Senses Matter: Spaces and Experiences of Cycling
Dr. Peter Cox
My work: sociologies of cycling

- Interdisciplinary social sciences
- Cycling and Society Research Group
- Twin background: academic and professional
- Studying the spatial practices of cycling
The Project: sensory ethnography

• Cycling as an embodied practice
• Measuring our sensory experiences
• Understanding their effects
• Methods:
  – Video ethnography
  – Biometric data recording
  – Traditional field notes
Findings

• Film as field notes, not for display
• Basic data on speeds, acceleration, braking as expected
• Wide variations – not predictable
• Need for common understanding to prevent conflict
Findings

• Response to urban design is emotional and pre-rational

• Routings and even trips often contingent
  – A single long wait or negative stimulus can change a journey

• Spaces create emotional responses that are exhibited in behaviours
Implications

- Impact evaluation needed for all built interventions
- The sensory and emotional impact of interventions is important
- Sensory ethnography using film a useful methods to combine hard data and impressions
Thankyou

Questions?
Contact: peter.cox@chester.ac.uk