



Virtual and imaginative travel in later life

Dr Charles Musselwhite

**Associate Professor (Reader) in Gerontology,
Centre for Innovative Ageing, Swansea University**

c.b.a.musselwhite@swansea.ac.uk

www.drcharliemuss.com

ONE-DAY OPAN CYMRU WORKSHOP ON:

PROLONGING SAFE MOBILITY IN LATER LIFE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND WELLBEING

**Wednesday 11th December 2013, SURF Room, Swansea
University, 10am-5pm**



Introduction

Internet usage is growing

Use of Internet over 65s

- Daily: 29% (67% all ages)
- Weekly: 11%
- Monthly: 4%

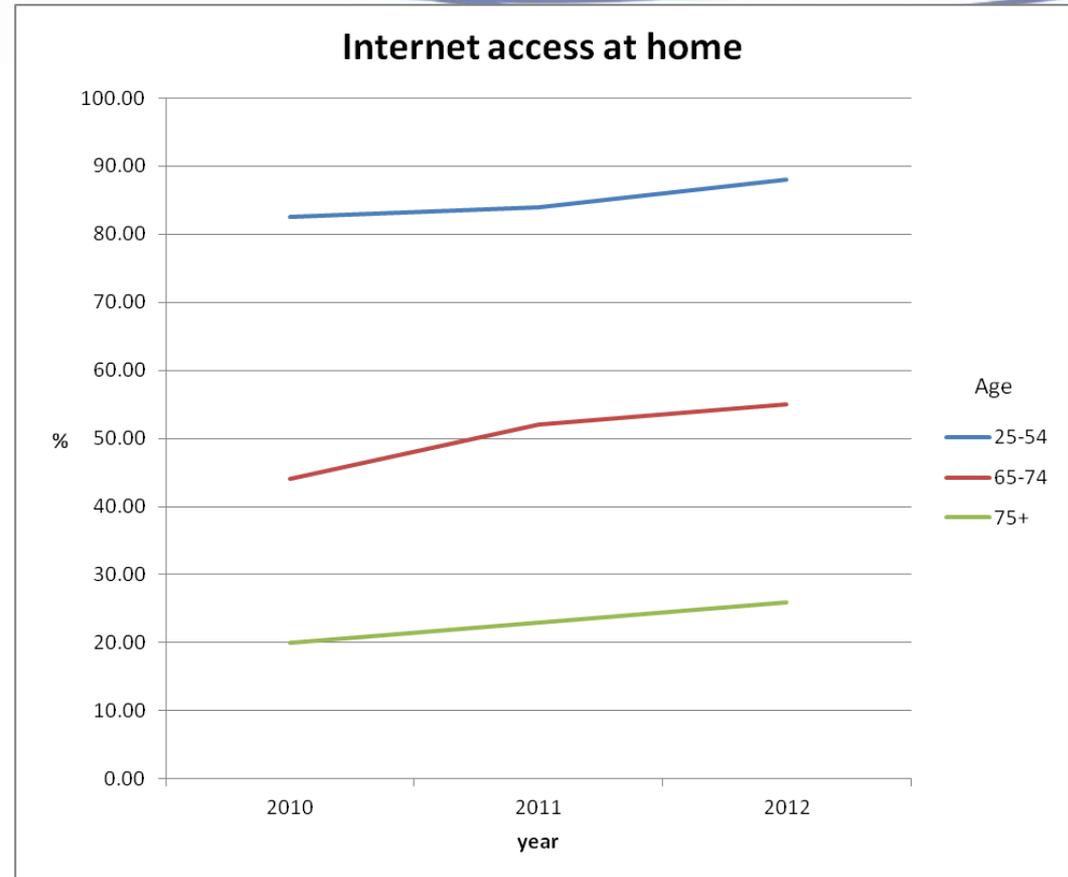
(OFCOM, 2013)

- Main reasons for not using

- don't need it

(ONS, 2013; OFCOM, 2013)

- Moving to “Can't use it” as no longer being an excuse?





Wider beneficial effects of computer/Internet use

- Users of internet = feel more in control of lives
- Owners of computers = feel more ability to learn new skills.
- People who reported not using the internet were more likely to say that they ‘often’ felt isolated from others.
- Conversely, people who said they did use the internet were more likely to respond that they ‘hardly ever or never’ felt isolated. The same pattern was found for loneliness.

(Mason, Sinclair and Berry, ILCUK, 2012).



What would older people like technology to help them with (Soparano et al., 2009)

- **Social isolation** (loneliness, depression, boredom, social exclusion and disruption of patterns of daily living);
- **Mobility inside and outside the home** (challenges to personal mobility in terms of walking in the neighbourhood and use of public transport).
- **Keeping healthy and active** (included physical and mental activity, exercise, good nutrition, daily routines and adherence to medications);
- **Getting access to shops and services**
- **Increase community participation and contribution to local community;**
- **Safety and Security:** (falls, disorientation, control of household equipment);
- **Reduce forgetfulness** (appears to be a challenge to independence for many and concerns, for example, taking medication or finding objects in the house);
- **Accessing information/keeping up to date** (was a crucial issue as well as finding help and tradesmen to do jobs around the home);
- **Quality management of care provision** (is an important issue to ensure that the right amount and right quality of care is delivered in people's homes);



Travel needs

Needs for travel



"You can't ask other people to take you out for "a drive". They'd think you'd lost their senses. Anyway they have got better things to be doing with their time, then ferrying me about just for the sake, like"

(female, gave-up driving at 80)

"It's hard to explain I suppose. You just don't seem like you belong. I suppose yes there are feelings that you might be ready for the scrapheap now. The first step to it, you know"

(Male, given-up driving at 76)

"Well Dorothy and David from number 3 take me shopping every week, we all go, we have a bit of a time of it you know, it's a kind of outing. I never expected that. " (Female, gave-up driving at 80)

A reduction in mobility can result in an increase in isolation, loneliness and depression and an overall a poorer quality of life.

TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Aesthetic Needs

e.g. The need for the journey itself for relaxation, visit nature, use and test cognitive skills

On giving-up driving this level of needs is adversely affected
Not so easy to ask for discretionary travel

SECONDARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Social/affective Needs

e.g. The need for independence, control, to be seen as normal. Related to status, roles, identity, self-esteem. Impression management

On giving-up driving this level of needs is adversely affected
Isolation, no longer part of society, no longer feel normal

PRIMARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Practical/utilitarian Needs

e.g. get from A to B as safely, reliably and as quickly as possible

On giving-up driving – this level of need is usually met

- friends
- accessible transport
- public transport
- teleshopping?



Satisfying travel
needs by virtual
technologies

Virtual

There are replacements on the Internet to reduce actual mobility



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Webcams

Virtual
Environments

TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Aesthetic Needs

e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.

No explicit purpose.

SECONDARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Social/affective Needs

e.g. The need for independence, control, to be seen as normal.

Linked to status, roles, identity, self-esteem. Impression management

PRIMARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Practical/utilitarian Needs

e.g. get from A to B as safely, reliably, cheaply and comfortably as possible.

Examples: E-health

Carefully track own health -

Independence, esp. rural areas, ownership over health

Reduce emergencies

PRIMARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Practical/utilitarian Needs

e.g. get from A to B as safely, reliably and comfortably as possible.

Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe



A tele-health monitor is installed at home allowing patient to measure pulse, blood pressure, lung capacity, lung function, electrical activity in her heart and other health indicators

Examples: Shopping online

Shop online

Browse time, still do it yourself, no need to move from comfort of own home

PRIMARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Practical/utilitarian Needs

e.g. get from A to B as safely, reliably and comfortably as possible.



Preferred when done in a group.

AGE UK help sessions (e.g. Come Dine with Us – Tyne & Wear)

AGE Concern, Dorset – Musselwhite (2006)

PRIMARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Practical/utilitarian Needs

e.g. get from A to B as safely, reliably and comfortably as possible.

Teleworking:

1993 by 2010: 80% of office workers
would work from home/remotely

Telehubs etc. (AT&T, 1993)

- Remove the need for physical/
literal/ corporeal travel
- Reduce need for workspace
- Did it happen? No?
- Why?
- Technology IS there and IS good
quality.



SECONDARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Social/affective Needs

e.g. The need for independence, control, to be seen as normal.

Linked to status, roles, identity, self-esteem. Impression management



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe



facebook



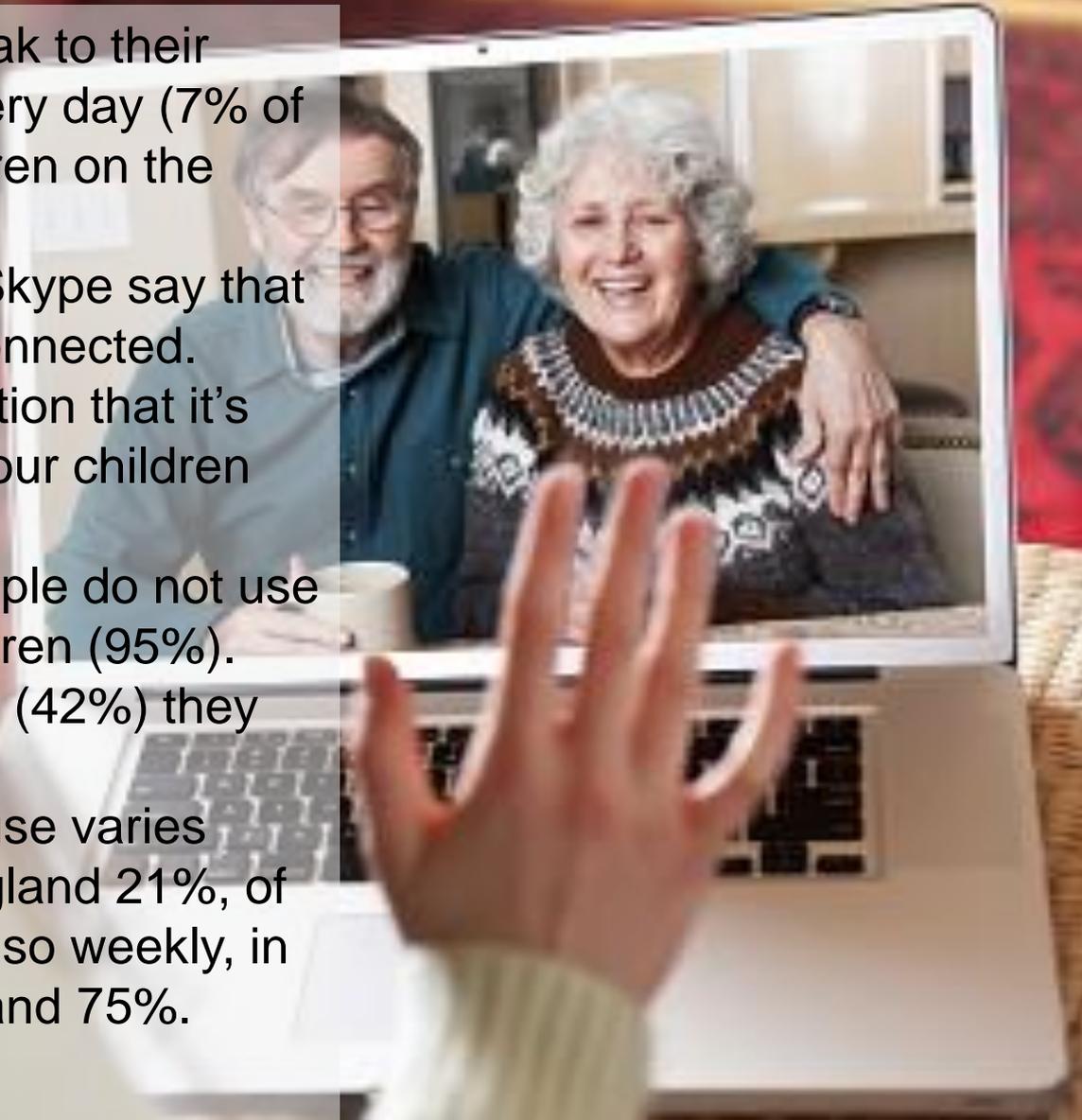
- Facebook big growth in use: 65% over 65s use. But many do not use frequently/give it up
- Twitter: 13% 50-64 year olds; 5% 65+ (compared to 30% 18-29 year olds)

SECONDARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Social/affective Needs

e.g. The need for independence, control, to be seen as normal.
Linked to status, roles, identity, self-esteem. Impression management

- 40% of older people speak to their children on the phone every day (7% of never speak to their children on the phone).
- 85% of people that use Skype say that it helps them feel more connected. However, there is recognition that it's not the same as seeing your children (87%).
- The majority of older people do not use Skype to talk to their children (95%). This is because, for many (42%) they don't know how to use it.
- The regularity of Skype use varies across the nations: in England 21%, of those who use Skype, do so weekly, in Wales it's 38% and Scotland 75%.



Examples: Outside world in

TV

Radio

Still Walks

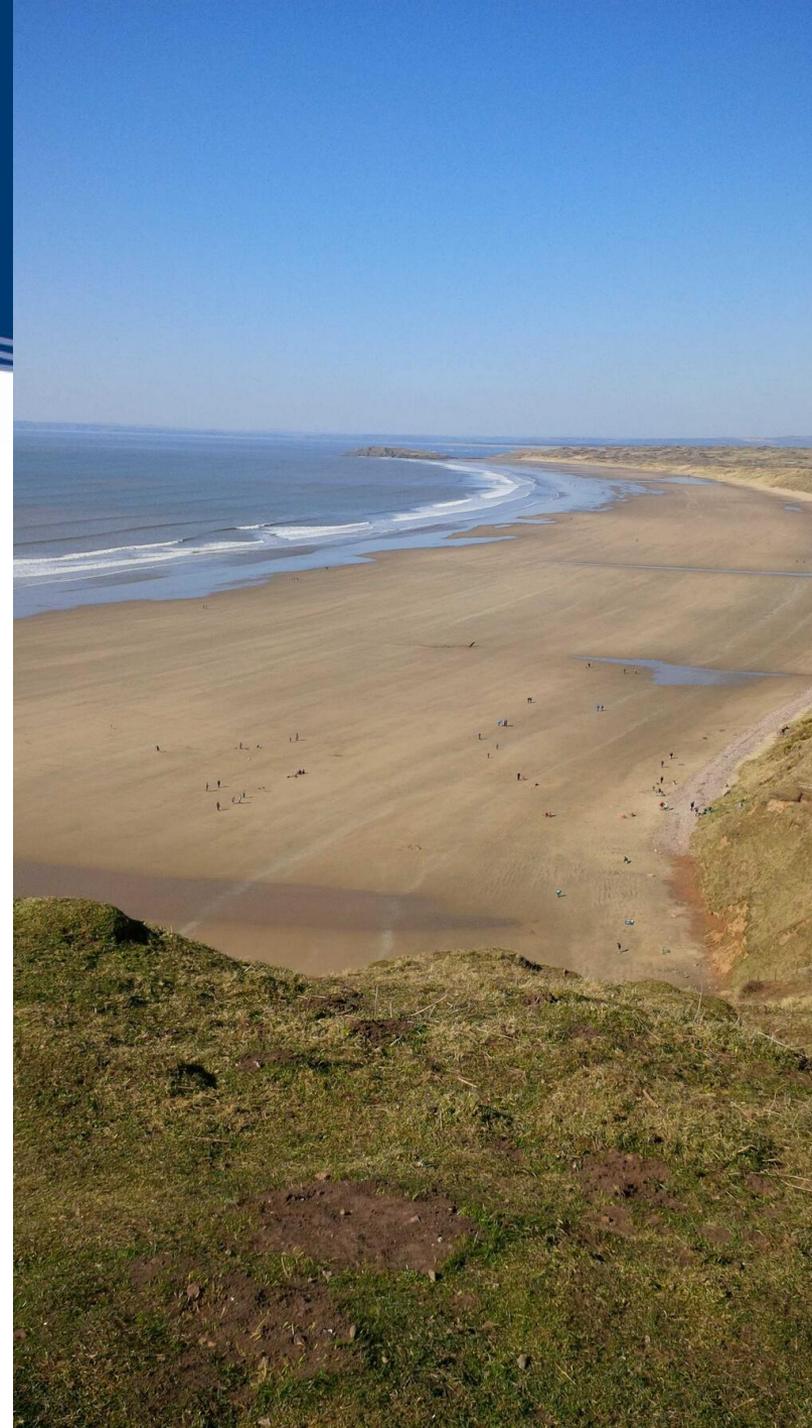
Webcams

Pictures

Biophilia – innate need to be with nature

Relaxing, calming.

Missing? – Control and movement,
moving between things and sensory
information. Interaction. The ordinary.



TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Aesthetic Needs

e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.
No explicit purpose.



StillWalks™

bringing the outside in - beautiful walks anytime, anywhere

TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS
Aesthetic Needs
e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.
No explicit purpose.



Times Square, NYC



TorchCam



Niagara Falls, CAN



Scranton, PA



Anna Maria Island, FL



Belmont, NC



Times Square, NYC



New York, NY



EarthCamTV



Grand Haven, MI.



Sedona, AZ



[Main Square, Stavropol, Russia](#)



[Mehamn - Mehamn](#)

[Nosara surf camera Costa Rica](#)



[Camera 3425](#)



[Camera 3467](#)



[Camera 3499](#)



[Camera 35](#)



[Camera 9777](#)



[near oslo, norway](#)



[Camera 1626](#)



[Camera 1684](#)



[Camera 85](#)



[Camera 1663](#)



[iceland webcam](#)



[Camera 3710](#)



[Camera 9906](#)



[Ucluelet B](#)

TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS
Aesthetic Needs
e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.
No explicit purpose.

TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Aesthetic Needs

e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.

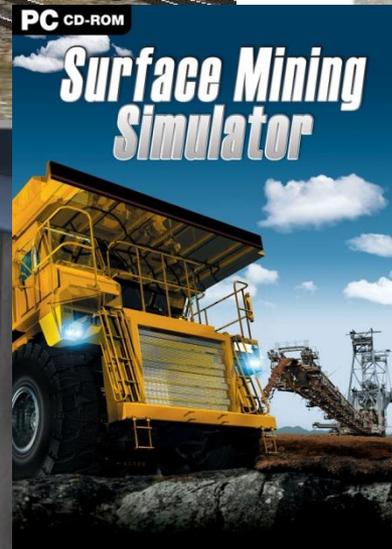
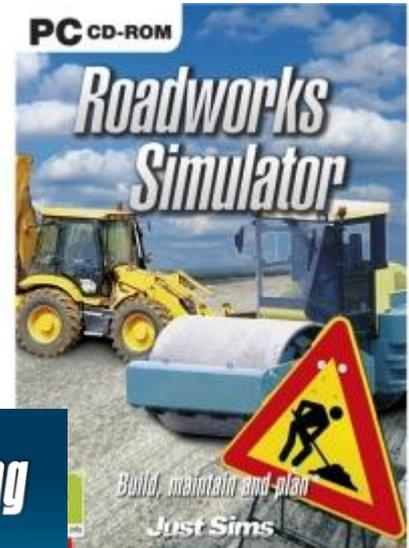
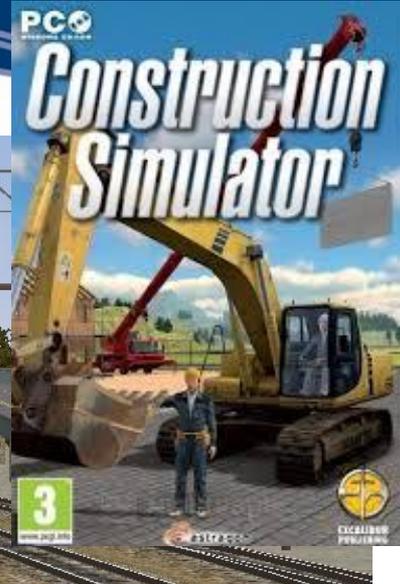
No explicit purpose.

Need for interaction

Simulated worlds



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe





TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS
Aesthetic Needs
e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.
No explicit purpose.



Need for interaction
Virtual worlds.
Immersion for relaxation (Baños et al., 2012)
Second life



TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Aesthetic Needs

e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.

No explicit purpose.

Virtual reality caves

Need more research with older people



Potential

Virtual

- Increase in technology and networking
- Increased accessibility
- Increased use – buying, talking, making friends, “visiting”, watching, interacting
- Own time



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

“I will order stuff on the Internet rather than going to town to buy it, so I don't make that journey and it is just so much simpler on the Internet. Somebody else comes and drives and delivers it to your door (Male 60s).”

“I certainly see more of my grandson because of Skype (Female 60s).”

Challenges

- What is missing from the “virtual” world compared to “reality”?
 - Touch, smell, sense, continuity, impression managed, staged
 - Informal, random, chance meetings
- Equal access?

“If I couldn't get to places..., although I've got a computer, I would stagnate. Because I like the social aspect of things. And I like the different characters you come across and it stimulates your thinking and makes life worthwhile to be able to go out and meet others (Male 70s)”

Parkhurst, G., Galvin, K., Musselwhite, C., Phillips, J., Shergold, I., Todres L. (forthcoming) Beyond Transport: Understanding the Role of Mobilities in Connecting Rural Elders in Civic Society in Hennessey, C., Means, R., Burholt, V., (Eds). *Countryside Connections: Older people, Community and Place in Rural Britain*. Policy Press, Bristol.

Need to bring it together



Shopping

Journey
Multi-
sensory
experience

TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Aesthetic Needs

e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.
No explicit purpose.

Senior-Chatroom.com

SECONDARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Social/affective Needs

e.g. The need for independence, control, to be seen as normal.
Linked to status, roles, identity, self-esteem. Impression management

Chat



Buy food

PRIMARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Practical/utilitarian Needs

e.g. get from A to B as safely, reliably, cheaply and comfortably as possible.



Imaginative travel

TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Aesthetic Needs

e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.

No explicit purpose.

Imaginative

I would miss not getting out and about. But look at the view from my garden of the fields. Look at it. If I really couldn't go out again I'd be a lot more better off than other people and other people in urban areas (Po2).

“look out my window don't you think I am very privileged.... people have got pictures like that hanging on their walls...I sit by here and I see the changing seasons and the sunrise on it....” (Female 80s)

Parkhurst, G., Galvin, K., Musselwhite, C., Phillips, J., Shergold, I., Todres L. (forthcoming) Beyond Transport: Understanding the Role of Mobilities in Connecting Rural Elders in Civic Society in Hennesey, C., Means, R., Burholt, V., (Eds). *Countryside Connections: Older people, Community and Place in Rural Britain*. Policy Press, Bristol.

Imaginative

Human and Health Sciences
Idorau Dynol ac Iechyd
Active Ageing

TERTIARY MOBILITY NEEDS

Aesthetic Needs

e.g. The need for the journey itself, for relaxation, visit nature.

No explicit purpose.

People remember places they
have travelled



Dunroamin



‘As far as I am concerned, I have spent 40 years of my life overseas anyway so I have no desire to go to these places or to move around’ (Male Dyfed)



Conclusion

- Technology not direct satisfaction
 - often satisfies only one need at a time
 - Could be brought together
 - But not the same as in-person
 - Random, informal – can this really be mimicked?
 - Touch, smell, feel – can technology provide?
- But could give you more
 - Shopping with family on other side of the world
 - Keeping people independent – ageing in place
 - Locus of control with the person
- Essence and importance of literal travel
 - Importance of being co-present
 - Of the informal
 - Of the random
 - Of the ordinary, in order to get at the extraordinary
 - Interaction, mastery, discovery, formulating





References

- Mason, M., Sinclair, D. and Berry, C (2012) [Nudge or Compel? Can behavioural economics tackle the digital exclusion of older people?](#) Discussion Paper. International Longevity Centre - UK.
- Musselwhite, C. (2011) [Successfully giving up driving for older people.](#) Discussion Paper. International Longevity Centre - UK.
- Musselwhite, C. and Haddad, H. (2010). [Mobility, accessibility and quality of later life.](#) *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults*. **11(1)**, 25-37.
- Musselwhite, C.B.A. & Shergold, I. (2013). Examining the process of driving cessation in later life. *European Journal of Ageing*. **10(2)**, 89-100
- Parkhurst, G., Galvin, K., Musselwhite, C., Phillips, J., Shergold, I., Todres L. (forthcoming) **Beyond Transport:** Understanding the Role of Mobilities in Connecting Rural Elders in Civic Society in Hennesey, C., Means, R., Burholt, V., (Eds). *Countryside Connections: Older people, Community and Place in Rural Britain*. Policy Press, Bristol.
- Shergold, I., Parkhurst, G., Musselwhite, C., (2012). [Rural car dependence: an emerging barrier to community activity for older people?](#) *Transport Planning & Tech.*, **35 (1)**, 69-85