



Department for Transport

# Local Area Walking and Cycling Statistics: England, 2014/15

The percentage of people walking frequently in England has increased significantly for a second consecutive year.

## About this release

This Statistical Release presents information on walking and cycling by adults (aged 16 and over) in England for local authorities and regions for the year ending mid-October 2015.

The statistics in this release are based on results from the Active People Survey (APS9), an annual telephone survey administered by Sport England.

Data on cycling rates are available on a consistent basis from the survey for 5 years and 3 years for walking rates.

## In this publication

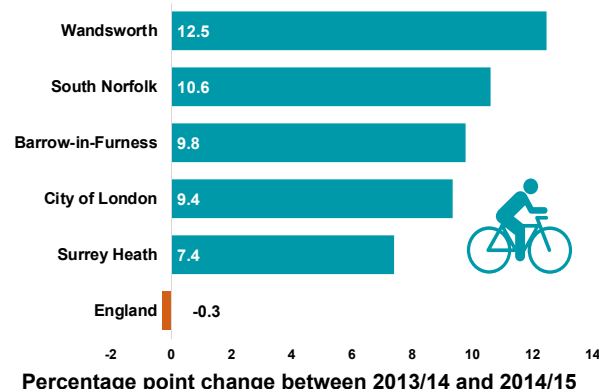
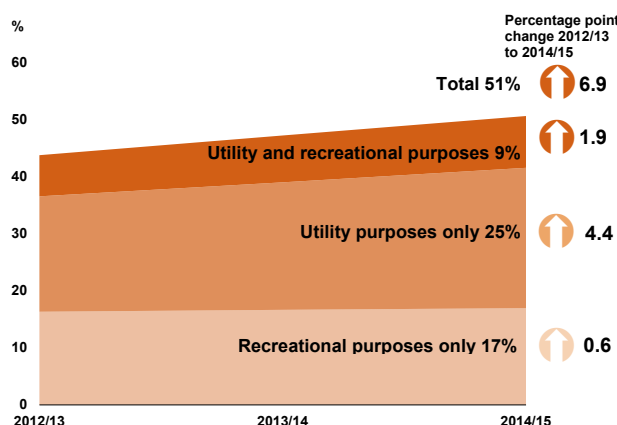
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The proportion of adults walking at least once, three and five times a week increased by 3.3, 7.1 and 6.9 percentage points since 2012/13.

These changes were largely driven by the increase in people walking for utility purposes. For example, adults walking at least five times a week for utility purposes increased by 4.4 percentage points since 2012/13.

15% of adults in England cycled at least once a month in 2014/15, similar to previous years. Some local authorities had large annual increases including Wandsworth, South Norfolk and Barrow-in-Furness.

% walk at least:	2014/15:	% point change since 2012/13
1x a month	86.3	0.0
1x a week	80.6	3.3
3x a week	61.8	7.1
5x a week	50.6	6.9



## What we can conclude

There has been a statistically significant increase in the % of people reporting they are walking frequently. There has been no statistically significant change in reported cycling prevalence in England overall but there is variation amongst local authorities.

## What we can't conclude

We cannot be certain of the reasons behind any changes in reported walking or cycling levels at national or local authority level, or if what respondents report translates into their actual walking and cycling behaviour.

# Prevalence of walking and cycling

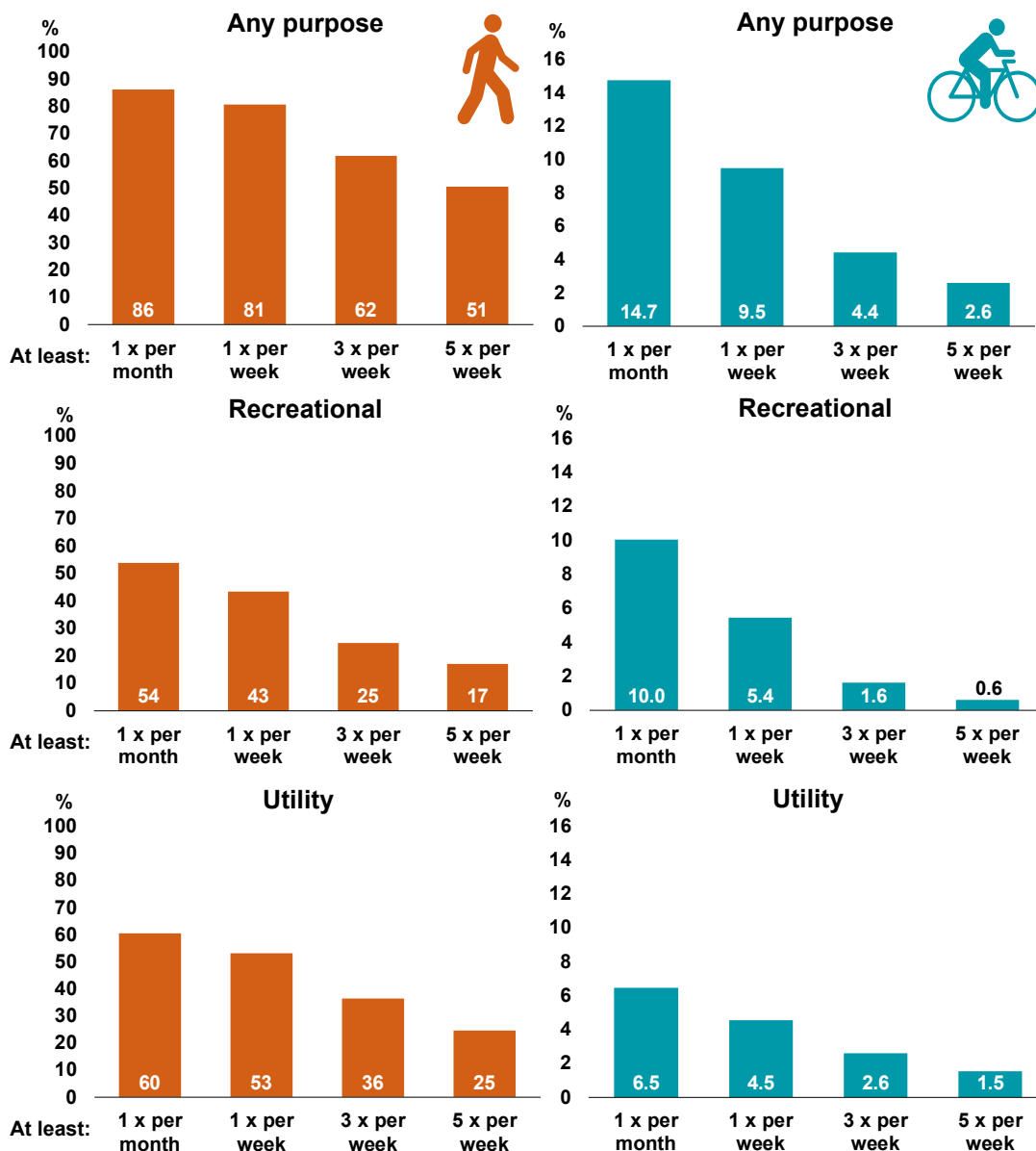
## Walking

86% of adults in England walk at least once per month for any purpose, which is unchanged from 2013/14 and equivalent to 38.3 million adults<sup>1</sup>. The proportion who walk for recreation (54%) is slightly lower than the proportion who walk for utility purposes (60%). 17% of adults reported having a disability which limits their ability to walk or cycle.

## Cycling

Cycling prevalence is considerably lower than walking prevalence, with 15% of adults cycling at least once per month for any purpose. This is equivalent to about 6.5 million people<sup>1</sup>.

**Chart 1: Percentage of residents walking and cycling at different frequencies, by purpose: England 2014/15 (table [CW0103](#))**



## Active People Survey

Figures in this release are based on the Active People Survey (APS) administered by [Sport England](#) unless otherwise stated. The survey consists of 165,000 respondents aged 16 and over (defined here as adults) in England. For further details see the 'Background Information' section.

### Recreation purposes

For the pleasure or value of the activity, or enjoyment of the surroundings.

### Utility purposes

Getting from A to B, which might be commuting, but would also include purposes such as shopping, going to the library, college or hospital, or visiting friends.

### Utility walking and cycling

The APS asks respondents how many days they have walked in the past 4 weeks, and how many of these days they walked for recreational purposes. Walking for utility purposes is calculated by subtracting days walked recreationally from total days walked. For example if a respondent said they have walked for 20 days in the past 4 weeks but no recreational walking days, then it is assumed the respondent walked for utility purposes for 20 days (a frequency of "at least 5 times a week"). If the respondent walked for 20 days, 15 of which were recreational, then it is assumed the other 5 days involved utility walking. This respondent walked 5 times a week with a combination of recreational and utility walking.

<sup>1</sup> Based on [ONS 2015 Mid Year Estimates](#) for ages 16+

## Changes in walking prevalence over time

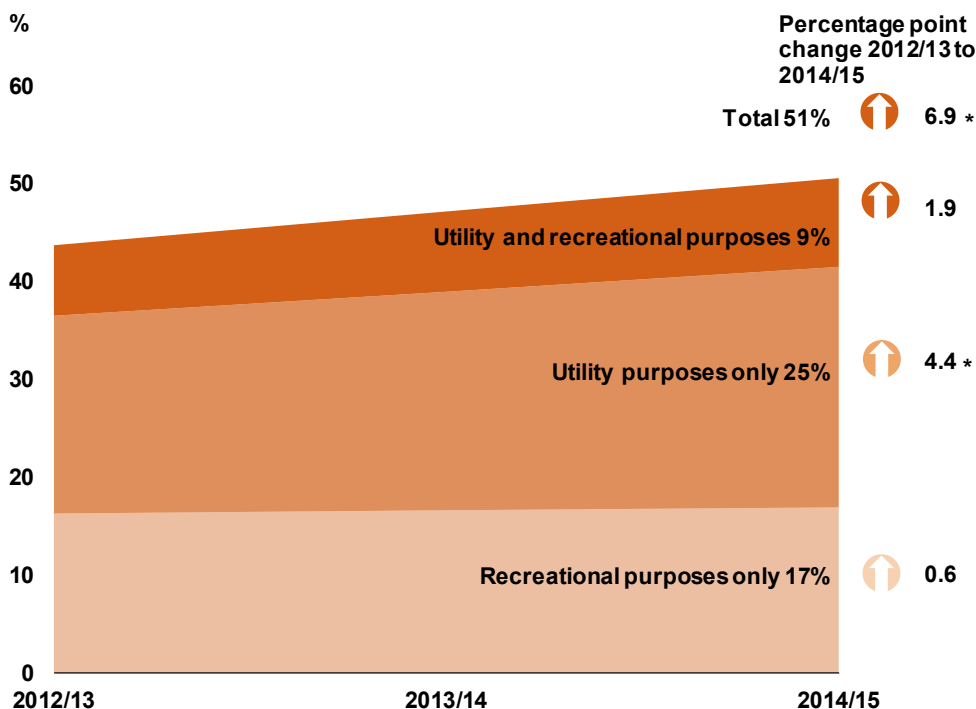
### Walking

The proportion of people walking at least once a month in England has remained at 86% for the past three years. However the proportion of people walking at least once a week, 3 times a week and 5 times a week have all experienced statistically significant increases for 2 consecutive years. This suggests that there is no change in the percentage of people that walk, but that people are walking more frequently.

% walk at least:	2012/13:	2013/14:	2014/15:	% point change since 2012/13:	
1x a month	86.3	86.3	86.3	0.0	→
1x a week	77.3	78.9	80.6	3.3*	↑
3x a week	54.7	57.9	61.8	7.1*	↑
5x a week	43.8	47.2	50.6	6.9*	↑

These increases have largely been driven by increases in walking for utility purposes. For example, the proportion of people walking at least 5 times a week for utility purposes has increased significantly by 4.4 percentage points since 2012/13 whereas the proportion walking for recreational purposes increased by 0.6 percentage points.

**Chart 2: Percentage of adults walking at least 5 times a week for each purpose: England 2014/15 (table [CW0105](#))**



### Detailed statistics

Detailed statistics on walking, including at local authority level, can be found in table [CW0105](#).

### Definitions

#### Significant

The size of the value is sufficient that we can be highly confident that the measure reflects the whole population, and is not just a random outcome (see Strengths and Weaknesses of the Data). A 95% confidence threshold was used, meaning if we ran the same-sized sample 100 times, in 95 cases we would correctly ascribe the change as large enough to count as statistically significant in the population.

In the publication, changes that are statistically significant are marked with an asterisk (\*).

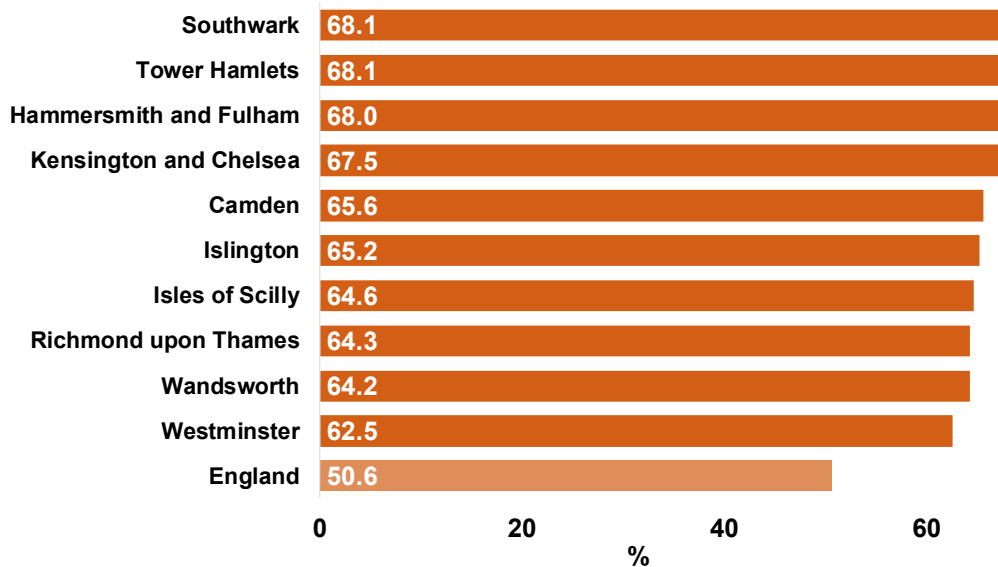
#### Time Series

We have three years of comparable data for walking and 5 years of comparable data for cycling (albeit only 3 years of data for recreational and utility cycling). The APS does have walking and cycling questions for earlier years, however the questions are different and therefore the data are not directly comparable with each other.

### Highest walking prevalence

Nine out of the top 10 authorities with the highest percentage of adults walking at least five times a week were London authorities. Overall prevalence in England was 51%.

**Chart 3: Percentage of adults walking at least 5 times a week: top 10 local authorities, England, 2014/15 (table [CW0105](#))**



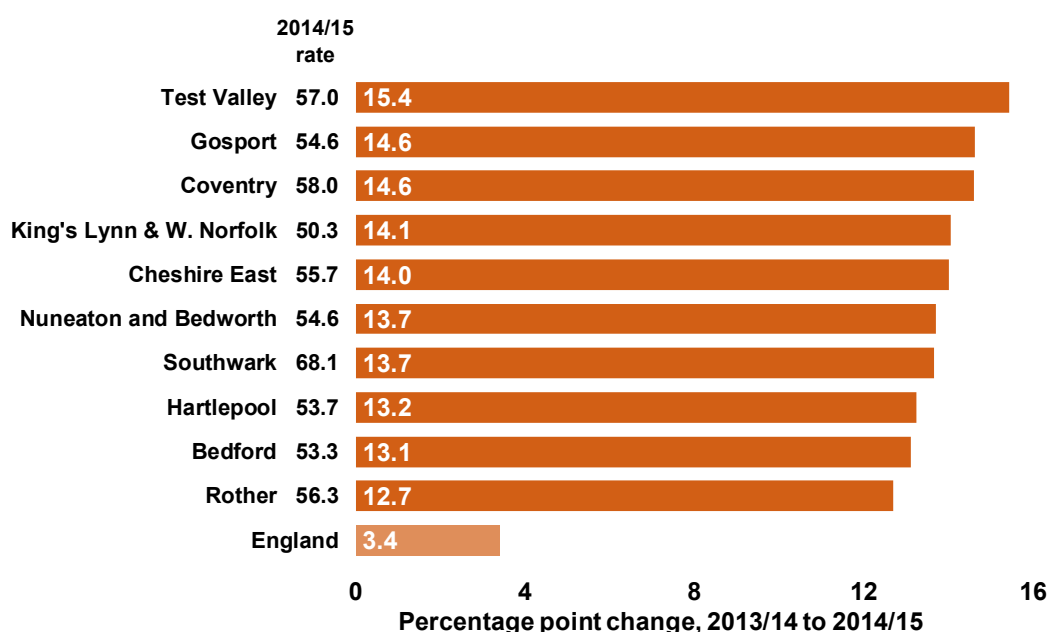
#### Detailed statistics

Detailed statistics on walking, including at local authority level, can be found in table [CW0105](#).

### Largest increases

Test Valley, Gosport and Coventry had the highest annual increases in the percentage of adults walking at least 5 times a week with increases of more than 14%. The overall annual increase in England was 3.4%.

**Chart 4: 10 local authorities with largest increases in percentage of adults walking at least 5 times a week: England, 2013/14 to 2014/15 (table [CW0105](#))**

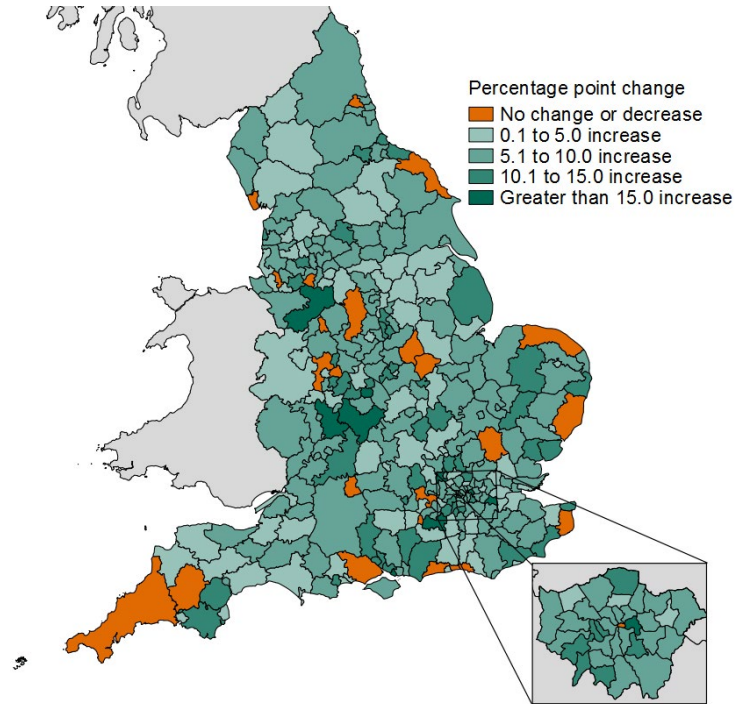


\* All changes in the chart are statistically significant

### Changes across local authorities

This increase in frequent walking has occurred across most local authorities in England. The proportion of residents walking at least 5 times a week has increased in 301 of 326 authorities since 2012/13 as can be seen in Map 1. It is also noticeable that among authorities where there have been decreases, a number are coastal authorities. It is unknown whether this is coincidental or whether there are genuine reasons behind this, or what those reasons would be if so.

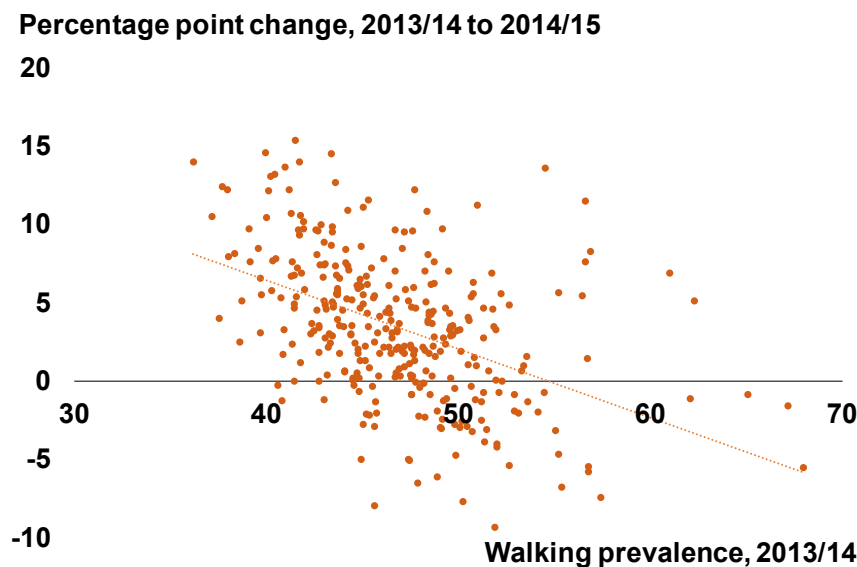
**Map 1: Change between 2012/13 and 2014/15 in proportion of adults walking at least 5 times a week: local authorities in England**



\* Not all changes are statistically significant. See Table [CW0105](#) for more detail.

The increase in frequent walking appears to be driven in part by authorities that in the previous year had relatively lower walking levels compared to other authorities. Chart 5 shows that in general the lower the percentage of adults walking at least 5 times a week in 2013/14, the higher percentage point increase they experienced in 2014/15. This pattern is just a general indication and does not apply to every individual local authority.

**Chart 5: Percentage of adults walking at least 5 times a week in 2013/14 and the percentage point change to 2014/15: local authorities in England**



**Scatter chart**

Each dot is a local authority. The axes compare the % walking at least 5x a week in 2013/14 and the percentage point change to 2014/15.

The trend line shows the average relationship between these. Authorities with relatively lower percentages of residents walking 5x a week in 2013/14 tended to have higher percentage point increases into 2014/15.

Because they are a significant outlier, The Isles of Scilly were excluded from the analysis.

-15 \* Not all changes are statistically significant. See Table [CW0105](#) for more detail.

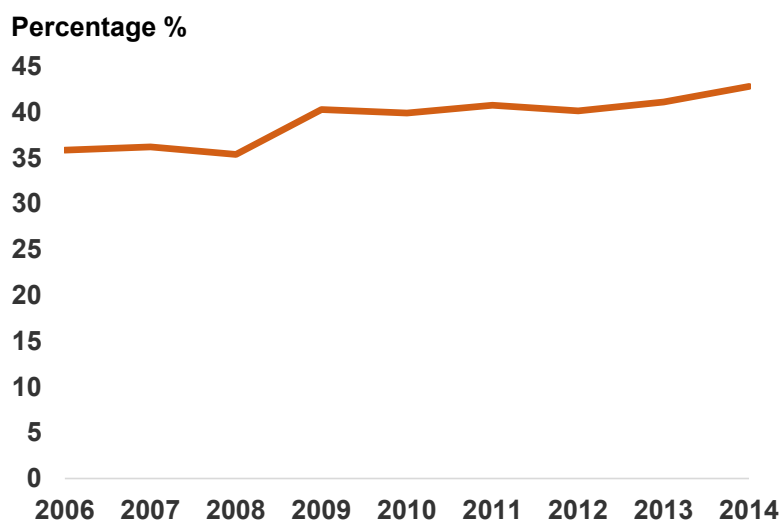
### Possible reasons for increases in frequent walking

There are many reasons that could have caused the increases in frequent walking in England, although we cannot be sure what factors are having an effect and if so how much of an effect they are having. Some possible reasons could include better weather, changes in the employment rate and initiatives taken by public and private organisations to encourage walking. The total number of hours of sunshine has increased during a similar time period in which frequent walking has increased and it could be that people are more likely to walk on sunnier days. The employment rate has also increased, which may result in more people walking to work. However we do not know whether these patterns are related or purely coincidental.

### Long term trend

With only 3 years of comparable APS data available, it is not possible to tell if the increases in frequent walking are part of a long term trend. The National Travel Survey does have a longer time series and indicates that whilst the overall number of walking trips are decreasing, the percentage of people walking frequently for longer periods (defined as at least 20 minutes) has generally been increasing since 2008.

**Chart 6: Percentage of people (aged 2+) who walked for at least 20 minutes at least 3 times a week England 2006-2014**



The NTS is reporting an overall decrease in walking trips (and some increase in longer, frequent walking trips as demonstrated above), whilst the APS reports an increase in frequent walking. The reasons for this are not clear, but it may be that the methodological differences result in the same walking behaviours being recorded differently, or that instead they are capturing different kinds of walking behaviours. In general, the NTS and APS are not directly comparable due to their differences in methodologies and how walking is defined and measured.

### Data sources

#### Sunshine

Total hours sunshine for the months October-September for each year was calculated from data from the [Met Office](#).

#### Employment rate

Employment rates are available from [ONS](#).

#### National Travel Survey

Data for long walks (more than 20 minutes) is taken from [Table NTS0312](#).

One of the most notable differences between the NTS and the APS is that the NTS asks respondents to record in a diary how many walking trips they make, whereas the APS asks in a telephone survey retrospectively how many days the respondent has walked in the last 4 weeks. This means someone could undertake more than one walking trip in a day and this would be recorded differently in the NTS and APS. The methodological difference (keeping a diary vs memory recall) may also impact how accurately respondents report their walking behaviour.

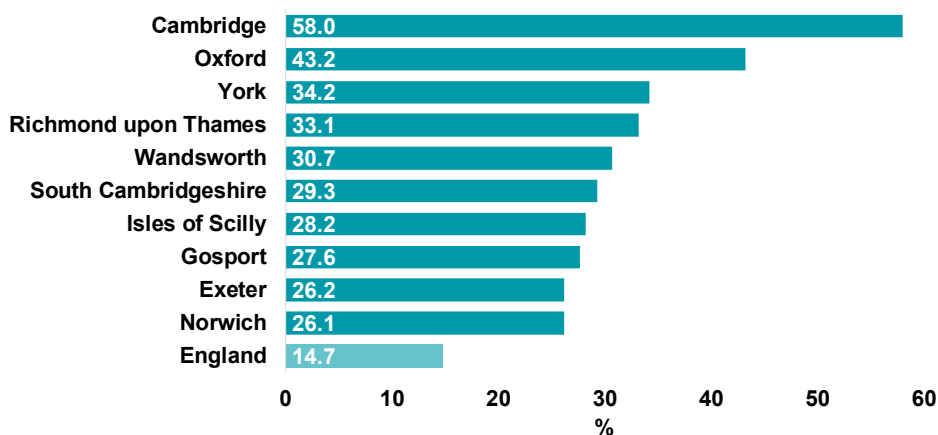
## Cycling prevalence in local authorities

### Cycling

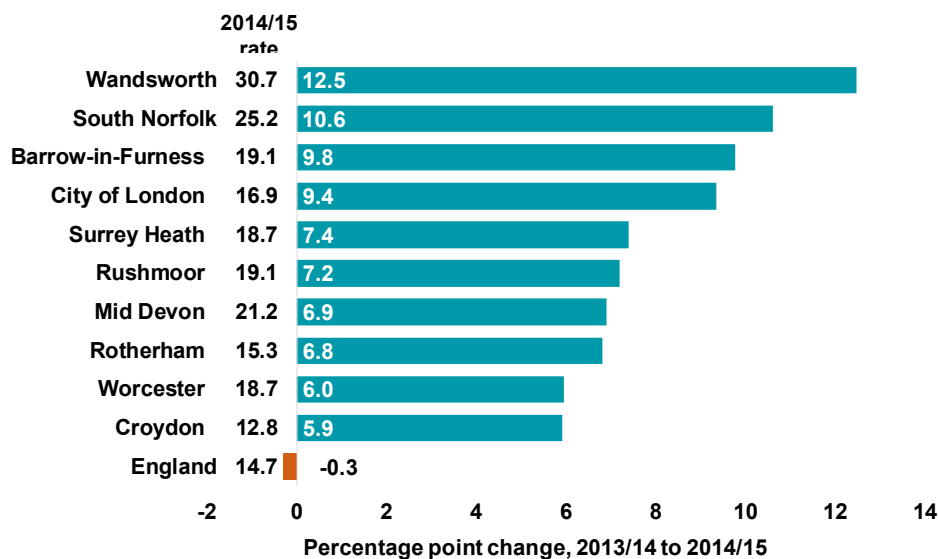
In England the proportion of the population who cycled at least once per month has remained at around 15%. Cycling rates at higher frequency levels have also had no significant change.

However, cycling rates (at least once a month) vary greatly between authorities, ranging from 5% in Burnley to 43% in Oxford and 58% in Cambridge. Cambridge and Oxford have high student populations and students cycle more frequently than other groups. This may partly explain why these local authorities have higher cycling rates.

**Chart 7: Percentage of adults cycling at least once a month: top 10 local authorities, England, 2014/15 (table [CW0104](#))**



Wandsworth had the highest annual cycling increase in England in 2014/15, increasing from 18% to 31%, followed by South Norfolk and Barrow-in-Furness.



**Chart 8: 10 local authorities with largest increases in percentage of adults cycling at least once a month: England, 2013/14 to 2014/15 (table [CW0104](#))**

### Detailed statistics

Detailed statistics on cycling, including at local authority level, can be found in table [CW0104](#).

### Cycling prevalence

Since cycling prevalence is relatively low, it is best to use figures for those who cycle at least once per month, to increase the reliability of the results. In England as a whole, the rate has remained at around 15% and has done so since 2010/11.

### Students

As shown in table [CW0203](#), 22% of students report cycling at least once per month, more than any other NS-SEC group. Census data from [NOMIS](#) reveals that students make up 27% and 28% of the Cambridge and Oxford populations respectively.

### Demographics

Detailed statistics for different demographics can be found in tables [CW0203](#).

\* All changes in the chart are statistically significant except England and City of London

## Time spent walking and cycling

About 14.7% of the population cycled at least once a month. About 3.4% of the population usually cycled for less than half an hour, 4.1% usually cycled for between 30 minutes and 1 hour, and a further 6.8% usually cycled for one hour or more. Of those people walking or cycling for more than half an hour, a considerable majority do so for recreational purposes.

Chart 9: Time usually spent cycling: England 2014/15 (table [CW0104](#))

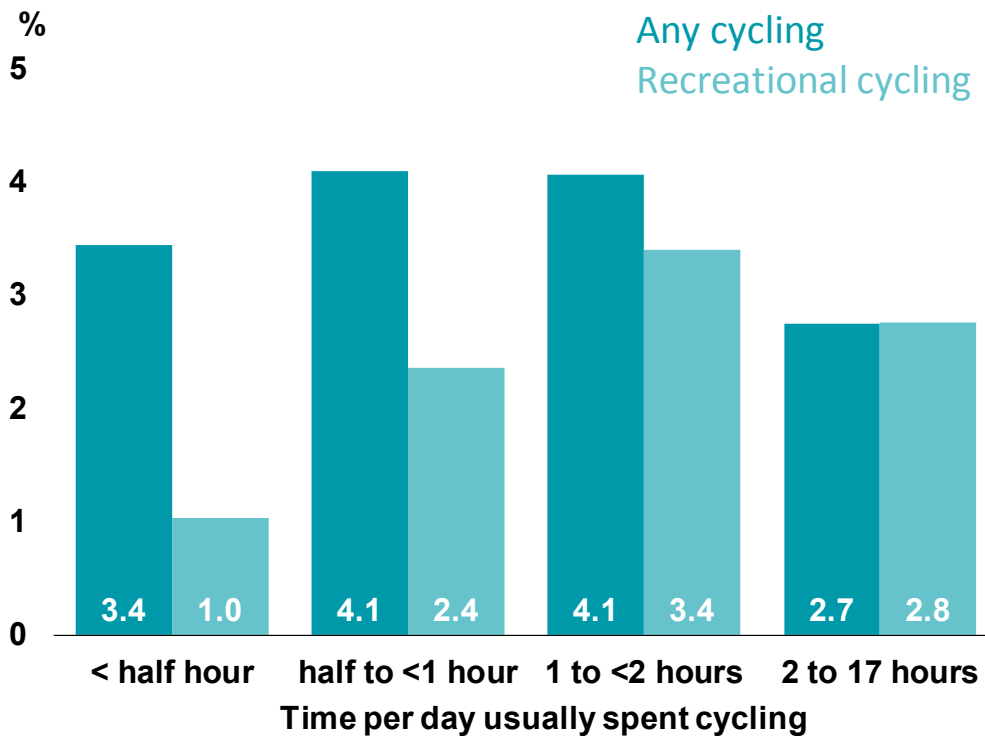
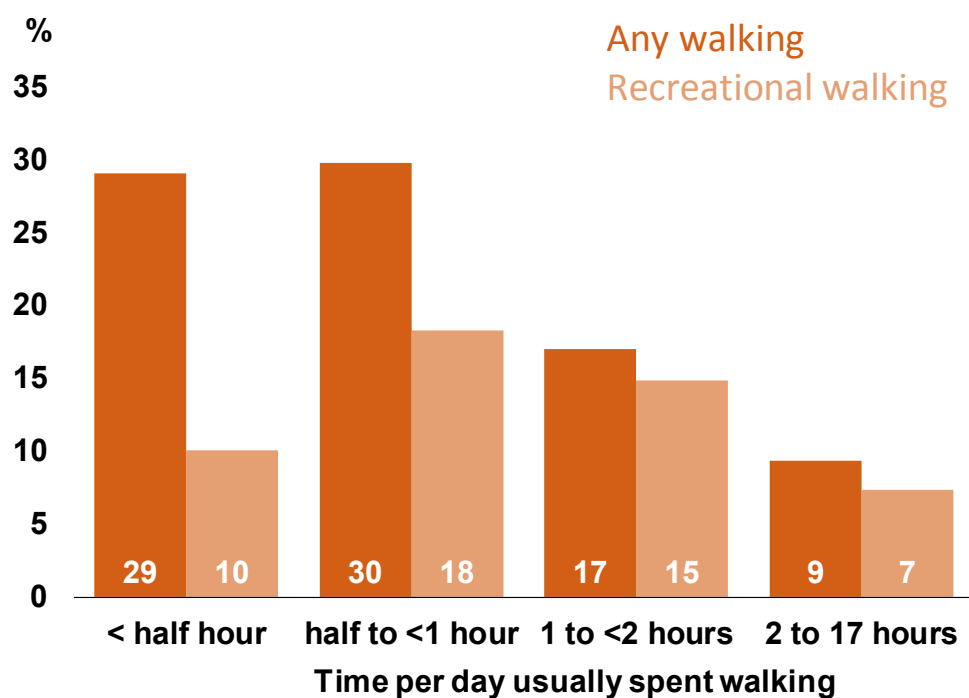


Chart 10: Time usually spent walking: England, 2014/15 (table [CW0105](#))



### Detailed statistics

Detailed statistics on time usually spent walking and cycling, including at local authority level, can be found in tables [CW0104](#) and [CW0105](#).

### Definition

Time usually spent is not the same as average time. For example if someone cycled for half an hour each weekday but for 2 hours during weekends, then usual time would be half an hour.

Time usually spent walking/cycling for recreation is available from the Active People Survey, but not the time spent for utility purposes

A small number of people did not state how long they usually walked or cycled for, which is why the figures do not add up to the proportions who walked/cycled at least once a month (86.3% and 14.7%).

### Distance

The APS does not ask respondents how far they travel, but according to the National Travel Survey there has been a long term increase in the distance people cycle, up 26% in 2014 compared to 1995/7. However for walking, there has been a 9% decrease in the distance travelled over the same time period.

### Further statistics

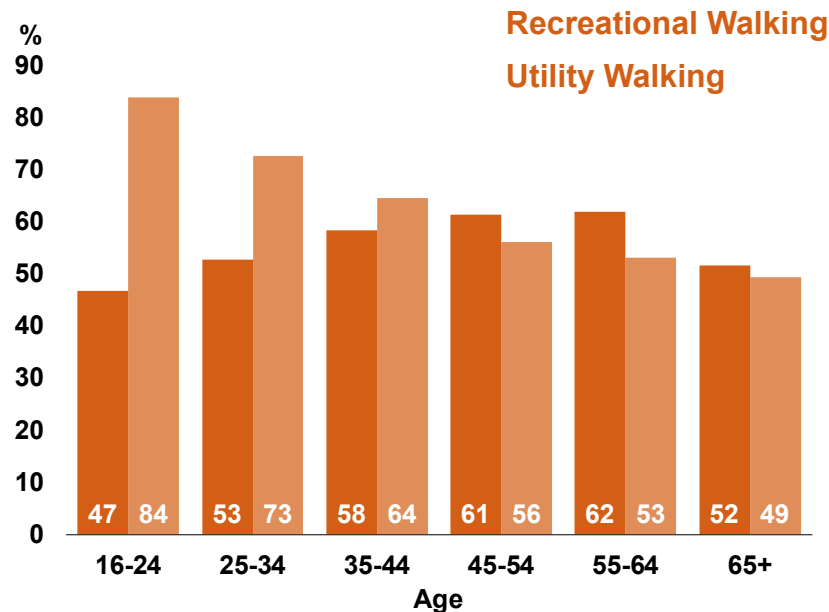
Further statistics on distance travelled when walking and cycling are available from the [National Travel Survey](#).



## Walking

There are clear age differences depending on whether people walk for recreation or utility. For utility purposes, walking prevalence is highest among the youngest adults and declines steadily with age. Prevalence of walking for recreational purposes, however, tends to increase with age up to the 55-64 age group before declining afterwards. These patterns hold for both general and frequent walking (at least once per month, and at least 5 times per week).

**Chart 11: Percentage of adults recreational and utility walking at least once a month, by age: England, 2014/15 (table [CW0203](#))**



### Definitions

#### Recreation purposes

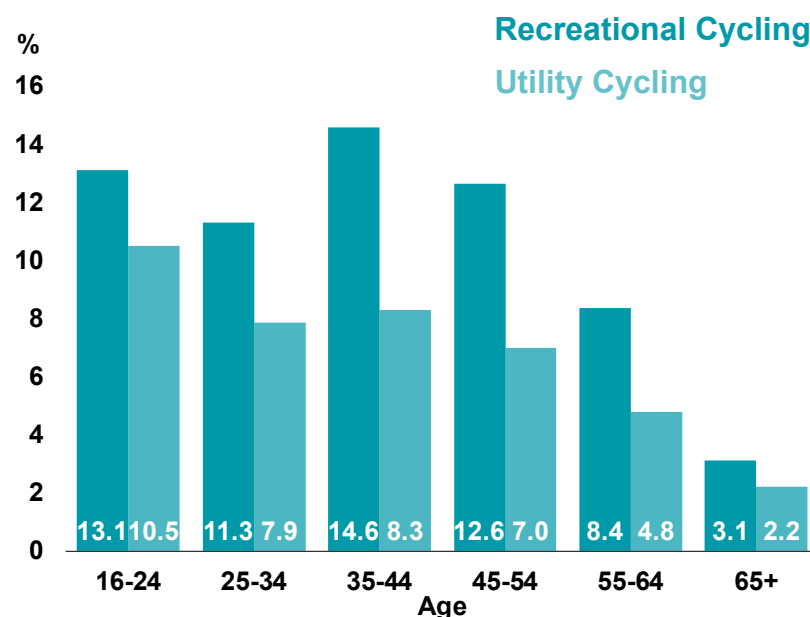
For the pleasure or value of the activity, or enjoyment of the surroundings.

#### Utility purposes:

Getting from A to B, which might be commuting, but would also include purposes such as shopping, going to the library, college or hospital, or visiting friends.

## Cycling

Cycling shows a different pattern by age and purpose from walking. Firstly, among cyclists generally, recreational cycling is more prevalent than utility cycling. For both purposes, though, there is a decline in prevalence between 16-24 and 25-34, followed by a rise in the 35-44 age group. Cycling prevalence then steadily declines with age from that group onwards.

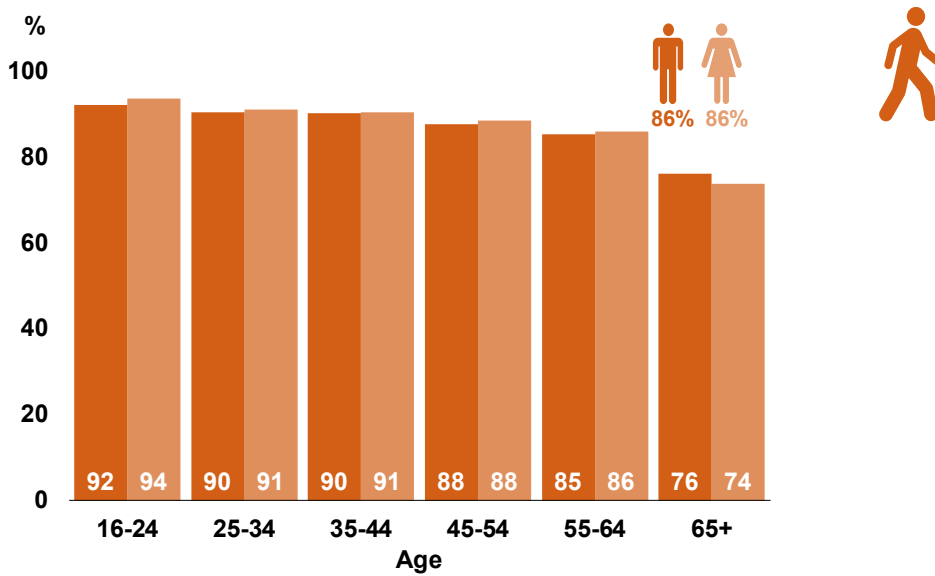


**Chart 12: Percentage of adults recreational and utility cycling at least once a month, by age: England, 2014/15 (table [CW0203](#))**

## Walking

Walking levels between men and women tend to be quite similar at all ages. On average, both 86% of men and women walk at least once per month. Walking levels between age groups are also similar although they do decline gradually with age.

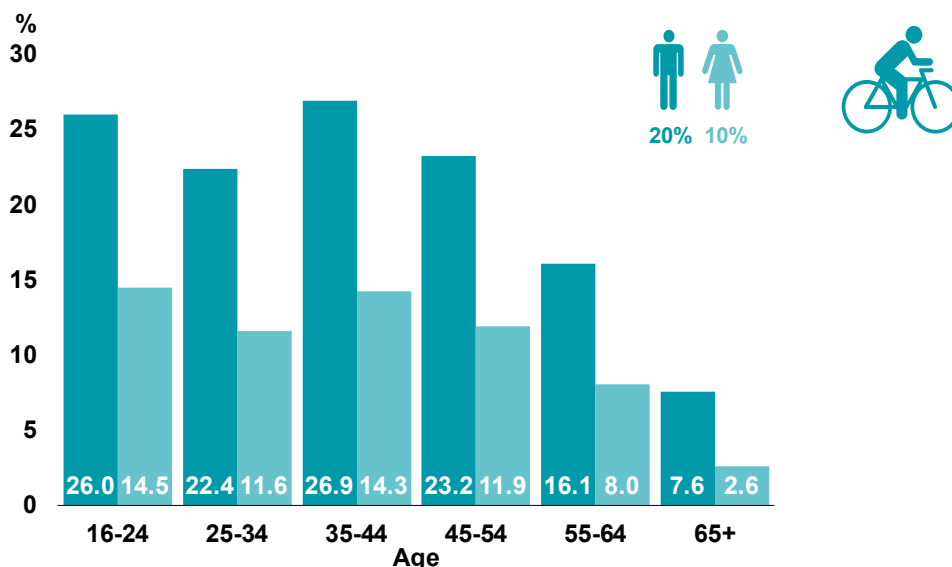
**Chart 13: Percentage of adults walking at least once a month for any purpose, by age and gender: England, 2014/15**



## Cycling

There is a much greater difference between men and women and across age groups for cycling. Cycling levels peak between ages 35-44 before declining thereafter. A lower proportion of women cycle than men in all age groups. Overall, 20% of men cycle compared to 10% of women.

**Chart 14: Percentage of adults cycling at least once a month for any purpose, by age and gender: England, 2014/15**



## Urban and Rural Areas

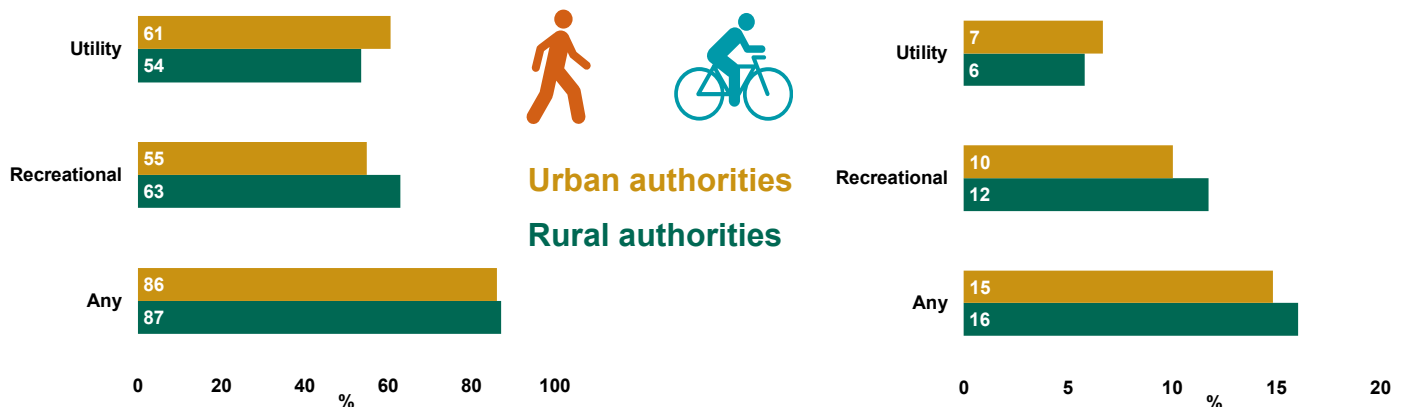
Walking and cycling for recreational purposes is more prevalent in rural areas, but more prevalent in urban areas for utility purposes. For walking, these two tendencies cancel each other out, so that there is not any noticeable overall difference in prevalence between urban and rural areas. However overall cycling prevalence levels are higher in rural authorities.

### Urban and rural classifications

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs 2011 Rural-Urban Classification of local authority districts and other high level geographies can be found [here](#).

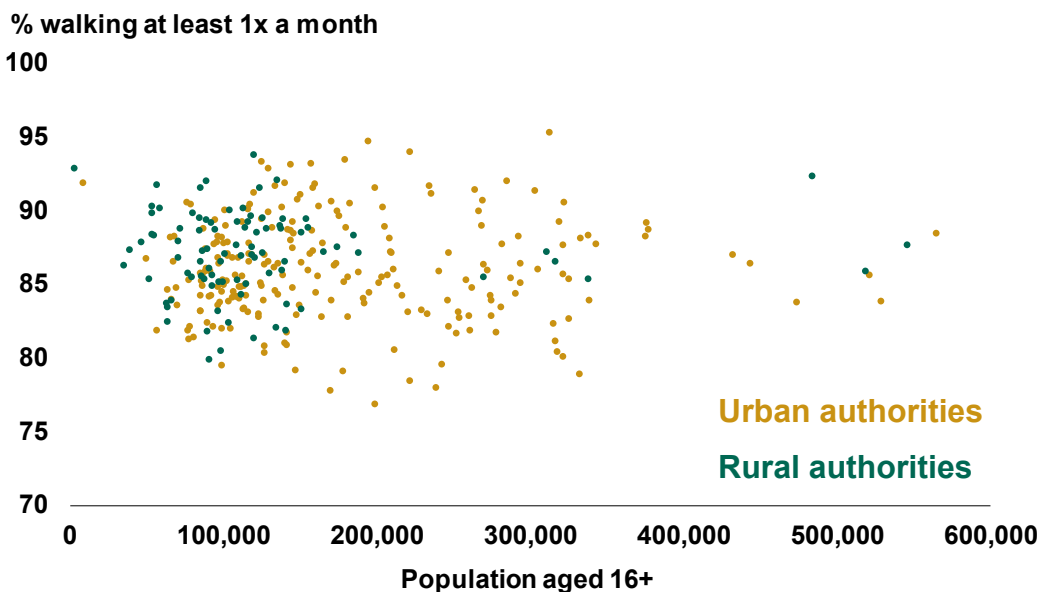
1 Based on [ONS 2015 Mid Year Estimates](#) for ages 16+

**Chart 15: Percentage of adults walking and cycling once a month in rural and urban authorities: England, 2014/15 (table [CW0203](#))**



While rural authorities have a higher percentage of adults that walk recreationally than urban areas (63% vs 55%), there are more people who walk recreationally in urban areas (5.9 million vs 19.2 million) because urban areas have higher populations<sup>1</sup>. Chart 16 demonstrates this, with the majority of rural authorities having a higher recreational walking prevalence levels but lower populations compared to many urban authorities.

**Chart 16: Population and recreational walking rate: local authorities in England, 2014/15**

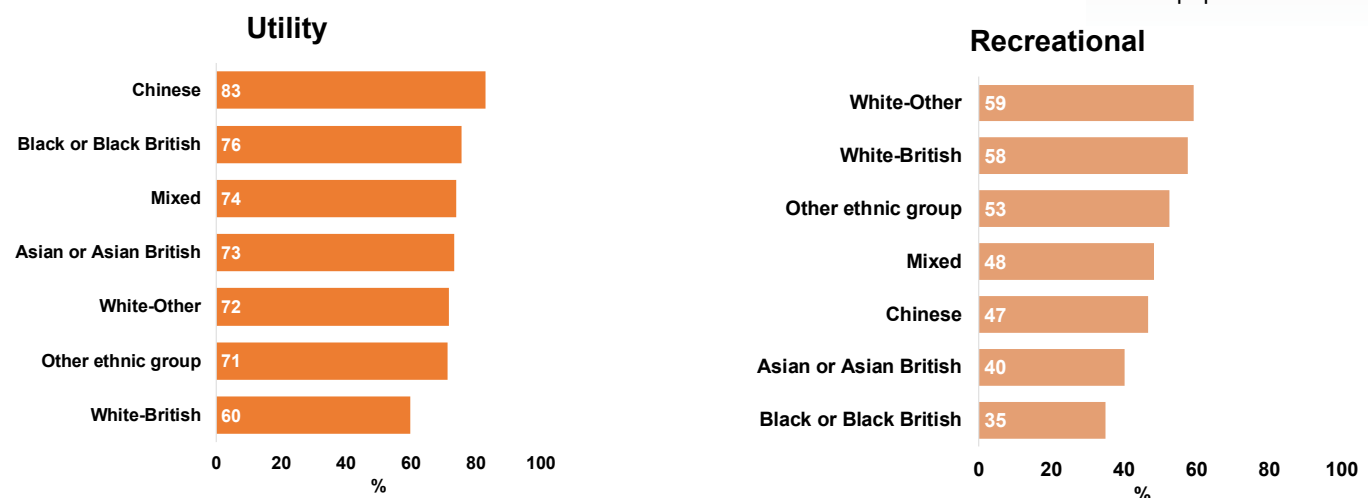


## Factors influencing walking and cycling: ethnicity

### Walking

Overall walking prevalence is similar across all ethnic groups (between 86%-90%) although there are differences between groups in the purpose for walking. White British adults walk for recreational purposes more than most ethnic groups but walk for utility purposes the least. Conversely, Black or Black British adults walk the least for recreational purposes but one of the most for utility purposes.

**Chart 17: Percentage of adults walking at least once a month, by ethnicity and purpose: England, 2014/15 (table [CW0203](#))**



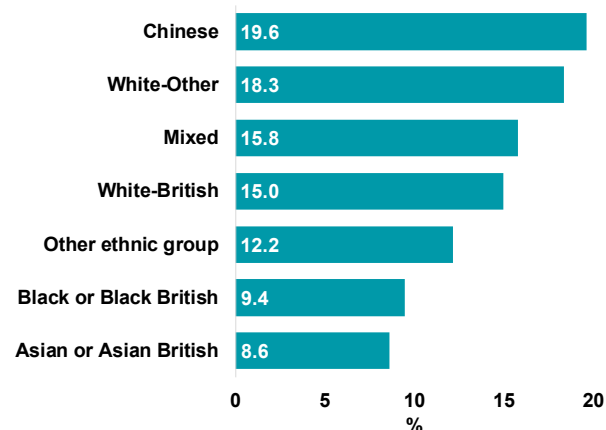
### Ethnic group

Further walking and cycling statistics by ethnicity and other demographics are available in Table [CW0203](#).

1 Census data from [NOMIS](#) reveals that White British residents make up 95% of the rural population but 77% of the urban population.

### Cycling

Unlike walking, there are noticeable differences in overall cycling prevalence between ethnic groups. Chinese adults have the highest prevalence rate cycling at least once a month (20%), whilst Asian or Asian British adults have the lowest (9%).



**Chart 18: Percentage of adults cycling at least once a month by ethnicity: England, 2014/15 (table [CW0203](#))**

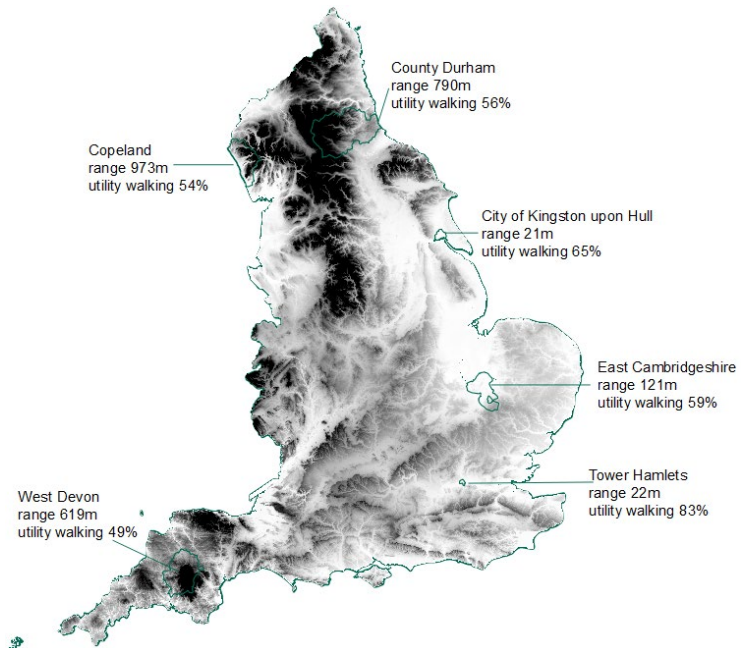
It is important to remember that these differences are not necessarily all due to cultural differences. For instance, there are higher proportions of White British residents living in rural areas relative to urban areas than other ethnic groups<sup>1</sup>. As rural residents are more likely to walk or cycle recreationally and urban residents for utility purposes, this may be impacting the results we see here. Other factors, such as differences amongst ethnic groups in employment, income, or car ownership, might also have an effect.

## Factors influencing walking and cycling: elevation

The difference in walking and cycling patterns between urban and rural areas may be partly influenced by their elevation levels. Urban authorities tend to be flatter whereas rural areas can have more varied and sometimes hilly terrains. One way of measuring variations in the elevation is by using the range between the highest and lowest land level points in each local authority, which makes it possible to investigate the relationship between terrain and walking and cycling levels.

Elevation above sea level  
0m 300m

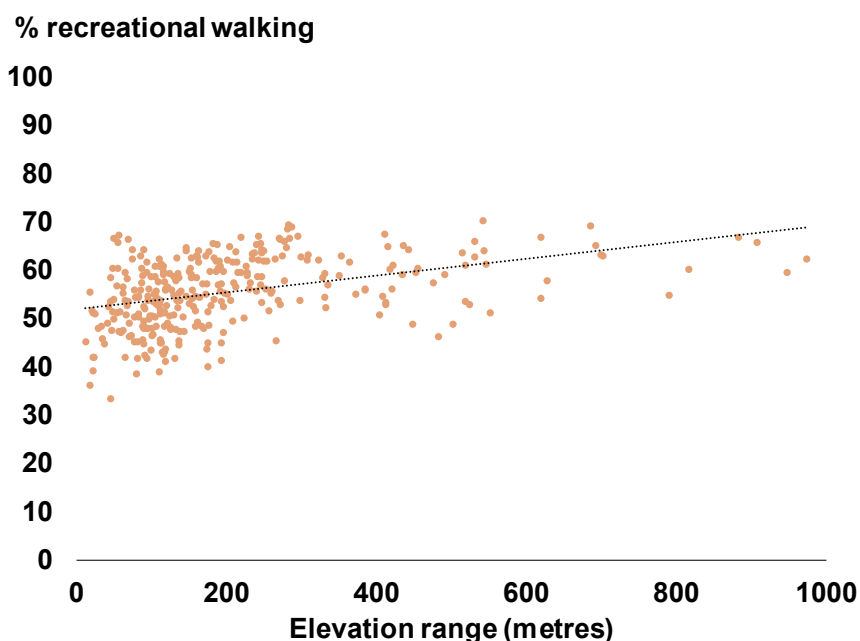
**Map 2: Elevation map of England (source: Ordnance Survey terrain data) with selected local authority elevation ranges and once per month utility walking rates**



## Walking

Overall, walking prevalence had no relationship with the elevation range of local authorities. However, recreation walking rates are positively correlated with elevation range and utility walking rates are negatively correlated with elevation range. This means that the greater the elevation range, and so likely more hilly, recreational walking rates tend to be higher.

**Chart 19: Elevation range and percentage of adults walking once a month for recreation: England, local authorities, 2014/15**

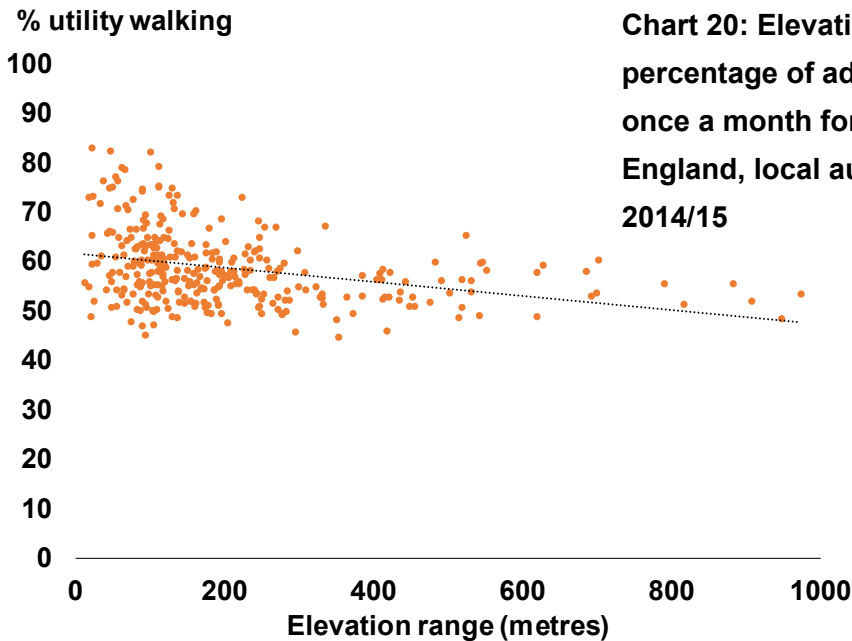


## Methodology for elevation analysis

Ordnance Survey Terrain 50 data are available for 50m<sup>2</sup> grids in England. Each grid indicates how far the land data point is above/below sea level (and is freely available [here](#)). These data were mapped against local authority boundaries and made it possible to identify the range between the highest and lowest land level points for each local authority. Data points below sea level were counted as 0 rather than negative as there were some authorities with artificially low minimum land levels which were not representative of the terrain residents typically walk/cycle along. For example, Charnwood has a quarry which goes to 129 metres below sea level but it is unlikely residents walk or cycle in the quarry.

## Factors influencing walking and cycling: elevation

The opposite is true for utility walking: the greater the elevation range the lower utility walking levels tend to be.



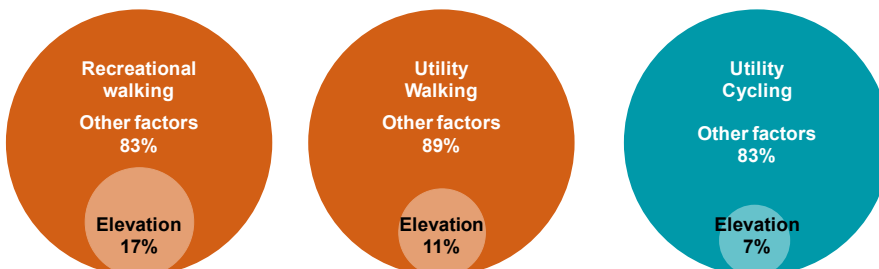
**Chart 20: Elevation range and percentage of adults walking once a month for utility: England, local authorities, 2014/15**

This is similar to the rural and urban walking patterns and so could be a sign that elevation levels do partly influence walking patterns. It may be that in rural areas varied elevation levels may be more scenic and enjoyable for recreational walking, whereas urban areas with flatter elevation levels may be more practical for walking for utility purposes such as walking to work.

### Cycling

The same, but weaker, negative correlation exists for cycling between utility purposes and elevation range however there is no relationship between terrain levels and cycling for recreational purposes.

**Chart 21: Prediction of how much elevation affects walking and cycling rates (at least once a month) in local authorities: England, 2014/15**



It is important to point out that the scale of these relationships, where they exist, are not particularly strong and there are many other factors that influence walking and cycling levels. A regression analysis revealed that elevation explained 17% and 11% of the patterns in recreational and utility walking levels across local authorities. This means that 83% of recreational walking and 89% of utility walking patterns are explained by other factors.

### Regression analysis

A linear regression revealed terrain range is significantly able to predict walking and cycling levels.

We can use the standard regression formula to work out to predict how much terrain range affects walking and cycling levels:

#### Recreational walking

For every 100m increase in the elevation range, a 1.7% recreational walking increase would be predicted.

#### Utility walking

For every 100m increase in the elevation range, a 1.4% utility walking decrease would be predicted.

#### Utility cycling

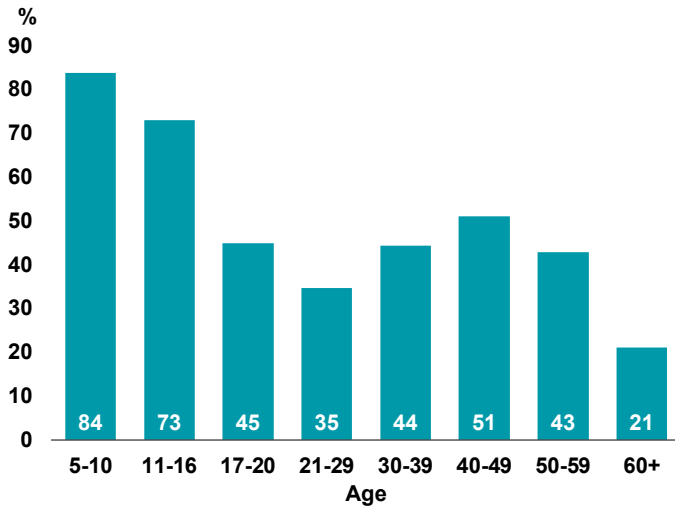
For every 100m increase in the elevation range, a 0.8% utility walking decrease would be predicted.

Whilst these formulas are better at predicting walking and cycling levels than by a random guess, there are many other influencing factors and therefore should be treated as a general indicator.

## Bicycle ownership

In England, 42% of people aged over 5 own a bicycle. Bicycle ownership is most prevalent amongst people aged under 17 years old. Amongst adults, bike ownership peaks at ages 40-49 with 51% owning or having access to a bicycle.

Chart 22: Bicycle ownership or access, by age: England, 2014/15



### Bike Ownership

Bike Ownership statistics from the 2014 National Travel Survey are available on [Table NTS0608](#)

## Safety Perceptions

Safety perceptions may partly influence cycling level differences between men and women, as the British Social Attitudes Survey found that women were more likely than men to believe cycling was too dangerous for them (71% vs 57%).

### British Social Attitudes Survey

The [British Social Attitudes Survey](#) is conducted annually with a sample of 3,000 people and the survey includes transport related questions.

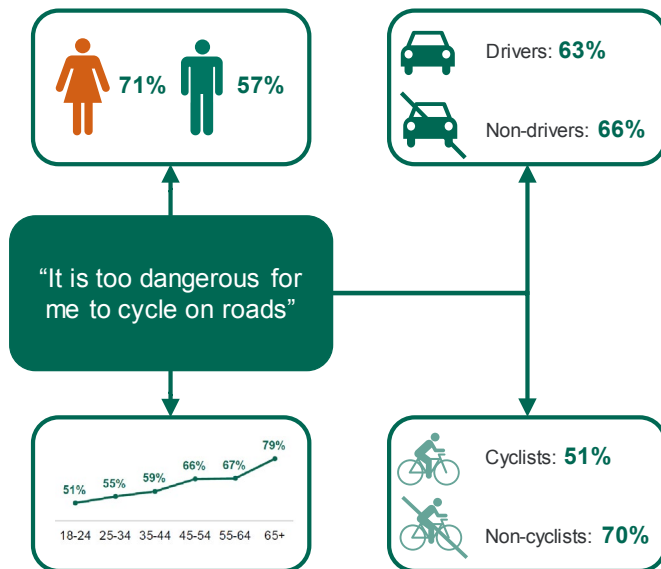


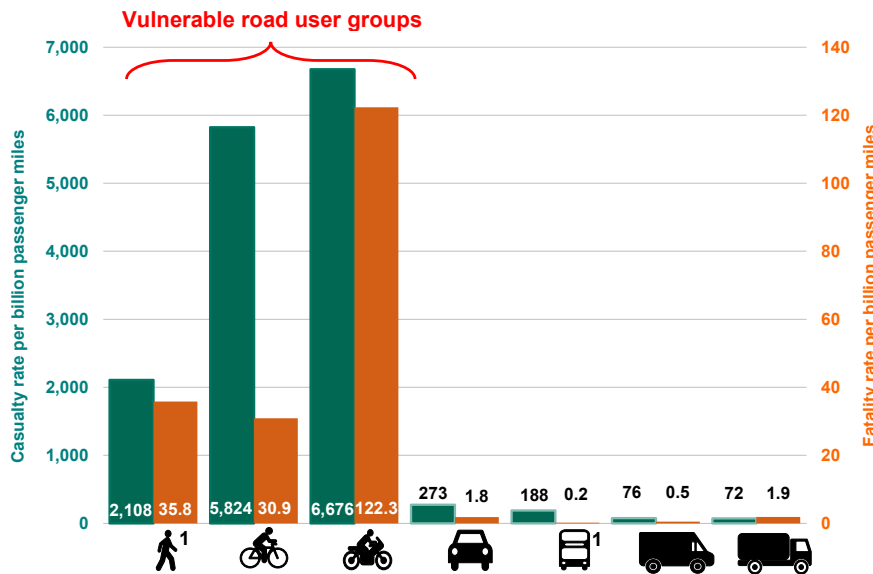
Chart 23: Differences in cycling safety perception, Great Britain, 2014

Another possible reason influencing gender differences could be that on average women tend to undertake different journeys to men, such as being more likely to take children to school, according to the National Travel Survey. These types of journeys may be less suitable by bike. However we cannot be certain whether these are reasons behind the difference and if so how much of an influence they have, and there are also likely many other factors involved.

## Comparison with other modes

Walking and cycling are less safe relative to some other modes of transport. However at an absolute level they are a safe way of travelling and serious accident are rare. In 2015, there was roughly 1 Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) casualty per 1 million miles cycled and 1 KSI casualty per roughly 100,000 hours of cycling.

**Chart 24: Casualty and fatality rates per billion passenger miles by road user type: Great Britain 2015**



### Road Safety Statistics

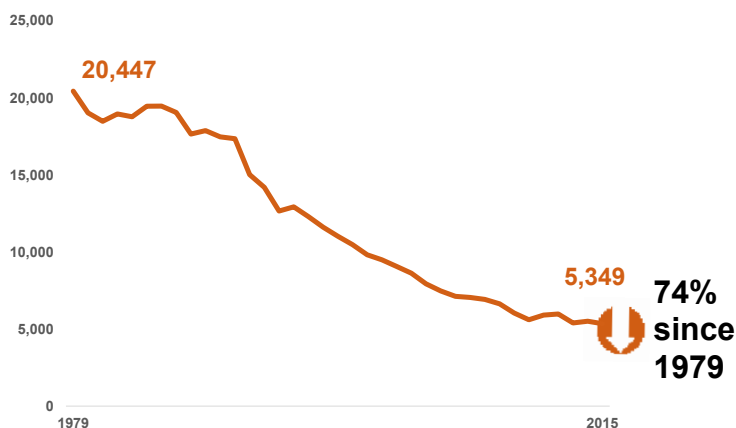
The road safety statistics presented on pages 16 and 17 are from the [Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2015](#) report, [Road Accident Safety Dataset](#) and [Road Safety Factsheets](#). Pedal cycle traffic is available [here](#). Further information can be found in these releases.

'Other' in Chart 25 consists of KSIs on motorways and that have unknown locations.

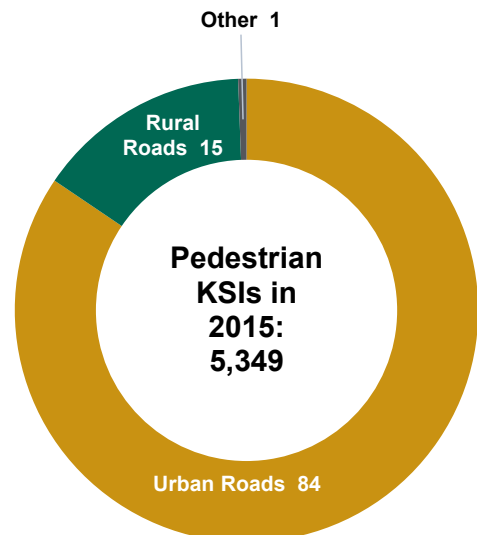
## Walking

The number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured has generally been decreasing since the 1980s. Urban roads account for more than four fifths of pedestrian KSI casualties across all road types.

**Chart 25: Pedestrians killed or seriously injured, Great Britain: 1979-2015**



**Chart 26: Percentage pedestrian KSIs by road type, Great Britain: 2015**





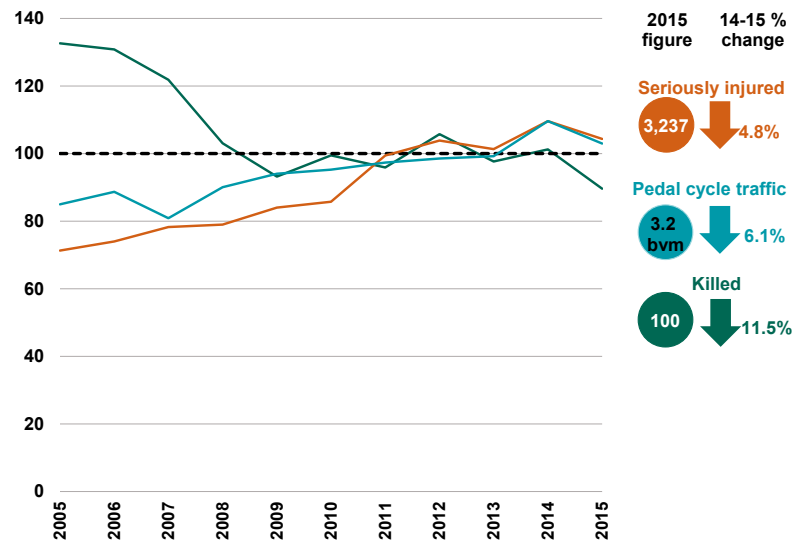
## Cycling

Although the number of cyclists killed on the roads in 2015 was the lowest figure on record, the 100 fatalities is very similar to the figures for each year since 2008. Since 2008, the number of deaths has been between 100 and 118. In statistical terms, there has been no change in the number of fatalities over this period.

In contrast, the number of cyclists seriously injured has generally been rising since the lowest point in 2004. Although there was a fall of 5 per cent to 3,237 serious injuries in 2015, this is still the second highest year since 1997. This long term increase is likely caused by the long term increase in cycle traffic, reflecting an increase in the number of cyclists exposed to potential dangers.

**Chart 27: Number of KSI cyclists compared with cycle traffic, Great Britain: 2000-2015**

Index: 2010-14 average = 100



**Chart 28: Cycle traffic and casualties on rural and urban roads, percent, Great Britain 2015**

### Urban

### Rural Urban and Rural Casualties

#### Cycle traffic



#### Killed (99)



#### All casualties (18,838)



#### Seriously injured (3,234)



#### Slight injuries (15,505)



Despite carrying only 33% of cycle traffic, nearly half (49%) of cyclist deaths occur on rural roads. Accidents that occur on rural roads are more likely to be of a fatal nature compared to those on urban roads. This is because rural roads have a much higher average speed than urban roads. Rural roads are often also much more sinuous and narrow in nature, with blind bends, dips and other distractions. However the pattern differs for non fatal casualties. Accidents on urban roads are more likely to result in slight or serious injuries.

Overall, the majority of cyclist casualties occur on urban roads (81%) which is unsurprising given that the majority of cycling takes place here and that there are many more opportunities for cyclists to interact with other vehicles.

#### Urban and Rural casualties

The urban and rural figures do not include motorway casualties or casualties where the location of the accident was unknown. Therefore the sum of urban and rural casualties will not quite add up to total casualties.

## Background information

### Users and uses of these statistics

Within the Department for Transport, we anticipate these statistics being used in the evaluation of local area interventions to encourage sustainable travel (for example, the [Local Sustainable Transport Fund](#)), as background information in the development and targeting of policies, for ministerial briefing and to answer public enquiries.

Other users include local authorities, campaign organisations, Parliamentary Groups, researchers and individuals with an interest in walking or cycling.

### Strengths and weaknesses of the data

The figures in this release unless otherwise stated are based on the Active People Survey (APS), administered by Sport England and used to derive official estimates of participation in sport and active recreation. The APS has a sample size of over 160,000 persons in England, thus enabling analysis at local authority level. Statistics at this level are not available from the [National Travel Survey](#) (NTS), which has an annual sample of around 16,000 persons.

Results from the APS are grouped by the area where survey respondents live, which may not be the same as the area where they walk or cycle, particularly for urban areas where there are multiple local authorities in a relatively small area.

Although the APS has a standard sample size of at least 500 persons per local authority, because the numbers of those cycling are small (only 15% nationally), some of the measures relating to cycling are based on only a few people per local authority and may not be robust. The tables accompanying this release include 95% confidence intervals for the estimates derived from the survey, to demonstrate the reliability of the estimates and the likely range of values for the true value<sup>1</sup>. Of nearly 370 authorities and regions, this means that some intervals will include errors, but it is not possible to specify which ones: the confidence interval may not contain the true value for the population, or a change may show as statistically significant when it is not.

The tables also highlight whether the change in walking or cycling activity since 2013/14 is statistically significant, rather than simply due to random variation in the survey sample. More details of the statistical test used to assess significant change can be found in the accompanying [Notes and Definitions](#) document. Caution should be taken when interpreting these changes because of factors that include small sample sizes and the inherent uncertainty in doing any statistical test.

The APS sample is weighted to ensure that the results are representative of the population. However, it is exclusively a telephone survey and only covers households with a fixed landline. The 15% of households in England that are mobile-only<sup>2</sup> are excluded from the survey, which may introduce bias into the sample. From 2015-16, the Active People Survey will be succeeded by the Active Lives Survey. The walking and cycling questions will remain exactly the same however the methodology is changing. Rather than contact participants by telephone, a letter will be sent with a unique link inviting them to take part in the survey online. This is hoped to reduce the sample biases existent in the APS. Sport England will be running both methodologies simultaneously for a period of time to investigate the effects of this change, which will be accounted for during analysis.

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<sup>1</sup>The confidence intervals used are Wilson Score intervals. For more details, see the accompanying [Notes and Definitions](#) document.

<sup>2</sup> See paper commissioned from the ONS Methodology Advisory Service, available at: [http://www.sportengland.org/research/active\\_people\\_survey/consultation.aspx](http://www.sportengland.org/research/active_people_survey/consultation.aspx)

## Background information

### Further information

The web tables give further details of the results presented in this statistical release. They are available here: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/walking-and-cycling-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/walking-and-cycling-statistics)

Guidance on the methods used to compile these statistics, including the calculation of confidence intervals, is available in the “Notes and Definitions” document, which can be found here: [www.gov.uk/transport-statistics-notes-and-guidance-walking-and-cycling](http://www.gov.uk/transport-statistics-notes-and-guidance-walking-and-cycling)

Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours in advance can also be found at the link above.

Further information about the Active People Survey and published sports participation measures for APS9 can be found on Sport England’s website: [www.sportengland.org/research/active\\_people\\_survey.aspx](http://www.sportengland.org/research/active_people_survey.aspx)

### Request for feedback

We welcome any feedback on these statistics, to ensure future releases best meet user needs. Feedback can be provided by email to [subnational.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:subnational.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk).

### Next update

The next release in this series is due to be published in Spring 2017 and will contain statistics on walking and cycling from the Active Lives Survey, the successor to the current Active People Survey. It will cover the period October 2015 to October 2016.

### Other sources of information on walking or cycling

- The **National Travel Survey**: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics>
- **Road Accidents & Safety** statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>
- **Road Traffic** statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-traffic-statistics>
- The **2011 UK Census** contains detailed information on mode of travel to work (which includes walking or cycling), available via NOMIS: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011>
- The **Travel in London** report provides walking and cycling statistics for London <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/travel-in-london-report-8.pdf>
- The **Propensity to Cycle Tool** is an interactive tool which maps the cycling rate potential at local levels <http://pct.bike/>
- The **British Social Attitudes Survey** includes numerous questions about perceptions of walking and cycling [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/481877/british-social-attitudes-survey-2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/481877/british-social-attitudes-survey-2014.pdf)
- The **Scottish Household Survey** contains walking and cycling statistics for Scotland <http://www.transport.gov.scot/statistics/j389989-08.htm>
- The **National Survey for Wales** contains walking and cycling statistics for Wales <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/active-travel/?lang=en>
- **Cycling and walking to work** statistics for Northern Ireland <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cycling-and-walking-to-from-work-in-northern-ireland-201415>