

Travel Time, Accessibility and Connectivity Statistics

Position Paper

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7-9 North St David Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1AW
Tel 0131 524 9610, email info@dhc1.co.uk, web www.dhc1.co.uk

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Summary

This paper discusses the evolution of the travel time, accessibility and connectivity statistics as a contribution to the ongoing review of statistics within government.

Accessibility is complex, but the needs of the population can be represented by a basket of indicators describing opportunities available to transport users and non-users. Within most of the statistics over the last 20 years, travel time has been used as a convenient proxy for the many factors affecting accessibility including travel cost and distance. Access to transport is referred to as connectivity.

In the first decade of this century government sought to establish consistent metrics by which to represent accessibility change. More recently DfT's desire for consistency has resulted in calculating fewer travel times. This new approach has many limitations that are not well understood by users. There is a risk that current statistics could be used inappropriately, confusing decision makers more than enlightening policy.

Cross sector working to improve access to opportunity has continued to rise on policy agendas of successive governments over 30 years. Despite the 2014 parliamentary inquiry into access to services giving strong endorsement to the national travel time statistics and recommending more extensive government interpretation of trends and changes, the statistics have declined in scope and relevance since then.

The national travel time statistics have lost their way, but fresh leadership by DfT could reap benefits across government. Opportunities could be more accurately represented by activity levels at destination locations, travel time estimation using the platforms already trusted by the population, and the statistics could include a wider range of personal mobility capabilities.

The national accessibility statistics were renamed national travel time statistics nearly a decade ago in recognition of the slow progress adding other attributes of accessibility such as cost, safety, and physical accessibility. Looking forward there is a need to refocus attention on how to improve accessibility statistics to meet the needs of the 21st century. This will require a fresh approach to working with industry on data, where the rights of transport operators and data providers to offer services must be balanced by a responsibility to share sufficient data to enable effective governance.

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1.0 Context

- 1.1 This paper briefly summarises how DfT national travel time statistics emerged and evolved over the last 20 years. It has been prepared as a contribution to the ongoing review of statistics within government. The context for the paper is the fast-changing data economy and the developing role of government.
- 1.2 Drawing from experience within DHC in accessibility policy and statistics over the last 25 years, the paper starts with some background on why a time series of government statistics was considered necessary, and then reviews current needs and opportunities.
- 1.3 The main points were discussed with Ian Knowles at DfT in July 2019 when it was agreed that a position paper would be useful as an input to discussions scheduled within government for the autumn of 2019.
- 1.4 The paper draws from many reports, some of which are referenced in this paper including recent papers written to summarise what has been learned¹. It does not aim to give comprehensive coverage of the issues but is intended to prompt reflection on the role and purpose of accessibility statistics in delivering policy aims for access to opportunity for all.

The 1990s - a decade of changing policy and opportunity

- 1.5 Measures of transport performance have traditionally been dominated by considerations of travel demand and operations. These approaches, business models and culture have viewed increased travel demand as a positive economic and social benefit and government oversight includes a raft of statistics describing travel demand for trains, buses, car sales, road building, and other travel. Over time it has become clear that other measures of transport performance were needed, more closely related to the function of transport within the economy, environment and society.
- 1.6 Transport policies emerging in the early 1990s recognised that it was neither practical nor desirable for all travel demand to be met. New metrics were needed to understand the consequences for the economy and society of travel trip suppression and growth. Representation of access to opportunity was widely viewed as one of the most important new metrics to represent these effects².
- 1.7 Policies for sustainable development require understanding of transport need, such as access to employment or healthcare. Social need is often better served with more local service provision and less travel. Accessibility needs are complex, but the leading practice in the 1990s showed how the needs of the population could be represented by a basket of indicators describing the opportunities available to transport users and non-users. Access to transport is often referred to as connectivity. A convenient simplification of accessibility needs in terms of travel time has been a useful starting point for statistics.
- 1.8 In parallel with the changing policy context was growing data availability making the measurement of access easier and cheaper. Vehicle operators started to track road

¹ E.g. The History of Accessibility Planning in the Netherlands and the UK. Geurs K and Halden D. Handbook on Transport and Development Edward Elgar.

² Guidance on Implementing Planning Policy Note 13. Institution of Highway and Transportation

vehicles, to help with supply chain management efficiencies, providing new data on road journey times without the need for expensive surveys. Bus and rail timetables started to migrate into easily accessible electronic formats. Geographical information systems (GIS) which had been controlled by large mapping companies became widely available on desktop computers. Software started to emerge to help public authorities manage readily available data on travel times, population data and opportunity data.

- 1.9 Until the 1990s government provided much of the open transport analysis software freely to ensure transparency in the way transport was planned and designed. However, the rapid growth of analysis possibilities in the 1990s led to a growing industry for data and software sales and services.
- 1.10 Due to the importance of accessibility and connections for the economy and society, accessibility analysis within GIS packages quickly became standard features, particularly drive time analysis. To ensure that wider economic and social effects of changing accessibility and connections were fully considered many public authorities started to use the new data and systems³. Much of this analysis was ad hoc and inconsistent, sometimes resulting in confusion about accessibility change. The government's standing committee on transport appraisal noted that accessibility analysis was largely used tactically to make a case for government transport investment⁴.

The 2000s – developing and establishing new approaches

- 1.11 Recognising the widespread and growing market failures in transport, the 2001-2003 Cabinet Office review "Making the Connections" was a focal point around which new legislation, standards and practice for accessibility started to evolve. The new approaches were more cross-sectoral underpinned by shared aims for better and more equitable access to opportunity.
- 1.12 To help standardise these new approaches, a new process of accessibility planning was rolled out across government. This included legislation for all government departments, and new management requirements for transport authorities. Underpinning these new approaches was the need for consistent metrics representing accessibility change. The 2004 national guidance on accessibility planning introduced two core concepts for accessibility statistics⁵:
- It was not the role of central government to set performance standards for access to opportunity nationally since access between people and places was locally sensitive and best planned locally. However national government had a key role to play in "monitoring overall change in access, and designing incentives for local action.
 - To manage local democratic change, economic and social partnerships were needed, to set aims for improving access to opportunity and manage progress towards making improvements. To enable an evidence led debate within these partnerships, transport authorities were viewed as having a pivotal role in

³ For example the Scottish Office "Guidance on Accessibility Measuring Techniques and their Application" was issued with free software to local authorities to help them with land use planning and transport appraisal tasks.

⁴ SACTRA 1999. Transport and the Economy

⁵ DfT 2004. Developing and piloting accessibility planning.

developing and publishing evidence and publishing clear strategies for making improvements in access to opportunity.

1.13 In practice these early approaches to accessibility statistics suffered many problems:

- Data availability was of variable quality affecting the consistency of accessibility measurement nationally. Whilst some parts of the country had excellent data on public transport supply others had none. Location data for many essential public services such as schools and hospitals were often of poor or inconsistent quality. Data assembly and cleaning was by far the greatest challenge when measuring travel times to opportunities.
- The government created pressure and incentives for transport authorities to lead these new approaches, but offered little in the way of support or information to help the authorities to deliver effective strategies⁶. By far the greatest resource deployed in informing and training transport authorities and planners was by software companies with commercial objectives to make best use of their products and services. Software user groups became the leading forums for discussing accessibility planning requirements. Within these forums, DfT requirements were often misquoted or misrepresented for commercial gain. This process resulted in demand from local authorities for greater help from DfT with the financial costs of software licenses. Instead of creating an industry of making connections in line with government policy goals, DfT's found itself creating a market for software sales and accessibility modelling⁷.
- DfT was highly successful in achieving what it intended through its cross sector working across national government departments⁸. However, for fear of undermining local action on accessibility analysis, DfT decided against setting up an open online national mapping system. A national system could have resulted in large efficiency savings and could have been of great assistance to policy makers across government. Instead the DfT accessibility statistics were published in large excel spreadsheets, not easily used by most of the people and organisations who could have benefitted from them⁹. Overall this meant that the promotion of a national approach to "Making the Connections" was not locked into future mainstream practice as effectively as it could have been.
- Despite, or perhaps because of, the large investment in new accessibility mapping software, few local authorities succeeded in developing robust local measures of access to opportunity. Local measures of access to opportunity had been intended to measure the cost or the safety of access to opportunity to complement the national travel time measures. However, the local analysis

⁶ A small training programme funded by DfT "Within Reach" was scaled down after 2 years and all trace of the training and support materials removed from government websites leaving practitioners with little clarity about DfT aims.

⁷ The History of Accessibility Planning in the Netherlands and the UK. Geurs K and Halden D. Handbook on Transport and Development Edward Elgar

⁸ See the evidence given by government departments to the 2013 parliamentary inquiry into accessibility planning <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmenvaud/201/201.pdf>

⁹ Independently of DfT an online mapping interface was published, so that any neighbourhood in Britain could be selected to reveal a pop up box showing travel times to a basket of local services www.accesstoservices.info. This lacked the authority of publication as government statistics but showed the potential for an open cloud based interface for travel time statistics for Scotland, England and Wales. The maintenance of this cloud based interface was discontinued in 2015 when Google's cloud based programme interface became freely available offering very similar information.

largely used proprietary tools for travel time analysis, and few accessibility strategies were founded in robust evidence of accessibility change. Government initially sought to prioritise funding for local transport programmes through investment in the local plans best able to demonstrate change in local performance data on access to opportunity. When this local data did not emerge, national funding towards delivery of the local strategies was discontinued after a few years and replaced with less specific programmes¹⁰.

- 1.14 Despite these problems, national accessibility statistics started to become widely used in checking for change and planning transport and development. Reviews of the practice and delivery showed this programme to be one of the more successful programmes promoted by DfT in recent decades for achieving economic, social and environmental benefits¹¹.
- 1.15 Perhaps the greatest policy gap during this period was the lack of incentives for successful travel demand reduction. Accessibility statistics could have been used to align new business models with policy aims for access to opportunity, placemaking and inclusion¹². In the absence of such approaches the transport industry continued to depend on business models that demanded growth in travel.

The 2010s – standardisation and the erosion of consensus approaches

- 1.16 By 2010 travel time data was openly available on information and mapping platforms such as Google and Bing. UK projects such as Transport Direct/Traveline became more focused on enabling high quality open data for use by third parties, than on traditional roles in travel information provision. Partly as a result of the availability of high quality UK public transport data, global information providers such as Google were able to showcase their UK public transport travel time information as leading practice.
- 1.17 However, comparisons between the travel times calculated using Google, Bing, Traveline and others showed substantially different results, reinforcing long standing concerns about inconsistency when measuring accessibility. The differences between the calculated travel times could largely be explained by differences in calculation methodology¹³. This reflected the diversity of evidence about travel choice and behaviour preferences when planning journeys.
- 1.18 By 2015 when the 2014 DfT travel time statistics were being calculated, the most pressing question had become how to achieve consistency in the calculation and reporting of the statistics. Users of the DfT accessibility statistics were increasingly

¹⁰ When DfT ministers and officials were questioned by the parliamentary inquiry into access to services in 2014 they cited general programmes such as the local sustainable transport fund and total transport pilots as the funding mechanisms for the local accessibility strategies

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmenvaud/201/201we02.htm>

¹¹ For example: DfT 2011 Review of accessibility Planning. Atkins. Halden 2011 - The Use and Abuse of Accessibility Measures <http://dhc1.co.uk/content/useandabuseonline.pdf> (also published in Research and Transport Business and Management Volume 2 by Elsevier)

¹² For example BCSC 2006 – Access, Information and Flexibility suggested various approaches to enable government and industry to develop new business models for mutual benefit.

¹³ Each year the DfT statistics were checked against the information being provided by market leading providers such as Google and Bing. There were differences in the travel times calculated using Google and Bing just as there were differences between the travel times from the national statistics and these platforms.

migrating to use market leading platforms such as Google¹⁴ helping businesses and public authorities to be more clearly accountable to consumers and citizens. By using the same analysis tools as the general population it was easier to develop a dialogue about accessibility with users, and over 90% of journeys at that time were being planned using Google¹⁵.

1.19 In response to the need for greater consistency in travel time statistics, DfT approached the problem by seeking to be more internally consistent in the way the statistics were calculated. By the time the 2016 statistics were being calculated in 2017, DfT was: controlling data supply, calculating fewer travel times, and using commercially available software to manage the calculation process in house¹⁶. This new approach has many important limitations:

- **Accountability** - Divergence between DfT's approach and the public perceptions of travel time lead to lower levels of trust than would otherwise be achieved. The original rationale for the travel time statistics was to measure access to opportunity as the general population view it – e.g. travel time to a grocer. Government must be held to account using the evidence available to the general population, yet the data sources used in DfT approaches are not the ones validated on the market leading cloud mapping systems.
- **Representation** - The resources available for the analysis using the TRACC software only allow one time of day to be represented. This time of day is also a peak hour when very little change in travel times takes place, year on year. Road congestion effects are seen through the spread of peak period delays to travel times rather than changes to journey times themselves within the peak periods. Public transport availability and coverage has different characteristics in peak periods.
- **Sustainability** - The data supply methods used in the DfT analysis draw less from crowd sourcing for continuous quality improvements. The market leading platforms such as Google achieve their popular status by continually improving accuracy through corrections made by users. If a school is in the wrong place, then the online mapping/editing is available to deliver a virtuous circle of quality improvement. Given the uses of the accessibility statistics, consistent improvements in the accuracy with which the real world is observed is essential. Internal consistency in isolation from continual improvement is not sustainable.

1.20 Data on travel times, land uses and population characteristics has become very widely available and is increasingly shared in industry standard formats. There is also intense competition between data providers to provide accurate travel time data, creating market pressures to raise quality and drive down costs. Current providers of travel time data such as Google, HEREmaps, Inrix, TomTom and others all compete in fast growing market niches protecting value in their products in various ways.

¹⁴ Research in 2016 showed that most local authorities now used Google in their day to day planning. Working paper 1 from 2016 of EU research on accessibility calculation in Europe was finally reported publicly in Silva, Bertolini and Pinto 2019 – Designing Accessibility Instruments – Lessons on their Usability for Integrated land use and Transport Planning.

¹⁵ Including the use of Google services by third parties such as the AA motoring association journey planner.

¹⁶ The ACCMAP software developed by Basemap in the late 1990s had been upgraded and rebranded Accession in 2003. With improvements made and new investment/ownership the software was rebranded TRACC a decade later.

- 1.21 The national travel time statistics now appear to be of marginal relevance to the fast changes taking place in the economy and society. The rationale for setting them up was a need for a common evidence platform through which to organise cross sector delivery. However, the national travel time statistics now largely appear to be relevant only for those transacting with DfT in some way, such as seeking funding. They could therefore be contributing more to fragmenting delivery of better accessibility than supporting it.
- 1.22 The accessibility market failures which require government attention are no longer a lack of mapping of travel time to opportunity, but a lack of understanding of trends and the factors affecting change. This requires a different response from DfT more focused at understanding accessibility change over time for each group in the population. Key issues that the current national travel time statistics are sometimes mistaken for representing but which they cannot currently consider are:
- The decline of the bus industry in rural areas - DfT's single peak hour time of day does not represent public transport coverage.
 - The changing patterns of health and education provision with more specialist services requiring consideration of travel times across all times of day and days of the week.
 - An evidence base for the performance of cross sector working on access to opportunity – There are many controversial policies which are not currently being considered as effectively as they could be due to the limitations of the statistics such as bank closures, or the decline of local shops.

2.0 Current Needs and Opportunities

Current needs

- 2.1 The need for trusted statistics and data has never been greater. As the data and knowledge economy explodes, trust must be built in new ways. The transparency of the global data platforms has been a key part of their success, but their lack of transparency about what they do with data is a growing problem. Government has a key role to play in helping to raise standards and build trust in essential data.
- 2.2 Data on access to opportunity is one of the most valuable types of data. Business competitiveness depends on successfully identifying how to improve access to opportunity. A key role for government must be to help markets work better and to address market failures.
- 2.3 Despite the 2014 parliamentary inquiry into access to services giving strong endorsement to the national travel time statistics and recommending more extensive government interpretation of trends and changes, the statistics have declined in scope and relevance at a time when trust, transparency and cross sector working have been becoming more important.
- 2.4 Some of the accessibility statistics developed nearly 20 years ago are still as relevant as they were, such as the number and proportion of people in the country that have a short walk to a grocer selling a good range of food. Others such as access to education and health need a far more detailed segmentation to reflect more accurately the experiences of people accessing these services.
- 2.5 Few users of national statistics (in any policy area) understand how they were calculated. Current users of the national travel time statistics are in danger of misrepresenting the evidence of access to opportunity if they assume that the same uses can be made of the statistics published since 2016 as were made for the very different statistics published prior to 2016¹⁷.
- 2.6 Substantial change is needed. The current travel time statistics are more likely to confuse than enlighten critical policy decisions. For example:
 - Travel times in peak periods are most interesting for considering access to work but the employment data used in the statistics is not segmented by market. By attempting to represent an average of all employment markets the statistics represent none of them well.
 - Marginal changes in transport can affect any time period. This requires a sampling strategy for time periods that reflect real world considerations such as peak spreading as road congestion grows and the loss of less commercially viable bus services off peak.
 - The most important current changes in access result from policies such as school choice, health specialisation, retail consolidation, new mobility options, and other issues which could be represented in the statistics only if users were able to filter the results by attributes of people, transport and places. In the absence of an ability to consider what is changing, the current statistics achieve consistency only in their ability to ignore what matters.

¹⁷ Yet claims to the contrary continue to be made publicly. See for example Landor 2019. http://www.landor.co.uk/downloads/Data_Modelling2019_Email.pdf - page 14

2.7 Overall, it is difficult to identify how the current statistics could be used safely for monitoring trends or changes, since they provide a largely misleading picture that masks the main changes taking place. The use of a single time of day for the analysis was dismissed as inappropriate by the central and local working group on accessibility planning between 2003 and 2005¹⁸ and nothing since then would reduce concerns about such an approach. In addition, many new needs since then add pressure for better measures and the ability to generate such measures at low cost.

Future directions

2.8 The national travel time statistics have lost their way, but fresh leadership by DfT could reap benefits across government. The need for better understanding of access to opportunity continues to grow with accelerating economic and social change.

Access to opportunity

2.9 When the statistics were first set up, DfT was strongly encouraged to consider activity levels at destinations rather than only locations of facilities¹⁹ (i.e. number of health treatments rather than existence of a hospital). At that time the data on activity was not of sufficient quality for practical statistics, but in the years since then data availability has been transformed and could now consider issues such as education modules delivered, health treatments administered, and other activities.

2.10 In most cases the current major destination categories of work, education, health, retail, local centres and transport nodes can be subdivided, allowing compatibility with previous statistics, but the headline reporting would benefit from much more useful results about changes in access to activities, rather than only access to types of places.

2.11 Using activities rather than locations would introduce no major computational difference for the travel time calculation. With current widely available data, it is now not difficult to calculate and store journey time data for all times of day and night and day of the week to all locations where services are delivered, employment is available, and goods and services are retailed. Such data stored in a highly segmented database of the opportunities, services and facilities available could be set up to allow access and reporting in different ways by different users. For example:

- DfT could report the how the average time to all destinations (regardless of destination category) is changing enabling the influence of mobility in accessibility to be observed – e.g. comparing car available with non-car available opportunities.
- A property developer could relate travel times to work in each employment market segment to demonstrate that new housing was appropriate for the employment opportunities accessible by non-car modes. Locating thousands of new expensive homes within walking distance of largely low value retail jobs locks in inefficient travel patterns. Few house builders have the resources to undertake detailed analysis, but most transport statements and assessments are required to report accessibility statistics where relevant reporting would be much more useful.

¹⁸ Developing and Piloting Accessibility Planning – 2005 – Final report.

¹⁹ Developing and Piloting Accessibility Planning 2003 – Working paper 2.

- Other government departments could use the statistics to consider the equity of policy and funding changes on access to opportunity by selecting the population group using the service and the service delivery type being considered.

Travel time data

2.12 To populate the travel time data, probably the easiest way is to use Google's application programme interface (API) since the online services are currently the most widely used by the population and almost certainly the most accurate way of representing currently available travel times:

- Consistency with the preferred method of travel time calculation for the bulk of the population is a good starting point. One of the greatest discrepancies between journey times from different journey planners results from different assumptions about how far people walk to access faster bus and rail services. The public transport databases are used by millions of people every day and more than any other public transport journey planner, so are tested daily and remain popular. In contrast people search for journeys on other platforms and then do not use them again which suggests that the journey suggested by the competing platforms was not useful²⁰.
- Google's Android system operates well over half of the mobile phones in the UK with about 80% of phones being precisely located and tracked to represent the speed travellers move through the networks. Google share the data openly for public use, principally for journey planning and route navigation. The data is made available in real time showing not just speeds but disruption and other delays. Even under Google's free licenses to use their API, a sampling strategy could be defined that would allow a fairly robust picture of travel times to opportunity to be built up over time. Google do not permit resale of data accessed freely, but DfT can ensure national statistics are open without paywalls. The Google data should probably be the most cost effective approach to obtain the largest amount of travel time data. It may also be possible for government to negotiate with Google much more attractive license terms than the standard defaults to allow much larger samples.
- One of the most important factors affecting differences between journey times relate to the footpath network. Google only shows journeys using the footpaths that people use regularly. Alternative systems that depend on theoretical footpaths often assume in the routing that walk journeys are made using paths that are overgrown with vegetation or have unsuitable surfaces. Google's ability to identify the footpaths people use is a major advantage for all trips but particularly the walking trips to local services and bus stops outside major cities. These are also the locations experiencing the greatest accessibility change with declining service provision and new land use development.

2.13 Alternative data could well be as high quality, but if there were differences between this and the Google data it could be difficult to understand which was more accurate. Google is currently most accurate in the 'democracy of the marketplace' so aligning this with the 'democracy of public authorities' is a strong foundation for government data. If in the future other information systems become more attractive to the

²⁰ The journeys calculated by modelling software such as TRACC are even further removed from public accountability

population, or better value, the process of continual improvement in the travel time statistics is consistent with using these instead.

Travel time or accessibility

- 2.14 When national accessibility statistics were proposed more than 20 years ago the intention was that the national travel time statistics would soon be supplemented with national travel cost statistics and perhaps also national transport reliability statistics, safety/security, access for people with mobility difficulties, and other attributes of accessibility. Unfortunately, time has remained the only factor being measured in the statistics. Given this limitation it therefore made sense to rename the accessibility and connectivity statistics as the national travel time statistics.
- 2.15 Nevertheless, access to opportunity has become of steadily increasing importance to public policy over the last 30 years and levels of access are only partly described by travel time changes. Looking to the future, government or someone else representing citizens, should be planning to publish data representing the opportunities available taking account of a wider range of factors. Access is affected by combinations of travel time, cost, safety and other issues. If any of the barriers to access is observed in the data then access is not possible, National statistics could recognise each factor that is a necessary but not sufficient influence on access to opportunity.
- 2.16 Considerations of both time and cost are increasingly important as transport changes since:
- Distinctions between public and private transport are increasingly unclear. Shared services using larger shared taxis and minibuses deliver low cost demand responsive services often at costs lower than what is currently referred to as public transport.
 - Shared cars in car clubs give many more people access to cars but the core distinction in the travel time statistics between opportunities for people with and without a private car available probably continues to be helpful.
- 2.17 Commercial providers can be reluctant to share data on costs – such as Ryanair’s long battle with Skyscanner about the right to publish air fare comparisons. Transport availability and cost is one of the leading causes of inequity. Secrecy about travel costs is anti-competitive, so there is a strong argument that the right to provide transport in the UK should be balanced by the responsibility to publish data on costs in agreed formats for open use by DfT and others. Urgent travel is often related to more critical social or economic needs, such as health issues, so understanding what people actually paid and how this relates to travel needs is worthy of greater attention in national statistics.
- 2.18 Once this is done, more meaningful accessibility statistics could be developed. The lack of comprehensive cost data need not be a barrier to more meaningful national statistics. Default costs and tariffs could be included in the statistics until such time as actual values are provided, much as default road speeds were used on roads until actual measurements were available from real time tracking of vehicles. Adding travel cost statistics in the short term using these pragmatic approaches should now be possible building on the work undertaken by Traveline and others over the last 15 years.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The lack of data monitoring trends over time on access to opportunity is a very substantial market failure that needs to be addressed by government. Individual sectors consider access in narrow ways, but it is a combination of all of the barriers to access: location, personal capability and transport supply that affects people's experiences.
- 3.2 The need for better data on access to opportunity has been growing steadily over the last 30 years, associated with the more complex and cross-sectoral challenges increasingly characterising policy delivery.
- 3.3 The simplification of the DfT statistics from 2014 onwards runs counter to these needs and it is difficult to identify policy applications where the current statistics would not be misleading. Not all users understand how the statistics are calculated, so there is a risk that the current statistics are causing more harm than good.
- 3.4 The dominance of Google in providing travel time data has grown over the last five years and easier, cheaper, more transparent and trusted travel time statistics could be calculated using their data, than using the current approaches used by DfT.
- 3.5 Travel time is only one potential transport factor affecting access. The national accessibility statistics were renamed national travel time statistics nearly a decade ago in recognition of the slow progress adding other attributes of accessibility such as cost, safety, and physical accessibility considerations. Looking forward there is a need to refocus attention on how to improve accessibility statistics to meet the needs of the 21st century. This will require a fresh approach to working with industry on data, where the rights of transport operators and data providers to offer services must be balanced by a responsibility to share sufficient data to enable effective governance.
- 3.6 There remains a gap between transport policy and business models for delivery. Transport markets are undergoing major change and new market designs could deliver improved access to opportunity if underpinned with robust measures of success. The continuing absence of business models for improved access, leaves the transport industry dependent on business models for travel growth undermining stated policy goals. A fresh look at accessibility statistics is overdue.