

Transport and Health Integrated research Network THINK









2023 - 2024 Annual report



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Core Metrics

Reporting period: 2023/2024



Health and Care Research Wales infrastructure award to the group



Jobs created through direct funding



Grants won during reporting period

Grants won	Led by group	Group collaborating
Number	0	0
Value	£0	£0
Funding to Wales	£0	£0
Funding to group	£0	£0
Additional jobs created for Wales	0	0
Additional jobs created for group	1	0



Number of publications



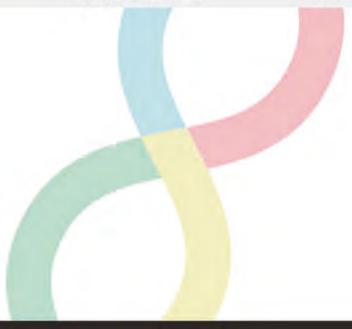
9



Number of public engagement events



Number of public involvement opportunities









Introduction from the Transport and Health Integrated Research Network - THINK Co-Directors







We enter our final year of funding for THINK from Health and Care Research Wales. We have been delighted with the interest that THINK has generated in both transport and health.

We set THINK up to

To generate new knowledge in transport and health (enriching the network)

from Aberystwyth University, which keeps some of the project moving forwards:

- To increase knowledge and skills in transport and health (enhancing the network)
- To generate more professional and general public understanding of the relationships between transport and health

In order to achieve this, we needed to create a resource to bring together people working in both transport and health. It has long been discussed how important it is to bring people together from both disciplines. Our use of transport has an effect on ours and others' health and wellbeing, and our health effects how we can use transport. The two are intwined and linked but rarely do they get discussed or acted upon together. Creating spaces for people in both disciplines to come together has been central to fostering collaboration to develop new research activity in transport and health, share resources and knowledge and put that knowledge into practice. This report identifies some of our key successes from all of these achieved through this last year. Going forwards, THINK will continue under the umbrella research group, the Centre for Transport and Mobility (CeTraM) at Aberystwyth University (see https://cetram.aber.ac.uk/) and we have been delighted to have support

£33k previously secured for impact project Transport, and Health Accelerated Impact Development (THAID) and 3 new research projects from THINK team members:

- Tekes, B. & Musselwhite, C. (2024) "Improving road safety in rural areas: An examination of human factors contribution to traffic safety climate". Aberystwyth University Rural Futures Hub Pump Priming Fund awarded project 2000 GBP.
- Tekes, B. & Musselwhite, C. (2024). "What do we really think about 20mph in Wales: An X(Twitter) Study".
 Aberystwyth University Our AI Enabled World Research Hub Project Award 2000 GBP.
- Bennett-Gillison, H., Wyn Hardy, H., Nicholass, A., Owen, R.. & Musselwhite, C. (2024). "User perceptions of shared walking spaces". Aberystwyth University Our AI Enabled World Research Hub Project Award 2000 GBP

It has been a real pleasure to work with you all during our Health and Care Research Wales funded phase and we look forward to continue to work with you all in the future in one way or another.

Dr Sarah Jones, Public Health Wales and Prof Charles Musselwhite, Aberystwyth University

Meet The Team





Co-Directors

Dr Sarah Jones is the Co-Director of THINK and a Consultant in Environmental Public Health with Public Health Wales. Sarah has a long-standing interest in road traffic injuries and inequalities.

Her PhD studied child pedestrian injuries and deprivation and she has been an advocate for the introduction of Graduated Driver Licensing for many years. In recent years, her interest has developed more widely to cover the links between transport and health, including work around the introduction of a default 20mph speed limit in Wales.

Co-Directors

Professor Charles Musselwhite is Professor of Psychology at Aberystwyth University. He is Co-Director of THINK. His research involves applying psychology to understanding and improving people's mobility including relationships between the built environment and transportation and health and wellbeing. In particular, he has expertise in environmental gerontology, examining relationships between environment and health in later stages of life, including older people's road user safety, giving-up driving, reducing isolation and loneliness and creating age friendly neighbourhoods and communities.

He has worked on around 50 projects as Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator totalling over £25m research income. He is also currently co-Director of the Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research (CADR), funded by Welsh Government through Health and Care Research Wales. CADR brings together research in ageing with policy and practice across Wales. He has almost 100 research publications, including authoring 5 books. He is Editor-in-Chief for Elsevier's Journal of Transport & Health and on the editorial board for Age Cymru's EnvisAGE and Elsevier's Research in Transportation Business & Management. www.drcharliemuss.com

THINK Core Team



Dr Lucy Baker is Research Associate in the School of Psychology, Aberystwyth University. Lucy will be supporting THINK research activities, bringing together and sharing knowledge and evidence, engaging with the public and stakeholders, developing funding bids and a future portfolio of research and activities for THINK.

Lucy is interested in developing research that examines how health inequalities are structured, what transport and urban planning have to do with disparity in health, wellbeing and care, and what we can do to reduce health inequalities to enable a higher quality of life for all. Lucy's prior research has explored digital platform labour in India and how it intersects with new money technologies with a view to increase the social equity of innovations, future work and the use of big data. Her doctorate explored the transfer of cycling mobility interventions to developing countries with fieldwork based in Namibia.

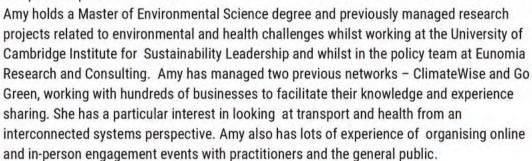
Dr. Burcu Tekeş is an Associate Professor at Başkent University, Turkey. She is currently also working with us as a post-doctoral research associate in THINK project. Burcu holds her Ph.D. in Traffic and Transportation Psychology and MSc. in social psychology. She previously had experience with Vision Zero: Road Safety project in Turkey as the senior expert on human behaviour. Burcu's research mainly focuses on applied psychology particularly in traffic and transportation, environment and health. She has over 30 research publications, including a book on Traffic Psychology.



Meet The Team



Amy Nicholass is the part time Project Officer and first point of contact for enquiries for the THINK. Amy manages the THINK members, curating, organising and facilitating most of THINK's online and in-person events. Amy also manages the THINK website, social media and podcast presence.















To generate new knowledge in transport and health (therefore enriching the network). The foundry supports two different strands of work:

- (1) Support for researchers and practitioners to systematically work together to develop, submit and win new funding in research.
- (2) Support research into policy and practice via workshops with key stakeholders aimed at maximising impact.

Research Development Activity - Ongoing Foundry Research Explorations

- 1. The role of machine learning, sensors and other technology such as adaptable signage to empower pedestrian safety, especially in rural areas with no pavements. Update We have secured a small grant from the Al Hub at Aberystwyth University to explore a filming methodology for capturing the experience of different types pedestrians to see how the public engages with the films and if it builds empathy.
- 2. Steering group facilitation support for the Mid and West <u>Healthy Travel Charter</u> authors in the region. Have provided facilitation and planning support to enable a co-design approach for the Charter commitment with <u>The Dialogue Centre</u> and Hywel Dda University Health Board.

THINK Events

Many of THINK's events are recorded and available on YouTube channel <u>Transport and Health Integrated</u> research NetworK - YouTube

- 20th March: THINK Online Workshop: Transport survey design for communities and grass roots groups.
- 29th February 2024: THINK Workshop: A Just Transition or Just a Transition
- 22nd February 2024. Transport options for young adults balancing freedom & risk
- 21st February 2024. Behaviour and Culture Change Workshop in partnership with the West Wales
 Regional Healthy Travel Charter Stakeholder Group
- 13th December 2023. THINK Hybrid Winter Conference. See https://think.aber.ac.uk/think-winter-conference-2023/
- . 23rd October 2023. THINK Seminar: public transport resilience to climate change in the UK
- 20th September 2023. THINK Seminar on the role of electric-cargo bikes in the UK
- 24th May 2023. THINK Workshop: Introduction to co-production and citizen involvement
- 19th April 2023. THINK Seminar: Gig economy logistics, health and wellbeing.

All THINK events are fully funded, so free for anyone to access and many take place online.







To increase knowledge and skills in transport and health (therefore enhancing the network). The academy hosts the following strands of work:

- (1) Plain English summaries of research findings for practice and policy.
- (2) A seminar series on transport and health.
- (3) Attendance at conferences
- (4) An annual THINK conference
- (5) Supporting training needs of professionals new to transport and health, including
 - a. An annual continual professional development workshop
 - b. Bespoke training support
 - c. Systematic mentoring scheme with experienced researchers
- (6) A website with a repository of information
- (7) Social media presence on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.
- (8) Promotional material to support knowledge and growth of THINK

Building the network and using social media



211 Network members



We have 328 twitter followers



May and October 2023 News Bulletins sent out



9 new THINK blogs

https://think.aber.ac.uk/a-just-transition/ https://think.aber.ac.uk/our-new-guide-for-bystandertrainers-and-campaigners-is-now-available-todownload/

https://think.aber.ac.uk/the-game-changing-tactile-maps-made-for-people-with-visual-impairments/ https://think.aber.ac.uk/q-methodology-as-a-useful-method-to-research-transport/ https://think.aber.ac.uk/systems-mapping-active-

https://think.aber.ac.uk/systems-mapping-active-travel-for-all-in-the-uk/

https://think.aber.ac.uk/summary-of-thinks-publicagenda-setting-workshops-2023/

https://think.aber.ac.uk/the-human-factor/ https://think.aber.ac.uk/the-e-move-trial-e-cyclingpractices-in-rural-welsh-communities-and-thepotential-for-low-carbon-transport-transitions/ https://think.aber.ac.uk/why-do-people-use-ageconnects-morgannwg-for-transport/



We have 87 LinkedIn members



9 new THINK events workshops, seminars and hybrid conference









Attendance at conferences

Musselwhite, C.B.A. (2023). Exploring issues around transport and mobility for an ageing population from a social psychology perspective. Invited presentation to the Active Aging Consortium in Asia Pacific (ACAP), Mobility and Transportation in an Ageing Society Webinar, online, 30th September.



Musselwhite, C.B.A. (2023). Improving Mobility in Marginalised Communities, University Studies Transport Group Conference, Cardiff, UK. 11th July.

Supporting training needs of professionals new to transport and health

We attend and support the Welsh Government delivery on transport in following main themes:

- . Welsh Government Rural Transport Stakeholder Working Groups run by Lee Waters.
- Welsh Government Disability Rights Taskforce on transport.
- Welsh Government 20mph default speed limit roll out especially around research and evaluation and communications.
- Wales Net Zero 2035 Challenge 4 reference group 'How could people and places across Wales be connected by 2035'. THINK delivery team was invited to join this group and Amy represented the team at meetings. THINK members have been invited to roundtable meetings.

THINK Academy Mentoring

One mentorship has taken place so far.

"I have felt immensely privileged to be a mentor as part of the THINK programme. My mentee and I have come together to chat, talk through challenges and praise the positives. It has been a learning journey for me and I have felt that we have achieved much over the time we have had together. I am very grateful to my mentee for her honesty and openness. It has been a very positive experience and I would encourage others to take up this opportunity."

Emma Bingham

"For me, Emma's mentorship has been very supportive and rewarding. I would recommend looking for an industry mentor because you get to hear a different perspective and consider the big picture. Emma has introduced me to community transport, which is an element of the transport system that remains fairly hidden to people who don't use it, and a lifeline to those who do. It's all about connections – transport, health, community... and talking about these things is very motivating to me. I was at risk of dropping out of an apprenticeship before THINK offered me the opportunity to talk with Emma. Being mentored, and learning from other THINK projects, has helped me to develop my interest and sustained my motivation through extended and complex projects".

Madeleine Boase

THINK Presentations and Influencing



Dr Sarah Jones:

- Completed the Chapter on Transport Policy and Health accepted for publication in the Policy handbook.
- · Completed the Chapter on 20mph for 'Health on the Move II'
- Completed a scoping review for the Road Safety Foundation identifying priorities for road safety research from an inequalities perspective.

Lucy Baker:

Completed Chapter on Gender, Transport and Health for 'Health on the Move II' book.

PRESENTATIONS

- Tekeş, B. Oral Presentation in the Workshop "How to deal with anger in traffic?". THINK Conference December 2023
- · Tekeş, B. Oral Presentation, "Human Factor in Traffic" in Aberystwyth University Department of Psychology

Publications

Sitinjak, C., Simic, V., Ismail, R., Musselwhite, C. and Bacanin, N. (2024) Psychometric components of the social acceptance toward end-of-life vehicles policy: A case study of Indonesia, Transport Policy, 148, 206-218. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tranpol.2024.01.019

Tekes, B. & Musselwhite, C. (2023). How far are e-scooters healthy transport? Journal of Transport & Health, 33(20), 101725. http://doi.org./10.1016/j.jth.2023.101725

Musselwhite, C. (2023). A community health approach to community transport, Journal of Transport & Health, 30, 101621, ISSN 2214-1405, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2023.101621

Media coverage

Charles Musselwhite appeared on BBC Radio Wales <u>discussion on the dominance of cars in society</u>(52 mins) (20th February 2024).

Newspapers

https://www.abergavennychronicle.com/university-grants-for-monmouthshire-and-powys-projects-663760 https://www.brecon-radnor.co.uk/news/llangattock-community-transport-project-gets-funding-boost-663595

THINK Presentations and Influencing



Inputs into meetings

Ongoing membership collaborations:

- The THINK Co-production working group continues to meet and discuss the experience of members and their explorations with co-production in the context of transport and health.
- THINK working group on improving walking standards is progressing towards gathering data to write a briefing document about walking proximity to services and amenities to better inform local authority officers.
- The West Wales Healthy Travel Charter Steering Group continues to meet regularly to develop their chosen 12-14 regional commitments (some shared some optional) with facilitated discussion support and expert input support from THINK.
- . THINK is supporting Powys County Council explore options for its transport review.
- THINK continues to support the Ceredigion Bus Action Group with their desire to launch a strategic body to coordinate better bus services across Ceredigion.
- THINK will have a roadshow in the summer visiting different communities to ask them about their transport needs.
- THINK support PACTO the Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations with their work via links with researchers at Aberystwyth University.









Transport Issues in Communities (TIC) Small Project Fund

In October 2022 THINK launched the Transport Issues in the Community (TIC) Small Project Fund at the Health and Care Research wales Conference in Cardiff.



We welcomed proposals on the role of transport in creating healthy communities. We welcomed exploratory projects from interdisciplinary/multi-background teams that brought together partnerships of people from different backgrounds (e.g. communities, charity and third sectors, academics, health-boards, local authorities) to work together to address a "rural community in need" with a "specific rural transport issue".

What is a rural community in need?

We defined a rural community in need as any community in a rural area that has an issue associated with transport, or health and wellbeing or both.

For example, it might be:

- · a geographically defined community such as a small town, village or street,
- and/or a community defined by socio-demographics or background, for example older people, children, LGBT+ community within a rural areas,
- and/or by mode of transport (cyclists, pedestrians etc.) accessing a rural area.

The specific transport issue may be defined as one or a combination of the following:

- one affecting health including either injuries/fatalities (caused by collisions),
- · air/noise pollution,
- · improving active travel,
- community severance and wellbeing.

The problem can be defined by an issue such as reducing speed limits or connecting communities with an off-road walking/cycle path, for example.

The funds were to be used as a steppingstone to further research, with the aim to understand the transport issue further, identifying it in more detail and beginning to create strategies or interventions that work towards mitigating or reducing the issue.

A grant of up to £2000 was available per project to support the activity. We selected 4 projects for funding with the money used in the project to support the hosting of events, workshops or knowledge gathering in pursuit of that aim.

Transport Issues in the Community Awarded Projects

Winners of the Transport Issues in Rural Communities Award 2023

We had nine applications for our Transport Issues in Rural Communities award of up to £2000 with application submission deadline of summer 2023.

More details at: https://think.aber.ac.uk/award-recipients-2023/

The Transport and Health Integrated Research Network is delighted to announce it is supporting four projects addressing the role of transport in creating a healthy community. The projects selected are:

1. Exploring a Future Six Councils Community Electric Bus and Bikes

Led by Kate Inglis, Community Councillor on Llangattock Community Council

Llangattock is a rural village with approximately 1000 residents, set in the Usk Valley in Powys.

Llangattock Village is experiencing increasing problems with the number of cars and insufficient parking.

Existing public transport in the area is very limited with infrequent services to the smaller villages. This existing service is under-used and we would like to understand why this is.

The key method being a local survey/questionnaire, designed and analysed by a professional consultant expert in community transport, who can help Llangattock Community Council to understand the demand, physical reach and routes, means of operation and to help with a business case to support an application to fund a larger project to set up a local Community E-bus and E-bike service.





2. Exploring prospects of shared e-micro mobility in Rural India

Led by Dr. Anshuman Sharma, Assistant Professor and Indian Institute of Technology (BHU) and Dr Yasir Ali, Lecturer, Transport and Urban Planning Group, School of Architecture, Building and Civil Engineering, Loughborough University

This project will investigate the motives and barriers behind adopting shared electric micro-mobility modes (such as electric rickshaws) in rural India via a survey, considering sociodemographic characteristics, such as age group, gender, economic status, marital status, and education. This project will investigate the factors encouraging/discouraging rural inhabitants to adopt shared electric micro-mobility modes. The project will also devise interventions for mitigating obstacles and uptaking shared electric micro-mobility modes.

Transport Issues in the Community Awarded Projects



3. Community Transport Initiatives – Volunteer Drivers (barriers to volunteering)
Led by Rhian Hathaway, Grants Officer, Bridges Centre and Andrea Charles, Community
Wellbeing Project Manager.

The lack of public transport options in rural Monmouthshire has created significant challenges for residents in accessing essential services and maintaining social connections. The community car scheme, although a promising solution faces difficulties in recruiting volunteer drivers, hindering its ability to meet the demand for transportation assistance. This research project comprising of surveys and in depth interviews aims to identify and address the barriers to volunteer recruitment, ultimately improving the effectiveness and reach of the community car scheme. By addressing these issues, the project will contribute to enhancing mobility, fostering community engagement, and improving the overall well-being of residents in Monmouthshire.

Research Project updates

Gender +Bus Project

- Dr Lucy Baker is working in partnership with Stagecoach, Transport for Wales and Confederation of Passenger Transport, Wales and Bus Users Wales with Welsh Women's Aid to help managerial and frontline staff understand the importance of creating safe spaces for passengers to enable public transport use for women and vulnerable people, and the positive impact this can have on people's wellbeing. Lucy is doing this by developing awareness raising guidance documents and a training programme piloted with industry partner Stagecoach. Transport for Wales are considering how this training can be more widely implemented with a shift in policy and governance more widely applicable to bus services and customer experience. Transport for Wales have implemented training on women's safety as part of their customer experience training delivered through their recent Traws Cymru contracts delivered in October in Swansea, 2023 and in Aberystwyth December-January 2024.
- The data from interviews has been used to develop case studies of lived experience added to a guide for bystander intervention trainers and campaigners. These case studies will also be reproduced and tailored to an audience of bus drivers and driver trainers. Bystander training guide can be found here https://think.aber.ac.uk/our-new-guide-for-bystander-trainers-and-campaigners-is-now-available-to-download
- The training programme is being developed in collaboration with Stagecoach and will be run from May-June.

Research Project updates



Improving road safety in rural areas: An examination of human factors contribution to traffic safety climate

Aberystwyth University Rural Futures Hub Pump Priming Fund awarded funding for this project to Dr Burcu Tekes and Dr Charles Musselwhite and this is progressing with project design development.

In this project, we look to improve road safety in rural areas by examining traffic safety climate, driver anger (and expression), driver behaviours, and risk taking in rural areas. Rural areas across the UK typically have higher numbers of road traffic collisions involving cars, motorbikes and bicycles. Locally, Powys and Ceredigion have the highest rates of road traffic collisions in Wales. While the narrow, bendy roads with fast posted speed limits are of course a contributing factor to collisions in rural areas, human behaviour (ibid human factors) is an issue in 95% of collisions, and is the only cause in 2/3 of collisions. This study will therefore examine these human factors through identifying road user safety attitudes, acceptability and behaviour through questionnaires with the motorists in rural and urban areas identifying unique rural traits in relation to traffic safety climate, driver anger (and expression), and risky behaviours. More specifically, this study aims to examine if drivers who live and drive more often on rural areas in Wales drive in a more aggressive nature, engage in more risky behaviours in traffic and how they perceive traffic climate compared to those in urban areas. Within this research, demographic data will be used to identify groups of people who are more at risk of crashing in rural areas.

What do we really think about the 20mph speed reduction in Wales?

The aim of this study was to analyse the public's views on the recently introduced speed rule changes in Wales and how these views have changed over time through the use of X (formerly Twitter) entries. According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour proposed by Ajzen (1985), individuals are more likely to engage in a behaviour when their attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioural control, and intentions align with that behaviour. The objective of this study is to uncover attitudes towards the reduction of speed limits to 20 mph and understanding the perceived barriers individuals face. There is a previous study conducted by Semwal et al. (2021) on X entries in two UK cities regarding 20 mph speed reduction, but present study has two different aspects that would be useful for the related literature. First, present study would be first study on speed reduction specifically in Wales. The change of the speed limit was implemented in September 2023, thus there is no other study explains current situation in Wales. Second, the previous study used a sentimental analysis which provides a positive-negative-neutral classification of the X entries. Although it is a very insightful method to use, sentimental analysis is limiting. In this study, we will be able to analyse the data in two separate perspectives: first, a sentimental analysis based on a classification of the attitudes as mentioned above, and second, a word-based LDA model of the X entries, that provides the context of the X entries. Also, this study examines the time-dependent change of the speed rule change that came into effect on 17 September 2023. For this reason, the planned timing is quite favourable to measure the first week of the law's entry into force and then to measure the reactions after a period of approximately 6 months. This study was funded by Our Al Enabled World Research Hub of the Aberystwyth University.





To develop professionals and the public's understanding the relationships between transport and health (therefore integrating the network). Participate will provide resources to develop opportunities for collaborative working through:

- (1) Secondment opportunities for people from research to work in policy or practice to work together on a mini project around transport and health.
- (2) Interactive roadshows with the public to help prioritise key issues, with published outcome material, along with summaries for the public developed.

Secondment

The first THINK secondment was launched in October 2023 to be completed by end June 2024 and was an opportunity to work on GP / Primary Care research project in Mid Wales with Rural Health and Care Wales (RHCW).

We looked for an individual currently employed in an organisation within our THINK network who will act as a Researcher for RHCW looking at transport and logistical barriers to accessing primary care in Mid Wales.

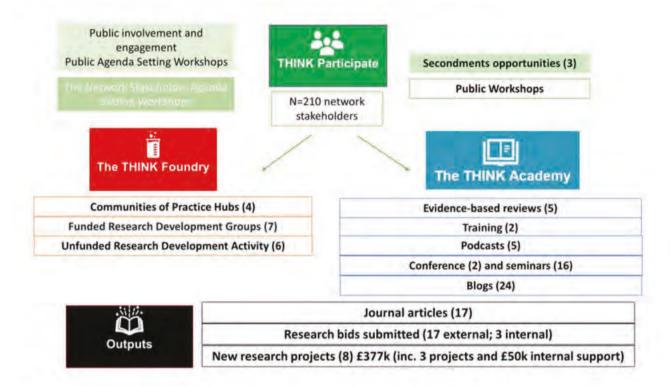
Rural Health and Care Wales, which is a collaboration between the three health boards operating across Mid Wales (Hywel Dda and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Boards; Powys Teaching Health Board), has been tasked with undertaking research into the GP provision across Mid Wales, exploring best practice examples of alternative models of delivering primary care interventions in rural areas (requested by RHCW Stakeholder Group and approved by the Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care: A review and Action Plan for GP / Primary Care provision across Mid Wales). Part of the work will involve looking at distance travelled by patients to primary care centres and any logistical barriers to accessing Primary Care services. The secondee will support this element of the research, working closely with the Head of Rural Health and Care Wales. This piece of work will provide an opportunity for cross-sectoral working, potentially between academia and healthcare, and foster working relationships that benefit from academic research rigour and operational insight and knowledge.

We were delighted to appoint THINK member, Dr Angela Curl from Otago University, Senior Lecturer - Pūkenga Matua, Postgraduate Course Director, Public Health, Co-director, Transport, Society and Environment Group, Special Issues Editor – Journal of Transport and Health

Where next?



The diagram outlines the network progress and how far we have come over the past few years. Hopefully the space we have created for collaborative working will continue into the future and beyond the Health and Care Research Wales funding phase.



Conclusion

Where THINK has been very successful is that we have found space to bring very busy organisations and groups together to work on transport and health. Some of these organisations and groups had not worked together previously, some had but we had introduced a space for them to focus around. Overall, THINK team is finding noval opportunities to bring new understanding to transport and health professionals and the key themes that have emerged during this collaborative working have included equity and justice, community and place, healthier transport choices, rurality and vehicle safety. We continue to support the spread of knowledge and information about these topics to new audiences through the online resources, podcast and recorded events available on YouTube channel. And really importantly, we are supporting communities to do their own research in order to inform transport provision in their areas. It's been a busy and satisfying year for the team and we want to thank everyone who has engaged and been involved with our important work.











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