

Living Streets - The Pedestrians Association

June 24, 2003

Mr Ian Stearman
Programme Officer
Public Inquiry into the New Tyne Crossing
Newcastle City Council
Civic Centre
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1

Dear Mr Stearman:

In response to document **TWPTA 2K**, I enclose several copies of a policy document from the London Office of *Living Streets*. In essence it makes the same points about pedestrian underpasses that I made at the inquiry.

In response to document **TWPTA 4I**, I would like to make the following points:

- There is a large difference between the statistic showing the percentage of travelers crossing the Tyne in cars to get to work, versus the percentage of people in general using cars to get to work. Comparing these two statistics is like comparing bananas and oranges. When I objected at the Inquiry to Mr Ham's suggestion that 80-90% of people travel to work by car, I was objecting to this generalisation. Furthermore, I note that Gordon Henderson does not even count people traveling across the Tyne on bikes or on foot – he has only counted cars versus public transport users. This shows a naïve bias. If we all had Mr Henderson's fatalistic attitude towards modal shift, then we might as well do nothing to improve public transport and just wait until 100% of workers cross the Tyne in their cars. However, we would be severely contravening current transport policy.
- Mr Henderson again shows a clear bias towards motorised transport when he suggests that the percentage of workers who take less than 11 minutes to get to work must all be drivers. What about those who work at their local shops? What about those without cars who deliberately take a job close to home? Why is this silly assumption made that the 11 minutes refers to travel time by car rather than what the statistic (from Census 2001 website) actually said – less than 11 minutes travel to work – which could be by any mode - foot, bike, bus or car.
- I would further disagree that 11 minutes by car would necessarily equate to a very significant walk time as an alternative. My neighbour takes 8 minutes to travel up the very congested Old Coast Road between Benton and Four Lane Ends in her car. I travel the same journey on foot, unimpeded by traffic jams, in 12 minutes – hardly an Olympic feat.

It is worrying indeed that both Mr Henderson and Mr Thurlow have such anti-pedestrian and pro-motorist attitudes. If the infrastructure of our towns and cities is in the hands of such transport engineers then we should indeed expect a decline in sustainable modes of transport and an increase in private motorised transport – exactly what the Government's transport policy is trying to avoid.

Sincerely,

Wendy Love
Tyne and Wear contact for *Living Streets*