



20's Plenty – the new norm

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Danny Dorling
Halford Mackinder Professor of Geography
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University of Oxford

#20mphconf

20mph visions

October 20th, 2022: 12.00

“Society”

Danny Dorling, Professor of Geography,
School of Geography and the
Environment of the University of Oxford

Visions of a future decade as 20mph becomes the norm

20's Plenty is one of the few campaigns
that has resulted in an actual
improvement in peoples' wellbeing and
life chances in the UK in the last decade



20's Plenty – the new norm

Twitter: #20mphconf



Oxfordshire County Council

@OxfordshireCC



We'd all like our roads to be safer, with cleaner, less polluted air.

Communities across the county are choosing to bring their local speed in built up areas down to 20mph.

See how your community can reduce to 20
oxfordshire.gov.uk/20mph

[#20MPH #SaferPaceSaferPlace
pic.twitter.com/EMxH5j64ae](https://twitter.com/EMxH5j64ae)

14/02/2022, 07:39

Research by the UK Transport Research Laboratory has shown that every 1mph reduction in average urban speeds can result in a 6 per cent fall in the number of casualties. It's also been shown that you are seven times more likely to survive if you are hit by a car driving at 20mph, than if you are hit at 30mph. If a child suddenly steps in front of a car, you are much less likely to seriously injure or kill them if you keep to a 20mph limit.

<https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/20mphrequest>

Request a 20mph restriction

Before you start the request

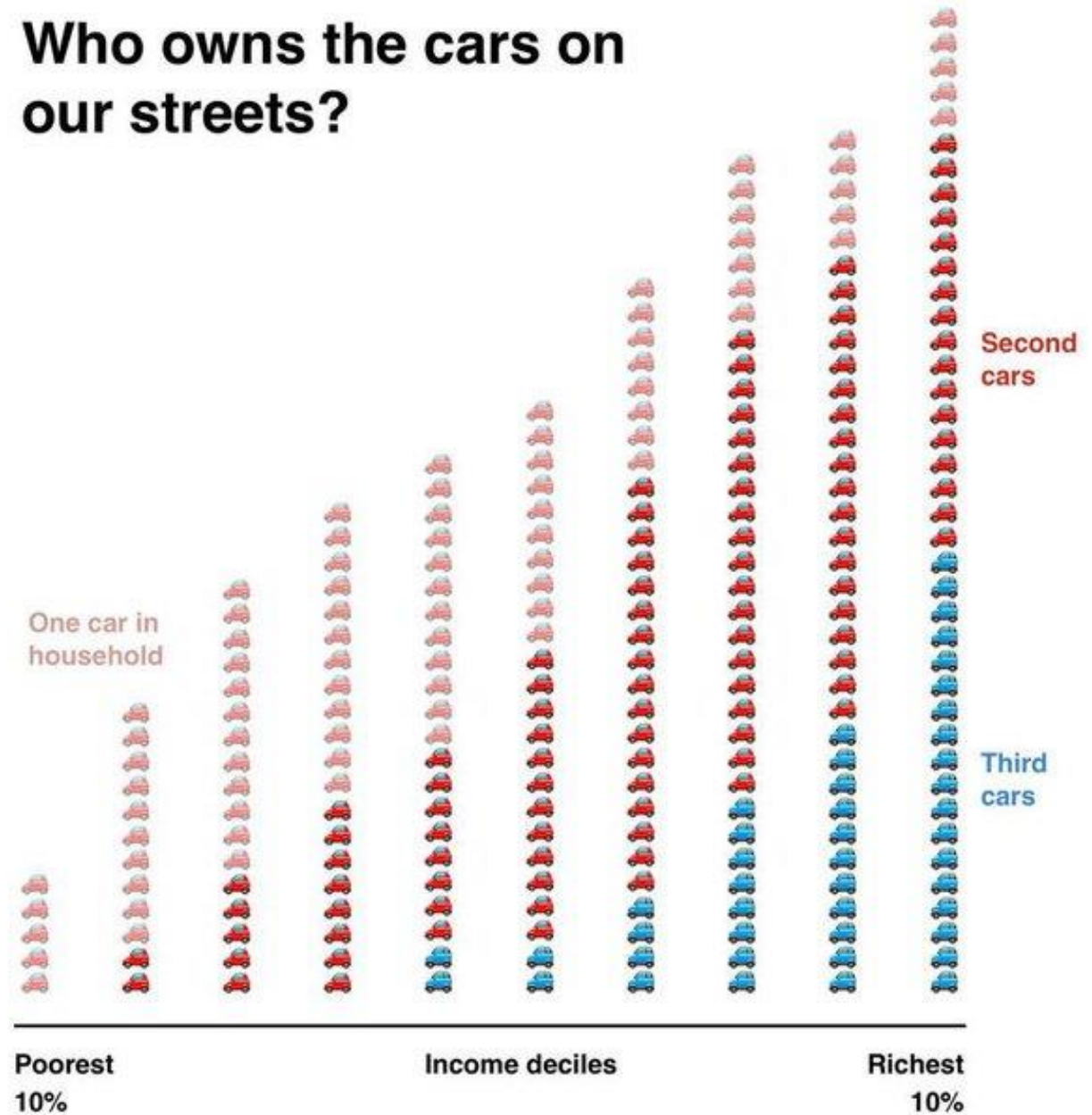
- ☐ I represent the town or parish council for the area which requesting the 20mph restriction
- ☐ This request is supported by the town or parish council and the county council elected member.
- ☐ The area affected by the request has an existing speed limit no greater than 40mph.
- ☐ The area includes such features as homes, shops, businesses, schools, walking and cycling routes. It may be an area where more active travel is being promoted, where air quality could be improved or is designated as a quiet lane.
- ☐ The proposal is within the extents of the built-up environment of the village or town where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix in a frequent and planned manner (except where strong evidence exists that higher speeds are safe)?

20mph will help the best-off people in particular, to be more courteous.

https://twitter.com/Charlie_Hicks_/status/1570355513522810882

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/expenditure/datasets/percentageofhouseholdswithcarsbyincomegroupandhouseholdcompositionuktablea47>

Who owns the cars on our streets?



Twitter: #20mphconf

A backlash was predicted in 2013. We are now approaching its tenth anniversary. This was when the RAC put out the following statement on one of its blogs (when blogging was fairly new...)

Twitter: #20mphconf

Blog

Backlash against 20mph 'slowdown' zones

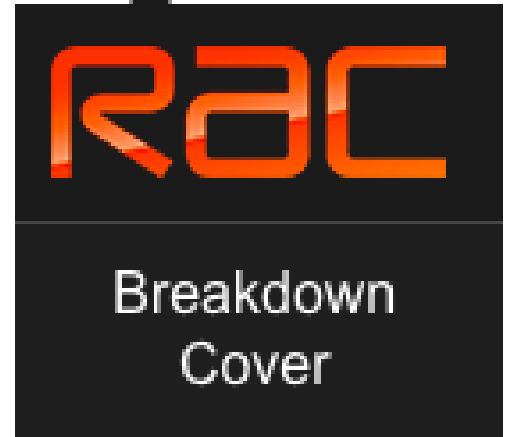
03 Jan 2013 at 13:16

“There’s also an environmental cost. According to the Highways Agency’s figures, at 30mph average CO2 emissions for vehicles (including 10% Heavy Goods Vehicles) stands at 188g/km, whereas at 20mph this rises to 221g/km. This is usually due to motorists driving in a lower gear than they normally would.

As CO2 output is linked to fuel consumption, it could thus hurt your motoring outgoings by driving at a slower speed.

There’s no denying a collision at 20mph is less damaging to humans and your vehicle than a crash at 30, but the argument is the number of incidents will increase. If we keep awareness levels behind the wheel high, can it be as effective as reducing the speed limit?”

Twitter: #20mphconf



<https://www.rac.co.uk/community/blog/rac-blog/january-2013/backlash-against-20mph-%E2%80%99slowdown%E2%80%99-zones>

Projected 'Backlash' was resurrected again this summer...

COMMENT

Prepare for the backlash against 20mph madness

Voters in Kent, Surrey and Wales won't like radically reduced speed limits. Only Kent politicians have listened so far

**IAIN DALE**

9 August 2022 • 7:00am

Related Topics

Motoring, Roads, Conservative Party,
Oliver Dowden



<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/08/09/prepare-backlash-against-20mph-madness/>

A rather wonderful thing happened in Tonbridge in Kent a few months ago. The county council had been given £1.6 million to introduce traffic safety measures. In its infinite wisdom, it decided to use some of this money to extend an existing 20mph limit.

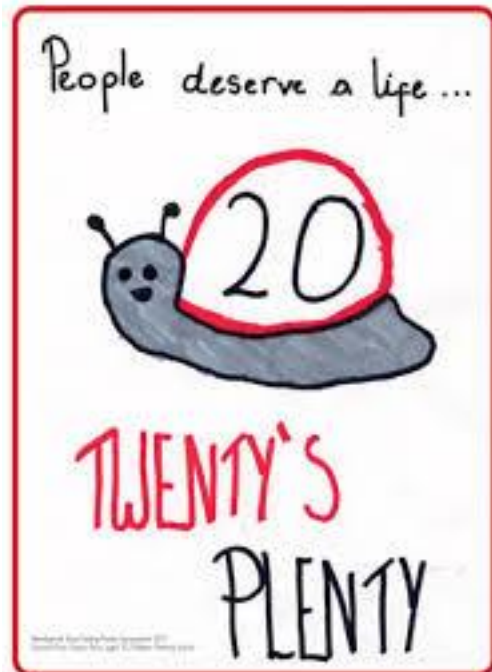
No, that's not the wonderful thing that happened. In the public consultation that was held at the end of 2021, it was clear that a huge majority of Tonbridge citizens wanted to abandon the scheme. The wonderful thing was that the local council actually took notice, and almost overnight the 20mph signs disappeared – or at least some of them did. Road safety campaigners were aghast. “This decision will cost lives,” they shrieked.

I know from the multiple speed awareness courses I have been on (yes, I am a bad person) that, if you reduce a speed limit, fewer people are likely to be injured or killed. However, taken to its extreme, this is an argument for cutting speed limits to 10mph or even 5mph. Have you ever tried driving at 10mph? It's almost impossible to do it for any length of time. And in many cars it's not that easy to drive at 20mph.

I got two speeding tickets driving along the Embankment in London for doing 22mph and 24mph. Was I causing any danger? No I was not. Laws only work when they enjoy the consent of the public.

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People understand the need for speed limits. I'm not some wide-eyed libertarian who doesn't believe in regulating driving, but there's little point in introducing such restrictions when drivers ignore them and pedestrians can't predict how fast a driver will be driving.

It's fine to put lower speed limits outside schools or old people's homes, or even on busy shopping streets where people cross the road more often, but to impose them on a dual carriageway or main A-road is the transport equivalent of political correctness gone mad. I know transport planners have a job to do, but to constantly kow-tow to the anti-car brigade, as many local authorities have been doing without even consulting the public, is not just infuriating, it is counter-productive.

Still, however, 20mph zones are spreading. The Welsh government is abolishing 30mph limits and replacing them with 20mph zones. Surrey County Council is planning to introduce 20mph limits on some formerly 60mph rural roads.

There has been no public debate about this and precious little formal consultation, no doubt because they saw what happened in places such as Tonbridge. Local politicians in Surrey and national politicians in Wales will rue the day they introduced this mad policy.



s Brown • AUGUST 9, 2022

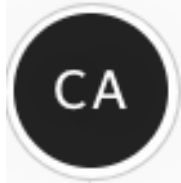
Most motorists are careful and considerate and already drive slowly when the conditions dictate.

Selfish and immature ones don't, and the new 20 mph law will make it easier for them to be punished more severely.

Mr Dale is most famous for attacking a protester in a fit of anger, impatience and intolerance, a tantrum which earned him a police caution.

I dread to think about how he behaves on our roads.

He freely admits he has little respect for speed limits.



Cat Arwood • AUGUST 9, 2022

I desperately want this. We live on a single track rural lane down which many idiots think they can do 60. Seems people are no longer capable of judgement, so signs it is. I hope.



DF Duggan • AUGUST 9, 2022

A 20mph makes my journey to work a real pain, and it feels bizarre and unnecessary at the times I travel. But then I saw a teenager get hit by a Land Rover I was cursing for obeying the limit, and he got up and walked away (sort of).



Barrie Newton · AUGUST 9, 2022

Many of the posts seem to indicate that the prime purpose of 20 mph limits is to protect jaywalkers, and the ridiculous demonstration video they use at driving awareness courses supports this view.

A little more attention to the behaviour of pedestrians might be in order.

Another thought :

When schoolchildren commonly played football and hockey and the like, they naturally became adept at judging relative velocity. That seems to have gone.

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Exclusive: study of London schemes says local communication should be improved but that benefits are clear



📷 Low-traffic neighbourhoods, introduced in a wave of schemes in 2020, often use planters to stop through-traffic by cars. Photograph: David Charles/Alamy

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The debate is moving on to other issues, but can LTN learn from the 20mph experience?

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/09/low-traffic-neighbourhoods-report-london-ltn-schemes>



📷 A 2020 demonstration against the imposition of a low traffic neighbourhood in Lewisham, south-east London. Photograph: John Gaffen/Alamy

It recommends that councils try to reach out better to communities ahead of future projects and seek to depoliticise the issue, with one idea being to use a different term from LTN, one not associated with the wave of schemes introduced in 2020, such as “healthy neighbourhoods” or “quiet neighbourhoods”.

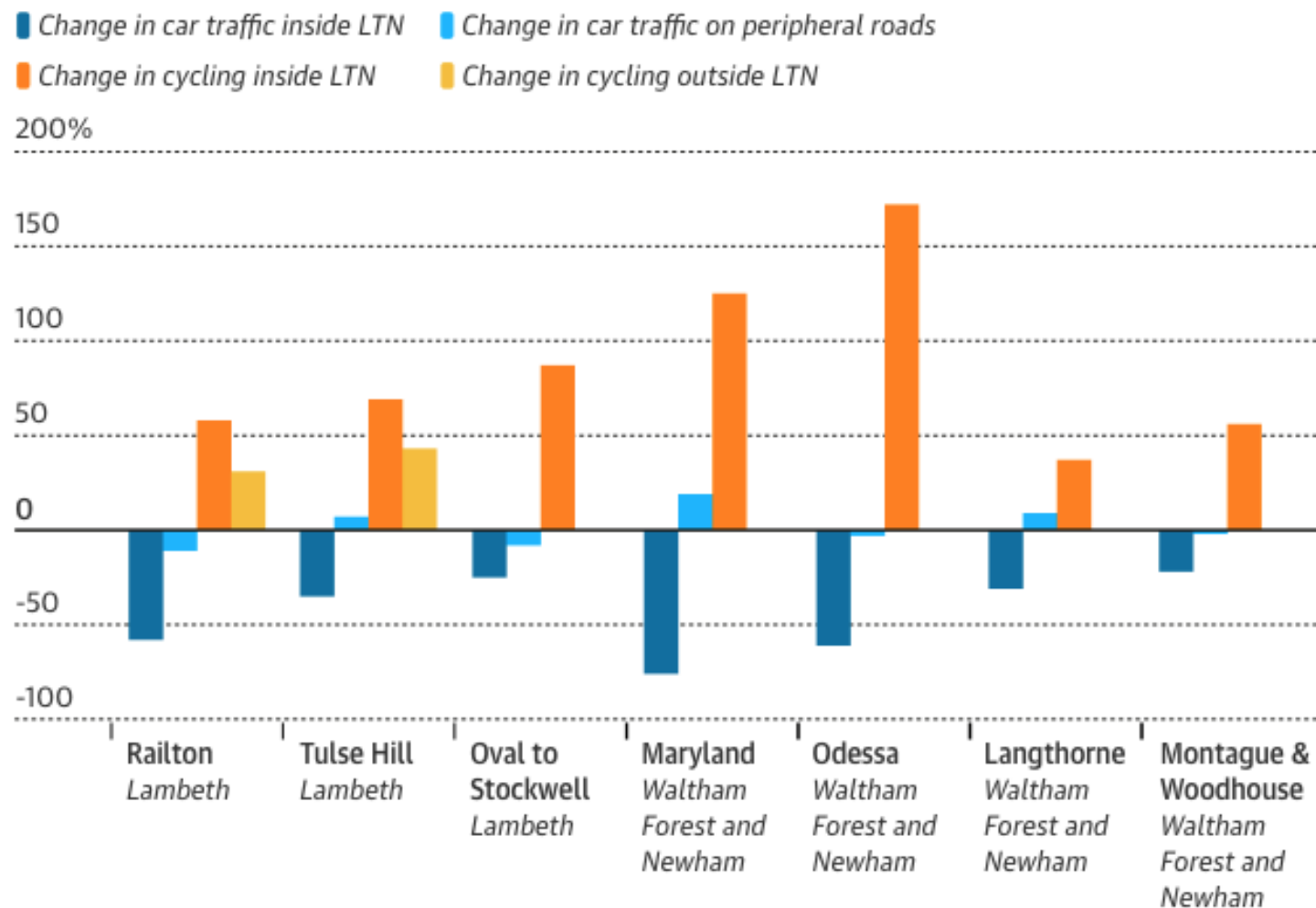
The report only covers [London](#), but has lessons for other areas given that the capital has seen the bulk of recent LTNs implemented, as well as much of the political controversy about their impact.

Data collated from 10 schemes in the report found that inside their boundaries, cycle use rose by between 31% and 172%, while car traffic fell by between 22% and 76%. There was also strong evidence they reduced road casualties.

One frequent criticism of LTNs is that they simply push car use to the periphery, to busier main roads. The study found some evidence of rising cycling numbers outside the LTNs, while car use also mainly fell slightly, although one area saw a 7% increase.

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How cycling and car traffic changed in London areas where low traffic neighbourhood schemes were introduced



Guardian graphic. Source: Centre for London. Note: This data was compiled in January 2022 and has not been updated since. These are average changes and vary from street to street. No cycling data for peripheral roads was available in Newham

Graphs and data alone do not change hearts and minds



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REACHING 78% OF ADULTS IN OXFORD EACH MONTH

oxfordtimes.co.uk

The Oxford Times

Established in 1862

Thursday, June 30, 2022

£1.50



CHAMPAGNE corks are flying at Oxford's last independent cinema after film fans won their campaign to save it from closure. Supporters of the 111-year-old Ultimate Picture Palace launched a campaign to give local movie-goers a chance to buy a share in the venue to prevent it from being sold and to improve its facilities. They are now celebrating after reaching their £366,000 target. Picture by Ed Nix

'LTNs have divided city's rich and poor'

Liam Rice

liam.rice@oxfordtimes.co.uk

A CONTROVERSIAL scheme which has blocked off roads in East Oxford and Cowley has divided the city and unfairly penalised working class people according to an opponent on the city council.

Oxfordshire County Council introduced a trial of three low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) in Cowley in March of last year, with roads blocked to through traffic in Church Cowley, Temple Cowley and Florence Park.

A decision on making the Cowley LTNs permanent was deferred in February after the previous cabinet member for highway management, Tim Beardsley, received a large number of emails, expressing anger at the

scheme. More bollards and planters were last month installed in the Divinity Road, St Clement's and St Mary's areas of East Oxford under an experimental traffic regulation.

The aim of the scheme is to make neighbourhoods more liveable by preventing 'rat-running', improving safety for cyclists and cutting air pollution.

But Saj Malik, a city councillor for the Temple Cowley ward, questioned why LTNs hadn't first been introduced in the north of the city focussing instead on the east. He said: "It's like a divide in the city between the north and the east. These schemes would make more sense in north Oxford and Summertown, where the roads are wider."

"This, north Oxford is more affluent and people can use public transport, compared to my ward where there are more working class people who might

have two or three jobs, and need their vehicle to get around.

"People in north Oxford are intellectual people with secure jobs. In East Oxford, you've got all the working class people and carers who need to drive to their jobs. It's a class issue against the most diverse areas - all these schemes are always in East Oxford. Why are they not in north Oxford?"

A spokesperson for the county council said there was already provision in the north of the city to prevent through traffic in the form of the North Oxford cycle path, and the Walton Street, Kingston Road and Bainton Road traffic filter.

The spokesperson continued: "The Cowley and East Oxford LTNs were funded by the Active Travel Fund, made available by the Government in response to the Covid-19 pan-

demie and primarily to promote the quickway and quietway cycle routes through them.

"Typically LTNs are trialled in residential roads that are inappropriately used as through-routes.

"East Oxford had multiple through-routes, a high number of families with children travelling to school and high levels of air pollution due to the proximity of the Eastern Bypass.

"LTNs being trialled in these areas therefore have the greatest potential to give households the choice of quiet, safe and convenient local walking and cycling routes.

"Our Local Transport and Connectivity Plan has made clear that there is a wider need for measures to incentivise more active travel - such as cycling and walking - including using a

Continued on Page 2



WIDOW'S WIN



Harper's Law success

SEE PAGE 12

ROBOT POP ART



Ai-Da hit Glastonbury

SEE PAGE 19



Josie Procter ♦ @JosieProc · 4h

Slow hand clap to the person who set the Howard Street and Barnet bollards on fire last night. Bollards have melted to road and road is impassable in a car unless you wish to wreck your chassis. #LTN

12

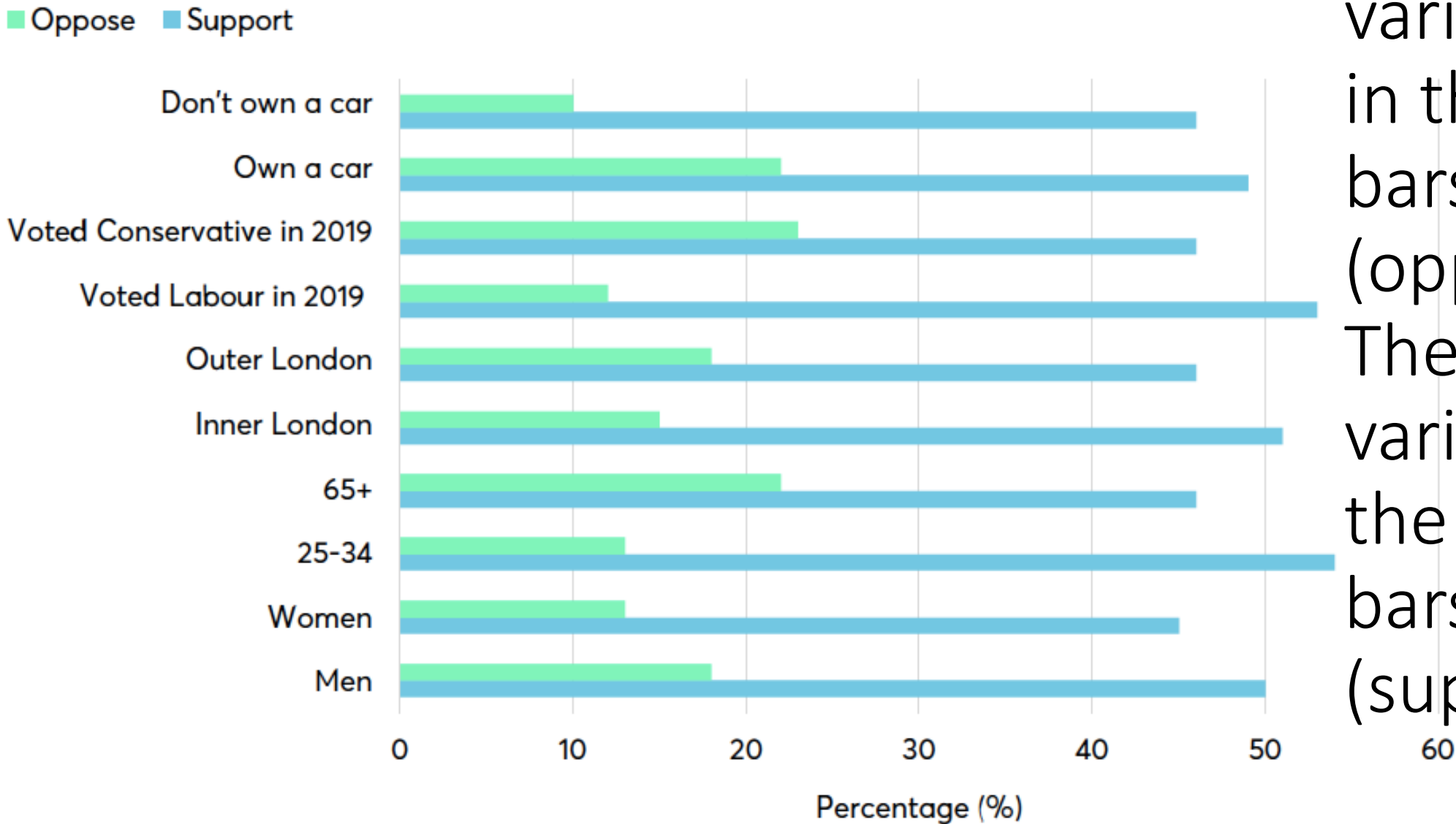
33

123



Tweet your reply

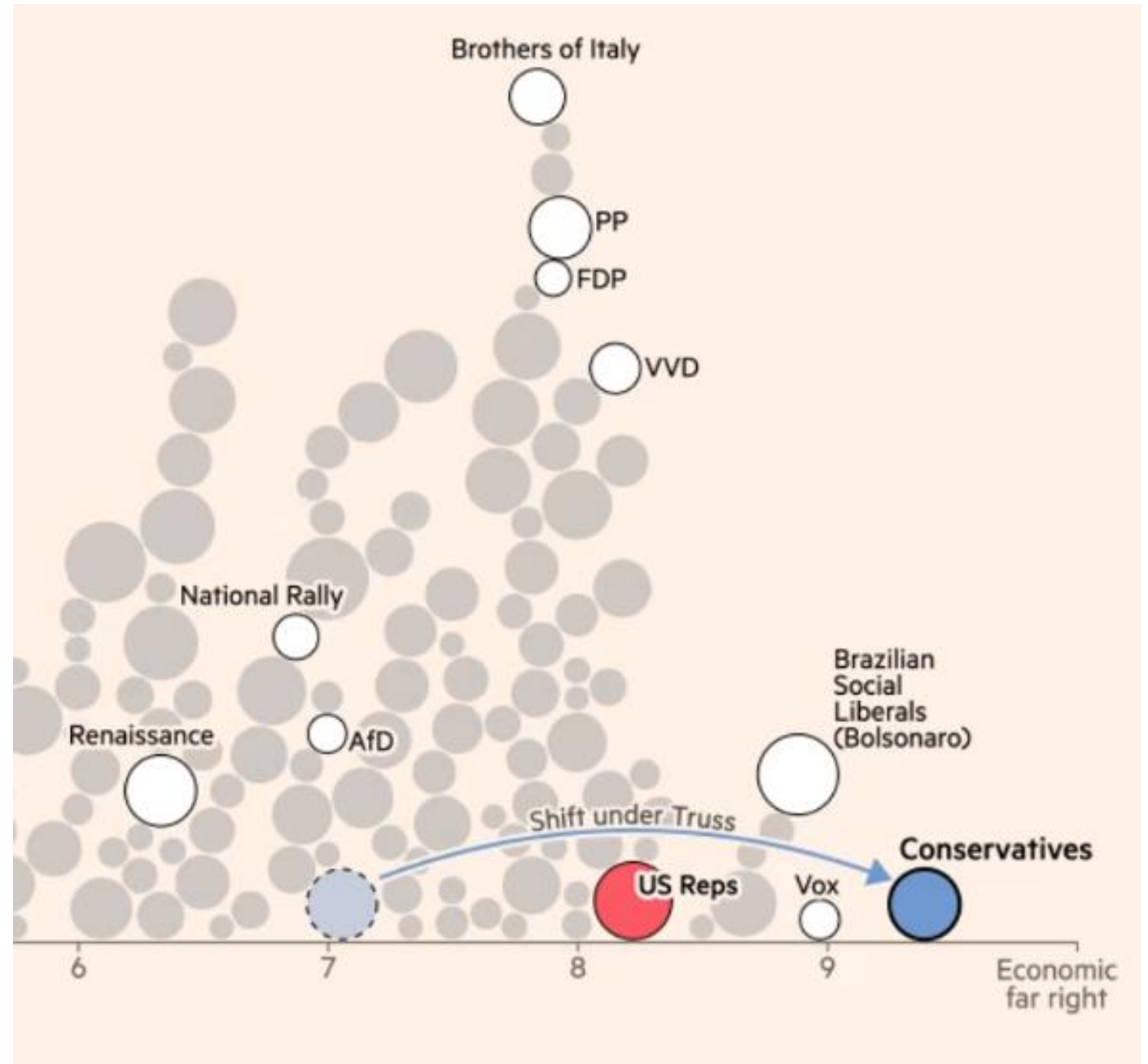
Figure 2: To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose the introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in London? (March 2021)



Most variation is in the green bars (opposition). There is less variation in the blue bars (support)

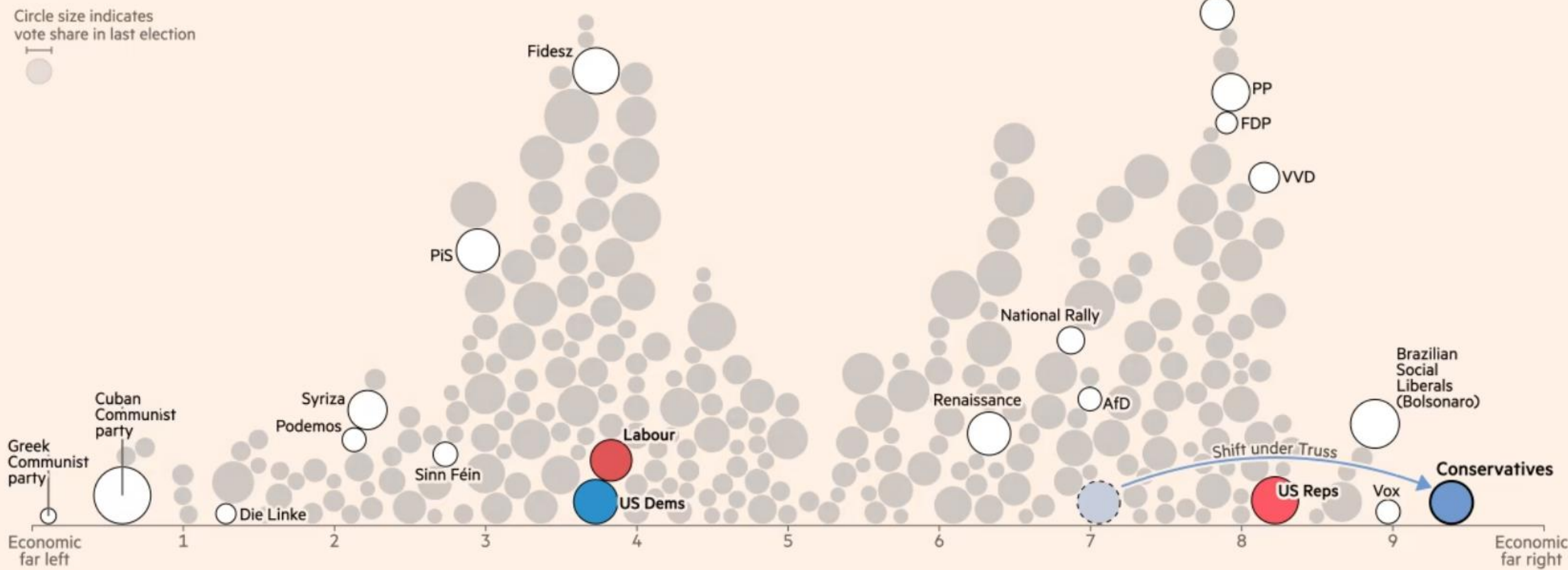
To begin to sum up

What is perhaps most surprising is that there has been success at all – given where the UK now sits in the international league table on libertarian economic and social policy.



The Tories are now the most economically right-wing major party in the developed world

Economic left-right position of all notable political parties in developed and emerging market countries*



*Showing 275 parties that achieved at least 5% of vote in recent elections in 61 countries
Sources: Chapel Hill Expert Survey; Global Party Survey; FT research
FT graphic: John Burn-Murdoch / @jburnmurdoch
© FT

John Burn-Murdoch (2022) The Tories have become unmoored from the British people, The Financial Times, September 30th:
<https://ft.com/content/d5f1d564-8c08-4711-b11d-9c6c7759f2b8>

I think we can be optimistic

But while there are still children and adults who are put at greater risk, simply because their local councilors are lax – there will be a job to be done.

We need policy which is:

Fair, Green, and Good.

Not Fast, Fast, and Fast.

Twitter: #20mphconf



<https://www.unlockingsustainablecities.org/car-free.html>

Image: © James McKay