

| Project Details | |
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| Project Code | MRCPHS24Br Kipping |
| Title | Evaluating the impact of the novel Welsh Government 'Active Travel Town' on inequalities in travel modes and physical activity and to inform policy development |
| Research Theme | Population Health Sciences |
| Summary | You will work with government agencies and a Welsh Local Authority to evaluate a new policy which aims to increase the use of active modes of travel. The policy development is a four-year, multi-million pound investment in one Welsh town with the aim of getting a large shift in transport to active travel options. You will evaluate the impact of the policy in active travel, physical activity and inequalities with the aim of influencing policy and adoption elsewhere. |
| Description | <p>Background Physical activity is important for the physical, mental and economic health of the nation, but large proportions of the UK population do not meet physical activity recommendations. Patterns of physical activity are unequal, with women, and people from lower income households being less active. Addressing physical activity inequalities is a central focus for public health policy. Active travel, such as walking and cycling, is accessible and affordable and is associated with increased physical activity in both adults and children. Increasing active travel thus has potential as a public health policy to promote routine physical activity. Local and national policies can positively and negatively impact on active travel, physical activity levels and inequalities. These policies are largely under-evaluated as current evaluation frameworks focus on researcher identified, individually focused interventions. The Welsh Active Travel Town is an example of a novel policy intervention starting in 2023, led by Welsh Government and Transport for Wales (TfW) where one town has been selected to be an 'Active Travel Town'. The Local Authority will receive significant multi-million funding for 4 years to implement a broad range of intervention components, with the aim of achieving the greatest possible mode shift in active travel. Welsh Government and TfW have committed to collaborating with University of Bristol to evaluate the initiative through a national grant application or alternative funding, with access to a range of existing data sources. This PhD will address inequalities informed by the 'For Equity' tool which will guide the thinking during the development throughout. Research question What impact does the Active Travel Town policy have on inequalities in travel modes and physical activity and how are the changes facilitated? Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake a systematic review of whole community interventions to improve physical activity. • To undertake analysis before and after changes implemented by the Active Travel Town programme, of travel mode by age, gender and SES in the Active Travel Town and a comparator town without the policy intervention. The student will have access to a broad range of relevant data sources, such as national surveys (National Survey for Wales, National Travel Survey for Wales, School Health Research Network biannual survey), local routine data (aggregated mobile phone data, GPS tracking data) and potentially specifically targeted local data collection (surveys that include physical activity and demographic variables). • To explore how the Active Travel |

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| | Town has facilitated change in travel and physical activity through interviews with children, parents, teachers, and school staff. There will be scope for the objectives to be shaped by the student in discussion with the supervisors and Transport for Wales and the broader colleagues in RIPPLES. This might include identifying a specific group of interest (e.g. children, working adults, parents, older adults), and/or a shift from a mixed methods approach to a more quantitative approach exploring different methods. The supervisors also have accelerometer equipment which could be used by the student for primary data collection if this was an area of interest. |
| Supervisory Team | |
| Lead Supervisor | |
| Name | Professor Ruth Kipping |
| Affiliation | Bristol |
| College/Faculty | Faculty of Health Sciences |
| Department/School | Population Health Sciences, Bristol Medical School |
| Email Address | Ruth.kipping@bristol.ac.uk |
| Co-Supervisor 1 | |
| Name | Professor Russell Jago |
| Affiliation | Bristol |
| College/Faculty | Faculty of Health Sciences |
| Department/School | Population Health Sciences |
| Co-Supervisor 2 | |
| Name | Dr Ruth Salway |
| Affiliation | Bristol |
| College/Faculty | Faculty of Health Sciences |
| Department/School | Population Health Sciences, Bristol Medical School |
| Co-Supervisor 3 | |
| Name | Dr Kelly Morgan |
| Affiliation | Cardiff |
| College/Faculty | College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences |
| Department/School | School of Social Sciences |