


Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)


...is a forum that encourages debate on a wide range of research findings, with the overall aim of promoting evidence-based policy and law-making within Northern Ireland



Using the Planning System to Secure Health and Well-being Benefits

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 @gellis23; @PlanQUB;

The importance of place

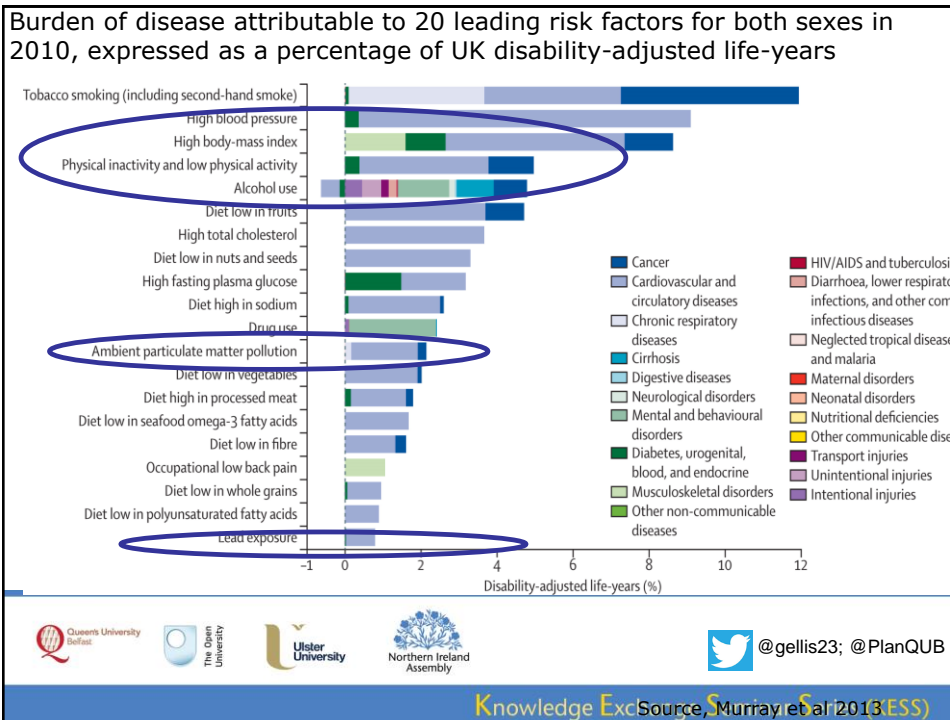
- We shape places; places shape us;
- Health challenges in a post-industrial society;
- Northern Ireland progress and good practice.





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Health:

‘a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity

WHO, 1948

Well being:

‘Feeling good and functioning well’

NEF, 2008



Health and the planning system

- The progressive origins of the planning system;
- Planning as a component of the post-war welfare state;
- The rise of technical professionalism and the decline of social objectives;
- Current statutory purpose:
‘to secure the orderly and consistent development of land’



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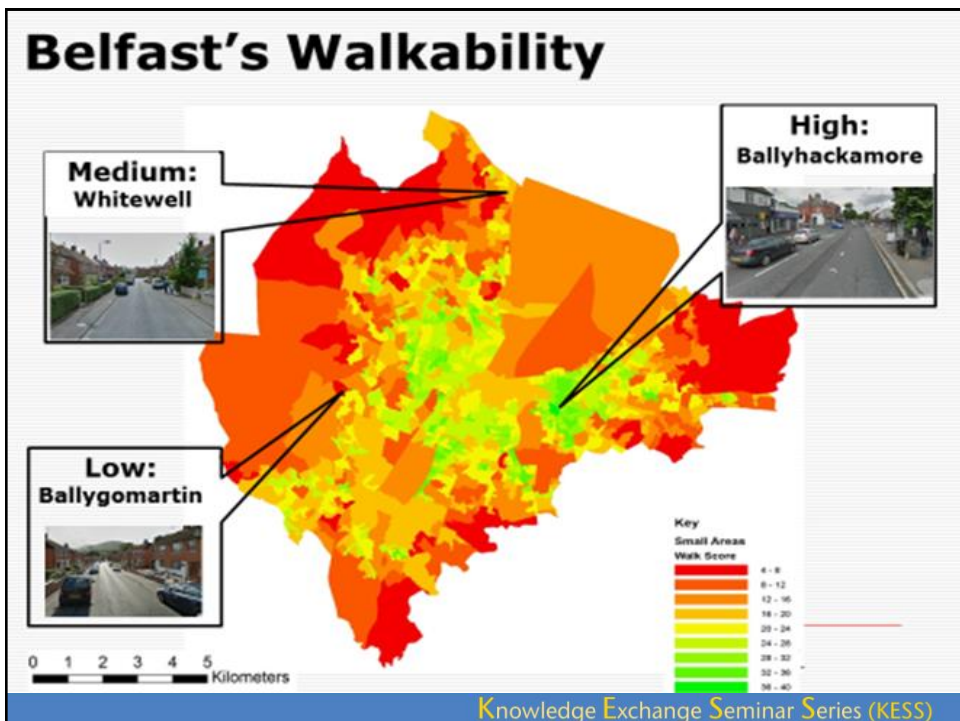
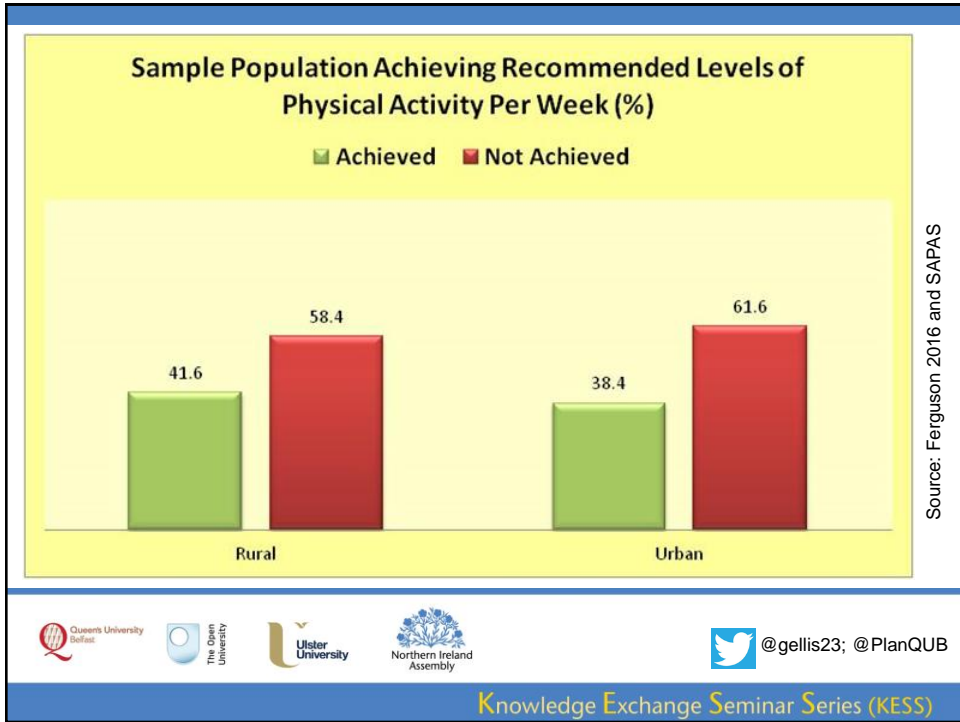
Health and the built environment

- Air Quality
- Obesity and inactivity
- Access to open and green space



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Health and the built environment

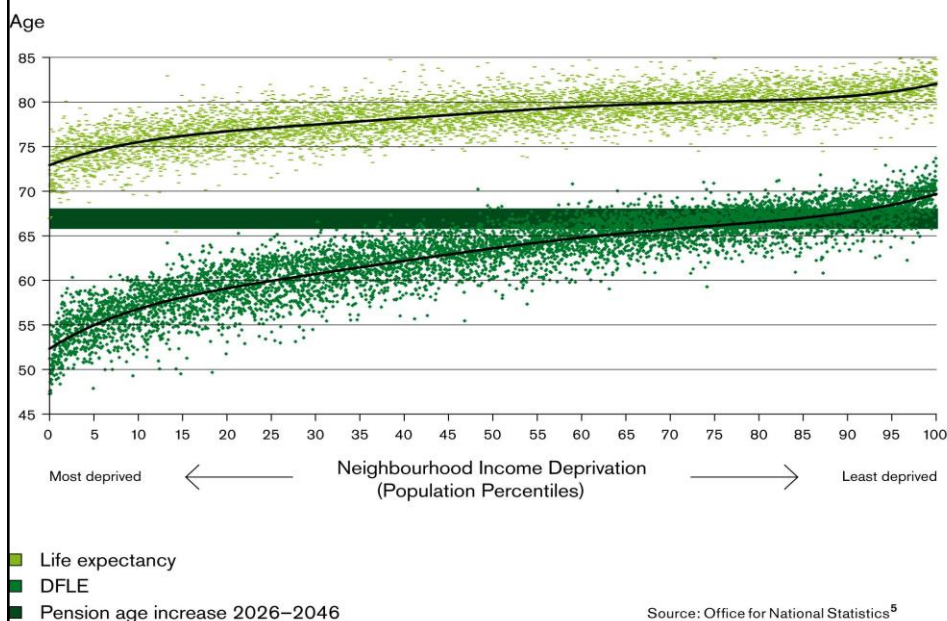
- Social exclusion and poverty
- Mental health
- Access to health care and other services

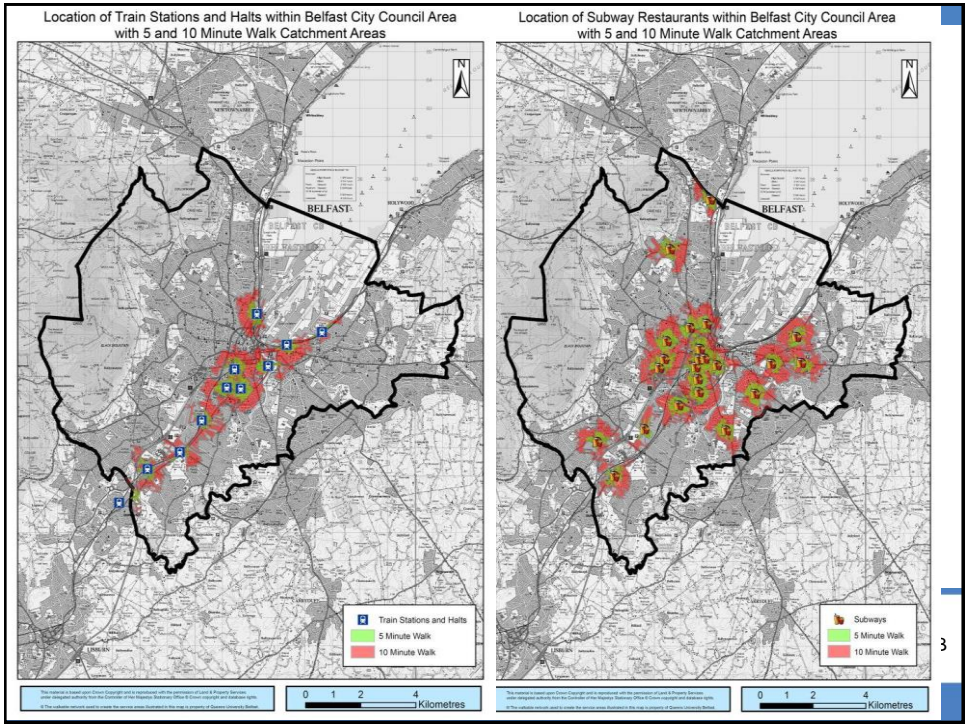


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Figure 1 Life expectancy and disability-free life expectancy (DFLE) at birth, persons by neighbourhood income level, England, 1999–2003





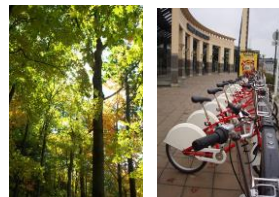
The Poke Principle (The 'Popsicle Test')



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The role of the planning system

- Built environment interventions are comprehensive, long-lasting and cost effective;
- Planning:
 - ...comprehensively controls the built environment;
 - ...takes a long term perspective;
 - ... incorporates complexity and diversity of interests;
 - ...is democratically controlled and participative
 - ...is a recognised element of civilised society.



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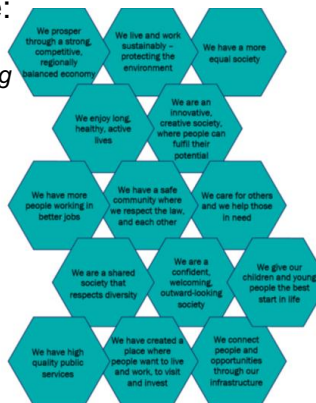
Key actions for Healthy Urban Planning

1. Make good health a statutory objective:

Amend s1(1) of the NI Planning Act to: *The Department must formulate and co-ordinate planning policy for securing the development of land that secures improved health and well-being for current and future generations'*

2. Adopt a health-led planning system:


- Health as a material consideration;
- Public health experts in planning teams;
- Health Impact Statements;
- Adopting minimal standards
- Training for planners and councillors;
- Restricting 'poor health' developments;
- Leading with good practice;




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3. Regulating

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NHS Healthy New Towns



Local Government Association
Tipping the scales
Case studies on the use of planning powers to limit hot food takeaways

Case studies

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Key actions for Healthy Urban Planning

1. Get serious about car dependency;
 - NI rates of car use and the impact of past policy;
 - The costs of car dependency;
 - Discourage car use through congestion zoning, reducing parking and 'road diets';
 - Encouraging alternatives through public transport investment, reducing car generating developments, encouraging active travel.
2. Make active travel easy:
 - Addressing imbalances in transport spending;
 - Making walking and cycling safer;
 - Long term strategies for towns and cities;
 - Incorporating cost-savings.





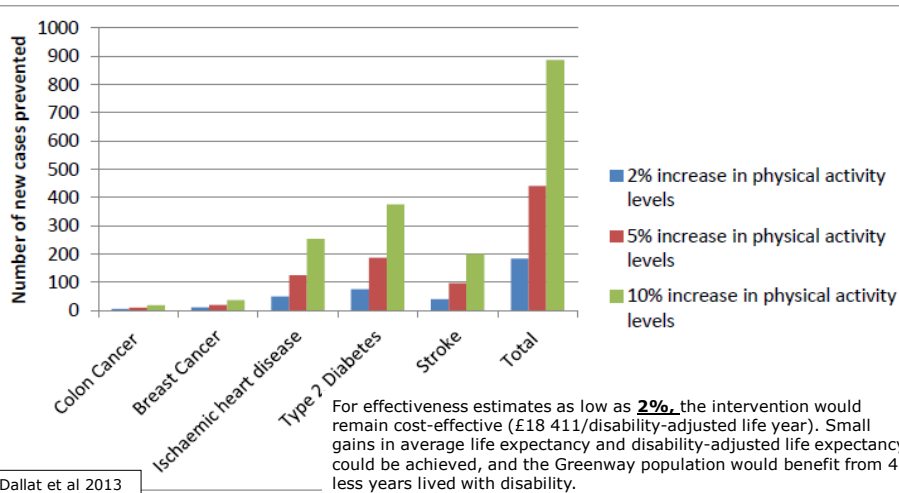





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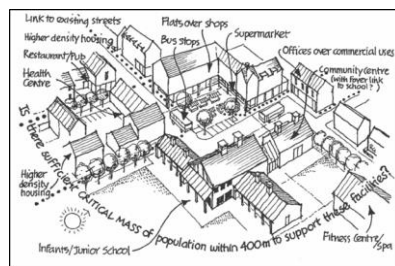
Number of new chronic diseases prevented over 40 years, if 2%, 5% or 10% of those currently inactive in the Greenway population, become active



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Key actions for Healthy Urban Planning

- Rediscover planning at the neighbourhood level:
 - Planning for a 10 min walk;
 - Clustering services and minimal access thresholds.
 - Access to schools, clinics, shops
- Integrate environmental health with planning:
 - Planning as the first line of defence against pollution;
 - Monitoring local environmental capacities;
 - Use of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment.



Toddler's play areas	100m
Allotments	200m
Playground	300m
Bus stop	400m
Local shops, pub, community centre	600m
Primary School	800m
Surgery	800m
Playing fields	1000m
Secondary School	1500m
Leisure Centre	1500m

Source: Barton et al (2010)



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Key actions for Healthy Urban Planning

1. Make places greener:
 - The Six Acre Standard
 - Minimal access thresholds to play areas, parks, playing fields...
2. Address health and environmental inequalities:
 - Targeting greatest need
 - Age- and Child-Friendly Cities
 - Enforcing minimal standards
3. Effective community engagement



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'We know more about good habitats for mountain gorillas, Siberian tigers or panda bears than about a good urban habitat for homo sapiens. Nobody has taken an interest ... so what happened was that the eye level stuff was handled by the traffic engineers'

Jan Gehl



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Northern Ireland
Assembly



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