



UKYP Sheffield

Transport Research Project

SUMMARY REPORT

Youth Opportunity Fund



Youth Capital Fund



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Sheffield's UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) Transport Campaign 2007 report. The reason we chose to undertake a project about transport is that it was a prominent campaign point for the elected Members of the UK Youth Parliament (MYPs) and deputies (DMYPs) for 2007, and therefore we believe that this is an important issue for young people in Sheffield. In addition to this, transport is also a national and regional campaign priority for the UKYP.

The UK Youth Parliament is a National organisation made up of over 500 elected Members (MYP's) and deputies (DMYP's). The UK Youth Parliament aims to represent young people locally, regionally and nationally, to find out issues important to young people, and campaign on young people's behalf. The organisation is run by young people for the benefit of young people and 11-18 year olds can vote for their chosen candidate, or stand for election themselves in their local area. At this time, the UKYP has three campaign priorities: Votes at 16, Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and Transport.

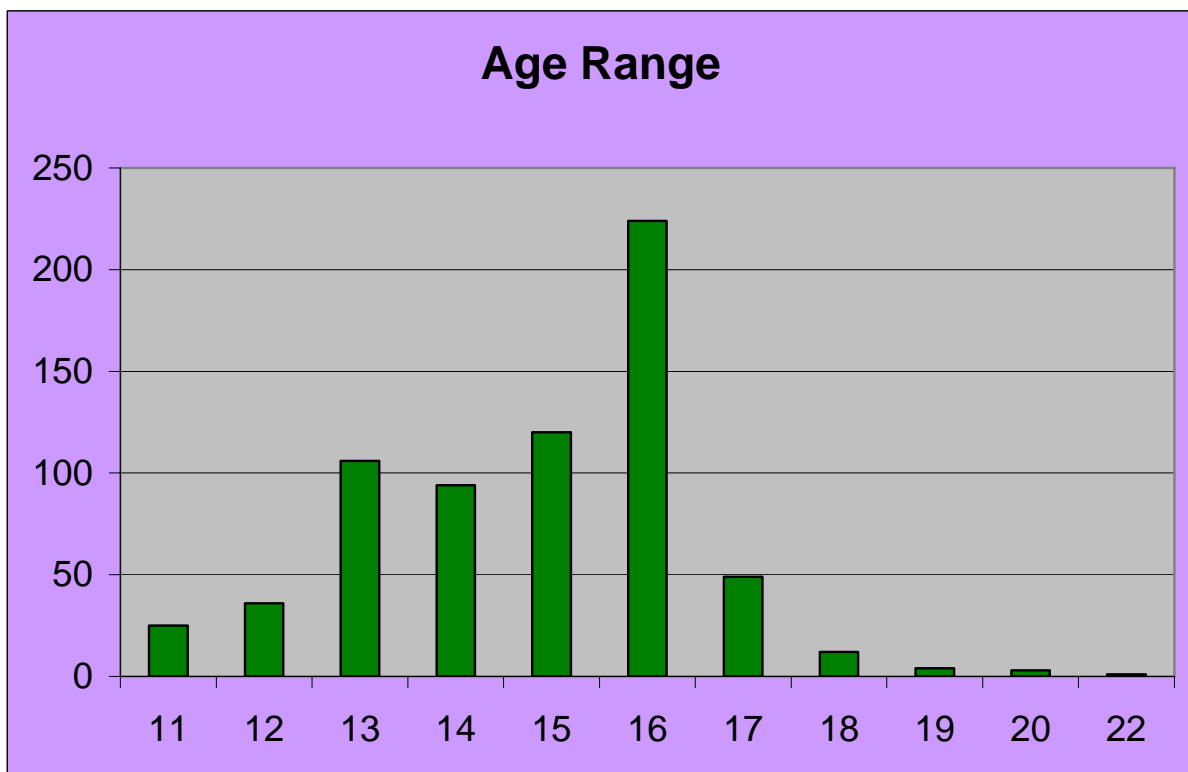
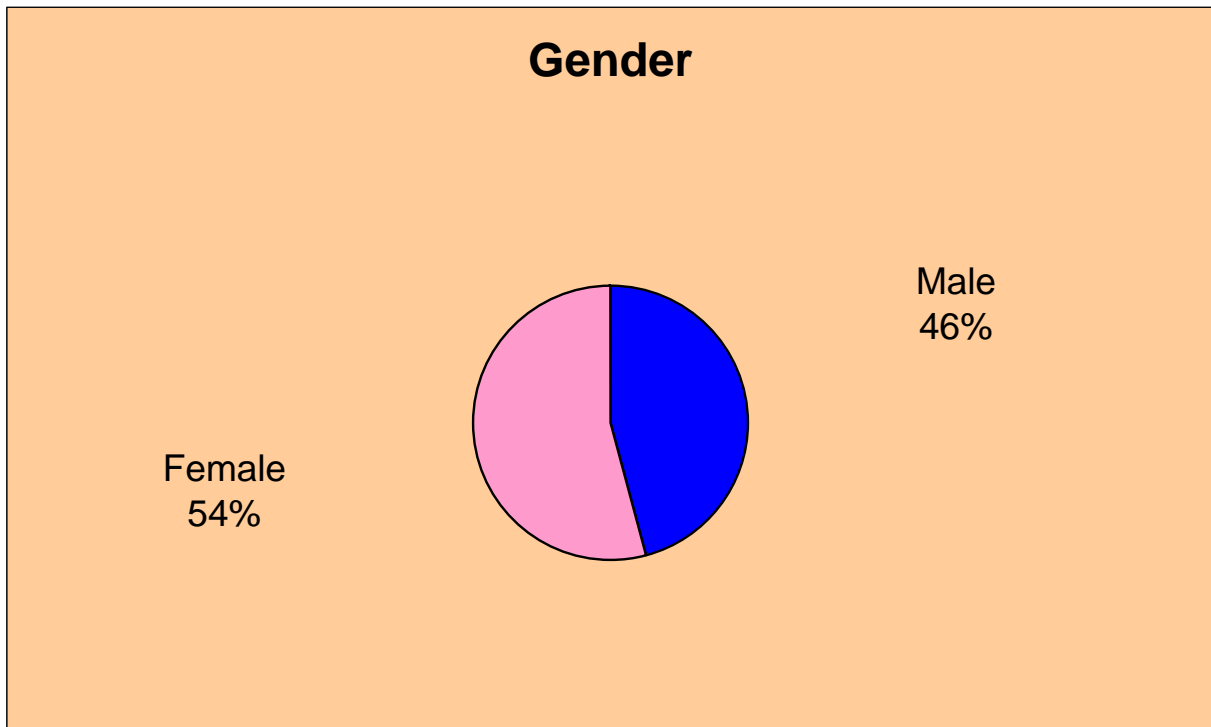
METHODOLOGY

We applied to Youth Opportunities Fund for funding and gained almost £3500 to help us complete the project. We then created a survey to find out what young people thought about public transport in Sheffield. We took the surveys into several secondary schools and colleges across Sheffield and we also carried out street surveying in the town centre to find out a wider variety of young people's views.

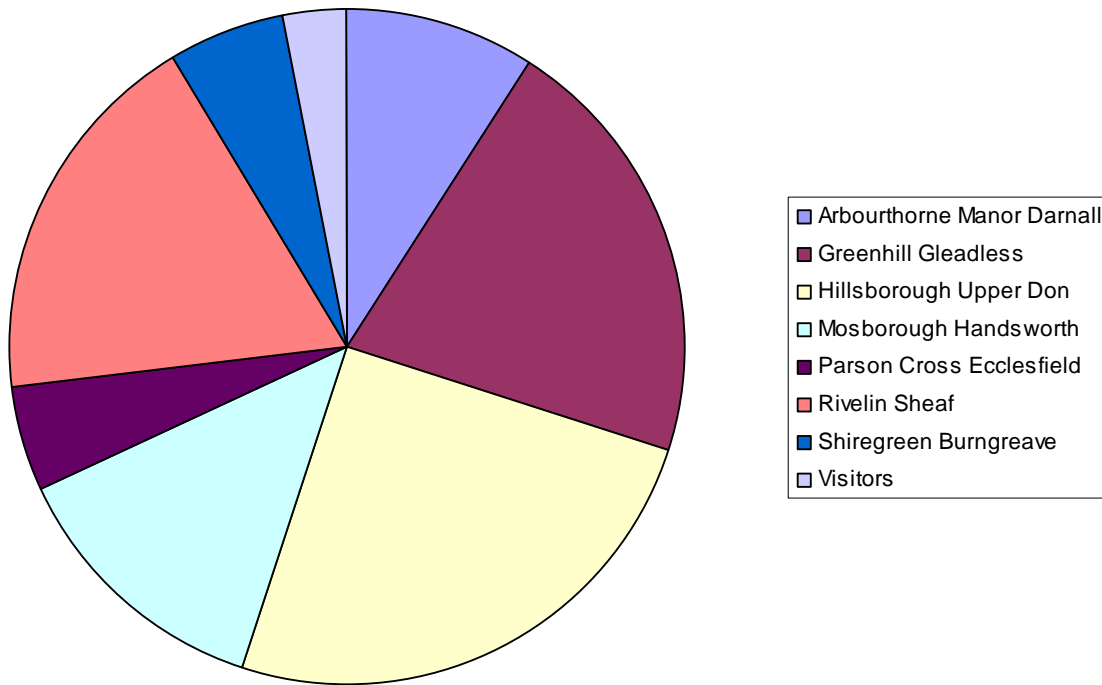
In addition, we undertook two focus groups to find more specific and detailed information about issues that may be affecting vulnerable groups of young people. These two groups were Burngreave Youth council and The Lodge Disability Project. We chose Burngreave Youth council to hold a focus group with because it is an example of an inner city area whose young people travel widely across the city to get to school, college and work; and we chose the Lodge disability project to look at the particular issues affecting young people with disabilities on public transport.

STATISTICS

The survey was carried out with a total of 677 young people across Sheffield.



%ages by Service District



The distribution was largely due to the majority of surveys being completed in schools. We think it is significant that large numbers of 15 and 16 year olds have completed the survey, as these young people are gaining independence, but not yet able to drive, so are very reliant on public transport. Many of them will soon be in a position to learn to drive, and so their opinion on public transport services now will have a great impact on whether or not they carry on using public transport over the next few years.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

We found that over half of young people in Sheffield who completed questionnaires are neutral (45%) or positive (28%) about the public transport services they receive, but we feel that there are still a number of concerns that young people have with transport that providers must address. One-quarter of young people are negative or unhappy about the services they receive.

It was also apparent that young people are more satisfied with trams than with buses: 79% of girls and 93% of boys who used the tram were happy with the tram service, compared to 65% of girls and 67% of boys happy with bus services.

Reliability

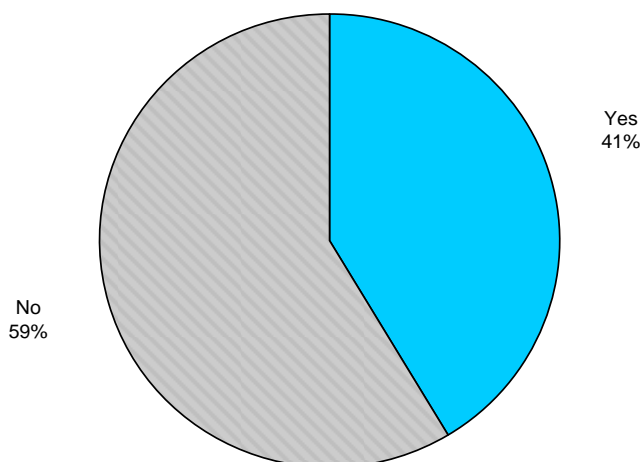
The most common complaint was reliability of public transport, with 43.1% of complaints mentioning it, and the largest number of negative comments also related to it. The most common comments were that buses were not on time, that they were infrequent and overcrowded. Respondents also commented on limited night-time services, as some services cease at night, and that there is also a lack of advertisement of late night services.

Reliability of public transport is an important issue for young people, because young people rely greatly on it to get around independently and unreliable service, e.g. frequent timetable changes, late arrivals and services not running after 7.00pm are a great inconvenience to young people, and may cause customers not to use the services in the future.

It should also be noted that reliability was also the primary concern raised by respondents to the 2006 'Buses – Have your say' survey commissioned by Sheffield City Council, and that frequency was the second most common concern.

Fares and Passes

Happy with the price of Public Transport?

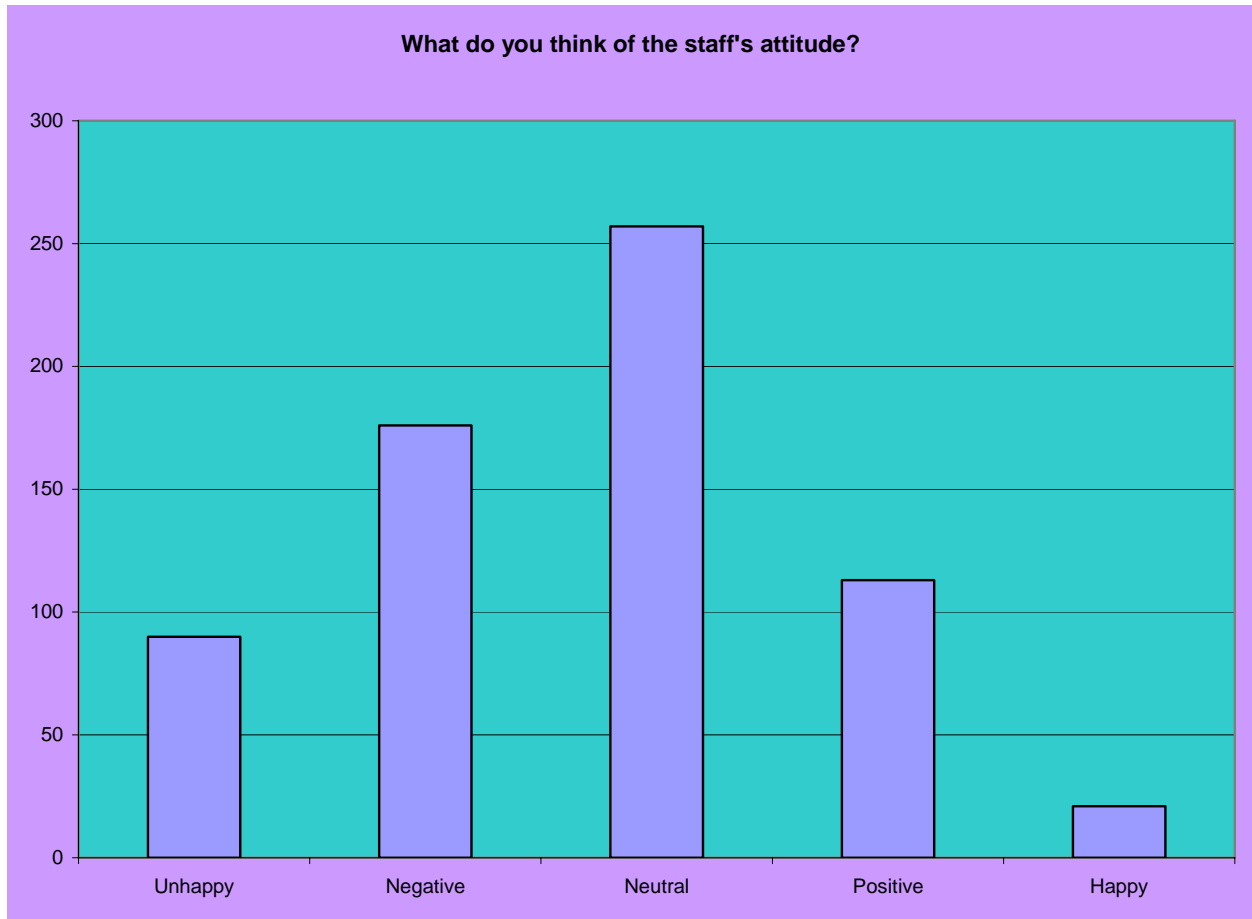


Concerns about the price of travel were the second most common raised, with 19.4% of complainants identifying price in particular as an issue. A specific question about the price of public transport for young people showed that, while most young people were happy with the concessionary price of 40p per journey for travel in south Yorkshire, young people find that it is extremely expensive to travel without a travel pass. The difficulty of travelling around without a travel pass could be reduced by increasing availability of information about travel passes, as there is often confusion around how to get one, who should get one and where from. Also, concerns were raised about the need to pay full fare on public transport in the time between mega travel and student passes.

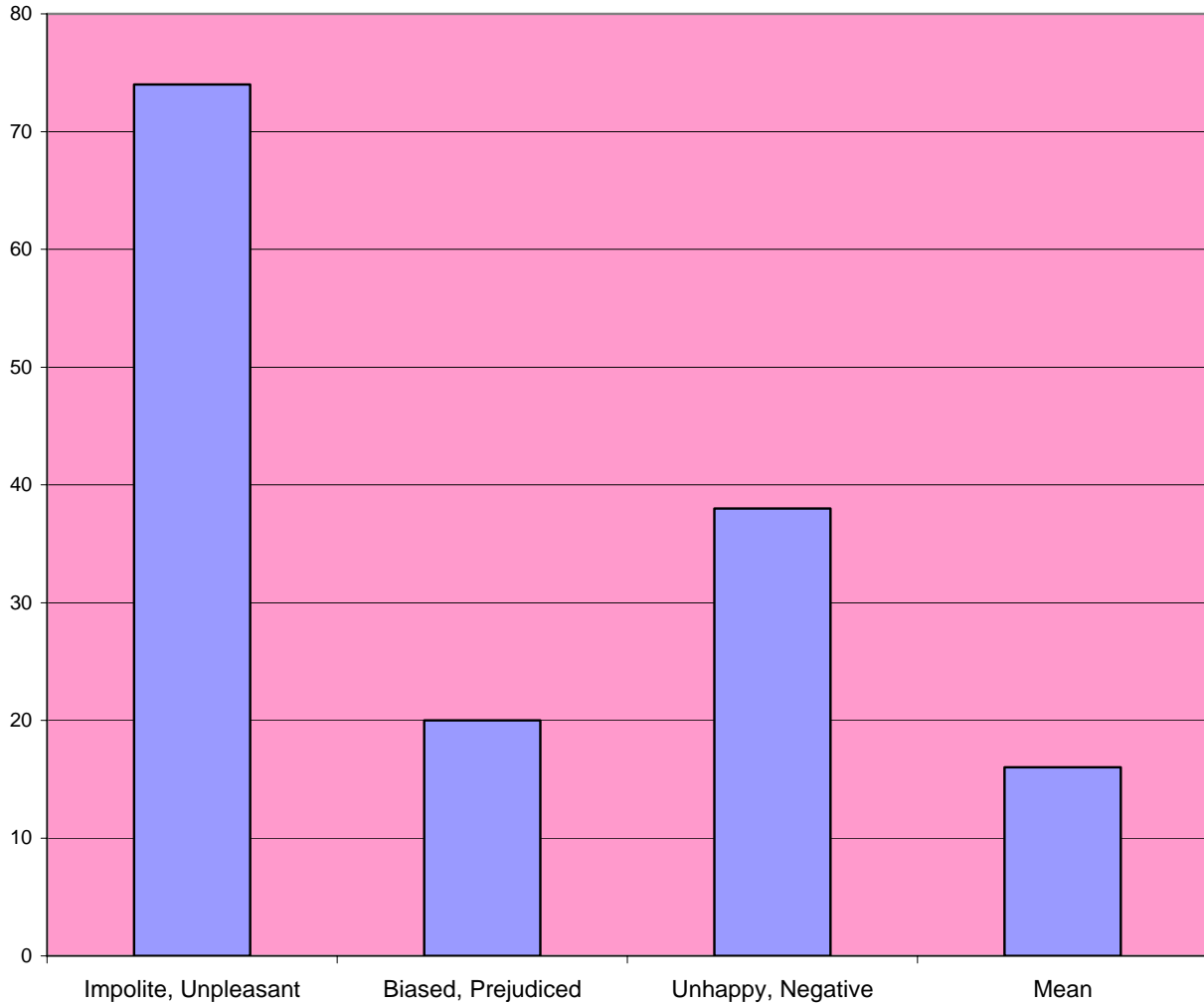
Trust is a key issue that has arisen from this survey: we had several comments from young people about transport staff not allowing young people the concessionary fare when they don't have their bus pass, even though they are in their school uniform.

Customer Service

We asked a specific question about problems young people may have encountered with transport staff, and we found:



Reason for displeasure



This shows that most young people felt that staff attitudes were not good towards them. There were also a large number of comments made by young people saying that they are unhappy with staff attitudes towards young people, showing that this is a major issue affecting young people and their use of public transport. The most common comments were that bus drivers are often rude, 'mardy' and grumpy. We also received a number of particularly concerning comments about discrimination, including two specific reports of racist behaviour by bus drivers.

On this issue we think that it is important that drivers receive training in customer care and issues affecting minority groups, like people with disabilities and young people. We feel that, although young people should be treated the same as any other public transport user, a significant amount of respondents don't think that young people are. In the 2006 'Buses – Have your say' survey, conducted with users of all ages, attitudes of bus drivers was the fourth concern raised by respondents, after reliability, frequency and missing buses.

Hygiene and Quality

A small number of respondents complained about public transport being overcrowded and unclean. This wasn't a major concern for young people, with only 8% of complaints identifying it, but it was raised and could be addressed by introducing more frequent services at times where overcrowding is present, which will result in less concentration of litter and damage.

Young People with Disabilities

We held a focus group with the High Fives Disability Project in Beighton. This is a group of young people aged 13-25, primarily with learning difficulties. The group has a strong emphasis on volunteering and were happy to get involved with the campaign.

The group felt that public transport is generally not clean enough and is expensive, although they were favourable about the current arrangements for passes and saver fares. They felt that public transport is unreliable, but most of the group felt that it is convenient and takes you where you want to go easily. Most of the group felt that young people are treated unfairly by transport staff. All the group felt that public transport at the moment is accessible to people with disabilities, including wheelchair users.

Inner City Young People

We conducted a focus group with Burngreave Youth Council to find out what young people from an inner city area thought about public transport. Burngreave Youth Council is made up of young people from the Burngreave, Fir Vale and Page Hall areas, who are elected by their peers to represent them locally. The main issues that arose from this group were safety on public transport, and also at public transport shelters.

The group felt that buses in particular were not clean, that public transport is expensive and that it doesn't take you where you want to go easily, and that transport staff do not treat young people fairly. They did, however, feel that public transport is reliable. They suggested that public transport staff should wear easily visible name badges, and that staff should be well mannered and tolerant.

We asked this group what would help improve bus services for them. Their recommendations were:

- Clean up buses – graffiti and litter
- Provide maps of bus routes
- Place security staff/conductors on buses
- CCTV on buses and at bus stops
- Use buses with separate entrances and exits
- Introduce a top-up-card system like the London Oyster Card
- Better ventilation and heating on buses

Rural Young People

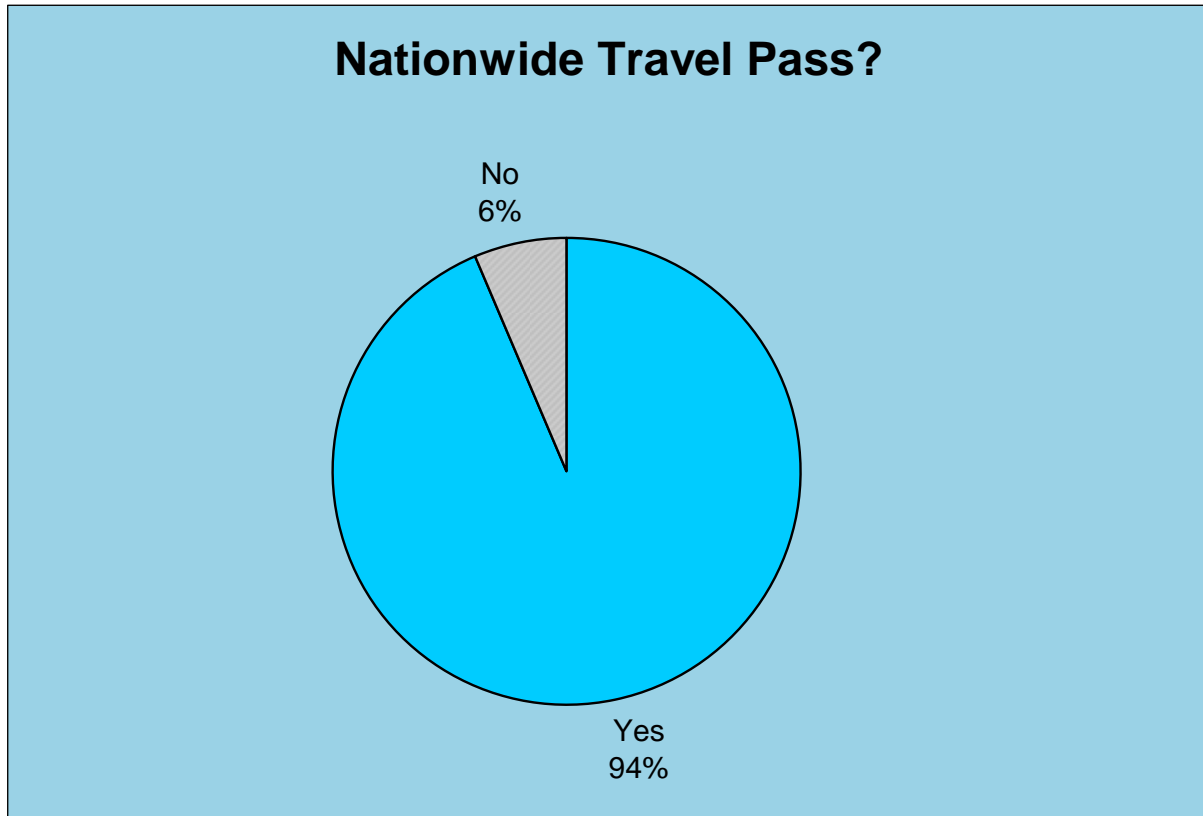
From the survey we were able to identify responses from young people from rural parts of the city such as Dungworth and Stocksbridge. Young people from rural areas are more likely to be neutral or happy about the transport services that they use, but are less frequent users of public transport than young people in urban areas, with almost half using public transport twice or less per week.

Visitors to Sheffield

From the survey, we were also able to identify responses from young people who were visitors to Sheffield. Visitors to Sheffield are less likely to be happy with public services than local people, although they do use public transport less. The primary concern young people visiting Sheffield had was the price of public transport in the city.

UKYP NATIONAL TRANSPORT CAMPAIGN – ‘Fares Fair’

One of the UKYP’s national campaigns, ‘Fares Fair’, is for a national concession card for all young people under the age of 18 in full time education. This travel pass would allow young people to get reduced fares on public transport, which would make public transport more accessible to young people and give them more independence.



On a specific question about having a standardised, national concessionary pass for young people, there was an overwhelming agreement that this was a good idea, with 94% of respondents wanting a nationally recognised pass.

A national travel pass is a key way of enabling young people to have more independence, as young people would be able to travel to areas outside of their home towns. It would also help young people who are on travel pass boundaries e.g. people on the border of Sheffield and Derbyshire.

The UKYP will be launching a viral advertisement campaign for Fares Fair on Monday 19th November, to tie in with the presentation of this report to Minister of State for Transport, Rosie Winterton. The viral ad will be viewable on YouTube (www.youtube.com).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Today's young people are tomorrow's adults, and as such, need convincing to continue to use public transport. Because of this, it is important that providers find ways of making public transport affordable, enjoyable and accessible to young people.

In order to achieve this, and drawing on the evidence we have assembled, we recommend that transport providers in Sheffield, and organisations commissioning services or working with transport providers, do the following:

- Take steps to ensure that services are more reliable, and that more information on service reliability and times is available to customers
- Make more buses available at busy times
- Provide front line transport staff with specific training on relating to minority groups, including young people
- Ensure that front line staff trust young people about their age
- Make more information available- through school and advertisements. In particular, more information about travel passes and what to do if you have lost yours
- Undertake more consultation with young people about public transport and involve young people in decisions about provision which will affect them
- Commit to working towards a nationally standardised young people's travel pass

THANKS

We would like to extend our thanks to all the young people who completed the survey and took part in the focus groups; to Zain Abdulla, Cheryl Ridge and their teams for helping us undertake the focus group sessions; to David Blunkett, Meg Munn, Clive Betts and Nick Clegg for their support for our campaign; to SYPTE (and in particular to Pam Horner and Peter Slack from SYPTE for meeting with us); and to all the schools, organisations and youth groups who got involved in our feedback event, as well as to St Mary's Conference Centre for hosting the event.

We would also like to thank the staff at the UK Youth Parliament for bringing our campaign into the UKYP's national 'Fares Fair' campaign.

Special thanks also to Lisa Judson at Sheffield Futures for all her work to collate and help us analyse the data, and produce graphics for this report.

Sheffield Futures Voice and Influence Team would also like to thank Lisa, along with Dan Whittaker, Thelma Whittaker, Lauren Barlow and Anne Reid for supporting our work on the project.

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UK Youth Parliament

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UK Youth Parliament National Transport Campaign

<http://www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk/faresfair>

South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive

0114 276 7575 / www.sypte.co.uk

Stagecoach

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First

01709 566 000

<http://www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/yorkhumber/southyorkshire/home/>