

## CASE STUDY 2: A deep dive into the personas of the travelling public

Managing traffic demand in context of the regional population's habits is an important part of driving successful behaviour change. The NR Live Lab programme took this to a new level, by seeking to understand the residents' travel habits and lifestyles in their seven metropolitan district areas as a way of better reaching them at times when there is a need to re-route, re-mode, re-time, or reduce their journeys.

The West Midlands is unique in having both an ADEPT Smart Places Live Lab and Future Transport Zone. We have been able to explore synergies and efficiencies across these programmes.



Carefree Affluence

# Adele



**Travel know-how**

- Self-sufficient or a support seeker?** Self-sufficient.
- Metaphorically a driver or a passenger?** Both - she enjoys being a passenger as she likes to relax, but happy to drive and be in control.
- Know their way or need maps / apps to help?** No planning done for routine journeys (doesn't check for disruption), but she will use AA Route Planner and Google Maps if it's a new journey (after asking friends/family).

Overall, the five-step process covers: segmentation, an in-depth research of personas, the design of service propositions such as the mobility solutions to meet persona needs, the approaches to behaviour change, and ways to measure impact.

In the Future Transport Zone, working with Experian, TfWM was able to develop a range of traveller segmentation from over 3,000 participants using mostly qualitative data based on common profile data such as location, travel behaviour, affluence, and attitudes to technology.

The eight segments identified (Traditional Ways, Striving to Get Ahead, Pressured Families, Comfort in My Community, Progressive Families, Comfortable Empty Nesters, Smart Digital Families, and Carefree Affluence) all have key characteristics.

A series of maps also shows the 'hot spots' of where these groupings are most likely to reside for better targeting such as with car ownership, and positioning of key messages for example, how people respond to certain types of media.

Then, in the NR Live Lab, TfWM teamed up with Connected Places Catapult and strategic marketing agency Trinity McQueen to develop deeper traveller personas to aid targeting of messages and interventions. A cohort of 48 people was recruited over winter 2020/21 and offered incentives for their participation. From rich ethnographic research, video diaries and conversations, we were able to develop 14 traveller personas that represented individual people and households that typifies people within a segment, reflecting the needs of the wider group and focusing on goals, mindset, and situations.



**My travel behaviour**

- Adele travels to see family (care for/provide for them), run personal errands, and for shopping.
- She rarely takes new, unfamiliar journeys – and on family days out to new destinations her partner tends to drive. Her travel is very routine – doing the same journeys, in the same way every week.
- She doesn't do much planning as she tends stick to familiar trips.

**Time travelling:**  
6 hours per week

**Return journeys:**  
5 per week

There were several objectives to doing this, including:

- Enhancing experiences by better understanding how people will respond and act in the fact of disruptions.
- Building compelling communications with real life stories.
- Shifting behaviours to more efficient and sustainable journeys.

The granular or traveller personas work stream allowed a deep understanding of travel behaviours of all travellers, for all journeys including the propensity to uptake new services and technologies and propensity to change travel behaviour.

Introductory sessions on the personas has been held with a range of internal and external stakeholders. A particularly positive response was received from bus operators who recognise the value in having a keen understanding of the customer.

The next stage is for WMCA to host all of the segmentation and personas information and training on its server for ongoing applications.