

# Ellie Harrison

artist, activist, author

selected works 2009 – 2021



*The History of Financial Crises* (2009)



*The History of Revolution: Ellie Harrison's Fireworks Display* (2010)



A Brief  
History of  
Privatisation

4 minutes

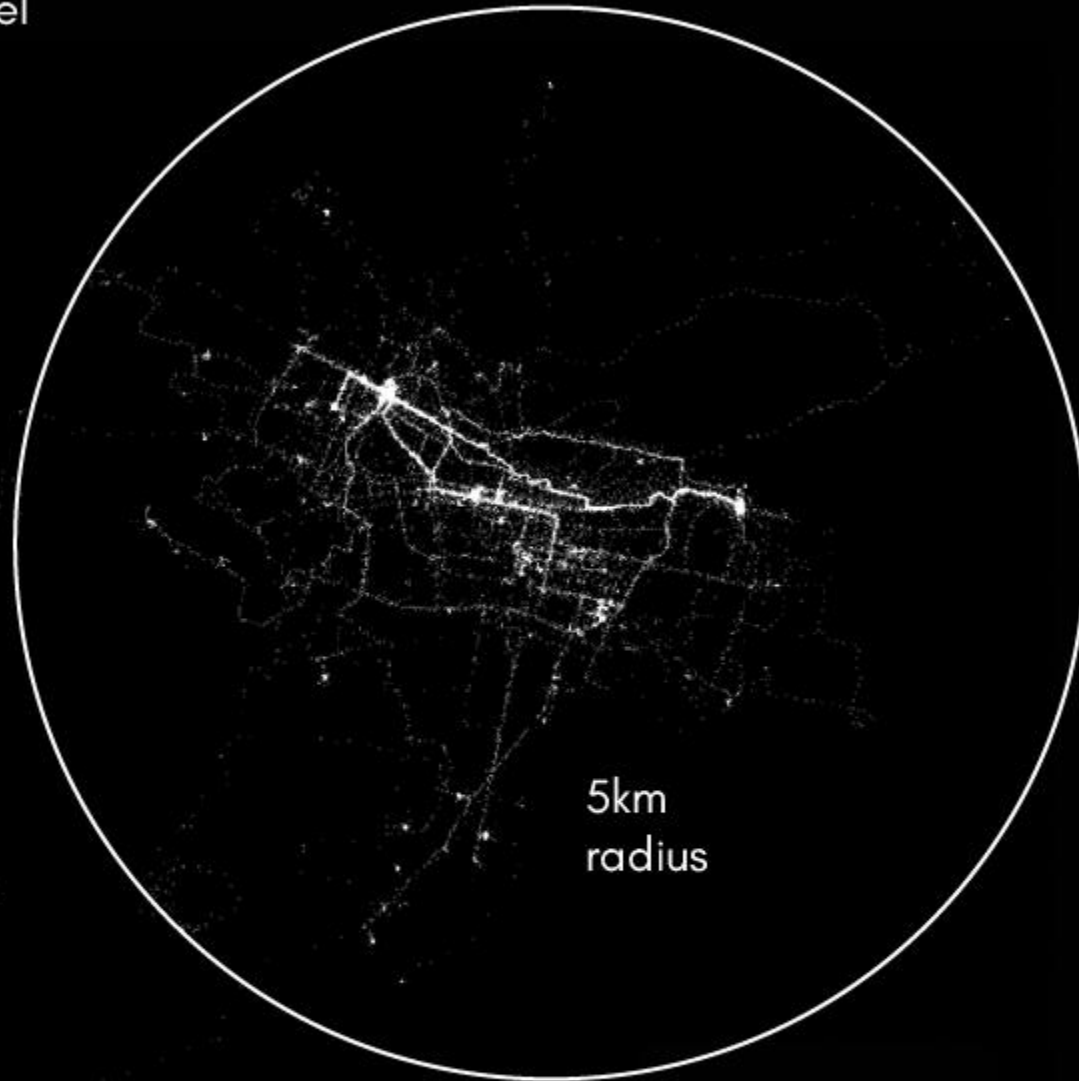
*A Brief History of Privatisation* (2011)



*High Street Casualties: Ellie Harrison's Zombie Walk* (Birmingham, 2015)

# The Glasgow Effect (2016)

Drumchapel



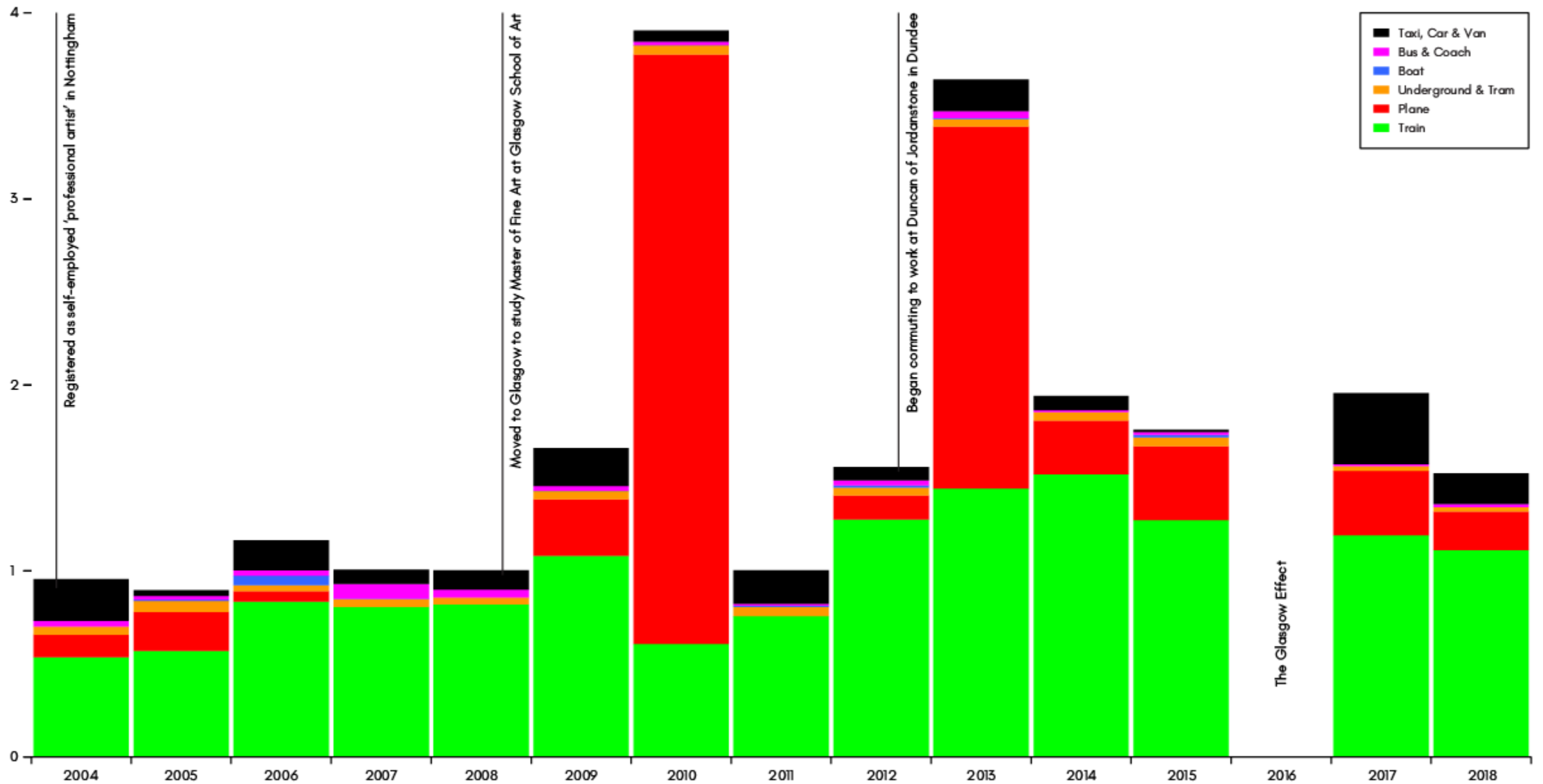
Easterhouse

Pollok

Castlemilk

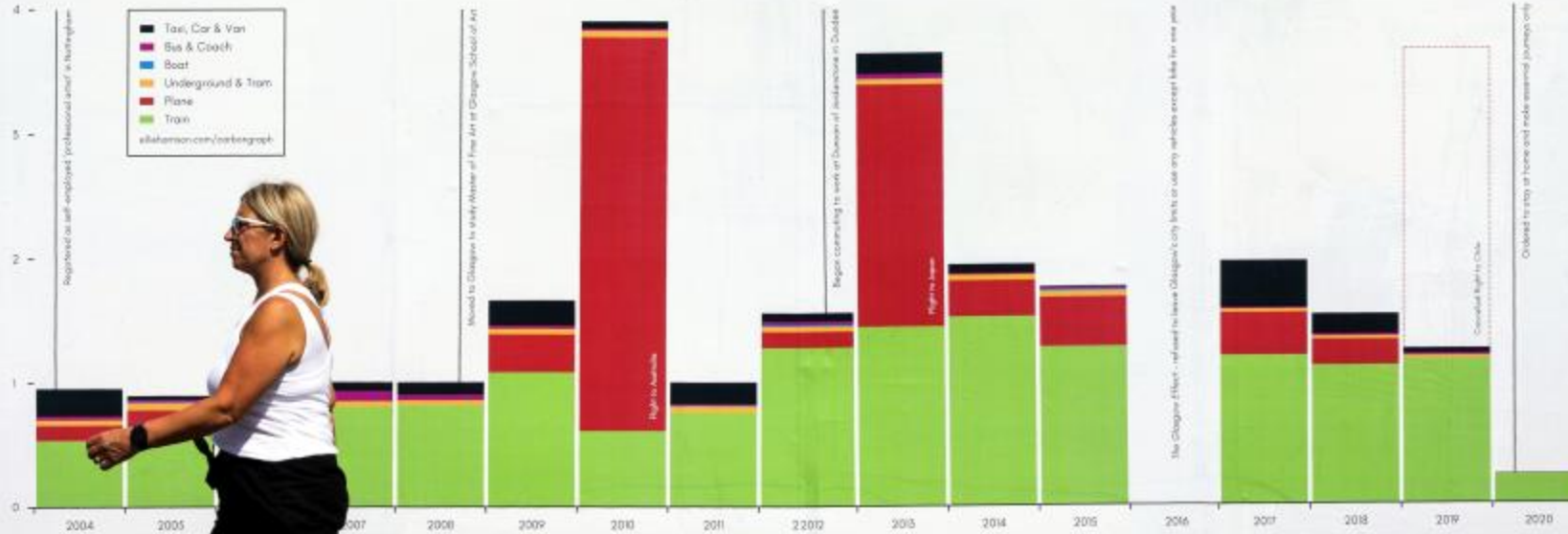
Annual Heatmap  
1 January - 31 December 2016  
Time moving: 185:07:00  
Distance travelled: 3,753.20km  
Average speed: 20.3km/h  
Energy output: 29,157kJ

# Tonnes of carbon produced by the personal transportation of a 'professional artist'



# EDINBURGH ART FESTIVAL

## Tonnes of carbon produced by the personal transportation of a 'professional artist'



**Elle Harrison**  
Tonnes of carbon produced by the personal transportation of a 'professional artist'  
Poster for Edinburgh Art Festival  
30 July - 30 August

Artist and activist, Elle Harrison, divulges details of her carbon footprint for transport. Created through the meticulous analysis of her 3,000 journeys she has made over the last 17 years, Harrison's graph tells a story of connections between energy and local mobility and highlights the consequences of our travel choices for our climate, which have become increasingly apparent in all our lives during lockdown.

This artwork forms part of a series of responses by artists across the city and online, to mark the dates of what would have been the 2020 edition of Edinburgh Art Festival. Other participating artists whose work can be discovered around the city include: Ruth Ewan, Pam Joseph, Peter Lees, and John Lee.

Find out more at [www.edinburghartfestival.com](http://www.edinburghartfestival.com) | #EdArtFest | @EdArtFest

This series of responses has been made possible thanks to the support of the Scottish Government's Festival, Events, Parks and Open Access team, part of Edinburgh's Events Directorate. All other public works presented with the support of J&A Arts.



Tonnes of carbon produced by... (Edinburgh Art Festival, 2020)



Car-free Glasgow (Kelvin Way, September 2018)



Harrison, inset bottom, says Glasgow should learn from Seoul in South Korea — in 2005, the city removed a congested motorway, below, and restored the river that once ran below it, left

# Shut M8 to let Glasgow breathe, says artist

Jason Allardyce

An artist once accused of taking a “poverty safari” after confining herself to a low-carbon lifestyle in Glasgow for a year for a project is calling for a six-lane section of motorway to be closed to let the city “breathe again”.

Ellie Harrison’s 2016 project, the Glasgow Effect — a term relating to poor health in parts of the city — was an attempt to explore sustainability by travelling less and focusing more on local opportunities.

However, she was widely attacked on social media, where some suggested that the artist, originally from London, was an arrogant southerner setting out to make poor Scots feel stupid and patronised. Scottish rapper Darren McGarvey called the project a “poverty safari” — though he now says Harrison is “not an enemy but an ally”.

Harrison, who received £15,000 for the project from arts agency Creative Scotland, reflects on the furore in a new book out next month, called *The Glasgow Effect: A Tale of*

Class, Capitalism and Carbon Footprint.

“It was only during my ‘extreme lifestyle experiment’ in 2016 — where I refused to leave Glasgow’s city limits, or use any vehicles except my bike — that I truly began to appreciate the significance of Glasgow’s car-centric infrastructure for all our mental, physical and financial health,” she writes.

She discovered that, despite Glasgow giving far more of its space over to roads than neighbouring Edinburgh — 25% compared with 12% — it has one of the lowest levels of car ownership in Britain, with a majority of people without access to cars.

Highlighting Glasgow city council research, which indicates that Glaswegians who do not own a car and so contribute least to air pollution are those that suffer from it most, she calls for “car-free days” — as held in Paris and which Edinburgh has emulated in a limited way with car-free Sundays in parts of Old Town.

Harrison says the “elephant in the room” is



the M8, which cuts through the heart of Glasgow. In 2016, the council invited Dutch architecture firm MVRDV to plan the regeneration of the Broomielaw area, which the motorway cuts through.

A draft version of MVRDV’s report said the M8 was a “highway scar” and that by diverting traffic using the new M74 extension, the city centre section of the M8 could be closed down.

Harrison says Glasgow should learn from Seoul in South Korea, which once had an 11km stretch of motorway carrying vast amounts of

traffic, “polluting the air and creating a hostile environment for all their citizens”. In 2005, the city removed the motorway and restored the river that once ran below it. In its place is a riverside park “creating a green lung for the city, enabling it to breathe again”.

Harrison suggests similar action, restoring the canal on which a section of the M8 from Easterhouse to Townhead was built. This would be accompanied by free public transport within Glasgow’s travel-to-work area to help those on the periphery, shift people onto more sustainable

forms of transport, and cut air pollution.

Transport Scotland, the agency responsible for trunk roads, said the Scottish government is committed to “a sustainable, healthier, fairer and more accessible transport system” and “will continue to take forward actions to help address the global climate emergency”.

It said the government must balance the “extensive changes required to meet a target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions with our duty to ensure Scotland has high quality infrastructure to meet the needs of all our residents, businesses and visitors”.

Anna Richardson, Glasgow city council convener for sustainability and carbon reduction, said: “We are developing a new transport strategy that will be fully focused on sustainability, such as public transport, cycling and walking. Decarbonising transport will be an essential part of Glasgow’s effort to become carbon neutral by 2030.”

The Glasgow Effect, published by Luath, is out on November 4.





Get Glasgow Moving (SPT Offices, December 2016)



Get Glasgow Moving (City Chambers, January 2020)



[Glasgow Community Energy](#) (Ashton Secondary School, September 2020)



[Glasgow Community Energy](#) (Glendale Primary School, October 2020)

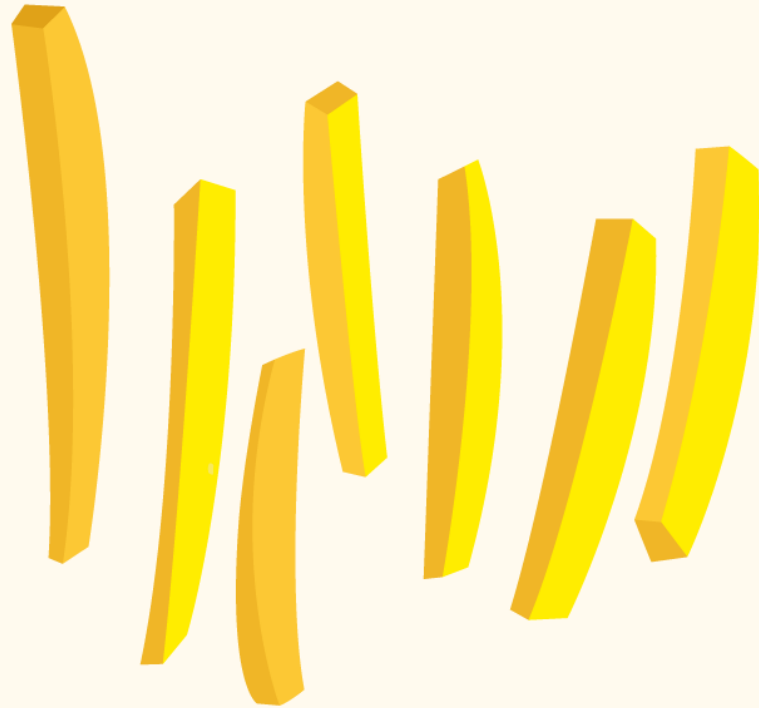
# BUS REGULATION THE MUSICAL



*Bus Regulation: The Musical* (Manchester Art Gallery, September 2019)

In early 2016, I found myself at the head of an angry mob... I was so consumed by my own anger and moral certainty, it had blinded me to the fact that Ellie Harrison, in all her middle class glory, was not an enemy, but an ally in the war I'd been fighting all my life.

DARREN MCGARVEY, *Poverty Safari*



# THE GLASGOW EFFECT

A tale of class, capitalism and carbon footprint

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New  
Updated  
Edition



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The Glasgow Effect, November 2021