**Where’s the fun in that?**

This presentation will explore the place of fun in Transport. We will touch briefly on academic literature, media, international examples, and anecdotes to challenge the urban gripe that transport is depressing, mundane and must simply be endured.

The mindless hours we spend on urban travel are accepted by some as a necessary evil. After all, boredom and frustration have never killed anyone… directly[[1]](#footnote-1). Others may try to squeeze in productive work, exercise, or catch up on serious reading during their daily commute.

Or (and this may be radical) we could try to have fun.

Fun in transport is hard to measure, hard to cost, and rarely happens by accident. However, it remains an important part of encouraging modal shift, increasing community cohesion, and improving wellbeing. Being able to articulate what fun is – not only for children, but for all users, may deepen our views on what transport systems can holistically offer to societies.

According to psychology research, fun is a key but often understudied part of consumer behaviour. Oh and Pham (2021)[[2]](#footnote-2) describe fun as supported by two “pillars”: hedonistic engagement, and a sense of liberation. These are facilitated by a combination of levers, including: novelty, social connectedness, spontaneity, and spatial/temporal boundedness.

While few people would ever use the words hedonism and liberation to describe their transit, levers that facilitate fun can be used to compare interventions and suggest new ways to not only get from one place to another, but to enjoy the journey.

1. Britton, A., & Shipley, M. J. (2010). Bored to death? *International Journal of Epidemiology, 39*(2), 370-371. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Oh, T. T., & Pham, M. T. (2021). A liberating-engagement theory of consumer fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *49*(1), 46-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)