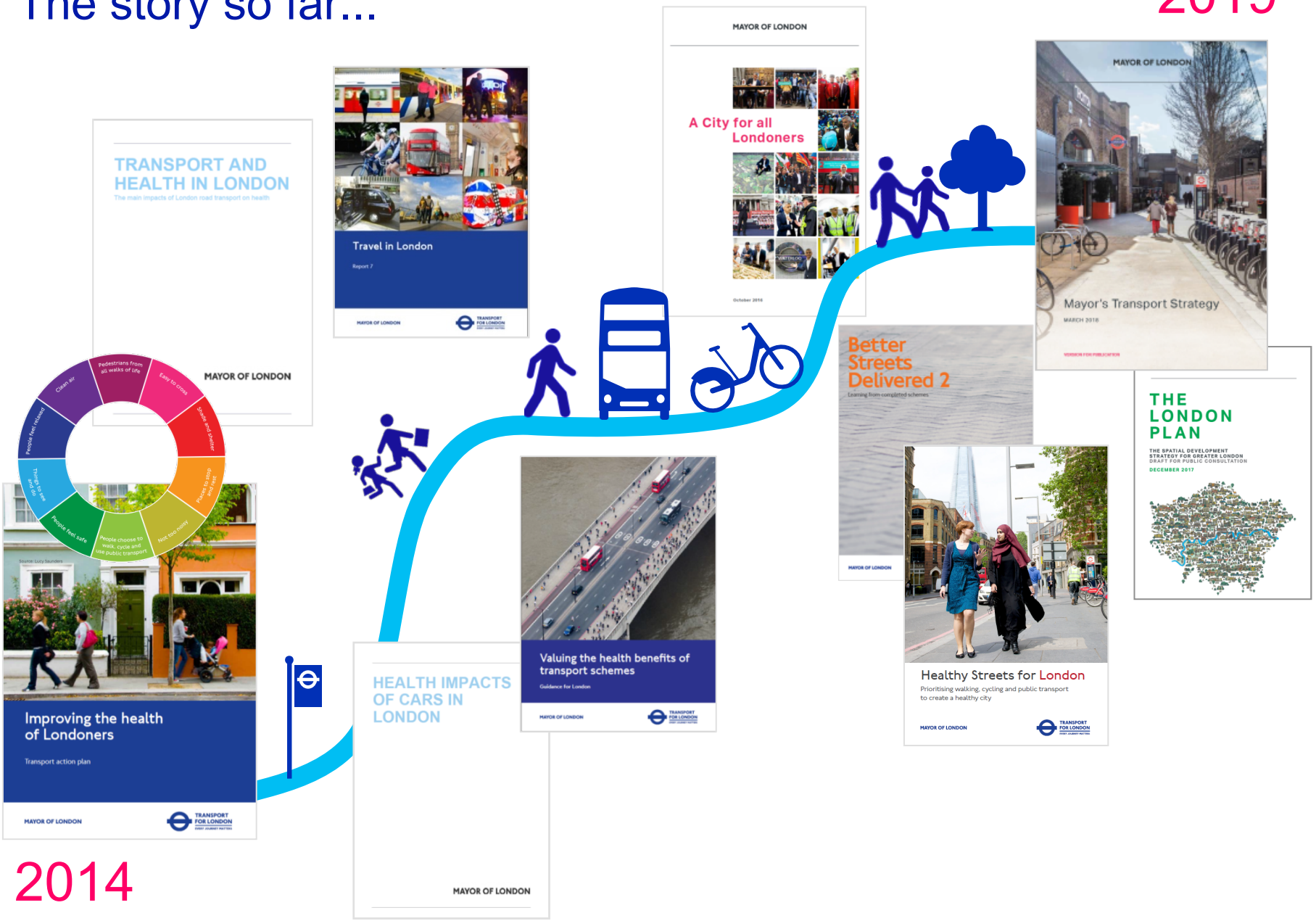
Top 15 risk factors for illness & early death, Greater London, 2017



Global Burden of Disease Study 2017

The story so far...

2019



2014

What does this mean for Mayoral strategies?

Healthy Streets is being embedded across the GLA family...

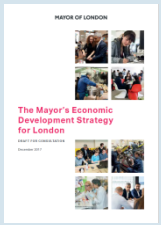
MAYOR OF LONDON

London Plan

Health Inequalities Strategy

London Environment Strategy

Policing and Crime Plan

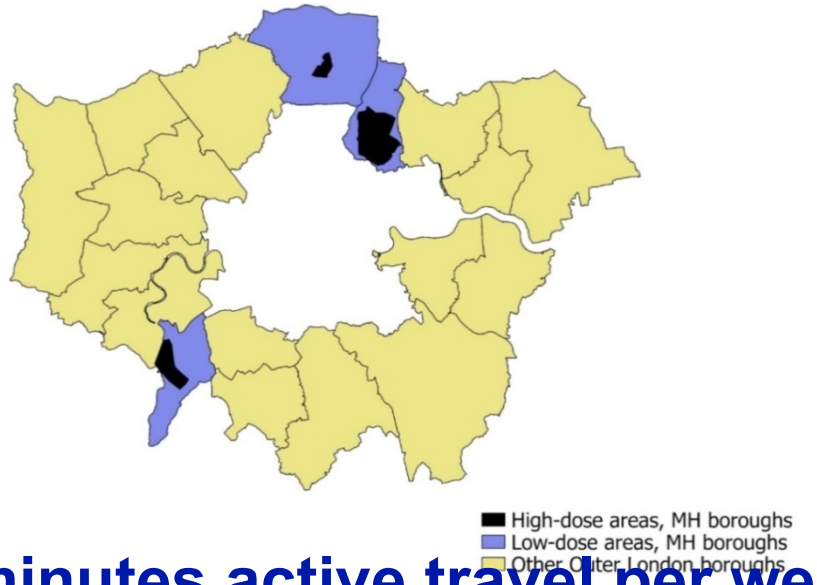


Economic Development Strategy

Mayor's Transport Strategy

Mini- Hollands

- The **Mini-Holland programme** is part of the Mayor's Healthy Streets agenda to help Londoners **use cars less and walk, cycle and use public transport more.**



- **Increase of 41 minutes active travel per week per person in the HIGH DOSE areas and 12.5 minutes in the LOW DOSE. No change** in non mini-Holland boroughs.

MTS ambition

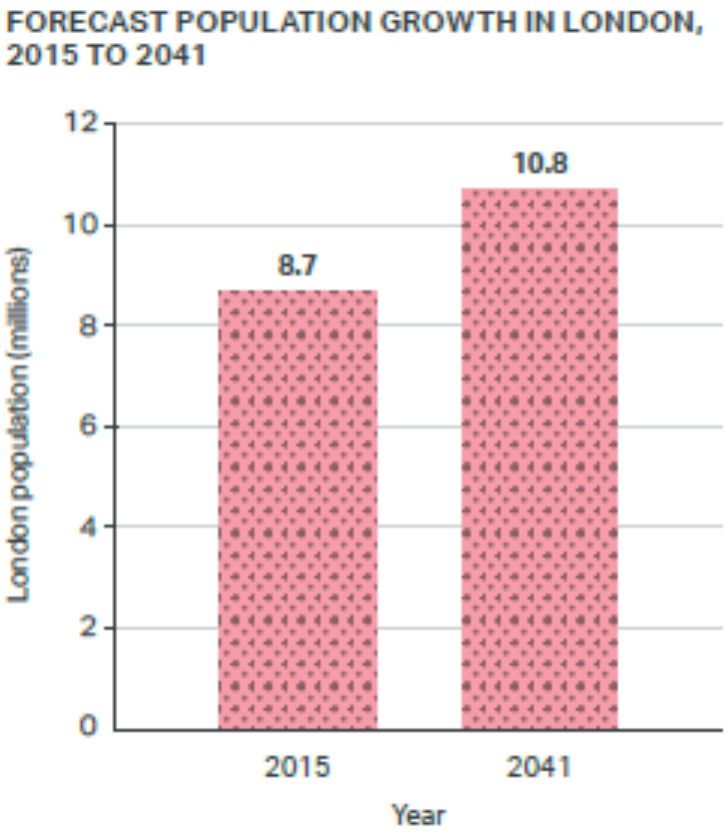
What is TfL's commitment to increase physical activity?

- The Mayor has made it his ambition that **every Londoner walks or cycles for twenty minutes every day by 2041**

- This will deliver significant health and wellbeing benefits for Londoners
- The easiest way for Londoners to keep active is to build walking or cycling into their daily travel.

Why do we need Healthy Streets?

London is growing…



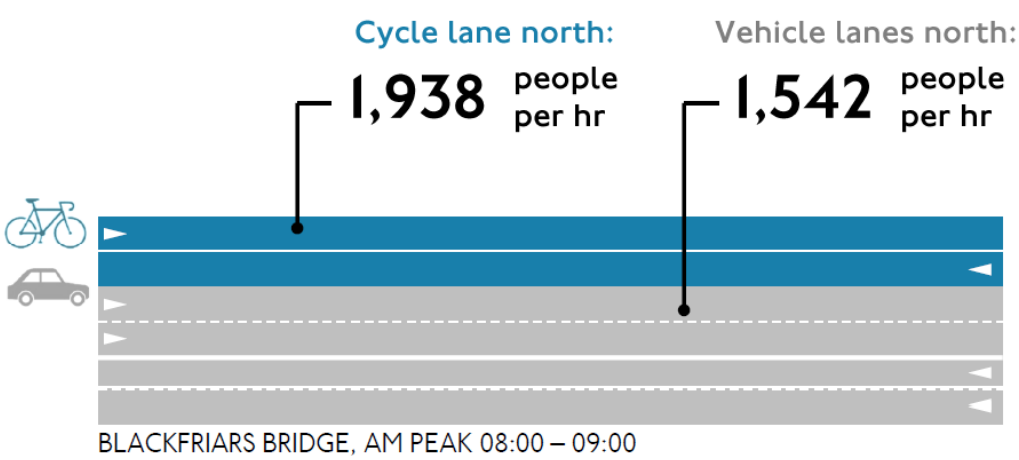
KEEPING STREETS MOVING

Segregated cycle lanes on Blackfriars Bridge help the street move

5% more people

in the am peak than before

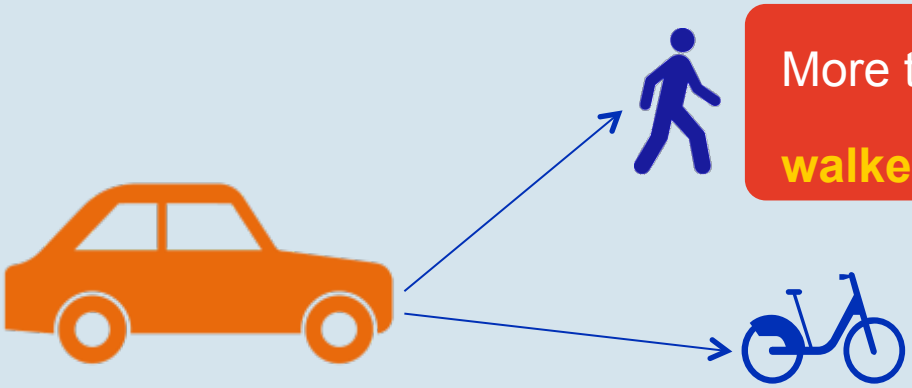
Source: TfL analysis



We can maximise the movement of people by reducing car use and shifting to sustainable modes

These health gains are achievable because...

There are so many potentially switchable trips



More than **1/3 of car trips** could be **walked in under 25 mins**

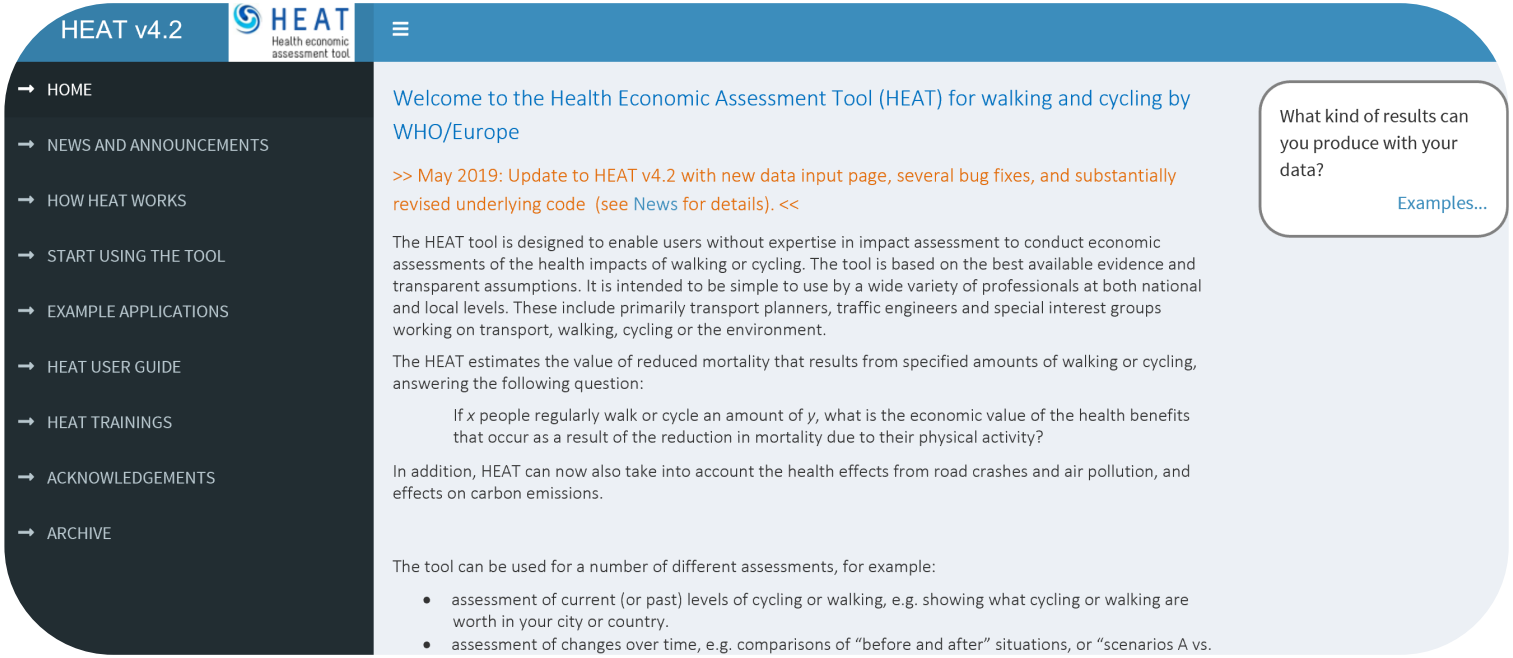
2/3 of car trips could be cycled in **under 20 mins**

Health Economic Assessments at TfL

What is the HEAT tool?

HEAT
Health economic assessment tool

World Health Organization



Monetising the health benefits of Active Travel schemes

- TAG/ HEAT tool available for monetising health benefits of uplift in walking and cycling
- TfL is applying this tool to its schemes

Example
Leonard Circus, Hackney

Before

After

Monetised health benefit of these improvements

= £,1,762,000

= £225,000

Why the need for research at TfL into HEAT usage?

- HEAT has been designed to ‘maximise usability’
- Anecdotally reported project managers were using HEAT inconsistently

Methods

The survey

- Mixture of free text and multiple choice questions.

Participants

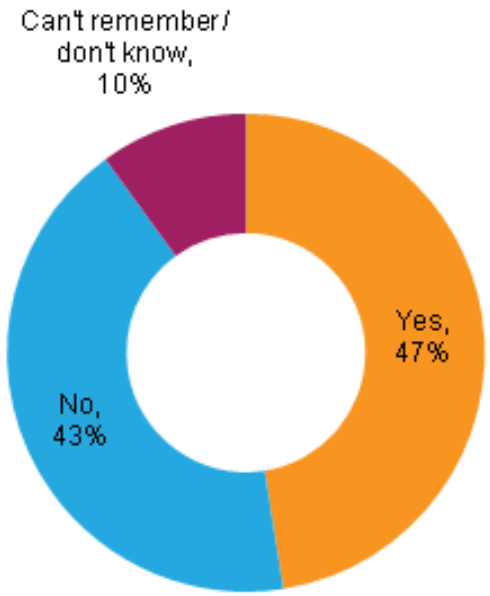
Description	Result
Number who attended HEAT training	161
Number we contacted	122
Number who completed a full survey	91
Proportion who completed survey (of those contacted)	91/122= 75%

Analysis

- Basic counts conducted on closed text responses and grouping of open text responses into thematic areas

Results

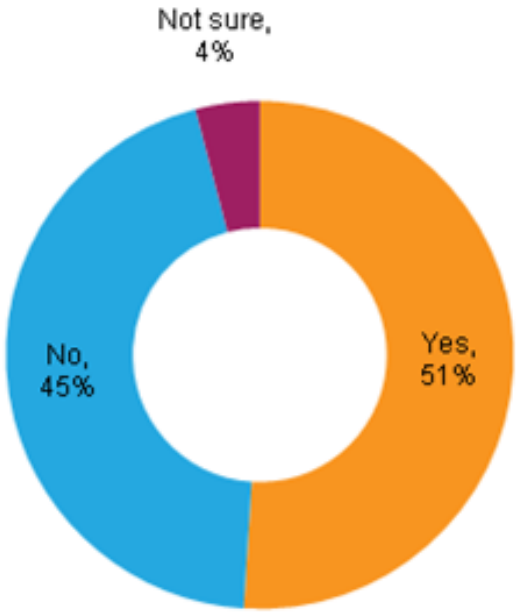
Figure 1. TfL staff reporting whether they had used a HEAT assessment in a business case in the last 18 months.



Around half the participants who wrote a business case last 18 months included a HEAT assessment

Results

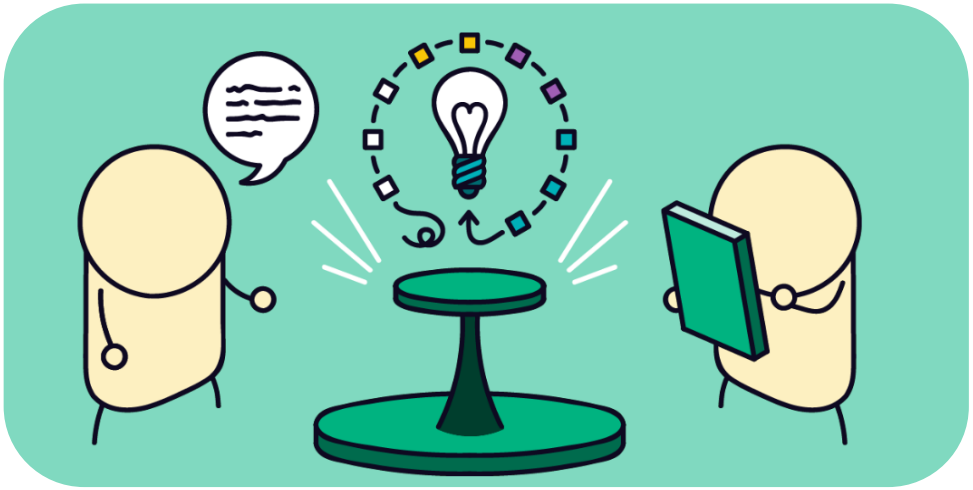
Figure 2. TfL staff reporting whether they feel confident using HEAT



Around half the respondents reported feeling confident using HEAT

Relevant themes emerging in the open text results

- Not trusting the robustness of the HEAT results
- Not thinking it was appropriate for public transport schemes
- Asking for further support in completing HEAT assessments



Conclusions

- **HEAT is being used inconsistently in business cases across TfL despite committing to using HEAT in business case development processes**
- **A large proportion of staff who have attended HEAT training at TfL do not feel confident in using HEAT and were requesting additional support to help them complete assessments**

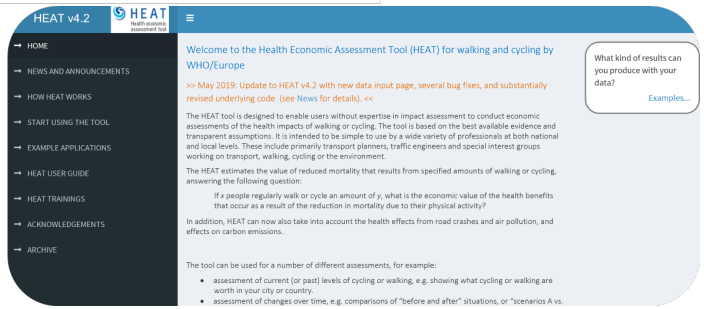
Implications of research

We worked with developers to make improvements

- Technical recommendations to improve usability were made including ensuring that manual count data could be entered into the tool
- Changes to the wording of the description of the data inputs were also adopted to aid understanding

HEAT
Health economic assessment tool

World Health Organization



3 Take home messages:

1. Promoting active travel has been associated with significantly increasing population physical activity levels in London
2. If we want to design for ‘utopia’ then we need to build the economic case for active travel
3. Any health/ environment economic tools must prioritise usability to ensure widespread adoption

My question to the audience...

- *How can we get health/ environment economic assessments embedded in transport planning outside of London?*