

- Bridgman J., Fassam, L., Hills, M.
- University of Northampton
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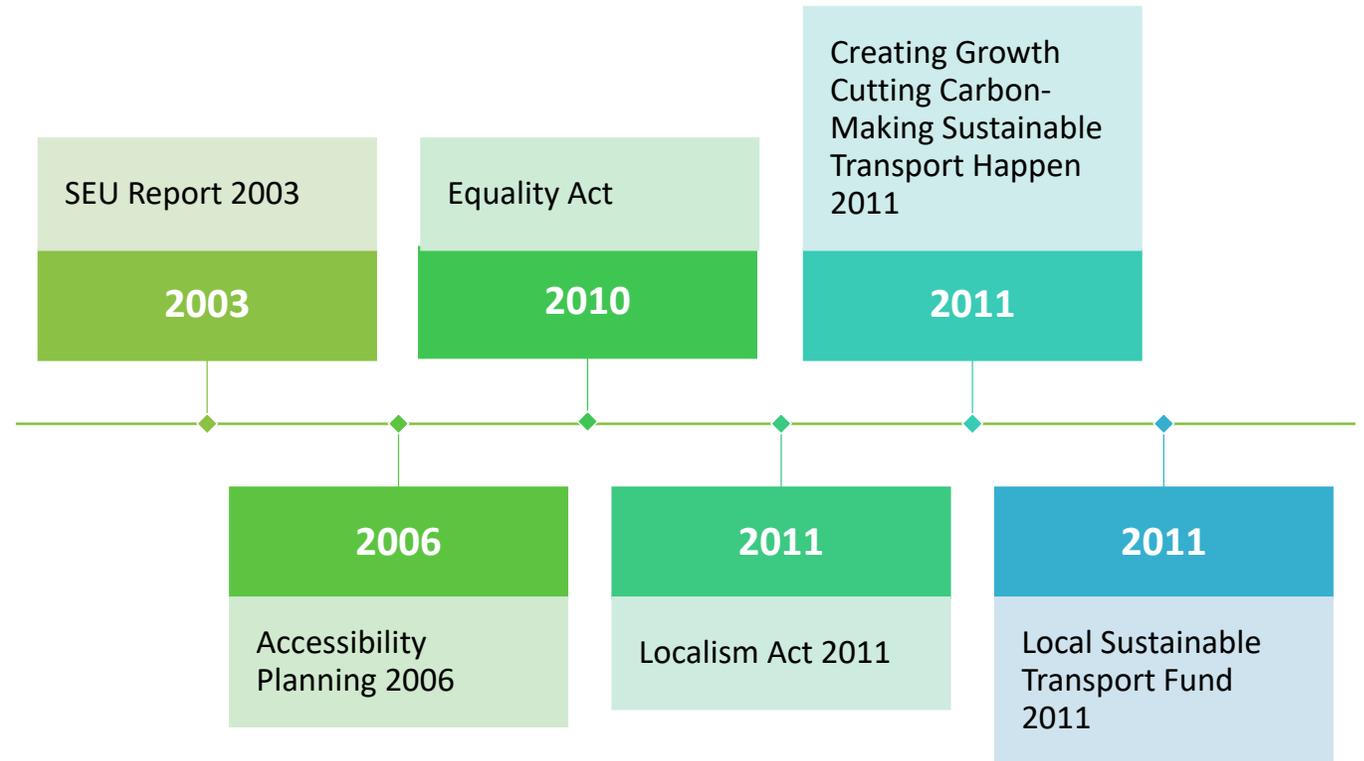
Introduction

Transport & Austerity Measures: When Policy Meets Reality

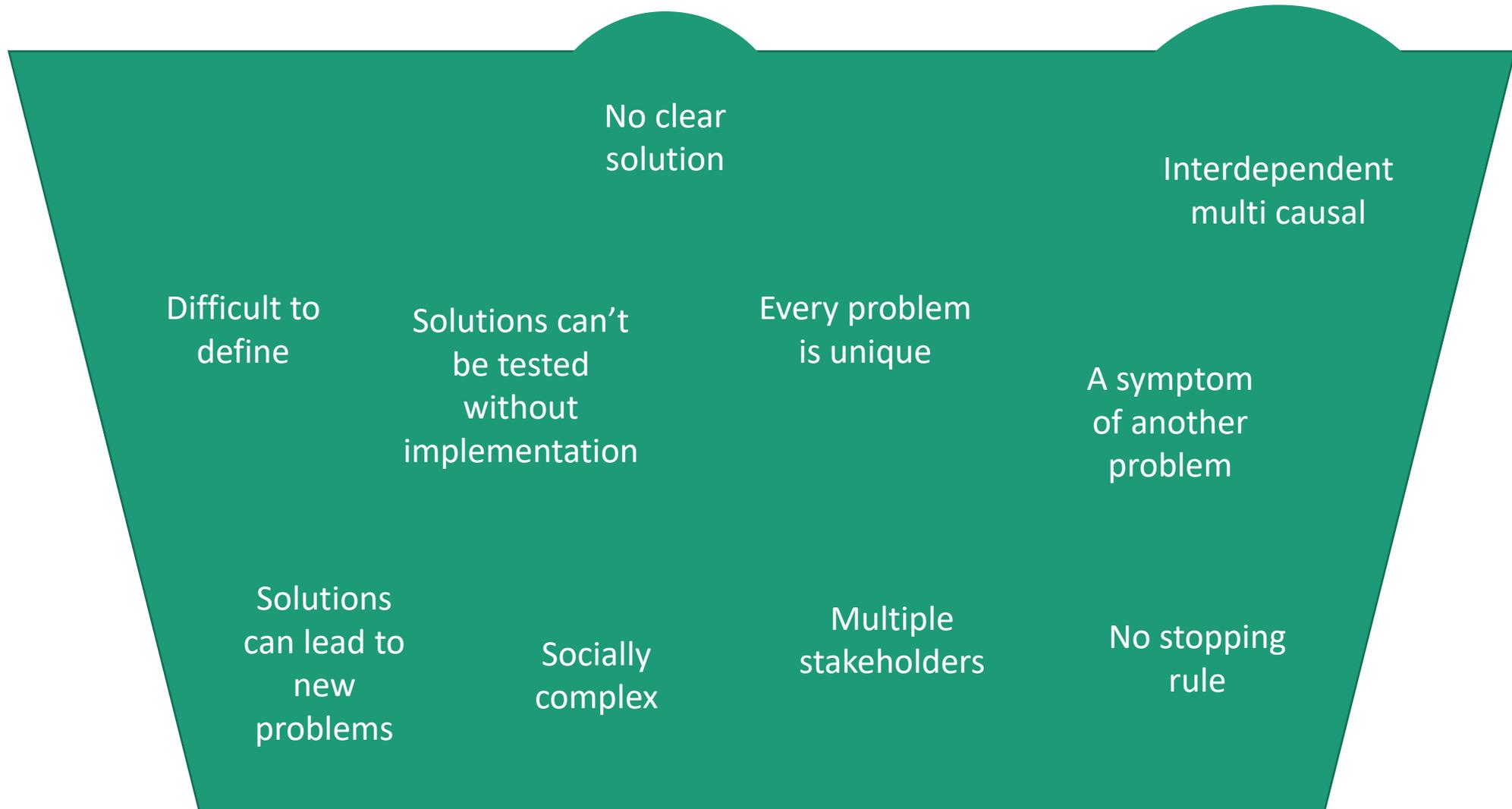
Explored the 2003 Social Exclusion Unit report – a view from the UK Cabinet Office which looked at the cross-cutting, pan-Departmental impacts of transport on social mobility and justice.

Explored the Government White Paper: Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon (DfT, 2011)

Reviews complemented by an introduction to the transport landscape in Northamptonshire – Introduce ongoing research documenting the projected effects of austerity-driven transport savings measures.



The definition of a Wicked Problem (Rittel & Webber, 1973)



What defines transport as a wicked problem

Wicked problems are inherently resistant to a clear statement of the problem and resistant to a clearly obvious and agreed solution (Head, 2008; Rittel & Webber 1973).

Social complexity and diversity amongst stakeholders
Uncertainty, divergence and the changing nature of the problem are factors that contribute to the problem

Historically no single government department has been responsible for ensuring that individuals can access goods and services, are
This truly confirms transport as a wicked problem (Rittel & Webber, 1974).

Degrees of wickedness

The wicked problem of physical accessibility for disabled people is a social or cultural problem (Dermott & Main, 2017)

The embedding of structural and other inequalities by a lack of availability and accessibility of transport is ***morally wicked***

The complex, overlapping, pervasive challenges of transport indicate there are degrees of 'wickedness' to the problem - rather than a binary distinction, between tame or wicked problems

Degrees of wickedness to the moral iniquity that non-accessible or unavailable transport provision or options visits on the socially excluded.

SEU-Making the Connections 2003

Defined Accessibility-enabling people to get to key services at reasonable cost in reasonable time and with reasonable ease

Job seekers- encouraged to seek work within a reasonable distance (90 minutes travel!)

Added further layer of complexity through accessibility planning

Opportunity to build on AP through the localism act- help stakeholders negotiate shared understanding about the problem

Creating growth- Cutting Carbon(2011)

Devolution of power to local authorities to increase accessibility of transport-simultaneous introduction of the LSFT (2011)

Accessibility for all groups should be considered at national and local level-LSFT aimed to improve accessibility through grant funding for local schemes

Aspirations of improving job seekers approach to access to work-increasing social mobility and economic growth

Focus on getting people into work but not the sustainability of work



A Council in Crisis

- Whilst the wicked problem of transport related social exclusion appears to have a level of understanding, connected approaches to developing solutions are appearing.
- This does not appear to be the case in Northamptonshire UK, the reverse is happening.
- Northamptonshire the tip of the iceberg!

Northamptonshire is a county situated in the midlands of the UK and has a population of approximately 733,000

Northamptonshire County Council has been beset with financial woes in recent times and has very recently had to be bailed out by central Government

£70 million pound shortfall lead to a series of draconian measures to cut spending. As part of that reduction in spending, subsidies for bus routes were withdrawn entirely

Case Study



- Northamptonshire – a living laboratory for the engagement of aspiration with Local Authority reality
- Removal of all bus subsidies – particularly affected rural areas and vulnerable groups- elderly- job seekers-single parents
- Onus on voluntary and community sectors to take control
- Minimal impact assessments conducted

The Reality of
living in a rural
community

Network Northamptonshire



- Set up a Community interest company, partnership between Local Authority & University
- Multi-stakeholder engagement
 - Local authority
 - Healthcare trust
 - Local businesses/NGO's
- Aims to model an innovative approach to service provision centered around existing service provision

Conclusion

Although transport's status as a 'wicked problem' is well deserved, there are many things that can be done to improve the situation.

Critically, in the context of recession and austerity, these approaches do not require large financial resources

The promise of genuinely transformative impact on accessible and available transport from financially sustainable business models which do not rely on subsidy and the whims of local authority decision-making.