



The Wellbeing Agenda: Opportunities for Transport Policy

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Commuting and Wellbeing: Academic Symposium

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- What is wellbeing?
- The wellbeing agenda in the UK
- Influence of wellbeing on national policy
- Wellbeing in local transport policy
- Opportunities and challenges
- Questions to consider going forward

Preference Shaping

- Experience of pleasure and the absence of pain
- Individual will purchase or behave rationally in the pursuit of their own wellbeing e.g. in market

Eudemonic

- A process of human 'flourishing'
- Role of state is to provide conditions for people to develop 'capability sets'

Objective List

- No formal theory of wellbeing
- Attributes/characteristics needed for wellbeing e.g. income, health, education, housing

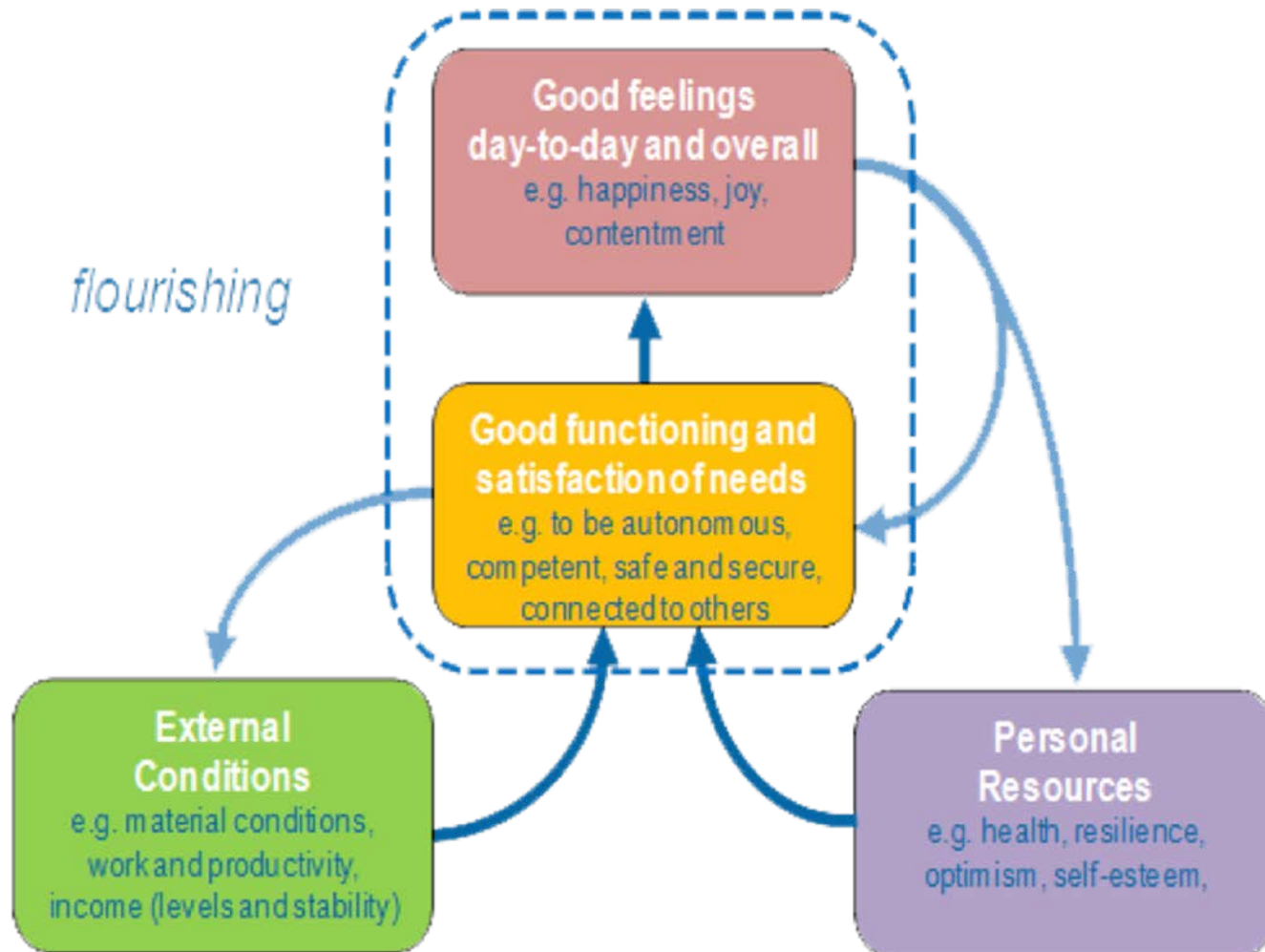
Subjective Wellbeing

- Individual's own opinion is central to assessment of wellbeing
- Assessed through individual survey questions

Understanding Wellbeing



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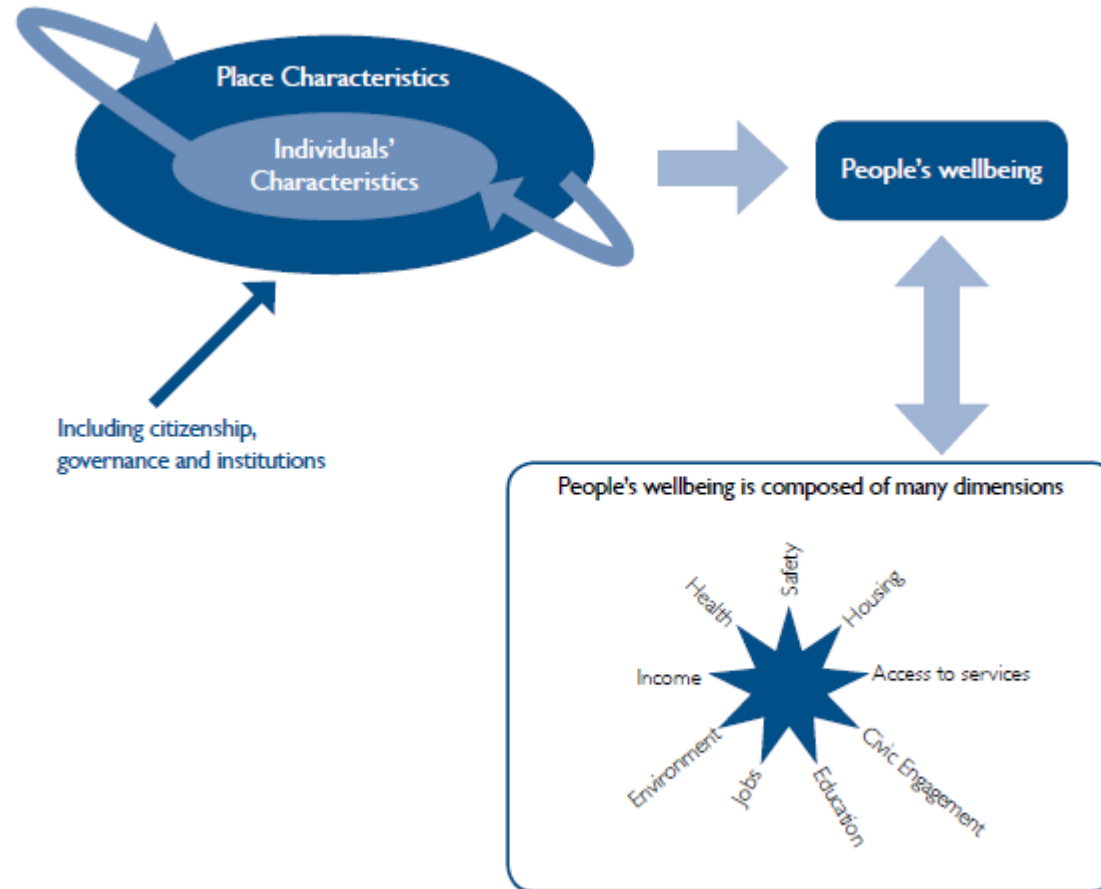


Adapted from the Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project (2008) Final Project Report (pg. 63)

Wellbeing and Localities



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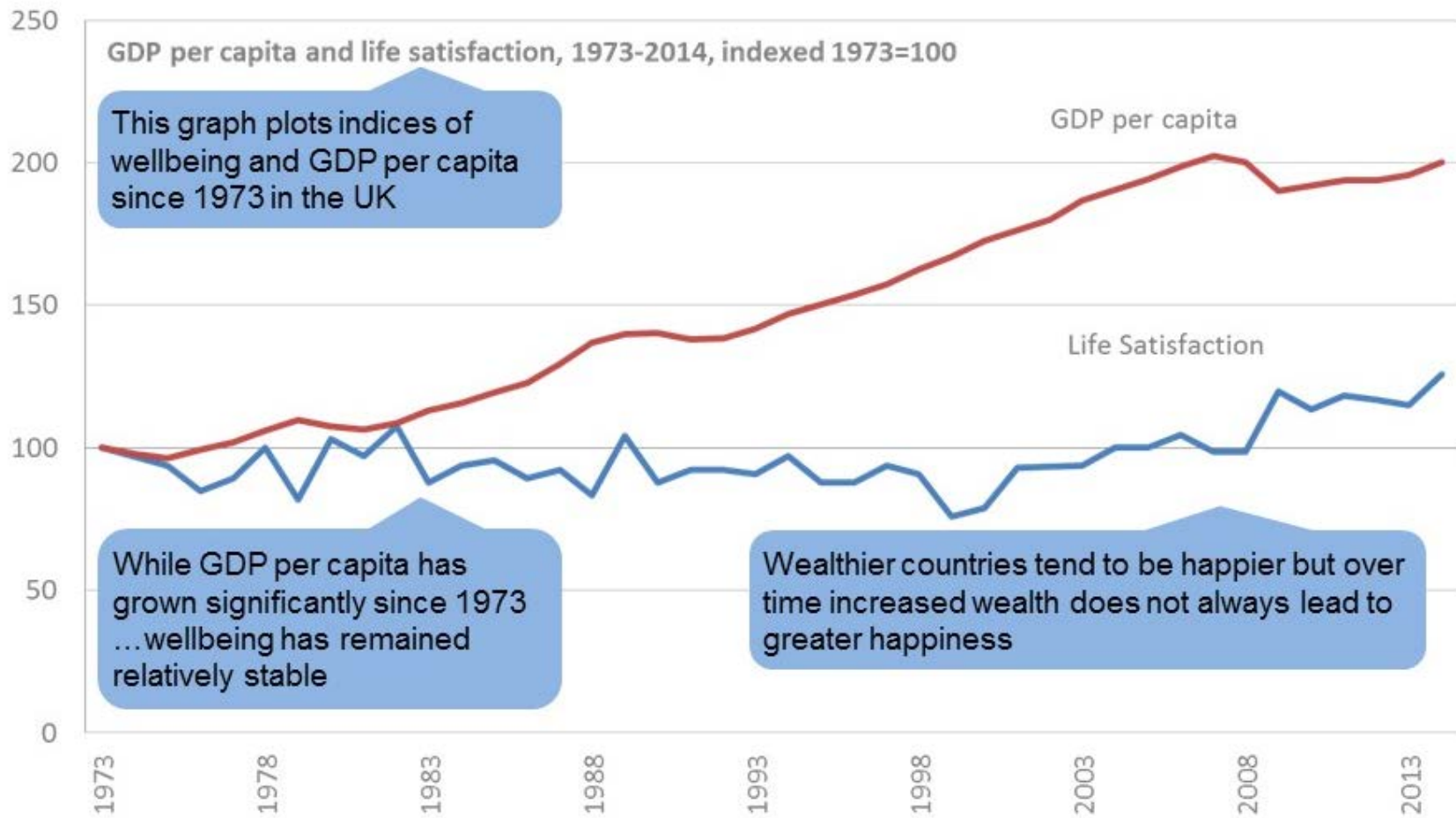




The Easterlin Paradox...



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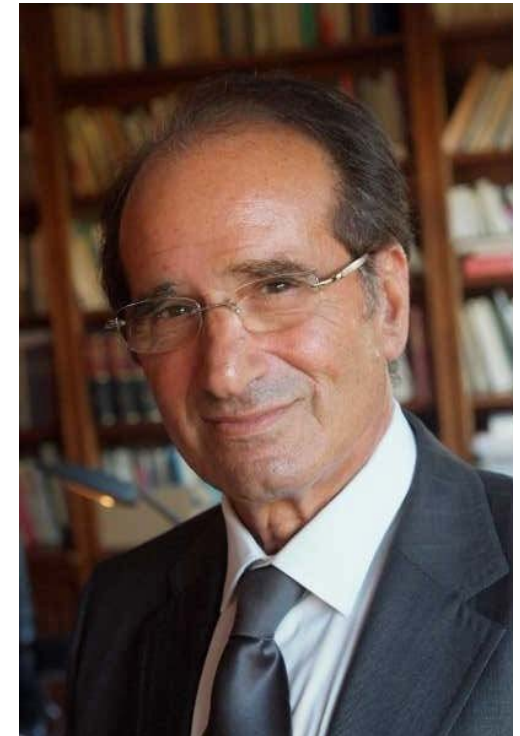
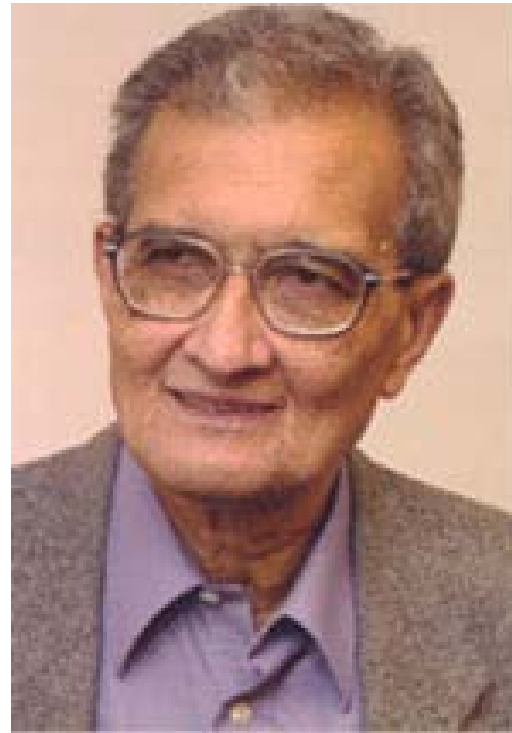
Source: What Works Wellbeing; <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wellbeing-in-policy-and-practice-course/>

Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress



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Identify the limits of GDP and...to consider what information might be required for the production of more relevant indicators of social progress; to assess the feasibility of alternative measurement tools, and to discuss how to present the statistical information in an appropriate way.



[measuring wellbeing] will open up a national debate about what really matters, not just in government but amongst people who influence our lives: in the media, in business, the people who develop the products we use, who build the towns we live in, who shape the culture we enjoy.

Speech at launch of Measuring National Wellbeing Programme, 25 November 2010





National Wellbeing Dashboard

- Personal Wellbeing
- Our Relationships
- Health
- What We Do
- Where We Live
- Personal Finance
- Economy
- Education and Skills
- Governance
- Environment

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc364/dashboard/index.html>

Where We Live

- Crime (against the person)
- Feeling Safe (felt safe/very safe walking home after dark)
- Accessed Natural Environment (at least once a week in the last 12 months)
- Belonging to the neighbourhood (agreed or strongly agreed)
- Satisfaction with accommodation (fairly/very satisfied)
- Access to key services (minimum travel time)

Transport in the 'Dashboard'

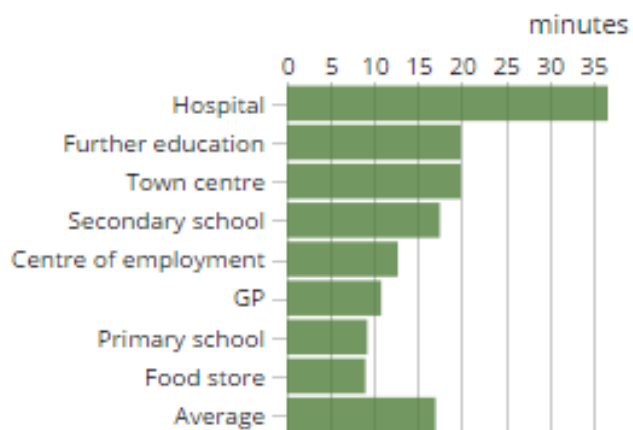


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Access to key services



Minimum travel time to reach nearest services



The average minimum travel time by public transport or walking to an average of 8 main services was 17.0 minutes in England in 2014. As there is only 1 data point at present, the measure has not been assessed.

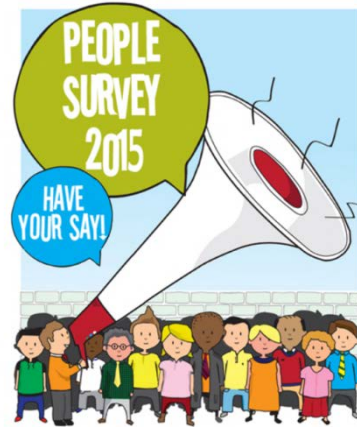
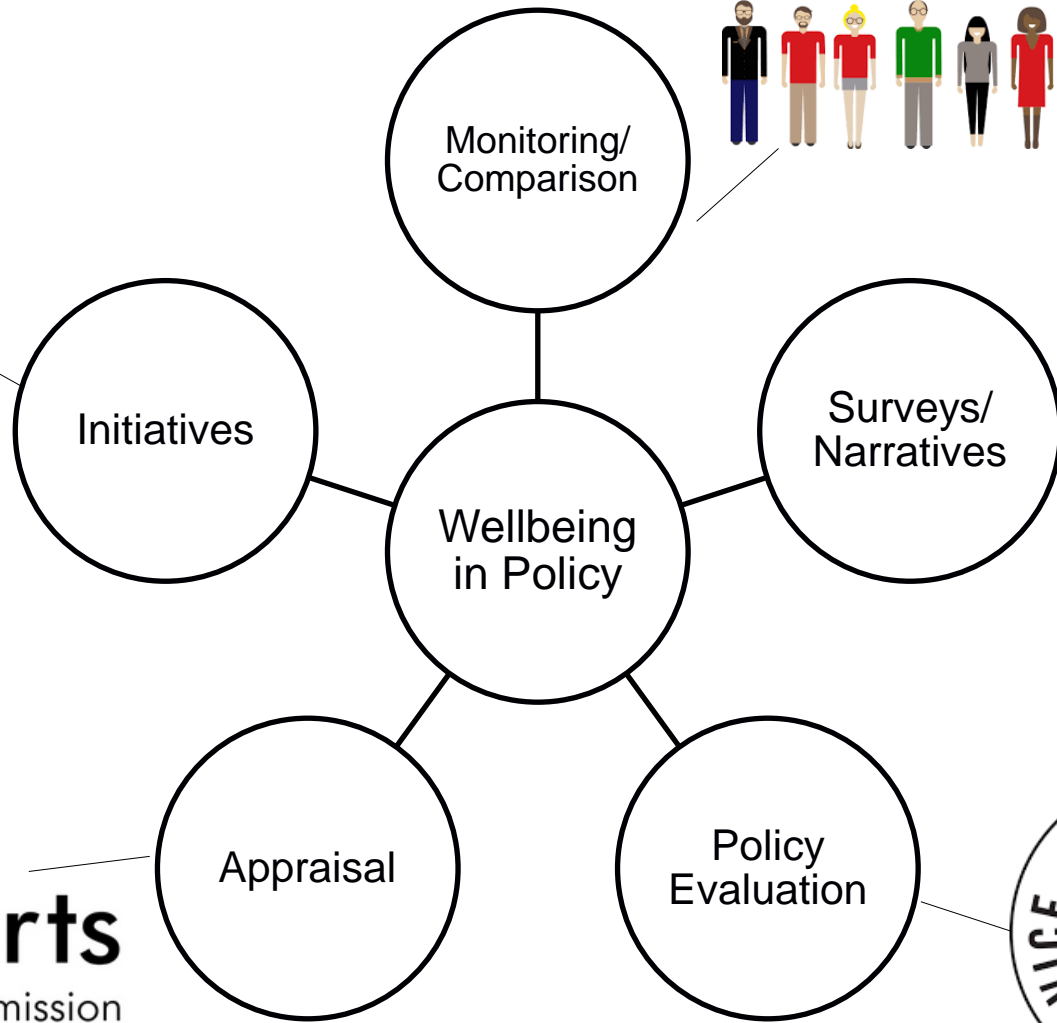
Updated: 6 April 2017

Public transport and walking
'Centre of employment' (places with 5000 or more jobs)
Not the commute (necessarily)
Travel time (rather than any other quality)

Wellbeing in National Policy



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Evaluation

- 'Wellbeing' measures often not used in evaluation
- 'Wellbeing' evidence often seen as weak ('not an RCT')

Appraisal

- Hard to monetise or value wellbeing in appraisal
- 'Wellbeing' interventions therefore hard to get high GVA

Understanding

- Training of practitioners creates a limited world-view
- Lack of engagement with academia & others stifles change

Governance

- Planning and transport authorities separate in CA areas
- Engagement with public health helpful but patchy

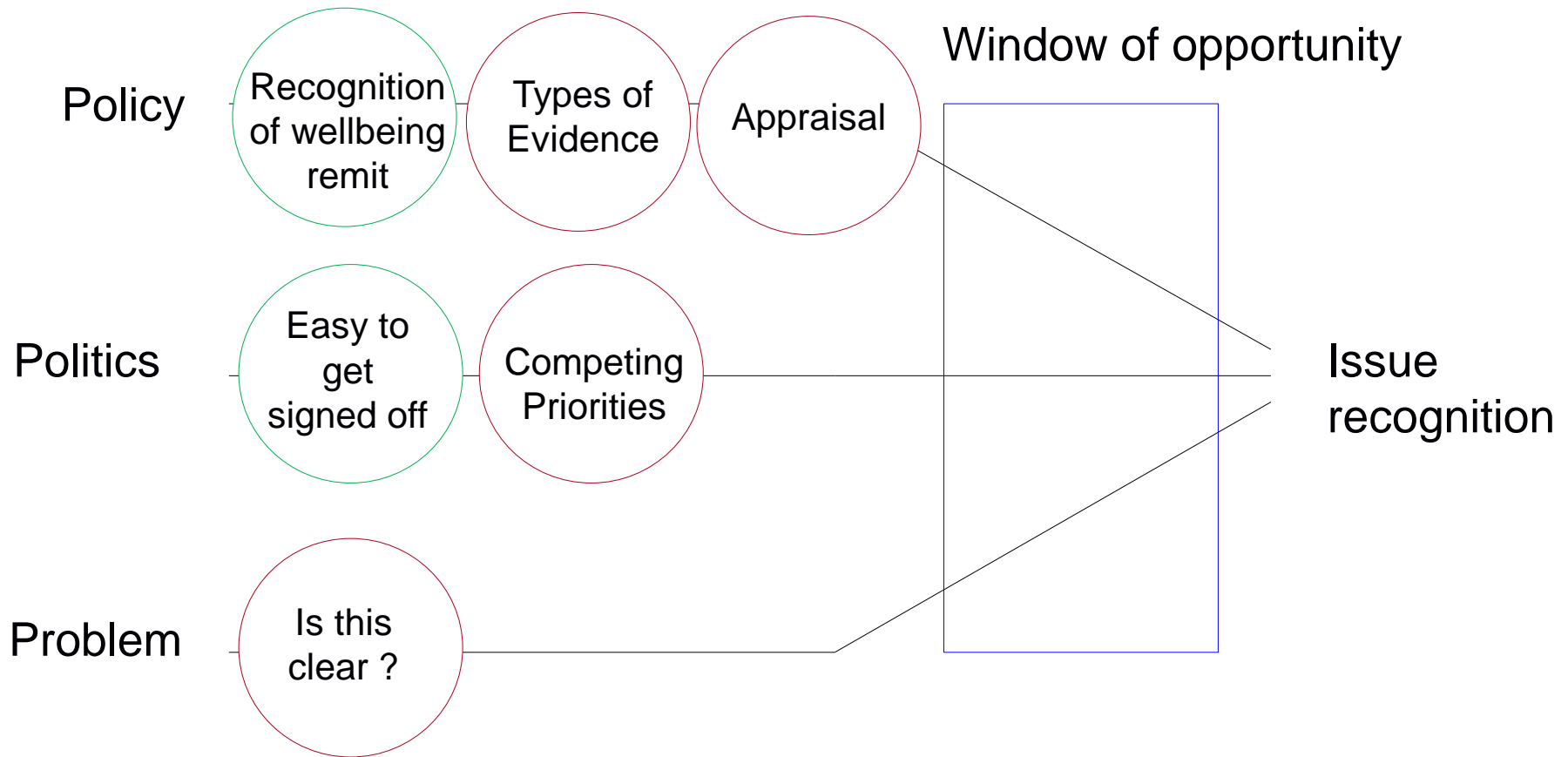
Political Priorities

- Hard to maintain support for 'wellbeing' in implementation
- Economic growth = more road space

Agenda Setting (Kingdon 1984)



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Conclusions



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- Appetite for wellbeing and wellbeing evidence in policy communities – but still peripheral
- Driven by public health and place shaping agendas (locally)
- Commute not strongly identified as an issue relating to wellbeing in policy circles (but travel experience, yes)
- What are the key ‘problems’ for policy/politics relating to the commute and wellbeing – what can our evidence help solve?
- Where in the policy process does our research have the most to offer – does it challenge the existing paradigm? Help assess interventions, etc?