

# British Social Attitudes survey 2011: public attitudes towards transport

February 2012

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# Executive summary

## Overview

1. In 2011, people were less concerned about congestion, exhaust fumes and the effect of transport on climate than in recent years, with several of these results recording historical lows since they were first added to the British Social Attitudes survey.
2. Females were more likely to be concerned about these environmental issues and were also more likely to present risk averse attitudes by supporting road calming measures in residential streets and opposing the use of mobile phones or alcohol whilst driving.

## Key points

### Roads and congestion

3. The proportion of people concerned about congestion on motorways fell from 26 per cent in 2010, to 22 per cent in 2011, and concerns about congestion on both motorways and in towns and cities (41 per cent) were at their lowest levels since these questions were added to the British Social Attitudes survey in 1997.
4. In 2011, 59 per cent of respondents agreed that when driving it is more important to arrive at your destination in a consistent reliable time, than to arrive faster some of the time and slower at other times. Two-thirds of people agreed that road improvements should focus on increasing the capacity of existing roads rather than building new ones. Sixty-four per cent of people indicated that they were concerned about damage to the countryside from road building.

### Parking

5. When asked whether they had changed a journey in any way in the last 12 months because of a lack of parking space, nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) of respondents who drive said that they had not made any changes to a journey. Around one in five respondents (22 per cent) said that they had used public transport rather than the car because of a lack of parking. Seven per cent of respondents had changed their destination

because there was a lack of parking space and six per cent chose not to make a journey at all.

### **Car use and driving**

6. Travelling by car as a driver was by the far the most commonly and regularly used mode of transport. Thirty-one per cent of respondents said that they do not drive. Nineteen per cent of respondents said that their household did not own or have regular use of any cars or van in their household, 42 per cent said their household had one car or van and 29 per cent said there were two cars or vans in their household.

### **Willingness to use sustainable travel alternatives for short car journeys**

7. Forty-two per cent of people agreed that they could just as easily walk many of the journeys of less than two miles they now travel by car; 38 per cent they could just as easily cycle (if they had a bike) and a third said they could just as easily catch the bus. Unlike non-drivers, drivers would not be willing to use the bus instead of the car.

### **Cycling**

8. Thirty-one per cent of respondents were cyclists: that is, they had access to a bicycle and had cycled in the last 12 months. However,
  - 45 per cent of cyclists agreed that it was too dangerous for them to cycle on the roads compared to 69 per cent of non-cyclists, and
  - 58 per cent of cyclists said that they were very or fairly confident cycling on the roads compared to 20 per cent of non-cyclists.
9. Age and gender have a strong effect on whether individuals feel confident cycling and how dangerous they consider the roads to be. Those who drive are also slightly more confident about cycling on the roads.

### **Transport and the environment**

10. Concerns about exhaust fumes in towns and cities fell from 48 per cent of respondents in 2010, to 45 per cent in 2011, and 67 per cent of respondents said that they were concerned about exhaust fumes from traffic. Sixty-five per cent of people said they were concerned about the effect of transport on climate change: down from 68 per cent in 2010. These results mark the lowest levels observed since the questions were added to the questionnaire in 2005. Two thirds of people agreed that the current level of car travel has a serious effect on climate change and a similar proportion (64 per cent) agreed that the current level of air travel has a serious effect on climate change.

11. When asked what types of things contribute towards climate change the most popular response was emissions from road transport (59 per cent) and emissions from planes (39 per cent). Vans and lorries were perceived as being the forms of transport having the most impact upon climate change (68 per cent), followed by cars (62 per cent) and aeroplanes (55 per cent).
12. Seventy-six per cent of respondents indicated that they believe that climate change is taking place and that it is at least partly a result of human actions. Sixteen per cent of people said they thought that climate change is taking place, but not as a result of human actions and seven per cent said that they don't believe that climate change is taking place.
  - 70 per cent agreed that they were willing to buy a car with lower CO2 emissions ;
  - 60 per cent agreed that they were prepared to reduce their speed on the motorway to help reduce CO2 emissions;
  - 40 per cent indicated that they were willing to reduce the amount they travel by car to reduce emissions, and
  - 25 per cent agreed they were willing to reduce the amount they travel by car.
13. Overall public attitude is neither clearly in favour or against reducing car use. However, people are not in favour of reducing the amount they travel by plane.

#### *Air travel and the environment*

14. People feel strongly about the freedom to travel by plane. However, agreement with these statements decreases if respondents are asked to consider the environmental effects of flying:
  - 62 per cent agreed that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like (the lowest result since this question was first asked 2003, when 79 per cent of people agreed with this statement);
  - 37 per cent agreed that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like, even if new terminals or runways are needed to meet the demand, and
  - 18 per cent agreed that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like, even if this harms the environment.
15. Forty-one per cent of people agreed that the price of a plane ticket should reflect the environmental damage that flying causes, even if this makes air travel more expensive and 34 per cent agreed that being able to get a direct flight isn't important to them, so long as they can get to their destination.

### *Car use and the environment*

- 58 per cent of people agreed that people who drive cars that are better for the environment should pay less to use the roads;
- 55 per cent agreed that for the sake of the environment everyone should reduce how much they use their cars;
- 47 per cent agreed that there is no point them reducing their car use unless others do so, and
- 13 per cent of respondents agreed that for the sake of the environment car users should pay higher taxes.

### **Road safety**

- 16.** Fifty-one per cent of all respondents were in favour of having speed bumps to slow down traffic in residential streets; 73 per cent were in favour of 20 mile per hour speed limits in residential streets and 36 per cent were in favour of closing residential streets to through traffic. The proportion of people against speed limits of 20 miles per hour in residential streets fell from 15 per cent in 2010, to 11 per cent in 2011.

### *Drink and drug driving*

- 17.** In 2011, a new question was added to the British Social Attitudes survey seeking opinions on drug driving. Ninety-nine per cent of respondents indicated that they believed those who have taken illegal drugs should not drive. Eighty-six per cent of respondents agreed that someone should not drive if they have drunk **any** alcohol and 77 per cent agreed that most people don't know how much alcohol they can drink before being over the drink drive limit.

### *Speeding*

- 18.** Whilst most people (91 per cent) agreed that people should drive within the speed limit, they were less favourable about the use of speed cameras:
- 54 per cent feel they are only there to make money;
  - 51 per cent agreed they save lives, and
  - 41 per cent believe there are too many speed cameras.
- 19.** Approximately half of all respondents (53 per cent) agreed that average speed cameras were preferable, 27 per cent said they neither agreed nor disagreed and 13 per cent disagreed with the statement.

### *Mobile phones*

- 90 per cent of respondents disagreed that it was perfectly safe to talk on a hand held phone whilst driving;
- 71 per cent felt that the law on using mobile phone whilst driving is not properly enforced;
- 59 per cent agreed that the use of all mobile phones - including hands free kit is dangerous and
- 49 per cent believed that all use of mobile phones - including hands free kit - should be banned.



# 1. Introduction

- 1.2** The British Social Attitudes survey is a representative household survey of adults aged 18 and over, which collects data on public attitudes towards a range of topics through a combination of face-to-face interviews and self-completion questionnaires.
- 1.3** The British Social Attitudes survey is managed and conducted by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen). This document contains results for the questions sponsored by the Department for Transport. NatCen will publish their annual report on the 2011 survey in late 2012.
- 1.4** Detailed analysis of long term trends may be found in *Trends in Attitudes to Transport, 1990 to 2009*<sup>1</sup>. Excel tables ATT0301 - ATT0360 containing the results discussed in this report can be found on the DfT website at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/public-attitudes>.
- 1.5** This report was prepared by Abby Sneade, a statistician in Statistics Travel and Safety. Please call 020 7944 4892 or email [attitudes.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:attitudes.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk) with technical enquiries about this report.

## Methodology

- 1.6** The sampling frame is the Postcode Address File (PAF) and is limited to those living in private households. The sampling method uses a multi-stage design with three separate stages selecting postcode sectors, addresses and individuals. The survey is weighted to correct for the unequal selection of addresses, dwelling units and individuals and biases caused by differential non-response. In 2011, respondents were randomly allocated to one of three self completion modules (A, B and C). Thus sample size for certain questions varies depending on which module(s) they featured in.
- 1.7** Fieldwork for the 2011 survey was carried out between June and September 2011. All results presented here are weighted and any differences in results for 2010 and 2011 are statistically significant at the five per cent level of confidence using an estimated design factor (DEFT) of 1.2.

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<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110601230302/http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/trsnstatsatt/Attitude2009.pdf>

## Response rates

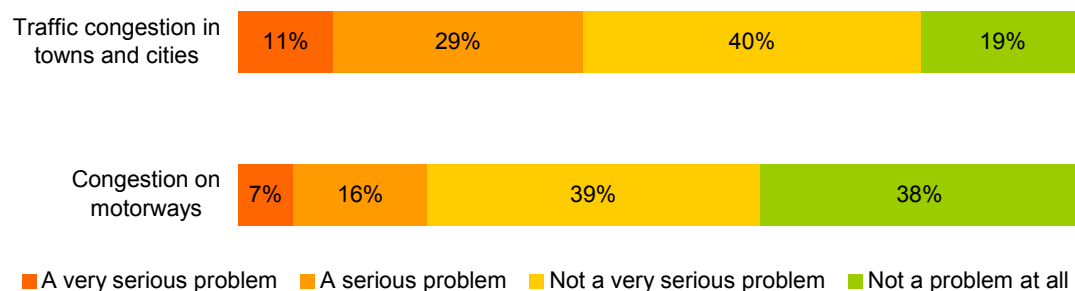
- 1.8** The achieved sample size for the 2011 face-to-face interview was 3,311 respondents. This equates to a response rate of 54 per cent. Of the 3,311 face to face survey respondents, 951 completed module A, 950 completed module B and 930 completed module C. In total, 86 per cent of face-to-face respondents (42 per cent of all potential respondents sampled) completed and returned a self completion module.

## 2. Attitudes on road use

### Congestion and road improvement

- 2.1** Twenty-two per cent of Britons consider congestion on motorways to be a 'serious' or 'very serious' problem for them. This is lower than in 2010, when 26 per cent of respondents indicated that motorway congestion was a problem, and marks the lowest level of concern regarding motorway congestion since the question was first asked in 1997. People were most concerned about motorway congestion in 1999 and 2000 when 36 per cent and 35 per cent per cent of people said that motorway congestion was a problem. This followed a period of high profile news coverage of anti-road protests in the mid to late nineties. Conversely, 77 per cent of respondents to the 2011 British Social Attitudes survey said that congestion on motorways was 'not a very serious problem' or 'not a problem at all'.
- 2.2** Forty-one per cent of respondents considered traffic congestion in towns and cities to be a 'very serious' or 'serious' problem in 2011. This was not significantly lower than in 2010, but nevertheless also marked a historical low in the series.

**Chart 2.1: concerns about congestion**



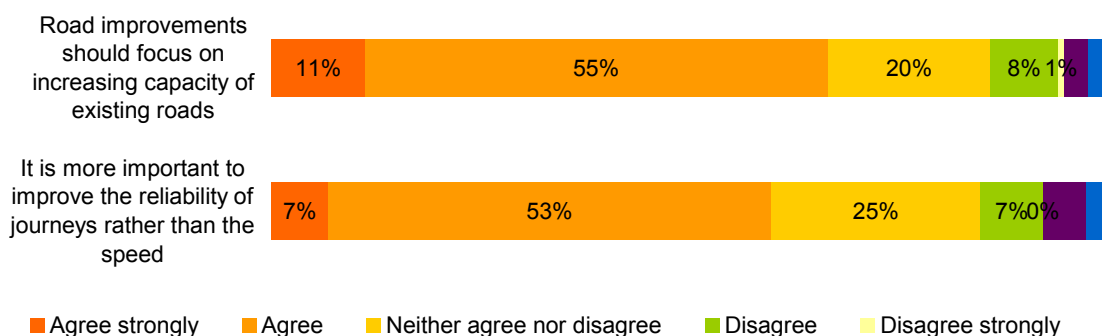
Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: 3,311 (all respondents, CAPI)

### 2.3

Respondents who drive were more likely to report that motorway congestion was a problem for them (26 per cent compared to 16 per cent of those who don't drive) and more likely to consider traffic congestion in towns and cities to be a problem (44 per cent compared to 34 per cent of non-drivers).

- 2.4** Males were more likely than females to consider motorway congestion and congestion in towns and cities to be a problem (26 per cent compared to 19 per cent of females, and 45 per cent of males and 36 per cent of females respectively).
- 2.5** A higher proportion of those aged 35-54 regarded motorway congestion (29 per cent) and congestion in towns and cities (46 per cent) to be a problem than those aged under 24 (13 per cent and 32 per cent respectively) or over 65 (17 per cent and 35 per cent respectively). Those in the highest pre-tax household income quartile (£3,701 or more per calendar month) group were more concerned about motorway congestion (29 per cent) than those with household less than £1,200 per month (20 per cent) and £1,201-£2,200 per month (19 per cent).
- 2.6** In 2011, 59 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that when driving, it is more important to arrive at your destination in a consistent reliable time, than to arrive faster some of the time and slower at other times. Eight per cent of respondents disagreed with this statement and a quarter neither agreed nor disagreed. Two thirds of people agreed that road improvements should focus on increasing the capacity of existing roads rather than building new ones. Nine per cent of respondents disagreed with this statement and 20 per cent said that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

**Chart 2.2: attitudes towards road improvements**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
 Unweighted base: 951 (all respondents, self completion version A)

**2.7**

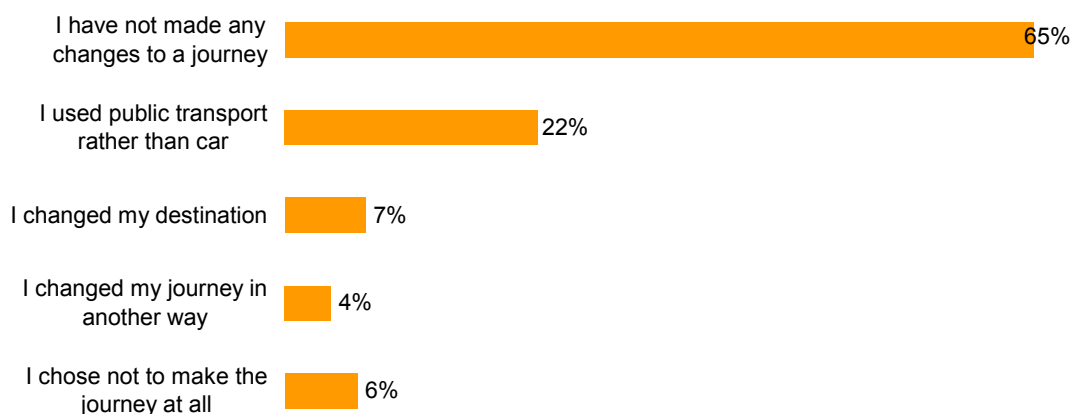
A higher proportion of drivers felt that improving the reliability of journey times was more important than increasing the speed of journeys (63 per cent compared to 51 per cent of non-drivers).

- 2.8** Those who believe in climate change (and that it is at least partly a result of human actions) were more inclined to agree that it is important to improve the reliability of journey times rather than the speed of journeys when compared to those who do not believe that climate change is taking place (61 per cent and 38 per cent respectively).
- 2.9** Sixty-four per cent of people indicated that they were concerned about damage to the countryside from road building. Sixty-eight per cent of females were concerned about damage to the countryside from road building compared to 58 per cent of males.

## Parking

- 2.10** When asked whether they had changed a journey in any way in the last 12 months because of a lack of parking space, nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) of respondents who drive said that they had not made any changes to a journey. Around one in five respondents (22 per cent) said that they had used public transport rather than the car because of a lack of parking. Seven per cent of respondents had changed their destination because of a lack of parking space, six per cent chose not to make a journey at all and four per cent changed a journey in some other way.

**Chart 2.3: parking experiences**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: 2,268 (all respondents who drive, CAPI)

- 2.11** Respondents with a condition or disability that has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities were less

likely than other respondents to have switched from the car to public transport due to a lack of parking space (14 per cent compared to 23 per cent). This may reflect blue badge holding or the inability to use public transport as an alternative to the car.

- 2.12** Those with a degree were more likely to have changed a journey in some way than those with lower levels of qualifications: 53 per cent of those with a degree had not changed a journey in any way compared to 71 per cent of people whose highest educational qualification was A-level, 66 per cent of those with O levels or CSE equivalents and 75 per cent of those with no qualification.

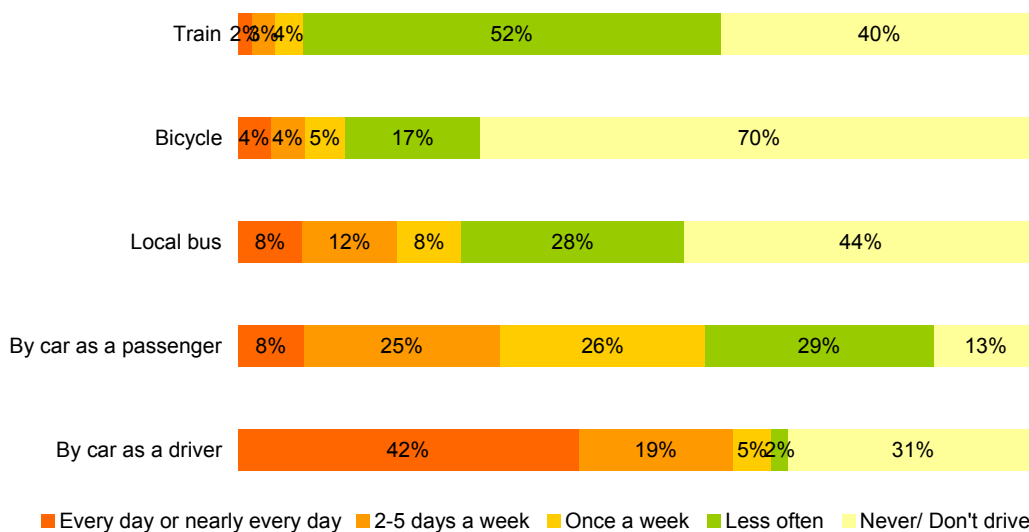
# 3. Sustainable travel

## Current behaviour

**3.1** Forty-two per cent of respondents reported travelling by car as a driver every day or nearly every day. This was by the far the most commonly and regularly used mode of transport. Just eight per cent of respondents said they travelled by car as a passenger or used local bus every or nearly everyday; four per cent reported travelling by bicycle very or nearly every day and two per cent said they travel by train every day or nearly every day.

**3.2** The proportion of respondents travelling by car at least once a week, either as a driver or passenger are broadly similar: 66 per cent and 58 per cent respectively. Thirty-one per cent of respondents said that they do not drive. The proportion of respondents who use buses (28 per cent), trains (eight per cent) or bicycle (13 per cent) to travel at least once a week is substantially lower. Just 14 per cent of people said that they never travel by car as a passenger, whereas 70 per cent reported never travelling by bicycle.

**Chart 3.4: frequency of travel by mode of transport**



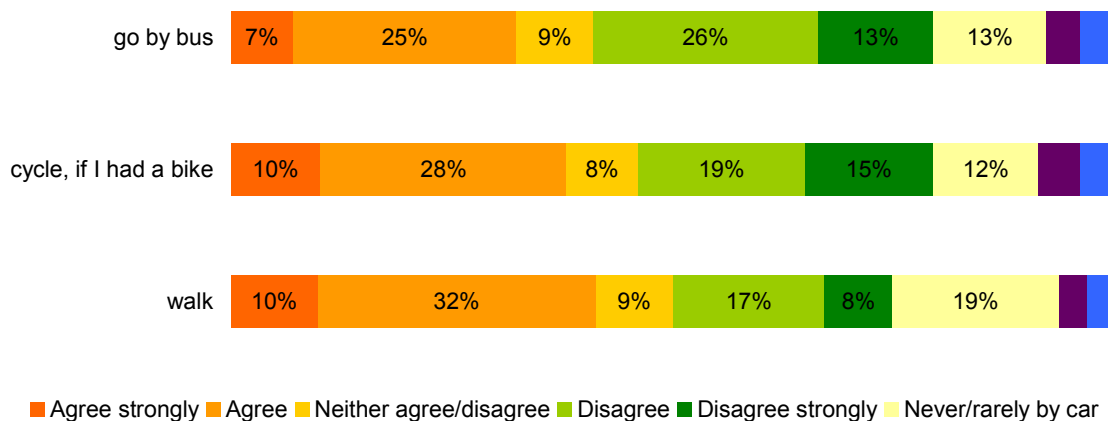
Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
 Unweighted base: 3,311 (all respondents, CAPI)

**3.3** Nineteen per cent of respondents said that their household did not own or have regular use of any cars or van in their household. Forty-two per cent said their household had one car or van and 29 per cent said there were two cars or vans in their household. Ten per cent of respondents said that their household owned or had regular access to three or more cars or vans.

## Willingness to switch from car to more sustainable modes of travel

**3.4** On average, people reported making four short journeys of less than two miles in a typical week. Forty-two per cent of people agreed that they could just as easily walk many of the journeys of less than two miles they now travel by car; 38 per cent they could just as easily cycle (if they had a bike) and a third said they could just as easily catch the bus.

**Chart 3.5: many of the journeys of less than 2 miles that I now make by car I could just as easily...**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: 1,901 (all respondents, self completion, versions A and B)

**3.5** The proportion of respondents who strongly agreed or strongly disagreed that they could just as easily walk the short journeys they make by car has polarised marginally since the previous year. In 2010, seven per cent of people strongly agreed with this statement: rising to 10 per cent in 2011. Similarly, five per cent strongly disagreed with this statement in 2010, rising to eight per cent in 2011.

**3.6** Over the same period, the proportion agreeing that they could just as easily cycle fell by four percentage points from 43 per cent to 38 per cent. The proportion disagreeing with this statement simultaneously



increased by five percentage points from 29 per cent to 34 per cent. These respectively mark the lowest and highest proportion of people agreeing and disagreeing with this statement since it was first asked in 2006.

- 3.7** Females were less likely to agree that they could just as easily cycle many of the short journeys they currently make by car (if they had a bike) than men: 32 per cent of females compared to 45 per cent of men. This may reflect lower levels of cycling amongst females, lower confidence and higher fears or simply that tasks which are usually undertaken by females more often such as escorting children and shopping are less practical upon a bicycle than in a car.
- 3.8** Cyclists were nearly twice as likely as non-cyclists to agree that they could just as easily cycle short journeys they currently make by car (57 per cent compared to 30 per cent). They were also more likely to agree that they could just as easily walk many of those short journeys (52 per cent of cyclists and 36 per cent of non-cyclists).
- 3.9** Those who had a disability or condition that adversely affected their ability to carry out normal day to day activities were more inclined to disagree that they could just as easily walk or cycle many of the short journeys they now make by car: 53 per cent disagreed that they could cycle (compared to 30 per cent of those without a disability or condition) and 46 per cent disagreed that they could just as easily walk (compared to 21 per cent of those without a disability or condition).
- 3.10** Forty-five per cent of respondents who lived in a household with children aged under 18 said they could just as easily walk short journeys they currently make by car compared to 40 per cent of those without children.
- 3.11** Forty-five per cent of those who drive agreed that many of the short journeys they now make by car could just as easily be made by walking compared to 33 per cent of those who do not drive. However, drivers were also more likely to disagree with this statement (28 per cent of drivers compared to 19 per cent of non-drivers) and a higher proportion of those who don't drive said that they never or rarely travel by car (28 per cent compared to 15 per cent of drivers).

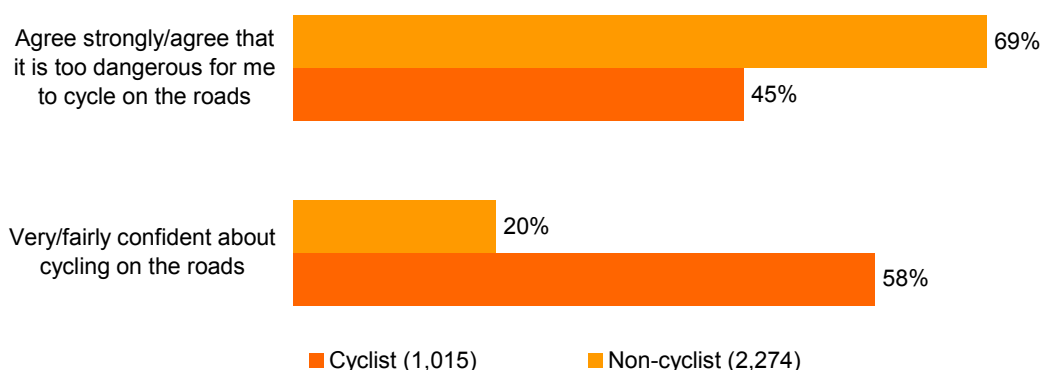
## Cycling

**3.12** Forty-three per cent of respondents had access to a bicycle: forty per cent owned a bicycle and three per cent had regular use of a bicycle owned by someone else. Sixty-one per cent of respondents said that they had not ridden a bicycle in the previous 12 months. Responses to these two questions have been used to create the definition of a cyclist as someone who has access to a bicycle and has ridden a bicycle in the last 12 months. On this basis, 31 per cent of 2011 respondents were cyclists.

**3.13** Two new questions were introduced in 2011 to test potential hypotheses on barriers to cycling. The response to both of these questions varied significantly depending on whether people were cyclists or not:

- 45 per cent of cyclists agreed that it was too dangerous for them to cycle on the roads compared to 69 per cent of non-cyclists, and
- 58 per cent of cyclists said that they were very or fairly confident cycling on the roads compared to 20 per cent of non-cyclists.

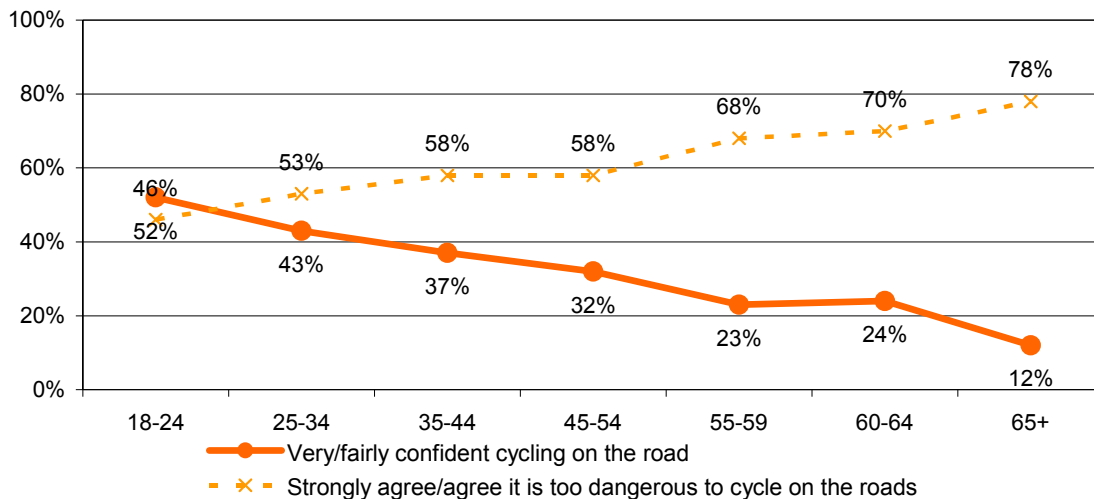
**Chart 3.6: attitudes towards cycling**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: 3,311 (all respondents, CAPI)

**3.14** Age has a strong effect on whether individuals feel confident cycling and how dangerous they consider the roads to be. As Chart 3.7 illustrates, 52 per cent of those aged 18-24 reported feeling confident about cycling on the roads, falling to just 12 per cent of those aged 65+ (this probably also reflects the respondents' confidence in their physical ability to ride a bicycle). Similarly, 46 per cent of those aged 18-24 said it was too dangerous on the roads for them to ride a bicycle, rising to 78 per cent of those aged 65+.

**Chart 3.7: confidence to cycle on the roads by age group**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
 Unweighted base: 3,311 (all respondents, CAPI)

**3.15** Females were less confident about cycling and considered it to be more dangerous than males:

- 18 per cent of females said they were very or fairly confident about cycling on the roads compared to 46 per cent of males, and
- 70 per cent of females said it was too dangerous for them to cycle on the roads compared to 52 per cent of males.

**3.16** Those who drive claimed to have slightly higher levels of confidence about cycling on the roads and slightly lower concerns about roads being too dangerous for them to cycle on than non-drivers:

- 33 per cent of drivers were very or fairly confident about cycling on the roads compared to 28 per cent of non-drivers, and
- 59 per cent of drivers said that it was too dangerous for them to cycle on the roads compared to 66 per cent of non-drivers.

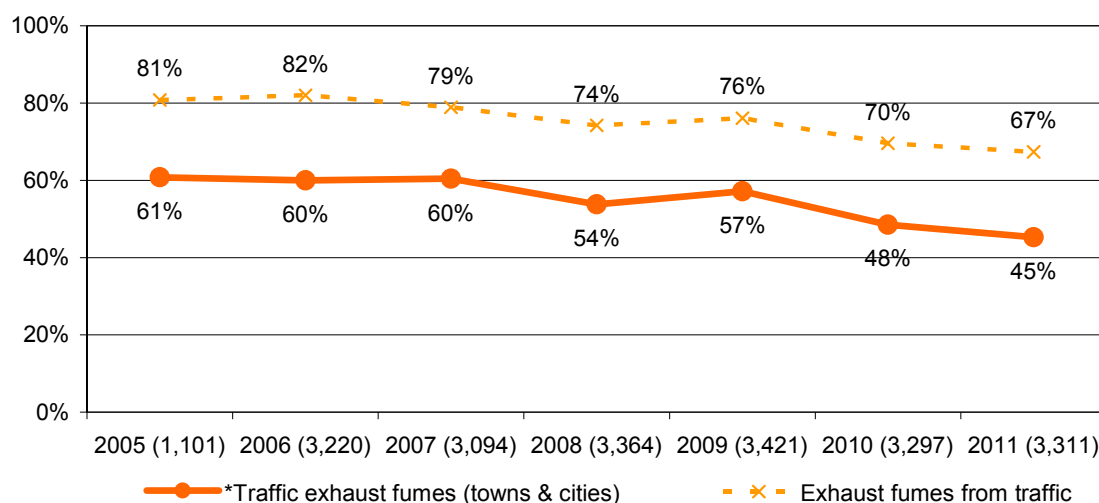
**3.17** This may well be connected to drivers already being regular road users and greater familiarity with the Highway Code. Thirty-four per cent of drivers were also cyclists, compared to 23 per cent of non-drivers.

# 4. Transport and the environment

## Exhaust fumes

**4.1** In 2011, concerns about exhaust fumes in towns and cities fell to their lowest level since being added to the questionnaire in 2005: from 48 per cent of respondents in 2010 to 45 per cent. Conversely, the proportion of respondents who said exhaust fumes in towns and cities were not a serious problem, or not a problem at all rose from 51 per cent to 53 per cent.

**Chart 4.8: attitudes towards exhaust fumes as a serious or very serious problem**



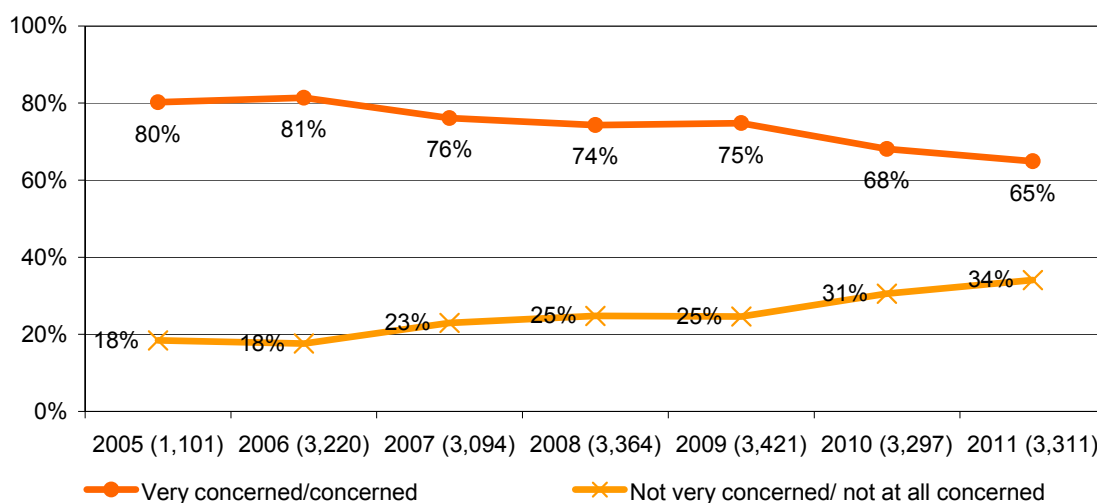
Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: indicated in brackets (all respondents, CAPI)

**4.2** Sixty-seven per cent of respondents said that they were very or fairly concerned about exhaust fumes from traffic. This was not statistically different from the 2011 result but marks another record low since this question was introduced to the survey in 2005. Females were more concerned about exhaust fumes from traffic than males: 72 per cent of females were concerned about this compared to 63 per cent of males.

## Climate Change

**4.3** Sixty-five per cent of people said they were very concerned or concerned about the effect of transport on climate change. This was lower than in 2010 (68 per cent) and is the lowest level of concern observed since this data item started being collected in 2005. The proportion of people who were not concerned about the effect of transport on climate change increased from 31 per cent in 2010 to 34 per cent in 2011.

**Chart 4.9: concerns about the effect of transport on climate change**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatGen)  
Unweighted base: indicated in brackets (all respondents, CAPI)

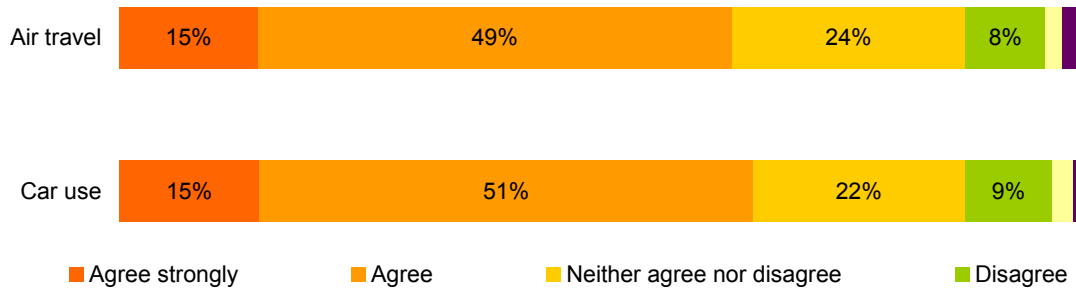
**4.4** The lack of concern about the effect of transport on climate change has nearly doubled since 2005-2006 when just 18 per cent of respondents were not concerned.

**4.5** Sixty-nine per cent of females were concerned about the effect of transport on climate change compared to 60 per cent of males. Respondents who drive were marginally more inclined to say that they were not concerned about the effect of transport on climate change (35 per cent compared to 31 per cent of non-drivers).

**4.6**

Two thirds of people agreed that the current level of car travel has a serious effect on climate change and a similar proportion (64 per cent) agreed that the current level of air travel has a serious effect on climate change.

**Chart 4.10: attitudes on whether the current level of car use/ air travel has a serious effect on climate change**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: 3,311 (all respondents, CAPI)

**4.7** Those who had travelled by air at least three times in the previous 12 months were more likely to disagree that the current level of air travel has a serious effect on climate change (15 per cent) than those who had flown once or twice (eight per cent) or not at all (10 per cent).

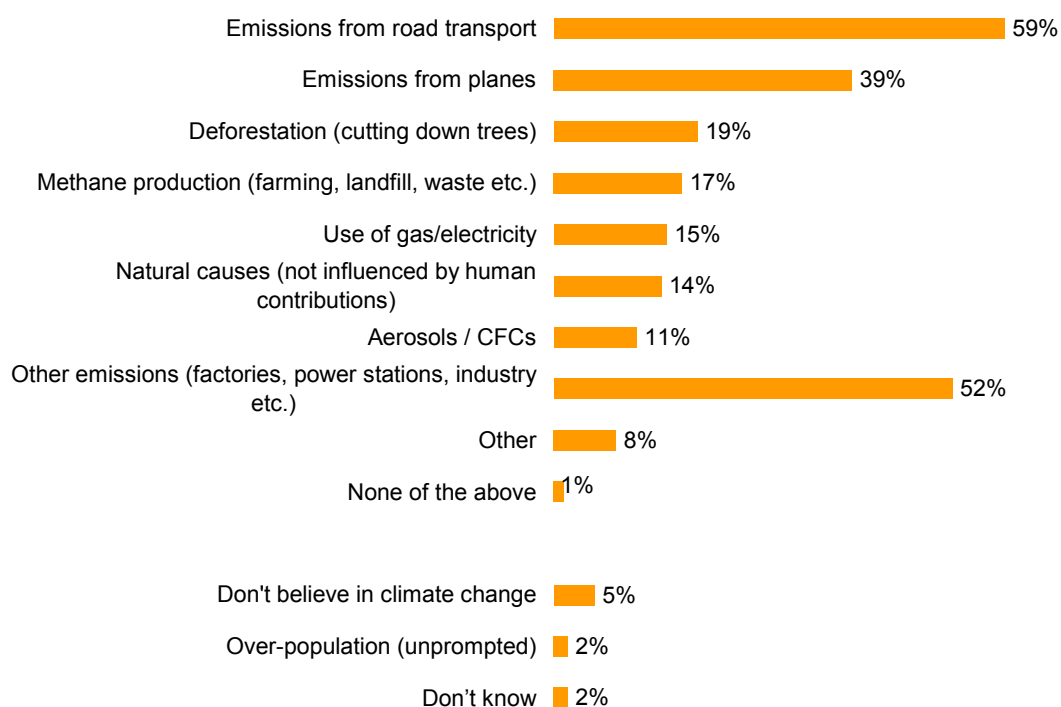
**4.8** Males were twice as likely as females to disagree that current levels of car use and air travel are having a serious effect on climate change:

- 15 per cent of males disagreed that the current effect of car use has a serious effect on climate change compared to seven per cent of females, and
- 13 per cent of males disagreed that the current level of air travel has a serious effect on climate change compared to seven per cent of females.

**4.9**

When asked what types of things contribute towards climate change<sup>2</sup> the most popular response was emissions from road transport, mentioned by 59 per cent of respondents and emissions from planes were mentioned by 39 per cent of respondents. Given that this question was asked in the context of a module of transport related questions it is possible that respondents may have been predisposed to think about the effects of transport on climate change rather than issues such as industry and agriculture. In 2009, road transport and planes accounted for 19 per cent and six per cent of total UK greenhouse gas emissions<sup>3</sup>.

**Chart 4.11: factors believed to contribute to climate change**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: 2,283 (random sub-sample, CAPI)

**4.10** This question was also asked in the transport and climate change module that DfT sponsored in the August 2011 Office for National Statistics Opinions omnibus survey<sup>4</sup> which produced similar results:

- 55 per cent of respondents said that emissions from cars contributed to climate change, and

<sup>2</sup> Climate change was defined as 'this is thought to be the main cause of changing weather patterns in Britain and around the world'.

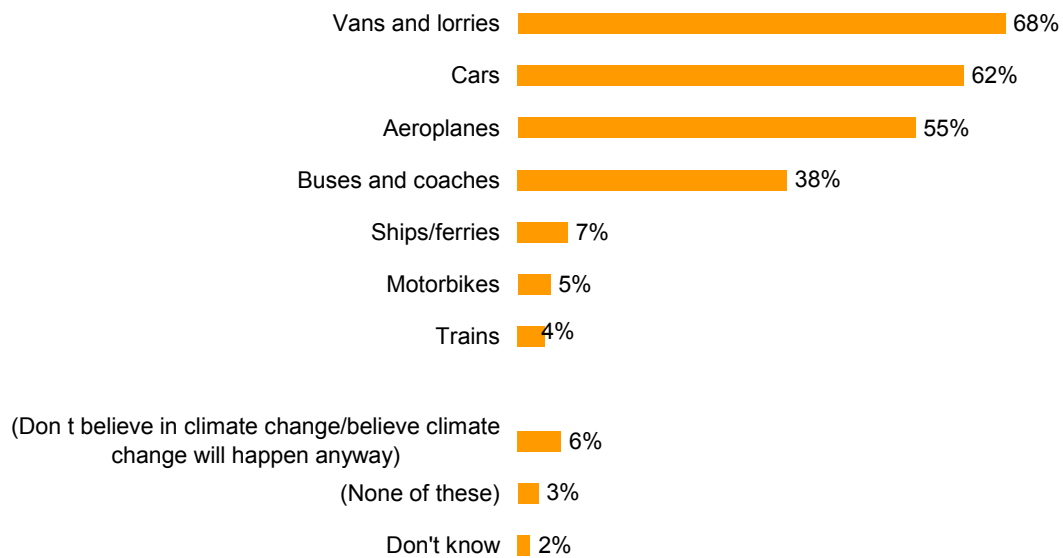
<sup>3</sup> Source: ENV0201 (TSGB0306) *Greenhouse gas emissions by transport mode, 2009* <http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/tables/env0201.xls>. NB base includes international aviation and shipping as well as total domestic transport.

<sup>4</sup> Base: 1,137 UK adults aged 18+ (f-f interview).

- 31 per cent of respondents said that emissions from planes contributed to climate change.

**4.11** When shown a list of transport options, vans and lorries were perceived as having the most impact upon climate change (mentioned by 68 per cent of respondents), then cars (62 per cent) and aeroplanes (55 per cent).

**Chart 4.12: factors deemed to have most impact on climate change**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)

Unweighted base: 2,283 (random sub-sample, CAPI)

Note: respondents could choose up to three options so results do not sum to 100%

**4.12** A similar question was also asked in the August 2011 Opinions survey, whilst the proportions attributing **major** impact upon climate change upon vans and lorries and cars was similar (64 per cent and 68 per cent), the results differ somewhat for the impact of aeroplanes (66 per cent) and buses and coaches (53 per cent).

**4.13** Cars and aeroplanes are in fact the two forms of transport with the highest total greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 43 per cent and 21 per cent of total UK transport greenhouse gas emissions respectively<sup>5</sup>. In contrast, heavy good vehicles and light vans account for 13 per cent and nine per cent of GHG emissions respectively.

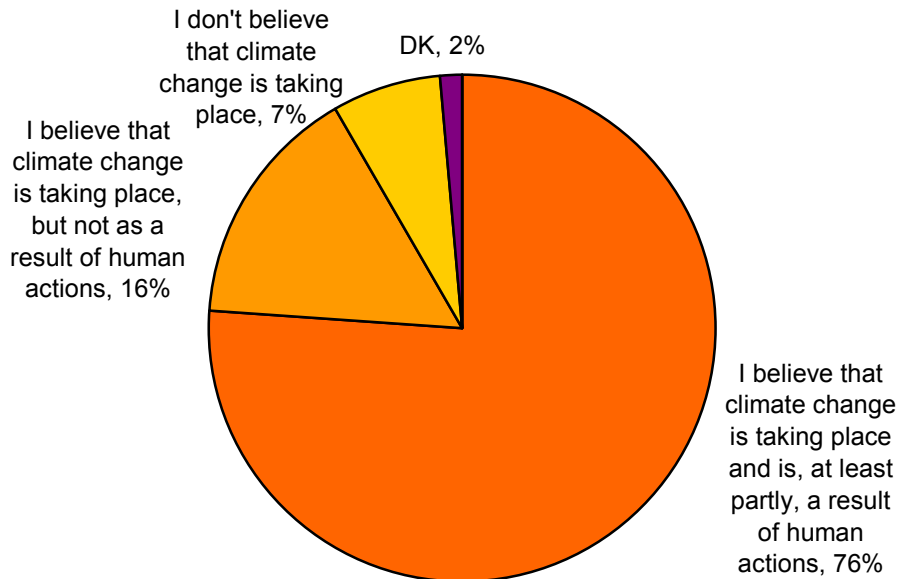
**4.14**

<sup>5</sup> Source: ENV0201 (TSGB0306) - includes international aviation and shipping.



When asked which of three statements came closest to their view, the majority of respondents (76 per cent) indicated that they believe that climate change is taking place and that it is at least partly a result of human actions. Sixteen per cent of people believe that climate change is taking place but not as a result of human actions and seven per cent said that they don't believe that climate change is taking place.

**Chart 4.13: belief in climate change**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: 3,311 (all respondents, CAPI)

**4.15** Those with children under the age of 18 present in the household were marginally more likely to believe in climate change (as a result of human actions): 80 per cent of these respondents believed in climate change compared to 76 per cent of those respondents from households without children.

**4.16** Respondents were read a list of four possible changes they could do to reduce the amount they travel or do things that would reduce the impact of their travel on climate change:

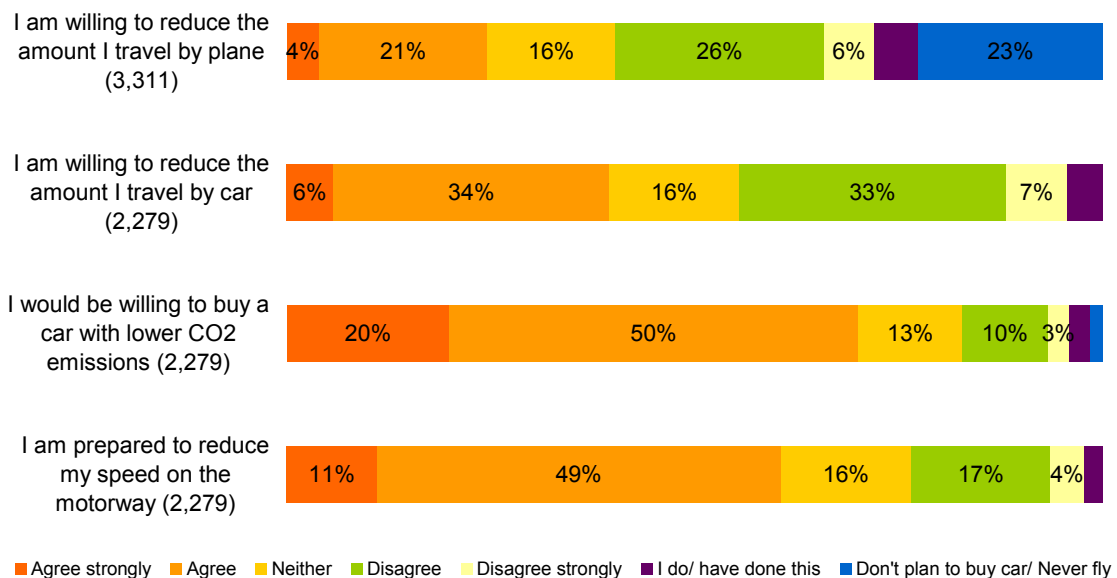
- 70 per cent agreed that they were willing to buy a car with lower CO2 emissions<sup>6</sup>;
- 60 per cent agreed that they were prepared to reduce their speed on the motorway to help reduce CO2 emissions;

<sup>6</sup> Please note this is not explicitly a low emission vehicle such as an electric car or a hybrid. It could also mean buying an 'ordinary' car with a smaller engine or simply a newer/ more efficient model than the car currently owned.

- 40 per cent indicated that they were willing to reduce the amount they travel by car to reduce emissions, and
- 25 per cent agreed they were willing to reduce the amount they travel by car.

**4.17** It is perhaps worth noting that whilst the net result for the first two of these options (buying a lower emissions vehicle and reducing motorway speeds) is broadly positive, 40 per cent of respondents were **not** willing to reduce the amount they travel by car and 32 per cent were **not** willing to reduce they travel by plane. Thus the overall public attitude towards reducing car use is not distinct and people are not in favour of reducing the amount they travel by plane.

**Chart 4.14: willingness to change behaviour to help reduce the impact of transport on climate change**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey, 2011 (NatCen)  
 Unweighted base: indicated in brackets (random sub-sample/ all respondents, CAPI)

**4.18** As one might anticipate, responses to most of these statements varied depending on whether respondents drive or not:

- 10 per cent of drivers and 19 per cent of non-drivers agreed that car users should pay higher taxes for the sake of the environment;
- 51 per cent of drivers and 37 per cent of non-drivers agreed that there was no use in reducing their car use to help the environment unless others do;

- 62 per cent of drivers and 51 per cent of non-drivers agreed that people who drive cars that are better for the environment should pay less to use the roads and
- 63 per cent of drivers and 51 per cent of non-drivers agreed that improving the reliability of journeys was more important than improving the speed.

**4.19** Sixty-eight per cent of females said they were willing to reduce their motorway speed to help reduce emission compared to 54 per cent of males and 72 per cent of females said they would be willing to buy a car with lower emissions compared to 68 per cent of men. Forty-two per cent of females said they were willing to reduce the amount they travel by car to help reduce the impact of climate change as did 37 per cent of men.

## Air travel and the environment

**4.20** Just over half (52 per cent) of the respondents said they had not taken any trips by plane in the previous twelve months, 34 per cent had taken one or two trips by plane in the previous year and 15 per cent said they had taken three or more trips by plane in the previous 12 months. Outward and return flights and any transfers are counted as one trip. On average, people had taken one trip by plane in the previous 12 months. As the median value is clearly zero trips, we can conclude that the mean is skewed by the number of flights taken by those who had flown.

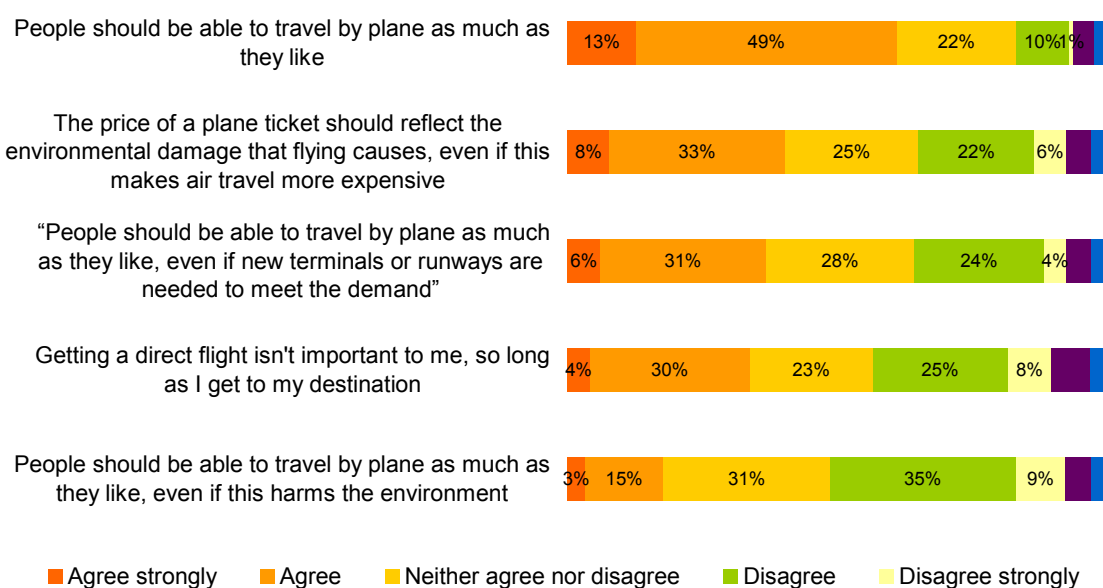
**4.21** Respondents were then read five statements about air travel (Chart 4.15):

- 62 per cent agreed that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like
- 41 per cent agreed that the price of a plane ticket should reflect the environmental damage that flying causes, even if this makes air travel more expensive;
- 37 per cent agreed that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like, even if new terminals or runways are needed to meet the demand;
- 34 per cent agreed that being able to get a direct flight isn't important to them, so long as they can get to their destination, and
- 18 per cent agreed that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like, even if this harms the environment.

**4.22** People feel strongly about the freedom to travel by plane: only 11 per cent disagreed with the statement about people being able to travel by plane as much as they like. However, the proportion disagreeing with these statements increases if this freedom is juxtapositioned with factors on the environmental effects of flying. Twenty-seven per cent of respondents disagreed that the price of a plane ticket should reflect the cost of damage to the environment and 28 per cent disagreed that people should be able to fly as much as they like even if new runways or terminals were required to enable this.

**4.23** Furthermore, 44 per cent of people disagreed that people should be able to fly as much as they like even if this damages the environment, meaning that more people were against this statement than in favour of it. The proportion of people disagreeing that direct flights are not important so long as they get to their destination was similar to the proportion agreeing (33 per cent) so there is no distinct public opinion on this issue.

### Chart 4.15: Attitudes towards air travel and the environment



Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatCen)  
 Unweighted base: 951 (all respondents, self completion, version A)

**4.24** The proportion agreeing that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like (62 per cent) is at its lowest since this question was first asked in 2003, when 79 per cent of people agreed with this statement.

**4.25** People living in households with children aged under 18 were less likely to agree that people should travel by plane as much as they want, even if this harms the environment: just 13 per cent compared to 20 per cent.

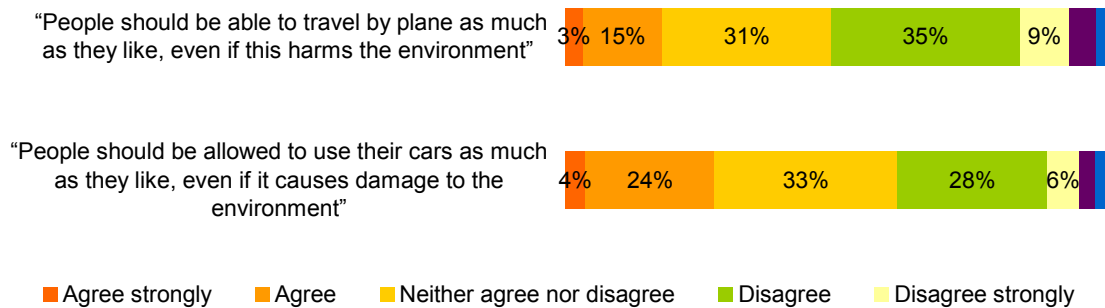
**4.26** Those who had travelled by air at least three times in the previous 12 months were more likely to say that they were not willing to reduce the amount they travel by plane (60 per cent) than those who had travelled by air once or twice (48 per cent) or not at all (13 per cent).

**4.27** As with other questions on exhaust fumes and the effect of transport on the environment, females were more concerned about the effect of air travel and were more likely to disagree that people should have the right to fly as much as they like, even if this requires new runways or harms the environment:

- 33 per cent of females disagreed that people should travel by plane as much as they like, even if new runways are needed compared to 24 per cent of men, and
- 48 per cent of females disagreed that people should fly as much as they like even if this harms the environment compared to 39 per cent of males.

**4.28** In paragraph 4.17 it was found that whilst there is no clear conclusion as to whether people are willing to reduce the amount they travel by car, they were marginally against reducing the amount they travel by plane. There was a five percentage point net majority agreeing that people should be able to use their cars as much as they like, even if it causes damage to the environment. That is, 28 per cent agreed with this statement and 35 per cent disagreed. However, 18 per cent agreed with the similar statement on air travel and 44 per cent disagreed. Thus, a 26 percentage point net majority disagreed with this statement, again indicating far less willingness to relinquish the freedom to fly.

**Chart 4.16: freedom to use car/ air travel with respect to environmental damage**



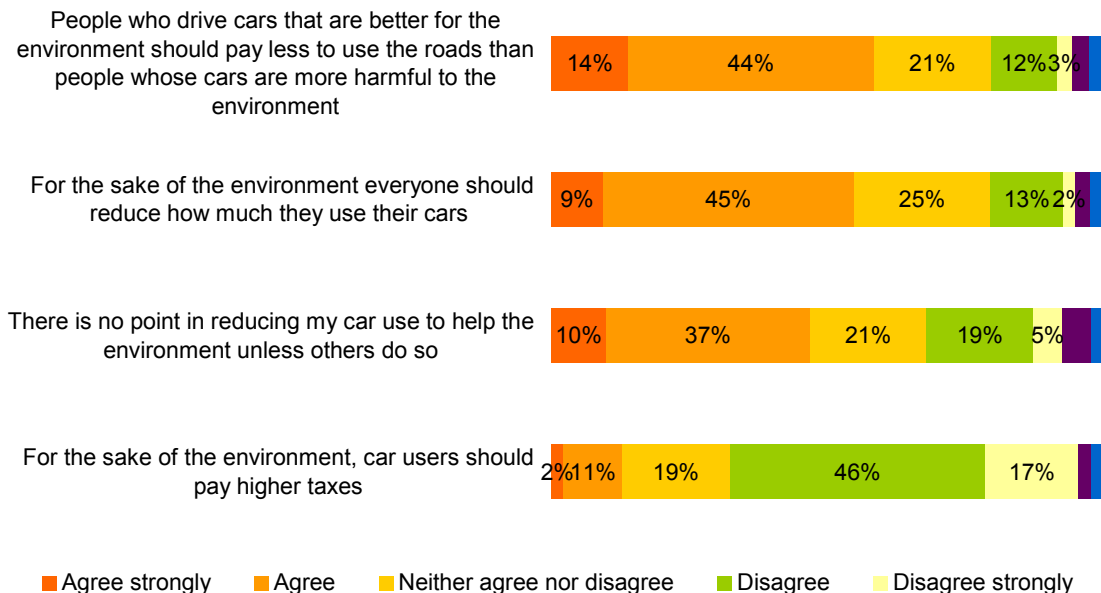
Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatGen)

## Car use and the environment

**4.29** Respondents were then asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with a range of statements about car use and the environment:

- 58 per cent of people agreed that people who drive cars that are better for the environment should pay less to use the roads than people whose cars are more harmful;
- 55 per cent agreed that for the sake of the environment, everyone should reduce how much they use their cars. However, 47 per cent agreed that there is no point them reducing their car use unless others do so. Cross analysis of these two questions indicates that 20 per cent of respondents disagreed that there is no use in reducing their car use unless others do **and** agreed that everyone should reduce their car use. One quarter of respondents agreed that everyone should reduce their car use **and** that it was only worth them reducing their car use if every one else did, and
- 13 per cent of respondents agreed that for the sake of the environment, car users should pay higher taxes. Sixty-three per cent of people disagreed with this statement. This contrasts sharply with the relatively low proportion disagreeing with the statement about incentivising the use of less harmful vehicles (15 per cent),

**Chart: 4.17 attitudes towards environmental transport policies**



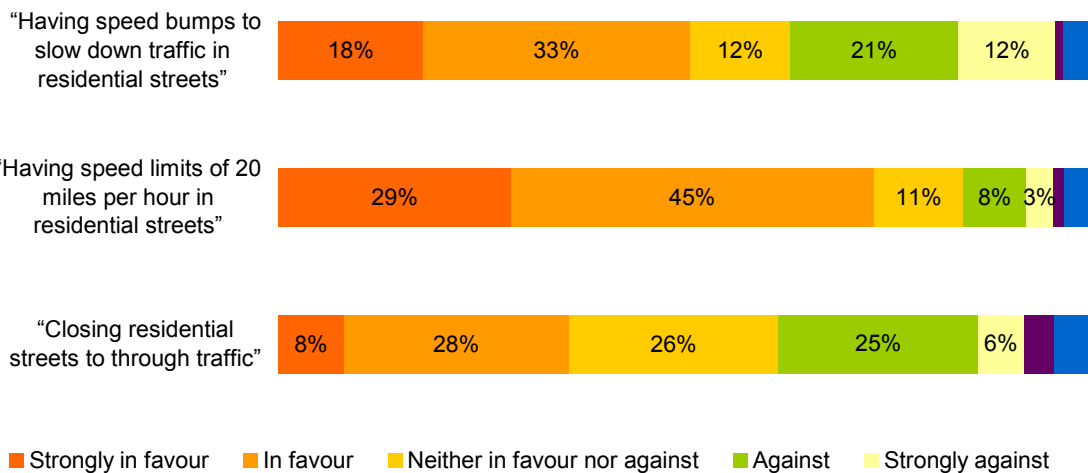
Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: 951 (all respondents, self completion, version A)

# 5. Road safety

## Residential streets

**5.1** Approximately half (51 per cent) of all respondents were in favour of having speed bumps to slow down traffic in residential streets; 73 per cent were in favour of 20 mile per hour speed limits in residential streets and 36 per cent were in favour of closing residential streets to through traffic. While the majority in favour of speed bumps and 20 mile speed limits outweighs the number of people against these measures (33 per cent and 11 per cent respectively), opinion on closing residential streets to through traffic is somewhat less favourable, with approximately one quarter (26 per cent) of respondents saying they were neither in favour of, or against this measure and 31 per cent declaring that they were against this.

**Chart 5.18: attitudes towards traffic calming measures on residential streets**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatCen)  
 Unweighted base: 950 (all respondents, self completion, version B)

**5.2** The proportion of people against speed limits of 20 miles per hour in residential streets fell from 15 per cent in 2010, to 11 per cent in 2011.

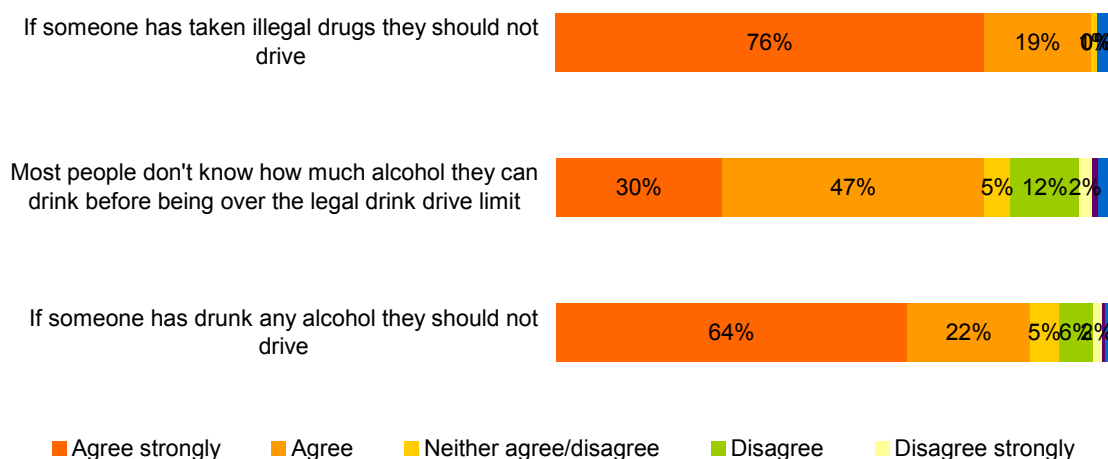


- 5.3** Those with a disability or condition that has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities were in stronger support of 20 miles per hour speed limits on residential streets: 43 per cent compared to 26 per cent of those without a disability or condition. Altogether, 81 per cent of those who had a disability or condition agreed or strongly agreed with 20 mile per hour speed limits compared to 72 per cent of those without a disability or condition.
- 5.4** Respondents who lived in a household with children under the age of 18 were more likely to agree that residential streets should have 20 miles per hour speed limits (79 per cent compared to 70 per cent without children aged under 18 present). A higher proportion of those with children also agreed with the use of speed bumps in residential streets to slow down traffic (64 per cent compared to 44 per cent of those in households with no children). Seventy-seven per cent of females were in favour of 20 miles per hour speed limits in residential streets (compared to 69 per cent of men) and 59 per cent favoured the use of speed bumps in residential streets to slow down traffic (compared to 41 per cent of males).
- 5.5** Drivers disagreed with all three statements about the use of traffic calming measures on residential streets more than non-drivers:
- 34 per cent of drivers and 21 per cent of non-drivers were against the closing of residential streets to through traffic;
  - 14 per cent of drivers and five per cent of non-drivers were against speed limits of 20 miles per hour on residential streets, and
  - 38 per cent of drivers and 18 per cent of non-drivers were against the use of speed bumps to slow traffic in residential streets.

## Drink and drug driving

**5.6** In 2011, a new question was added to the British Social Attitudes survey seeking opinions on the whether those who have taken illegal drugs should drive. Nearly everybody agreed that those who had taken illegal drugs should not drive (96 per cent). In hindsight this question perhaps also asks implicitly whether people should take illegal drugs. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that just one per cent of respondents disagreed with this statement. Some 86 per cent of respondents agreed that someone should not drive if they have drunk any alcohol and 77 per cent agreed that most people don't know how much alcohol they can drink before being over the drink drive limit.

**Chart 5.19: attitudes towards drink and drug driving**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatCen)  
Unweighted base: 950 (all respondents, self completion, version B)

**5.7** Respondents with a disability were more likely to strongly agree that if someone has drunk any alcohol they should not drive (77 per cent) compared to those without a disability (61 per cent). Overall, 91 per cent of those with a disability agreed or strongly agreed that people should not drive if they have drunk any alcohol compared to 85 per cent of those without a disability.

**5.8** Respondents living with children under the age of 18 were more likely to agree that someone should not drive if they have drunk any alcohol (90 per cent compared to 84 per cent of those without children). Females were also more likely than males to agree that someone who has drunk any alcohol should not drive (89 per cent compared to 82 per cent of men).

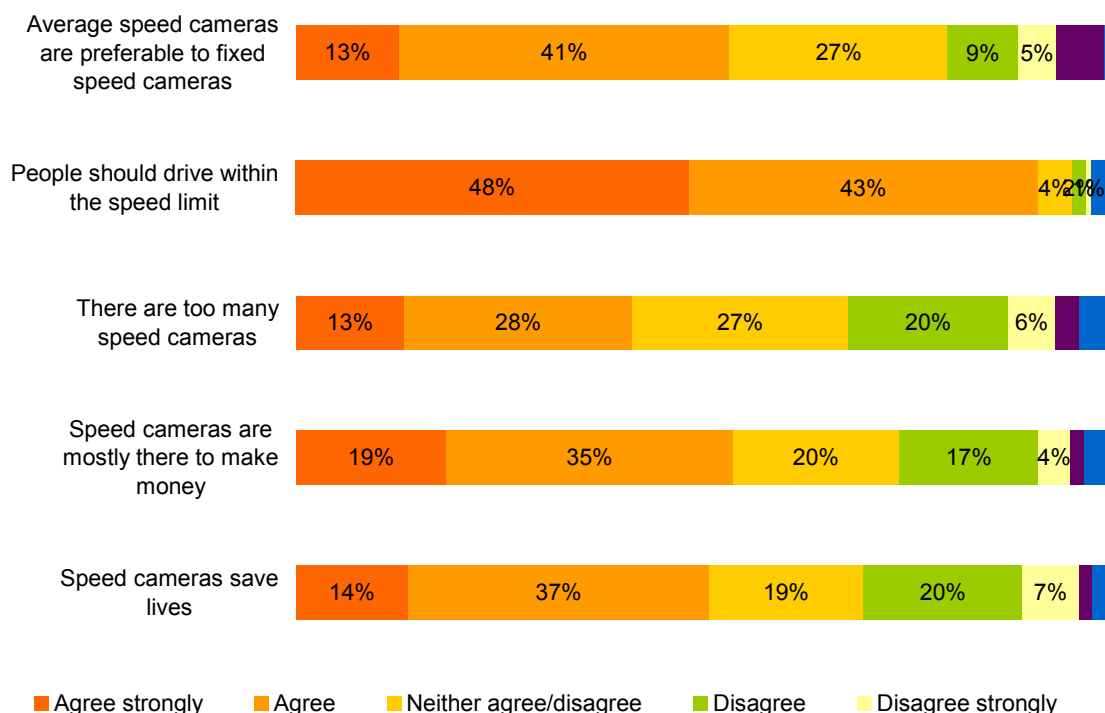
**5.9** Ninety-four per cent of non-drivers agreed that if someone has drunk any alcohol they should not drive compared to 82 per cent of drivers.

## Speed cameras

**5.10** Whilst most people (91 per cent) agreed that people should drive within the speed limit, they were less favourable about the use of speed cameras:

- 54 per cent feel they are only there to make money;
- 51 per cent agreed they save lives;
- 41 per cent believe there are too many speed cameras.

**Chart 5.20: attitudes towards speeding and speed cameras**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatCen)  
 Unweighted base: 930 (all respondents, self completion, version C)  
 Note: values not displayed for 'can't choose' and 'not answered' categories

**5.11** Despite the lower levels of support for speed cameras, support for people driving within the speed limit has polarised: the proportion neither disagreeing or agreeing with this statement had fallen from eight per cent in 2010 to four per cent in 2012 and the proportion agreeing fell from 49 per cent to 43 per cent whilst the proportion who said they 'strongly agree' with this statement rose from 41 per cent to 48 per cent, reversing

a slight decline in trends since the question was first asked in 2005. The proportion of people disagreeing 'strongly' that there are too many speed cameras also rose marginally from two per cent to six per cent, and the proportion. There was also a marginal shift between the proportion disagreeing to the proportion disagreeing strongly that speed cameras are only there to make money.

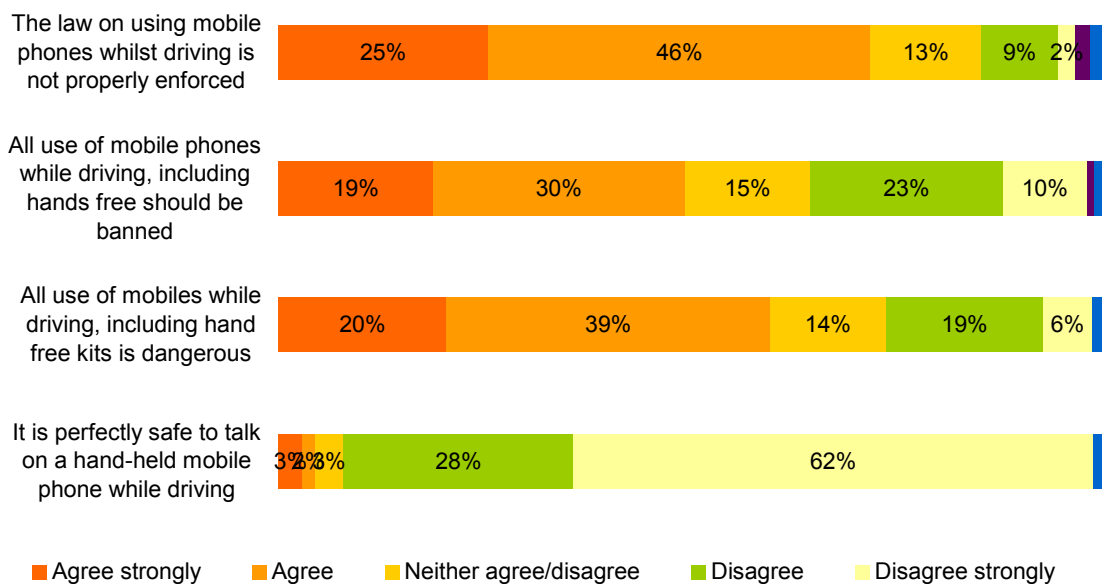
- 5.12** Females were more likely to agree that speed cameras save lives, less likely to agree that there are too many speed cameras or that they are only there to make money:
- 56 per cent of females agreed that speed cameras save lives compared to 45 per cent of men;
  - 48 per cent of females agreed that speed cameras are mostly there to make money (60 per cent of male agreed with this statement), and
  - 34 per cent of females said there were too many speed cameras compared to 49 per cent of men.
- 5.13** Non-drivers were more likely to agree that speed cameras save lives (63 per cent compared to 46 per cent of drivers), less likely to agree that speed cameras are mostly there to make money (34 per cent compared to 61 per cent of drivers) and less likely to agree that there are too many speed cameras (24 per cent compared to 48 per cent of drivers).
- 5.14** In 2011, a new question was asked of respondents; asking them whether average speed cameras were preferable to fixed speed cameras. In case respondents were unclear as to the difference to the two systems, the introduction to this question explained that 'average speed cameras measure speed based on the time taken to travel distance between two camera sites' whereas 'fixed speed cameras measure speed at a single site'. Approximately half of all respondents (53 per cent) agreed that average speed cameras were preferable, 27 per cent said they neither agreed nor disagreed and 13 per cent disagreed with the statement.

## Mobile phones

**5.15** When asked whether they agreed with a range of statements about driving and using mobile phones:

- 90 per cent of respondents disagreed that it was perfectly safe to talk on a hand held phone whilst driving;
- 71 per cent felt that the law on using mobile phone whilst driving is not properly enforced;
- 59 per cent agreed that the use of all mobile phones - including hands free kit is dangerous and
- 49 per cent believed that all use of mobile phones - including hands free kit - should be banned.

**Chart 5.21: attitudes towards the use of mobile phones when driving**



Source: British Social Attitudes survey (NatCen)

Unweighted base: 930 (all respondents, self completion, version C)

Note: values not displayed for 'can't choose' and 'not answered' categories

**5.16** Non-drivers were more inclined to agree that all use of mobile phones while driving is dangerous: 65 per cent of non-drivers agree with this statement compared to 57 per cent of drivers.

**5.17** Sixty-five per cent of females agreed that all use of mobile phones whilst driving is dangerous (compared to 53 per cent of men) and 54 per cent of females said that use of mobile phones whilst driving should be banned (compared to 44 per cent of men).

# Annex A: sample profile

Gender	Male	49%
	Female	51%
Age of respondent	18-24	12%
	25-34	17%
	35-44	18%
	45-54	17%
	55-59	7%
	60-64	8%
	65+	21%
Presence of children in HH (<18)	No children	69%
	Children	31%
Household pre-tax income quartiles	Less than £1,200 p.m.	19%
	£1,201 - 2,200 p.m.	17%
	£2,201 - 3,700 p.m.	19%
	£3,701 or more p.m.	20%
	Refused information	14%
	Don't know	11%
Drives a car at all these days	Yes	69%
	No	31%
Economic activity	In full-time education/training	4%
	In work, waiting to take up work	56%
	Unemployed	6%
	Retired	22%
	Other	12%

Has condition/disability that has substantial adverse effect on ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities	No	84%
	Yes	16%
Highest educational qual obtained	Degree	20%
	Higher educ below degree	10%
	A level or equiv	16%
	O level or equiv	17%
	CSE or equiv	6%
	Foreign or other	2%
	No qualification	19%
	DK/Refusal/NA	9%
Cyclist (has access to cycle and cycled in last 12 months)	Not cyclist	69%
	Cyclist	31%
Air travel in last 12 months	Not travelled by air	52%
	Has travelled by air once or twice	33%
	Has travelled by air at least three times	15%
View on climate change and causes	Don't believe climate change is taking place	7%
	Believes climate change is taking place, but not as a result of human actions	16%
	Believes that climate change is taking place and is, at least partly, a result of human actions	76%
	Don't know	2%

NS-SEC analytic classes	Managerial & professional occups	35%
	Intermediate occupations	13%
	Employers in small org; own account workers	8%
	Lower supervisory & technical occupations	9%
	Semi-routine & routine occupations	29%
	Not classifiable	1%
	Not asked (off route)	5%
Total number of respondents		3,311