

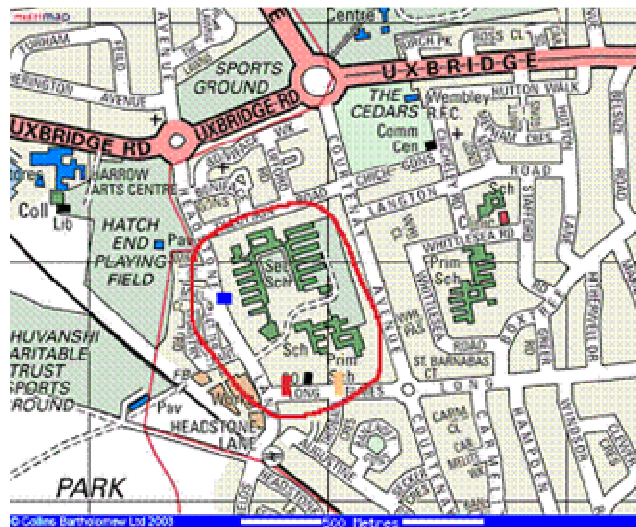
# Geography Coursework

## Introduction

In this piece of coursework I am looking at the issues regarding transport, locally and nationally. These issues are:

- ✚ Traffic Jams
- ✚ Congestion
- ✚ Pollution
- ✚ Parking
- ✚ Cost
- ✚ Public Transport
- ✚ Repairs
- ✚ Accidents

These problems need solutions and I have decided to make a chart on the traffic around the area of Hatch End High School. (Red Border)



There are three sites I have chosen, also marked on the map.

**Site 1:** Blue mark – Outside front gate of Hatch End High.

**Site 2:** Red mark – The parade of shops.

**Site 3:** Yellow mark – Outside St. Teresa's First school.

I will be monitoring these areas on the type and amount of traffic that goes past. As the traffic is a problem already. I will be trying to prove that there are three sites by the school that get busy at three different times of day. The sites are located around the school. I chose those particular sites because I will find they will give me the best varied results.

Traffic growth presents us with serious problems and challenges for the future. Its cost to the community and the environment in terms of congestion, road crashes, health problems and climate change are serious. Some local authorities have set traffic

reduction targets and others are keen to introduce congestion charging, but nationally the Government has shied away from taking a lead on cutting traffic.

In 1952 there were 2 million cars on the road in Britain. Now there are 22 million and traffic is still continuing to grow. According to the Government's own figures it is projected to be half as much again by 2026. Traffic congestion is becoming more and more of a problem. The average speed of traffic in central London, for example, is around the speed of a horse and cart. But it is not just cities that will suffer in the future. Experts predict that traffic will grow most rapidly in the suburbs and rural areas and congestion on motorways is expected to become crippling.

Traffic is growing by between 1 and 2 per cent a year, enough to produce big increases in traffic levels over just a few years.

Congestion is the most obvious effect of growing traffic levels. Everyone suffers the effects of congestion: motorists, business and other road users as well. According to the CBI traffic delays cost the country around £20 billion a year. The knee-jerk reaction to congestion has been to widen roads and build new ones, despite all the signs pointing to this making things worse in the long term. Time and time again it has been shown that new road space creates extra traffic. Nevertheless, pressure for new roads continues and around the country local communities and environmentalists are fighting schemes that would destroy countryside and put wildlife sites at risk. Every day ten people die on the roads and over a hundred are seriously injured. Many of the people killed and injured are not even using cars at the time: they are children, pedestrians and cyclists. More insidiously small particles and other pollutants from vehicle exhausts cause lung and heart diseases, killing up to 24,000 every year. Meanwhile, a study in the US has proved for the first time that traffic pollutants not only make asthma attacks worse but are responsible for causing the condition in the first place. More than one in seven children now suffer from asthma, six times as many as 25 years ago. Traffic also reduces the quality of life for many through the effects of noise, intimidation and community severance.

## Method

I carried out this investigation by going to each site and counting all the types of vehicles that pass the site over a period of time. This would tell me how much traffic passes this point.

### Experiment 1 Site – Outside the front entrance of Hatch End High

- First, I designed the table for the results.
- Then I stood outside the front gate of hatch high school.
- For every vehicle that passed the site, I marked it on the tally chart.
- I stood there for 10 minutes recording the details.
- After that, I totaled the results
- I then typed it up in neat on the computer.

### Experiment 2 Site – The Parade of the shops

- I made another table to take my results
- Then I stood just by the parade of shops, by the bus stop.
- I did the same I did for the first task.
- I stood there for 10 minutes.
- I totaled the results.
- Then I recorded it onto the computer.

### Experiment 3 Site – Outside St. Teresa’s School.

- I made another table to record my results.
- I stood by outside the front gate of St. Teresa’s school.
- I marked down, that every vehicle passed the site.
- I stood there for 10 minutes.
- I totaled the results and recorded them onto the computer.

### Analysis

As you can see from my graphs of site one (outside HEHS), the type of vehicle used most is the car and the time of day when there is the most cars is between 8:30 and 8:40 when people are going to school and work. The time of day when there is least cars is between 12:30 & 12:40. The number of cars counted between 15:25 and 15:35 is more than you see at 12:30 and 12:40 but not as many as seen at 8:30 and 8:40.

There were not many bicycles, motorbikes or lorries seen at site one. There were more bicycles in the mornnig period than any other period. The number of motorbikes increased in each time period. There were more vans and lorries seen between 12:30 and 12:40 than at the other times. In each ten minute period there were an average of six buses at site one.

Looking at site two (parade of shops on Long Elmes), the type of vehicle used most is again cars increases with each time period so that between 15:25 and 15:35 there are the most cars. This time of day is when children are seen in the morning between 8:30 and 8:40. The type of vehicle seen the least was lorries. There were more bicycles seen here than at site one especially between 15:25 and 15:35, as there are bicycle lanes at site two. In each ten minute period there was an average of six buses seen at site two. There were a lot more vans seen at site one between 12:30 and 12:40 than seen at site two but at the other time periods there were more vans seen at site two.

Looking at site three (outside St Teresa’s school), the type of vehicle used most is again the car and the time of day when there is the most cars again between 15:25 and 15:35 when the children are coming out of school. The number of cars again increases with each time period. The number of bicycles and motorbikes seen increased with each time period. No bicycles or motorbikes or vans were seen between 8:30 and 8:40. The number of lorries decreased with each time period, no lorries were seen between 3:25 and 3:35. In each time period an average of four buses were seen at site three. Looking at the average speed of traffic – period one and period three the traffic was very slow moving at all three sites.

### Conclusion

#### Traffic problems in local area

##### a) Problems created by school

As you can see from my investigation, there is a lot of traffic between 3:25 and 3:35 because of children being picked up from school. This causes congestion and very slow moving traffic at all three sites. There is also a problem because of all the parked cars which blocks the road. Parked cars create a problem by making the roads much narrower. Especially outside the parade of shops as buses jam the road when the parked cars are in the way. The school creates a lot of problems, again more parked cars as the parents are picking or dropping off their children to school or from school.

b) Problems that reflect general traffic issues in the UK

The number of cars on the roads has increased from 2 million to 22 million in 50 years. The more cars the more packed the motorways are getting, and to decrease the amount of traffic they are expanding the motorways to make it wider for more cars to fit onto the road. But it's making it worse as more and more cars are coming onto the road and also road improvements are more frequent so more cars are squashed as they need more space for the improvement. Also when the motorways are jammed, people come off the motorways and go onto A and B roads but as more people do this, this packs up the other roads.

Government plans to reduce traffic congestion are doomed to fail because of a widening gap between motoring costs and public transport fares.

People who need to commute to work will only choose public transport when it is reliable, clean, fast and cheap. Right now it is none of those things! The government consistently fails to accept that people seek out things which are attractive or pleasurable. Public transport is often not punctual, frequently dirty, there is a risk of personal attack and to cap it all it is expensive - in short - it is appalling value for money.

A national system of road user charging might be a way of forcing people to use public transport instead of their own car.

c) Possible Solutions to local traffic issues

To improve the congestion around Hatch End High School they could put traffic lights at the junction of Long Elmes and Headstone Lane or putting double yellow lines around the area to stop people parking. Also I would put more cycle lanes to encourage more people to cycle. It would be better if there was off street parking so there wouldn't be cars blocking the roads. It might help to encourage more people to share their car for the journey to school or work.

The suggestion of traffic lights at the junction of Long Elmes and Headstone Lane was felt to be a good idea when asking drivers and pedestrians. Although this may not be beneficial as it can be an expense and it may not resolve any congestion in the area. Other people's opinions are school campaigns on improving the cycling facilities and also encourage children to walk to school rather than getting a lift.

Evaluation

I think that my investigation could have been improved by monitoring the amount of traffic at more time periods to include quieter periods. This would give you an indication of the speed of traffic when the road is not congested. Also the time of day for the first collection of data is too early. The roads in this local area become more congested between 8:40 and 8:50. The number of buses should have been the same for site two and three but they weren't so the data is not completely accurate. If there is a lot of traffic, you have to be very quick tallying the type of vehicles passing.

To improve my data collections, I would monitor traffic at a different site away from the school to compare the differences. E.g at the other end of Long Elmes.