

# Quality of Life at Risk

Conference on the Human Dimensions  
of Global Environmental Change

Amsterdam

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Deputy Prime Minister  
and  
First Secretary of State

On 6th June 1997 John Prescott said  
"I will have failed if in five years time  
there are not many more people  
using public transport and far fewer  
journeys by car. It's a tall order, but I  
urge you to hold me to it"

On May 16 2007 John Prescott  
said "I had never envisaged we  
would have 7 million new cars.  
It has created real problems."

Forecasts published by Prescott's department for 2007 at the  
time of his 1997 statement:

Motor vehicles +27% = +6.85 million

Traffic +35% = + 8.9 million

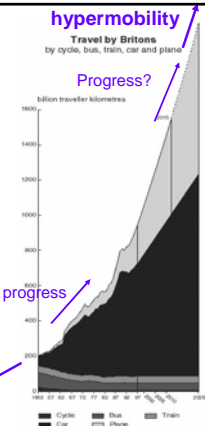
Growth of GDP over 10 years at 2.8% = 32%

London > Edinburgh  
332 miles  
Parking meters 20' apart  
Therefore 264 per mile  
One lane = 87648 cars  
7 million extra vehicles  
= 80 lanes



## Business as usual in Britain

- 5 miles per day in 1950
- More than 30 miles per day now
- 60 miles per day in 2025



### The Public



Fatalist



Hierarchist



Individualist



Egalitarian

### The Public



Fatalist



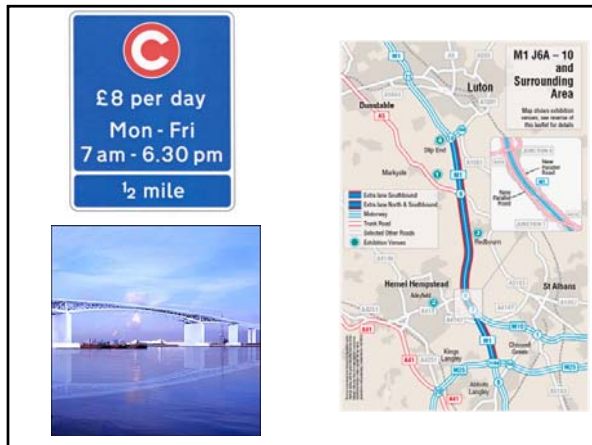
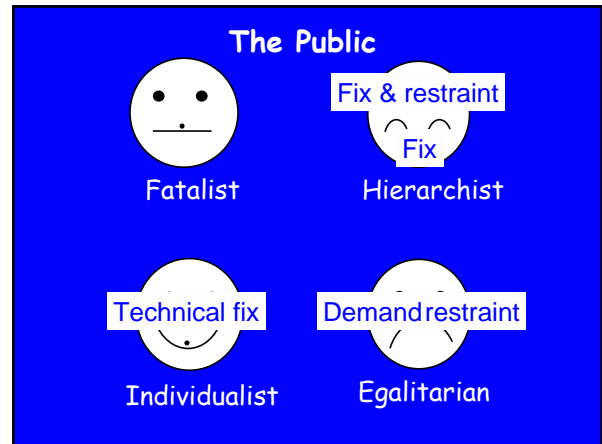
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### The social consequences of hypermobility

(the pollution-free perpetual-motion engine & electronic mobility too cheap to meter)

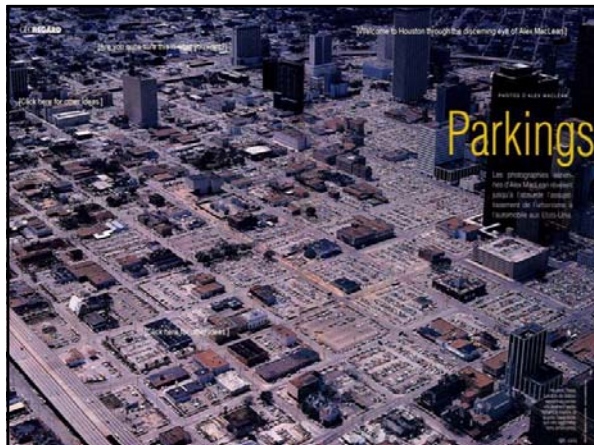
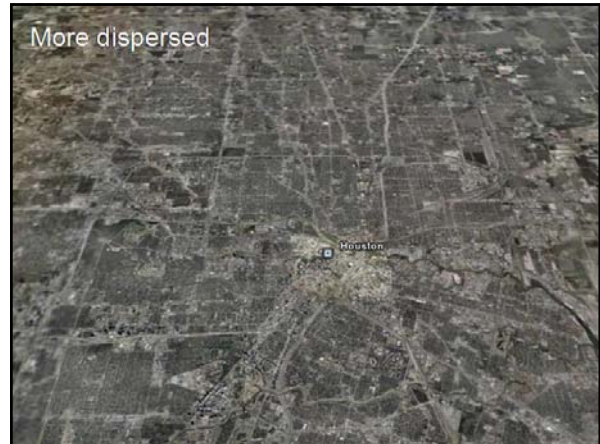
- more dispersed (more suburban sprawl)
- more polarised (greater disparity between rich and poor)
- more anonymous and less convivial (fewer people will know their neighbours)
- less child-friendly (children's freedoms will be further curtailed by parental fears)
- less culturally distinctive (the *McCulture* will be further advanced)
- more dangerous for those not in cars (more metal in motion)
- fatter and less fit (less exercise built into daily routines)
- more crime ridden (less social cohesion and more fear of crime)
- subject to a more Orwellian style of policing (more CCTV surveillance)
- less trusting (the rise of the audit/risk-assessment culture)
- less democratic (the majority will have less influence over the decisions that govern their lives)

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More dispersed



Anonymity, more crime and fear of crime  
– Big Brother watches



### CAUTION

These plants are covered  
in sharp spikes that may  
puncture the skin if touched  
DO NOT HANDLE



The entrance to the Health and Safety Laboratory, Buxton

More dangerous

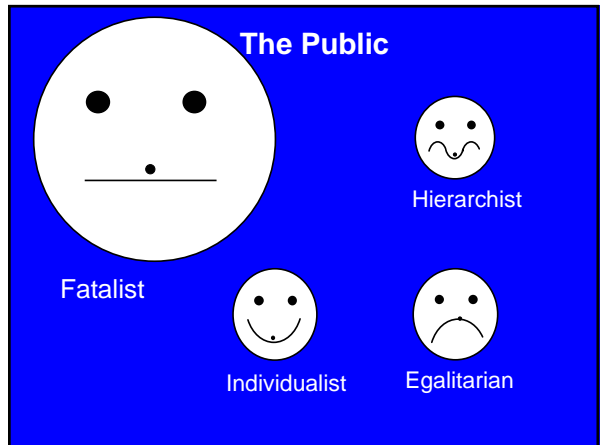
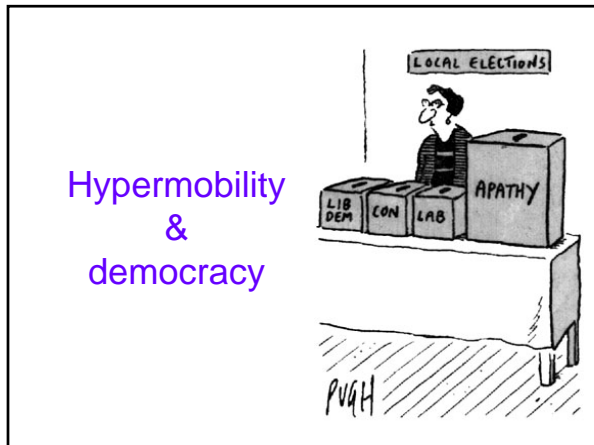
ONE FALSE  
MOVE  
AND YOU'RE  
DEAD.

BEFORE YOU CROSS THE ROAD.

STOP AT THE KERB.

Department of Transport





**Three opinion polls**

- Would you like a car and unlimited air miles?
- Would you like to live in the sort of world that would result if everyone's wish were granted?
- Would you like to live in a cleaner, safer, healthier, more sustainable world in which people knew their neighbours, and it was safe for children to play in the streets?



