

The background image shows an elderly woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a blue jacket, walking towards the camera with a cane. In the background, a person is seated in a wheelchair, and a white bus is visible. The scene is outdoors with trees and a building in the distance. The image is overlaid with decorative green and blue wavy lines.

I'DGO



Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors

I'DGO TOO findings launch
Thursday 26th April 2012

**Our two studies,
known as I'DGO One and I'DGO TOO,
on access outdoors and older
people's quality of life
found that...**

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The desire to get out and about does not diminish in older age, nor does the variety of activities people like to do outdoors.



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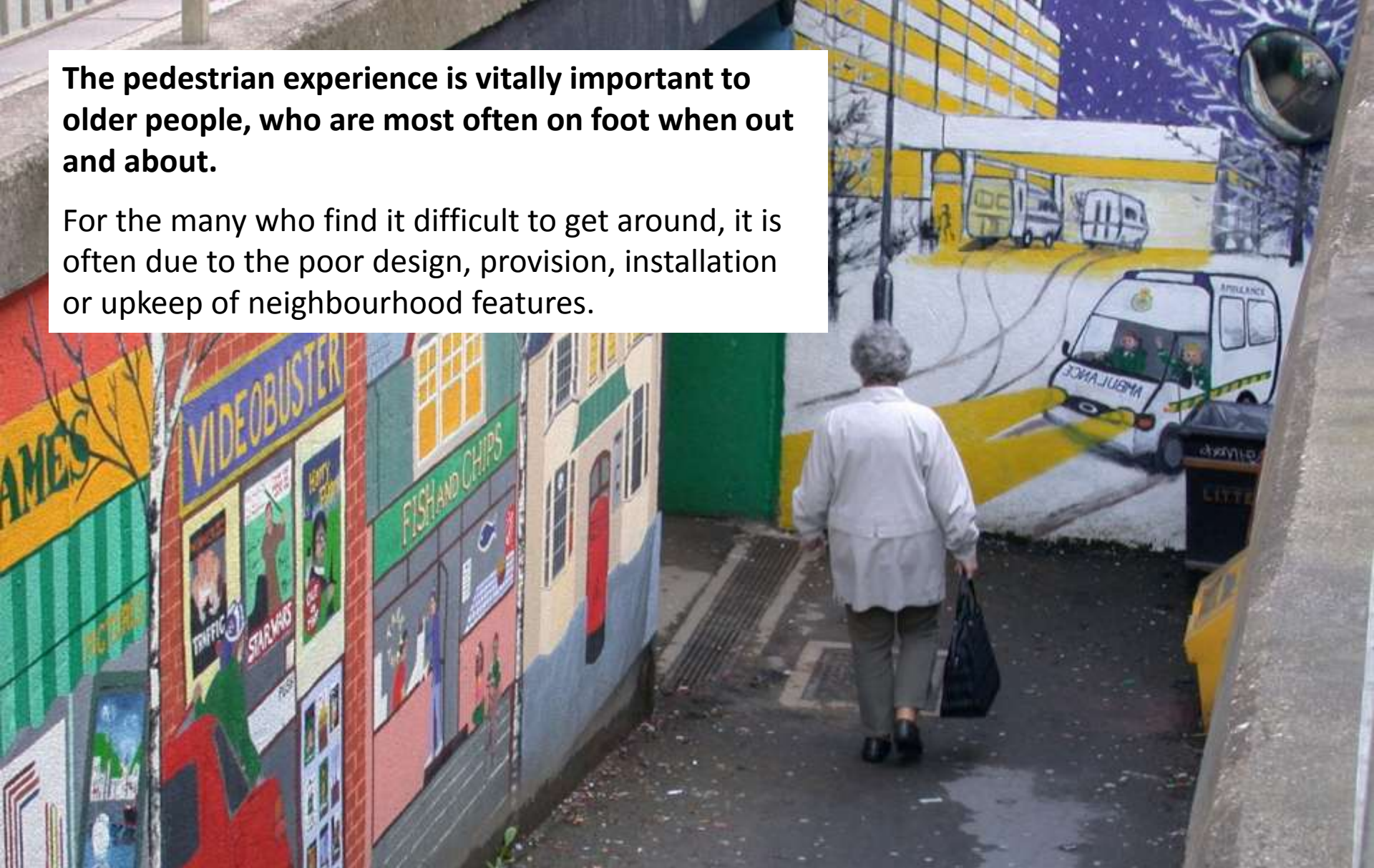
If older people live in an environment that makes it easy and enjoyable for them to go outdoors, they are more likely to be physically active and satisfied with life and twice as likely to achieve the recommended levels of healthy walking.

The same is true for those who live within ten minutes' walk of a park.



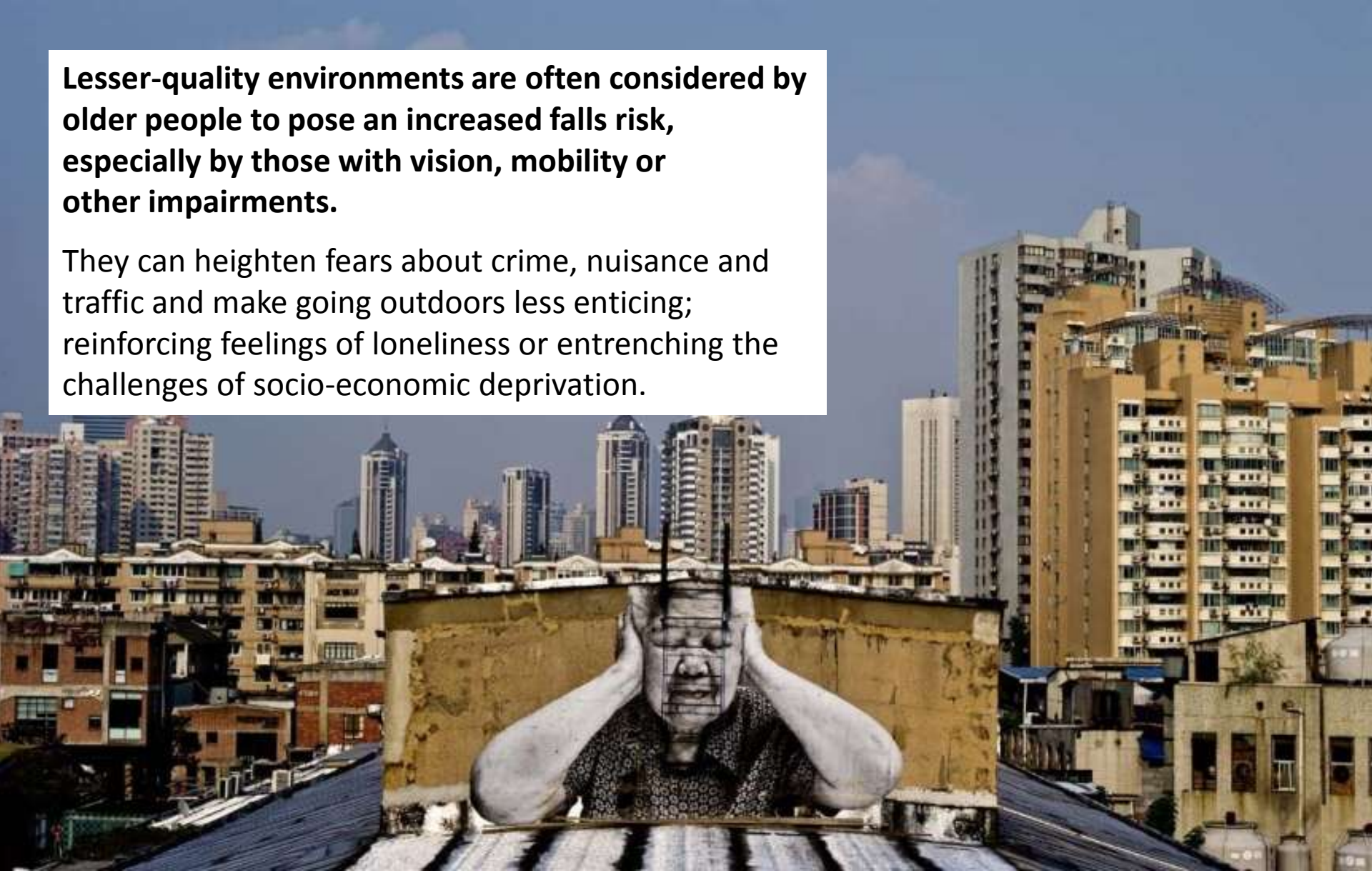
The pedestrian experience is vitally important to older people, who are most often on foot when out and about.

For the many who find it difficult to get around, it is often due to the poor design, provision, installation or upkeep of neighbourhood features.



Lesser-quality environments are often considered by older people to pose an increased falls risk, especially by those with vision, mobility or other impairments.

They can heighten fears about crime, nuisance and traffic and make going outdoors less enticing; reinforcing feelings of loneliness or entrenching the challenges of socio-economic deprivation.



Supported by their environment, most people aged 80+ living in the community can expect to continue to go outdoors daily, engage in a range of activities and maintain quality of life into oldest age.



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Our study of 'DIY Streets', conducted by the OPENspace Research Centre at the University of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt University, found that...

Findings presented by Prof Catharine Ward Thompson



Some older residents responded positively to measures aimed at reducing the dominance of cars.

They felt they had become more active and that their street was easier to walk on, especially after dark.



Image courtesy of Sustrans

For others, not being able to park outside their house, for example, was a disincentive to going out at all and limited social contact.

Getting out of the house at all, for whatever reason, and even if people used a car or public transport to do so, was key to greater levels of activity.



Over a three-year period, 'DIY' changes did not appear to have as much of an impact on wellbeing, social engagement and quality of life as environmental factors on a wider scale...



... many of these relate to local open spaces, such as parks, and safe and enjoyable routes to them; both paths and cycleways.



Our tactile paving and road crossings study, conducted by SURFACE Inclusive Design Research Centre and the Centre for Health, Sport and Rehabilitation Sciences Research at the University of Salford, found that...

Findings presented by Prof Marcus Ormerod

Few older participants were aware what the different types of tactile paving and road crossings signify. This challenge is exacerbated by incorrect provision, siting and laying.



Image courtesy of the Royal College of Art

Participants with balance problems told us they often felt unsafe walking on tactile paving.

In our laboratory, it affected the rhythm of our subjects' gait, indicating that their balance was challenged.



Many people found the 'blisters' uncomfortable and regarded them as a slip hazard when laid on a steep slope, or when wet or icy.

When tested, we found that brass and steel studs had a high slip potential.

None of the 30 sites we studied met the recommended Light Reflectance Value.

This means that the tonal contrast between tactile and surrounding paving was insufficient for many visually impaired people.



**Our study of residential outdoor
space (ROS),
conducted by WISE (Wellbeing in Sustainable
Environments) at the University of Warwick,
found that...**

Findings presented by Dr Lynne Mitchell

In 21stC. developments, residential outdoor space (ROS) tends to be less green than it was pre-2000.

The levels of such space in the rising number of homes built for older people is below average.



The greatest impact on our participants' wellbeing came from having their own patio or a green view.

While size of residential outdoor space wasn't important, quality and choice was.



The more types of ROS participants had, whether owned or shared, the greater their satisfaction.



We found that front gardens, in particular, are valued as a place for social interaction.

Some of the positive effects of ROS on wellbeing actually strengthen as people age.





Thank you!

E idgo@ed.ac.uk T +44 (0)131 651 5833

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