

Young people and crime on public transport

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Foreword
by Glenda Jackson
Transport Minister

Young people are major users of public transport and they are the key to the future market. This report is an important step in understanding young people's attitudes towards and requirements for public transport, and how these requirements could be better met. I am certain that the report will prove to be a useful guide for all of us keen to promote public transport as an attractive, safe and accessible mode of travel.

All too often young people's behaviour is viewed in negative terms. Whilst this report shows that young people can sometimes behave badly on their travels, it also clearly highlights that their views and experiences of public transport are not too dissimilar from those of adult passengers. They too have concerns over fare prices, timetabling, staff attitudes and personal security. They too are sometimes the victims of crime on public transport - from both other young people and adults.

Public transport is not perceived by many young people as a friendly environment where they are welcomed and their custom valued. A number of transport operators have undertaken initiatives to address not only concerns about young people's behaviour on public transport but also to promote public transport as an attractive mode of travel for them. A number of these initiatives are described in this report, and the key lessons and recommendations from them are highlighted.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenda Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Glenda Jackson

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all who contributed to this research, not least those children and young people who helped to design the questionnaire surveys for their peers. Also, our thanks to those who participated in the questionnaire surveys and the many teachers and youth club workers who helped to make it happen. Particular thanks to those schools and youth clubs who helped organise the focus group discussions with young people across the country.

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Geraldine Pettersson
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Chapter 1 - Background to the study

1.1 Introduction

In January 1998, Crime Concern was commissioned by the DETR through the Department's Mobility Unit to:

- explore young people's attitudes towards public transport and their experiences and perceptions of personal security and crime;
- assess the effectiveness of individual initiatives from the perspective of both the operators and the young people;
- identify best practice on dealing with young people and crime on public transport; and
- establish and prioritise young people's requirements for public transport, and how these could be better met.

1.2 The Research Programme

This national study uses a blend of quantitative and qualitative research methods to investigate young people's experiences of and attitudes towards public transport, their perceptions of personal security and their involvement in crime and nuisance behaviour. It also uses discussion groups and interviews to assess the effectiveness of measures taken to encourage young people to be responsible users of public transport.

For the purposes of this study, 'children' refers to young people from 10 to 12 years of age and 'young people' refers to those from 13 to 24 years of age.

Details of the research programme are provided below.

Understanding the issues:

Literature audit

this draws on the literature review carried out for the national review of personal security on public transport [1995] updated by a review of subsequent publications, including professional transport and crime prevention journals.

Questionnaire surveys

Self completion surveys using structured questionnaires were conducted with children and young people in the age range 11 to 19 years. To design the questionnaires, Crime Concern separately trained two groups of young people [one group aged 11 and 12 years and a second aged 17 years] and worked with them on the content and style of the questions. Crime Concern's past experience had shown that involving young people in this way is the most effective way of ensuring that surveys address all their main concerns. Drawing on the experience of these training sessions, Crime Concern designed a third questionnaire for young people aged 18 to 20 years.

Each of the three questionnaires was also piloted with young people from the relevant age group.

The questionnaires covered: attitudes to public transport and car ownership; experiences and perceptions of personal security; young people as the perpetrators and victims of crime and anti-social behaviour; young people's suggestions for encouraging their use of public transport; and the impact of child to adult fare changes.

In total, 582 completed questionnaires were received from schools and colleges in different types of areas: inner city, suburban, large town and rural. The profile of the survey respondents is included in Appendix 1.

It was intended to distribute a separate questionnaire to pupils at special schools. However, those schools approached said that such a survey would not be appropriate because their pupils rarely travelled independently and had little or no experience of public transport. To provide information on the attitudes and

needs of those with learning difficulties, this report has drawn on the findings of other focus group discussions conducted by Crime Concern with young people with special needs undertaken in separate research projects.

Focus groups

Focus group discussions were held with children and young people in primary and secondary schools, training centres, youth clubs and places of employment. It was intended to conduct between ten and twelve focus groups. However, the focus group format proved more informative than the questionnaire surveys in identifying young people's attitudes to public transport, their travel needs and priorities. As a consequence, it was decided to conduct more focus groups than the ten or twelve originally proposed and twenty one were completed through the research programme. A profile of the participants in these groups is provided in Appendix 2. All age groups from 10 years and older were met through the focus groups and the participants were split fairly evenly between females and males. There were focus groups where the majority or all of the respondents were black or from Asian communities.

The discussions with groups of young people have explored in depth: their experiences of using public transport; the impact of personal security on their use of public transport; young people's travel needs and priorities; and their attitudes to public transport and car ownership. Where appropriate, discussions also covered the views of children and young people on specific initiatives targeted to encourage responsible behaviour when using public transport.

Assessing the effectiveness of individual initiatives and identifying best practice:

Survey of initiatives

Questionnaires asking for information about any initiatives targeted at children and young people were sent to 315 organisations, including local authorities, Passenger Transport Executives, transport providers, the Home Office police and British Transport Police.

Completed questionnaires were returned by 125 organisations from England, Wales and Scotland, a 40% response rate. The survey identified 400 individual initiatives to address issues relating to young people and public transport. Further details of this survey and its findings are provided in Chapter 5.

Case study selection

Using the analysis of data from the survey of initiatives, case studies were selected for further investigation. Case studies were chosen to ensure the variety and range of initiatives were covered. It was also necessary to select those where sufficient information was available to aid assessment.

Case Studies

<i>a comprehensive approach</i> <i>a) a comprehensive approach for addressing issues about young people and public transport</i>	Merseytravel - Youth on the Move Nexus [Tyne & Wear]
<i>raising awareness of public transport issues</i> <i>b) work in schools and visits</i>	First Cymru SAFE, South Yorkshire PTE First Mainline First Bradford NEXUS London Transport Museum
<i>c) providing curriculum material</i>	London Transport Museum SAFE, South Yorkshire PTE Merseytravel
<i>d) young people's direct involvement through action groups</i>	Thameslink Youth Action London Transport Buses
<i>promoting public transport</i>	SAFE, South Yorkshire PTE

<i>e) campaigns, sponsorship, events</i>	NEXUS
<i>encouraging responsible behaviour f) junior citizen and crucial crew</i>	London Transport Education
<i>g) addressing behaviour through drama</i>	Merseytravel First Bradford
<i>h) addressing behaviour through art</i>	Merseytravel Railtrack Southern
<i>i) addressing behaviour through videos</i>	First Cymru London Transport Museum Merseytravel
<i>j) detached youth work</i>	Merseytravel Nexus
<i>k) other initiatives</i>	First Mainline Connex South Eastern Nexus

Case study assessment:

For each of the case studies, interviews were held with the initiating authority and, as appropriate, with their partners in the initiative. For most of the case studies, discussions were held with the children and young people who were expected to benefit from the initiative. Any evaluation or survey material on the effectiveness of the initiative was also collected. The issues covered in the case study research are listed in Appendix 3.

1.3 The Advisory Group

An advisory group was established to provide guidance and comment at various stages of the study's development. The members of the group were:

Home Office	Ben Judah
Nexus	Bob Patterson
Merseytravel	Murray Grant
Merseytravel	John Bligh
Strathclyde PTE	Hilary Howatt
Honley High School	Martin Shevill
West Sussex County Council	Roz South
St Mary's School, London	Kathy Cornish

1.4 The Report's Structure

The next chapter sets the context for the presentation of the research findings. It draws on existing research and professional publications to summarise current perspectives on young people and their use of public transport; their attitudes towards bus, train and taxi travel, and their travel needs. This chapter also provides contextual information on young people and crime generally and in relation to public transport, both as the victims as well as the perpetrators of crime and nuisance.

Chapter 3 draws together the findings from the surveys with children and young people and the focus group discussions to describe their experiences of and attitudes towards public transport and public transport staff.

It also identifies the wider issues affecting young people's use of public transport, including their attitude to fares and concessions. It discusses young people's travel needs and their priorities for services. Finally, it explores young people's attitudes towards the car and how they see their future use of public transport in relation to car ownership.

Again, using the findings from focus group discussions and the surveys, Chapter 4 focuses on young people's experience of crime and anti-social behaviour on public transport, both as perpetrators and as victims. It explores what makes young women and young men of different ages feel unsafe when travelling on or waiting for public transport and over the 'whole journey'. It examines their attitudes towards graffiti and vandalism and what impact, if any, they feel their actions have on other passengers and public transport staff.

Chapter 5 presents an overview of initiatives or measures in place or planned which are targeted towards encouraging the responsible use of public transport by young people and promote their continued use of services. This chapter also draws on the survey of organisations and from the literature review to identify the full range of initiatives being deployed by PTEs, transport providers, local authorities, the Home Office police, British Transport Police and others.

Chapter 6 draws on interviews with those involved in delivering the case study initiatives and discussions with the young people who are targeted to benefit to assess their effectiveness and the scope for replication as good practice.

Finally, Chapter 7 draws together conclusions from the study's findings with recommendations to effectively meet the travel needs of young people and tackle issues of crime and nuisance which involve young people and public transport.

Chapter 2 - Young people, crime and public transport: an overview from the literature

2.1 Young people and public transport

Young people's use of public transport

Children and young people are major users of public transport and they are the key to the future market. School journeys account for a quarter of all children's travel and 20% of journeys to school are made by bus or coach [Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers et al, 1997]. Over 1 million children receive free transport every day to and from school, and several million more use public transport for their school journey, paying their own fares [Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers, 1992].

There are different patterns of use of public transport between younger and older children. A major programme of consultations with children and young people on their use of public transport has been carried out in schools and youth clubs for Merseytravel [Crime Concern, 1995; Harris Research Services, 1995]. Most of the children and young people taking part in the discussions were regular users of public transport, with much higher frequencies of bus use compared with rail. Children younger than 11 or 12 years tended to travel on public transport accompanied by family members. The patterns of use changed substantially beyond this age. Children started to travel more independently or with friends of a similar age, and evening and weekend use of public transport was more frequent and regular. Travelling independently, either alone or with friends, is associated with '*freedom*' and '*being able to look after yourself*'.

Usually those older than 11 or 12 years used the bus much more extensively for social and leisure activities including going to the cinema, swimming or other sports activities, shopping, visiting friends and going to parties. Those aged 14 or 15 years and older also used public transport, again mainly the bus, to get to and from school, college or night school, and to get to work. The bus was used regularly to get to clubs and discos, but some said they returned home by taxi or got lifts from friends to avoid trouble late at night. They were particularly concerned to avoid rival groups or gangs of young people congregating at bus stops near to late night venues as fights could result.

Some young people, mainly young women and girls, described using buses "*sometimes just because we're bored, we go on top and talk, just sit there and ride around - when there's nothing else to do*". Another study with young people in Merseyside [Bligh and Cole, 1996] revealed that many young people regularly meet at or close by bus stops to socialise with their peers. Such locations were identified as convenient and close to home. Some young people 'hang around' at train or bus stations or ride around because they perceive there is little else to do. Stations, trains and buses are warm and dry places to meet independently, cheaply and without adult supervision [North Tyneside Council and Nexus, 1997; Crime Concern, 1995].

A questionnaire survey and focus group discussions with young people in small towns and villages in North Warwickshire [Crime Concern, 1994] provided an indication of the extent to which they can be excluded from sports and leisure facilities by the absence of appropriate public transport. In that study, two thirds of the students responding to the survey were restricted in their use of such facilities by the paucity of services, especially the lack of evening buses, and a third were restricted by the cost of public transport. From the same survey, nearly 50% of young women and a fifth of young men were deterred from using facilities because they would have to walk from the bus stop or train station late at night. Those unemployed or on training schemes were particularly restricted in their use of facilities because they could not regularly afford the cost of a taxi home. The paucity of bus services or the cost of travel meant those unemployed or in training were severely restricted in their efforts to gain employment.

Impact of car ownership on use of public transport

Although living in a household with a car does affect younger children's use of public transport, when older and travelling independently there appears to be little difference in the levels of use between young people living in households with or without cars. Also, young people's strong enthusiasm for future car ownership is

universal and does not appear to be influenced by current car usage within their family [Crime Concern, 1995].

Until they are over 17 years of age and have the option of becoming a car driver, young people are often described as a 'captive market'. In the past, this may have the effect of lulling some transport operators into the belief that they need to do little to retain or attract young people to use public transport. Importantly, this view is gradually changing and many increasingly recognise the need to develop market initiatives targeted at young people and their travel needs.

Attitudes to public transport

The research with children and young people in Merseyside [Crime Concern, 1995] identified close similarities in their attitudes and those expressed by adults in other surveys. Bus travel, however, was perceived as "*really slow*" and this was partly attributed to the "*long winding routes*" of some services. In common with findings from research with adults, the reliability of services was an important consideration for older children and young people. There were complaints about patchy or unreliable services and how experiences of delays or cancellations negatively influenced their view of public transport. Again, echoing the comments of adults in other consultations, young people identified the importance of reliable and up to date information, particularly on local bus services.

Again, from the Merseyside consultations, the cost of travel produced some of the strongest reactions from the young people, with a widely expressed opinion that bus fares were too expensive and not good value over short journeys [Crime Concern, 1995]. The view was expressed that cheaper fares would encourage young people to travel more and continue to use public transport. There was strong support for the wider availability of passes for school travel. Many children and young people complained that bus drivers did not always give them a ticket and they could be short changed, especially if they were travelling on their own. The majority of those consulted felt that bus drivers treated children and young people very badly. The drivers were described as hostile and impatient and many did not know how to treat or respond to young people.

As a means of revealing young people's perceptions of bus as compared to car use, secondary school students were asked what were the main characteristics they associated with those using the bus and the car [Harris Research Services, 1995]. The most common characteristics for bus users were said to be an elderly woman or unemployed person. In contrast, someone using a car was most commonly described as having a mobile phone and living in a big house.

The impact of experience on future use of public transport

Research in South Yorkshire has indicated that travel habits developed at a young age can influence subsequent behaviour [Goodwin et al, 1983]. It has been suggested that those who have not been regular public transport users as young people are less likely to be passengers in their adult life [Atkins, 1996]. Also, although evidence from the literature is sparse, it may well be that a young person's unpleasant experience while travelling by or waiting for public transport could have an impact on their choice of travel mode as an adult. Certainly it is evident from the findings of the British Crime Survey and local studies by Crime Concern that experience of crime can increase fear of crime.

A letter in Local Transport Today [July 1998] commented on that fact that many of the people now driving two or three miles to work will have been the school children who regularly travelled by bus in the early 1980s. The letter's author suggests that negative experience of the school bus may discourage use of public transport as an adult. The letter concludes:

'remembering how my classmates and I used to behave on the bus into school certainly encourages me to now use my own car for travel to work!'

2.2 Young People and Crime

A disproportionate amount of recorded crime is committed by young people, especially by young males. In 1994, two out of every five offenders were under the age of 21 and a quarter were under 18 [Audit

Commission, 1997]. A small number of persistent offenders commit most of the crimes by young people. A survey through which respondents self reported their offences over the previous twelve months identified that 3% of young people, mostly young males, were responsible for about a quarter of all offences [Graham and Bowling, 1995]. Most offences by young people are property related. In contrast, young males are more likely than adults to be the victims of personal crime, with those aged 16 to 19 years at greatest risk of assault.

Often of greater impact than the criminal offences committed by young people is their involvement in anti-social and nuisance behaviour. Much of the public concern about young people stems from their tendency to hang about in groups, on the street or other public places. This is associated with noise and nuisance behaviour which many adults find intimidating [Audit Commission, 1996].

Young people are often associated with a great many incidents of vandalism and graffiti. Among criminologists there are contrasting views on the causes of vandalism. Some argue that it shows a lack of respect for society's values, whilst for others it is associated with youthful high spirits or '*an unconscious attempt on the part of children to exercise control over their environment by leaving some sign of their presence*' [Barker and Bridgeman, 1994]. Evidence has been presented that suggests a great deal of vandalism is 'unwilful' and caused during the course of unsupervised play, or design has made an object vulnerable to damage during normal use [Mayhew and Clarke, 1982].

It is likely that vandalism has no one cause but a variety, some wilful and others unwilful. Whatever the causes, vandalism has been a feature of the human environment for centuries. An Egyptian priest, 4000 years ago, gave expression to his anger and fears in the following quote referred to in Madison [1970]:

'youth is disintegrating. The youngsters of the land have a disrespect for their elders and a contempt for authority in every form. Vandalism is rife, and crime of all types is rampant among our young people. The nation is in peril'

In contrast to a decade ago, young people and young males in particular are not growing out of offending behaviour as they reach their late teens and early twenties. Property offending by young males may now be increasing with age up to the mid twenties [Bright, 1997]. The known rate of offending by young adult males aged 18 to 24 years has increased significantly and, as a result, the peak age of offending for young men has increased from 15 years in 1986 to 18 years in 1994. In contrast, the peak age of offending for women has remained between 14 and 15 years of age [Audit Commission, 1997]. Female offenders who become socially mature adults are significantly more likely to stop offending than those who do not, whereas this development process appears to make little difference to male offenders [Graham and Bowling, 1995].

The risk of becoming an offender is greater for those young people who: live in families with inadequate parental supervision; have problems at school, including truancy or exclusion and poor educational achievement; live with conflict at home; have friends or siblings who offend; are not in employment or further education; and have a heavy use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs.

A survey with 1,100 young people revealed the consequences of truancy on their behaviour [Lewis, 1995]. Over a fifth said they were often truant and a similar proportion were occasionally truant. Over 80% were absent with at least one other friend who was also playing truant. Although from the survey a significant number of truants either stayed in the school grounds or at their own or a friend's home, the other common places to visit were cafes, burger bars, towns centres and other public places. Although only a minority of truants commit crime, a significant number stated that they had been a nuisance to others.

Although it is recognised that children and young people are often the victims of crime, most of the comprehensive studies of youth crime have focussed on them as the perpetrators. It is specialist studies such as those on homelessness, young people in care, domestic violence and bullying which provide most information on young people as the victims of crime, usually from the criminal behaviour of adults. In addition, local surveys with young people conducted by Crime Concern have identified the extent to which they are victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, especially from other young people. In particular, bullying is now known to be far more prevalent, including on the journey to and from school.

2.3 Young People and Crime on Public Transport

The types and patterns of crime which occur on public transport partly reflect the opportunities presented by the particular travel mode and the location of the route. For example, an American study found that crime levels are highest on routes traversing high crime areas [Pearlstein and Waches, 1982]. A survey of incidents on buses in the UK [Oscar Faber, 1992] found that levels of assault were highest in Metropolitan areas. Most of the assaults occurred in the latter part of the day, 36% occurring between 3pm and 7pm and half of these involved young people.

Other types of crime on public transport which frequently involve young people as perpetrators are theft and criminal damage. The British Transport Police estimate that 90% of offences of vandalism on the railways are committed by young people, the peak age being 17 years and the peak time for vandalism between 4pm and 7pm. Examples include obstructions on the railway line, dropping objects over bridges, stone throwing, and cable cutting, as well as damage to the station infrastructure and rolling stock. In 1995 Nexus and Metro Police Unit estimated that a small number of offenders aged 8 years and above were responsible for £600,000 of damage to Metro rolling stock and property in North Tyneside alone [North Tyneside Council and Nexus, 1997].

At the request of Railtrack, the annual omnibus survey conducted by MORI, with a large sample of 11 to 16 year olds, now includes questions on trespass and vandalism. The survey findings reveal that 35% of all respondents and 42% of boys admit to at least one incident of trespass on railway property [MORI, 1998]. Older young people are more likely to trespass than those of 11 to 13 years of age. A quarter of 11 to 16 year olds admitted to at least one offence of vandalism of railway property. Those attending schools closest to the tracks are the most likely to trespass and vandalise railway property and the critical distance at which the number of offences begins to fall significantly is about two miles.

The findings from the MORI survey reveal that the strongest influence on potential offenders is their 'aptitude to take risks'. Although substantial majorities of young people think that trespassers are stupid and the activity is dangerous, half of all respondents still described trespassers as 'daring'. When asked about their motives for taking a short cut across railway tracks, nearly a third said they had done so because of 'nothing else to do', a quarter said that they 'enjoyed taking risks', a fifth said they had done so in response to peer pressure, nearly a fifth said it was for excitement, and 16% identified it as a 'regular place to hang out'.

Much of the graffiti on transport infrastructure and vehicles is attributed to the action of young people, especially children. The interest in graffiti appears to lessen as young people get older, with other forms of vandalism or structural damage becoming more frequent and exciting activities. Graffiti was described by the children and young people as an important means of stating their presence and identity within their local community and conveying information about themselves and other young people. In addition, it was partly in response to boredom and partly a challenge or dare to authority and older people.

Anti-social or nuisance behaviour involving young people is often the main cause of concern on public transport. Qualitative research with transport users and staff shows that noisy and rowdy young people, especially in groups, cause anxiety to others. Young people can be intimidating on buses and trains and at stations, although surveys with young people show that they are often unaware that their behaviour may be unacceptable to others [Crime Concern, 1995].

Anti-social behaviour by young people on buses and, especially, school services has been identified by transport providers as a national problem. The more serious incidents involving criminal damage, rowdy behaviour, and assaults on staff or passengers tend to occur most frequently in major urban areas. The costs of damage from vandalism and graffiti are substantial and can be financially devastating to bus operators. An article in *Coach and Bus Week* [Wakeling, 22.6.96] described some of the problems affecting contract buses in Scotland:

'Bus operators recount tales of vandalism and mayhem. Whilst damage to seating is most common, pupils have set light to vehicles, used hair sprays as flame throwers and broken or wrenched out windows...It is small consolation that behaviour may be better in the mornings than at the end of the school day...The behaviour and total disregard for road safety displayed by pupils milling around

roads and pavements close to schools is a fair reflection of an attitude which does not improve once the bus is boarded'

In some urban areas, bus companies have withdrawn services which are consistently vandalised or where transport staff feel unsafe and have been threatened or physically assaulted. There are some school services which bus operators are unwilling to undertake for the Education Authorities. Where young people regularly travel in large numbers on ordinary bus services, other passengers complain about their lack of security and the noise and rowdy behaviour which is commonplace. In an increasingly competitive and cost conscious market, bus companies can lose patronage as a result.

Young people are as much the victims as perpetrators of crime and anti-social behaviour on public transport, just as elsewhere. They experience crime from both adults and other young people and the vast majority of the incidents they experience go unreported.

To date, the nature and scale of the problem has been revealed primarily through qualitative research.

Consultations with children and young people in Merseyside [Crime Concern, 1995] revealed many incidents which they had experienced directly or observed. The number and variety of incidents described by young people in the study suggests a high level of contact with incidents compared with adult passengers. The incidents that young people see and experience on public transport include having their personal belongings stolen and being bullied or threatened by older children, especially when they are alone.

The Merseyside consultations also revealed that girls and young women experience being molested by men whilst sitting on the upper deck of buses, girls and boys being exposed to, and young women approached by men in cars while waiting at bus stops. Young people are often intimidated by older young people, especially in gangs. And school 'rivalry' can result in bullying and theft from young people.

2.4 Young people and perceptions of their personal security on public transport

Public transport is not perceived by many young people as a friendly environment where they are welcomed and their custom valued. An important aspect of young people's experience on public transport which affects their perceptions of personal security is the attitude of adults, both other passengers and staff, towards them. A number of studies have shown that young people often feel 'picked on' and unwelcome as potential trouble makers by passengers and staff, and this impacts on their sense of personal security [North Tyneside Council and Nexus, 1997, Crime Concern, 1996].

Surveys with young people reveal that most feel safe on public transport during the day but, in common with adults, their perceptions of personal security change after dark. In particular, girls and young women were much more likely to express their fears for personal security, especially after dark, including the walk to and from bus stops and rail stations. Although fear for their personal security was much less a concern for young men and boys, some still described situations where they had or would feel unsafe, especially those involving gangs of youths or drunks.

Waiting for buses was seen as a problem for many young women and girls, especially when they were waiting in unfamiliar areas or at stops which were dark and isolated. Some of the younger children of both sexes admitted to feeling scared waiting for buses in the dark. Information and reliability of services was seen as important for keeping waiting times to a minimum.

Children and young people identified that the presence of staff was an important issue for personal security, despite negative comments on their relationship with bus drivers. Young people also identified that the greater numbers of people travelling could make a positive contribution towards their perception of personal security. Using train stations after dark was also identified as an issue affecting personal security and the lack of visible staff affected young people's confidence.

Young people identify other people's anti-social behaviour as a source of concern. The presence of undesirable or threatening people had a strong impact on perceptions of personal security. Many young people expressed their fear of drunks or tramps and argued that "*they shouldn't be allowed on transport*".

2.5 How children and young people impact on the personal security of other passengers and staff

The views of passengers and staff

The presence of rowdy young people, especially in groups, is known to intimidate both staff and other passengers using public transport. In particular, it impacts on the perceptions of older people. In addition, vandalism and graffiti is known to contribute to a sense of personal insecurity, since its presence indicates a lack of management, care and control, which makes passengers feel more vulnerable [Crime Concern, 1997].

Bus and train drivers feel particularly uneasy on routes that are known as 'hotspots' for criminal damage and at night in those locations where they expect disorder. The consequences of fear of crime and disorder include: increased stress; a reluctance to patrol stations and vehicles; increased sickness; and higher staff turnover [North Tyneside Council and Nexus 1997, Crime Concern, 1993 and 1997].

What young people think about the impact of their behaviour

Most young people regard their behaviour as normal and do not recognise that they may be intimidating or threatening to other passengers or staff. Few young people admit to being involved in serious anti-social behaviour or violence [North Tyneside Council and Nexus 1997, Crime Concern, 1996]. In the Merseyside research with young people [Crime Concern, 1995], only a minority of young people recognised that they could be a nuisance or threatening to others. The majority of those consulted, particularly boys and young men, felt other passengers were generally hostile to children and young people on public transport and considered them a nuisance. There was only a reluctant admission that the behaviour of young people may help bring about these attitudes. Also, while they would like to see a change in adults' attitudes towards them, they are less ready to accept that changes in their own behaviour may be part of the solution.

Although children and young people share many of the adult population's perceptions of personal security and what influences impacted upon it, when it comes to discussing graffiti many of their views are in stark contrast to those of adult passengers and staff. Young people show a high level of tolerance and acceptance of graffiti and minor vandalism and they are often unaware of the negative impact it could have on other people. Moreover, graffiti is seen as an important means of stating their presence and identity within their local community and it conveys information about each other. It is also partly a response to boredom and partly a challenge or dare to authority and adults [Crime Concern, 1996].

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Chapter 3 - Young people's experiences and perception of public transport

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter focuses on young people's experience of using public transport and the cost involved. Fares and the age at which they no longer qualified for a child's or concessionary fare were key issues for many young people. Finally, the Chapter closes with a section of young people's attitudes towards the private car and what they perceive will be their use of public transport when they are of driving age.

In Chapters 3 and 4, the questionnaire survey data for children and young people aged 10 to 18 years has been presented for three groups: 10 to 12 years; 13 and 14 years; and 15 years plus. Information from the focus group discussions identified that the analysis of data by these three groups was the most appropriate for identifying key changes in travel behaviour and attitudes to public transport.

In the first group [10 to 12 years] most of the young people surveyed were at the start of independent travel and many of their experiences were associated with travel with an adult or in a family group. Most of the young people in the second group [13 and 14 years] were experienced in independent travel and often used public transport with large groups of friends. Those young people in the third group [15 years plus] increasingly used public transport for shopping or leisure trips, including evening services, and their attitudes as passengers and potential car drivers were well developed and established.

3.2 Using public transport

Both through the questionnaire surveys and the focus groups, children and young people were asked how they travelled to school, college, training centre or work. Not surprisingly, the focus group discussions revealed a considerable range between locations in the numbers walking, using public transport or travelling by car. Universally, very few young people of any age made the trip to school by bike. Some expressed a wish to do so, but traffic dangers and lack of secure parking at the school were the strongest deterrents.

	10 to 12 %	13 & 14 %	15 years plus %
Service Bus	6%	23%	17%
School Bus	22%	12%	22%
Train	-	1%	1%
Taxi	1%	-	1%
Car	15%	13%	14%
Bike	1%	6%	1%
Walking	55%	45%	44%

Data from the questionnaire surveys [Table 3.1] reveals that across all locations more than a quarter of children aged between 10 and 12 years travel by bus and this proportion increases to nearly 40% for those aged 15 years and older. Journey to school by car remains fairly constant at about 15%. Walking to school or college gradually decreases with the age of the student, reflecting the increased distances which young people travel to secondary school or college.

The summary in Table 3.2 gives an indication from a selection of focus groups of the variety of travel modes and the importance of ordinary service and school buses for this regular journey for many young person's journey to school, youth project or work. Again, very few young people cycled to school or college.

Table: 3.2 Sample of Focus Group Locations With Mode of Travel to School, Project or Work			
School, Project, Work	Journey Mode	School, Project, Work	Journey Mode
East London primary school [10 years of age]	All walk to and from school	Yorkshire secondary school [14 years of age]	About half travel by school bus services, and others walk or use ordinary bus services
Sheffield secondary school [11 years of age]	Most use either the school bus or ordinary service buses to and from school	Wolverhampton secondary school [15 years of age]	All use either the school bus or ordinary service buses to and from school
Croydon secondary school [2 groups of 11 and 12 years of age]	A third use ordinary service buses, nearly half by car and the rest walk to and from school	North Somerset secondary school [16 years of age]	A third use the school bus, a third by car and a third walk
Sheffield secondary school [11 to 14 years of age]	All use ordinary service buses to travel to and from school	Training Centre in Bristol [16 & 17 years olds]	About half walk to the Training Centre and half use buses
Bradford secondary school [13 to 15 years of age]	Most use the school buses to and from school and the rest walk.	North London Youth Project [2 groups - 16 and 17 years of age]	All use buses to get to and from the Project
Leeds secondary school [12 years of age]	All walk to and from school	Office workers in Reading [19 & 20 years of age]	All use public transport for work trips - bus and train
Central Edinburgh youth project [3 groups - 14 to 19 years of age]	Most come by bus to and from the Project. Others walk and two by car		

Children and young people not only travel to and from school or college by public transport but use buses, taxis and, to a lesser extent, trains to go shopping, visit friends and relatives and access leisure and entertainment venues. The extent to which children and young people use public transport, especially for leisure trips, varies with age and whether the family has regular use of a car. From the surveys, the use of buses for purposes other than the school or college journey increases sharply for those 13 years of age and older, when independent travel with friends is commonplace [Table 3.3]. More than half of young people aged 13 or 14 years use the bus at least once a week and this increases to two thirds for those 15 years and older. There was a small

increase in the use of train travel with age and a quarter of those aged 15 years and older said they used a taxi at least once a week.

Table: 3.3 How Often Last Week Did Young People Travel by Public Transport for Purposes Other than to and from School or College				
Age of Respondents	10 to 12 %	13 & 14 %	15 years plus %	All respondents %
By Bus				
Every day	8%	24%	22%	21%
Two/three times a week	13%	19%	25%	20%
Once a week	6%	11%	19%	12%
Not at all	73%	46%	34%	47%
By Train				
Every day	-	-	-	-
Two/three times a week	-	4%	3%	3%
Once a week	3%	5%	13%	7%
Not at all	97%	91%	84%	90%
By Taxi				
Every day	-	-	-	-
Two/three times a week	4%	6%	8%	6%
Once a week	3%	10%	16%	12%
Not at all	93%	84%	76%	82%
% with a car at home	86%	77%	85%	80%

Children and young people living in households with a car were less likely than those without a car to use buses for non-school trips [Table 3.4]. About half of all young people without a car at home used buses at least two or three times a week. This fell to a third for those living in households with a car. Half of young people with a car at home had not travelled by bus in the previous week. Travel by train was not affected significantly by car ownership, but those without a car at home were more likely to use taxis, with a third using a taxi at least once in the previous week.

The purpose of trips by public transport was explored through the focus group discussions. Young people most frequently used the bus to visit their town or city centre for shopping or entertainment, to visit friends or family, go to the cinema and local sports centre or swimming pool. Older young people regularly used the bus to go to late night entertainment venues, but usually returned home by taxi. Reflecting differences in the availability of public transport, young people living in urban areas were more likely than those in rural locations to travel regularly by bus for leisure purposes.

Table: 3.4 How Often Last Week Did Young People Travel by Public Transport for Purposes Other than to and from School or College		
	Car and Non Car Households	
	Car No at Home %	Car at Home %
By Bus		
Every day or two/three times a week	36%	51%
Once a week	12%	15%
Not at all	52%	34%
By Train		
Every day or two/three times a week	2%	3%
Once a week	7%	8%
Not at all	91%	89%
By Taxi		
Every day or two/three times a week	5%	16%
Once a week	8%	19%
Not at all	87%	65%

Consistent with the questionnaire survey findings, the focus group discussions revealed that trains were only used infrequently and mainly for longer journeys for holiday or travel between cities. The exception was in Bradford where the train was used to travel into Leeds being "much quicker than the bus which goes all round the houses". Outside London, young people tended to use taxis more frequently to return home from the club or cinema. Travelling as a group reduced the costs of taxi travel:

"we have to get taxis home from Sheffield and we try to get a group of us together to spread the cost...but whatever it costs, I wouldn't want to be stuck here all the time"
[young man from Bradford secondary school]

A third of young people aged between 10 and 12 years usually travel on public transport with a parent or other adult and another third usually travel with friends [Table 3.5]. Older young people are much more likely to travel with friends and nearly a quarter of those aged 15 years and older travel alone.

Table: 3.5 How Do Young People Use Public Transport?					
	Usually on my own	Usually with friends	Usually with a brother or sister but no adult	Usually with a parent or other adult	Do not use public transport regularly
10 to 12 years	7%	33%	14%	33%	13%
13 & 14 years	12%	73%	13%	-	2%
15 years plus	23%	69%	7%	-	1%

3.3 Fares and Concessionary Fares

The cost of public transport and the age at which concessionary fares are no longer available to young people was a source of frequent and fierce criticism from young people across the country. The cost of transport was identified along with the perceived poor attitude of transport staff as the two main reasons why young people felt unwanted and poorly served by public transport, especially the buses.

The impact of the comparative high cost of fares for young people was also seen as an important factor in excluding them from employment and social activities. A conference report on urban transport and exclusion in France identified similar consequences and concluded:

'in France, in recent years, the average income of pensioners has been greater than the average income of those of working age. However, although there are special fares for elderly people...nothing or very little is planned for younger people...this encourages younger people either not to use facilities or to evade payment. New solutions must be found'
 [Guidez, 1996]

Cost of travel generally

Through the focus group discussions, there were a number of issues for young people about the cost of using public transport. Most frequent comments referred to the high cost and the constraints this could place on their access to services and employment:

i [young man at Bristol training centre]

"the most important thing is the price of the tickets...I pay £14 a fortnight in fares and I can't afford it, but I have to get to work" [young woman in Newcastle]

"the main thing about public transport is the cost...young people can't afford it, we don't have the money. If you want to encourage young people to use the buses and trains, bring the prices down, it's as simple as that"
[young man at central Edinburgh youth project]

"the travelling costs certainly puts people off from getting a job"
[young man in Newcastle]

"I can't get a free pass and it costs me £18.70p for a monthly pass to get to and from school. That's a lot for my parents to pay out every month"
[young man in Wolverhampton school]

"the cost of travelling is high now. I pay £139 a month for coming to work by train. I've got a young person's railcard which would reduce the cost but I can't use it before 9.30 in the morning"
[young woman working in Reading]

Some young people identified a link between the cost of fares and fare evasion:

"the fares are more expensive on the tube but I can get away with not paying the full fare...I take a child's ticket and just go through the barriers"
[young man at North London youth project]

"trains are really expensive but they leave the station gates unlocked all the time, so people just go through...I think there's a lot of people who never buy a ticket"
[boy at Croydon secondary school]

"having the fares hiked up for young people doesn't help anyone...we are still better off with a £10 fine from time to time than paying 85p each way all the time"
[young man in Newcastle]

A number of participants referred to what they see as the rising costs of travel in recent years:

"fares keep going up, they've gone up 40p in two years..."
[young woman in Bristol training centre]

"fares on buses keep going up...year after year"
[young woman in Wolverhampton school]

"the fares have gone up sharply in recent years...my bus pass costs £40 a month, that's a lot when you are not earning much"
[young woman working in Reading]

There was criticism about the systems for operating fares which often meant that concessionary passes or travelcards could not be used during the hours when people most needed to travel:

"they should make public transport cheaper for everyone...adults and children. Why is it going up all the time? Why can't we use travel cards at certain times? Why can't we use travel cards on the night buses?"
[young man at North London youth project]

"why are they [fares] more expensive in the morning before 9am? - that just makes it more expensive for people who are going to work or to training"
[young woman at Bristol training centre]

Young people also commented on the cost of taxi travel, particularly the use of a standing charge or minimum fare:

"taxis are really expensive...they are quicker but the first charge of £1.80 just for getting in the cab is brutal" *[young woman in central Edinburgh youth project]*

"taxis are so expensive...there's a flat fare as soon as you get in...it's very expensive at night, £7 for about a ten minute drive..."
[young man at central Edinburgh youth project]

"the black cabs are really expensive, that's why we don't use them..."
[girl at Croydon secondary school]

Age limits on concessionary fares

Obtaining the views of children and young people from many different locations highlighted the variety of systems which operate for concessionary fares. There is no consistent age limit to qualify

for a child's fare. Across local authorities and PTEs, there is a variety of passes available for young people in education and training. How young people access these passes varies considerably. In some places, they have to pay a charge for their pass [in addition to the tickets purchased], whilst others are free; and some passes are well published and easily available, whilst others are poorly publicised and difficult to obtain.

Young people at the same school, college or youth project often gave conflicting information about passes and who qualified. Not only does poor or conflicting information give young people a negative perception of public transport but it also draws them into conflict with transport staff. The questionnaire surveys asked older young people about the impact on them of the age limit on child or reduced fares. Nearly 4 out of 10 young people said they were directly affected by the age limit imposed on child fares [Table 3.6].

Table: 3.6 Impact of Age Limit on Child or Reduced Fares		
Respondents affected by age limited on child fares		38%
How are they affected?		
I am over 16 years of age but still in full time education		18%
I look older than I am and often get charged the adult fare		83%
Respondents who said the age limit should be raised		76%
If Yes, it should be raised to -		
	17 years	5%
	18 years	37%
	19 years	18%
	until I leave full time education	40%

The most common problem was that the young person still qualified for the child's fare, but they often got asked for or were charged the adult fare because they looked older. A large majority of young people [76%] wanted the age limit for the child's fare raised. The most popular option was for a young person to qualify for a child's fare until they left full time education, chosen by 40% of those wanting the age limit to be raised. More than a third of young people wanted the qualifying age to be raised to 18 years and nearly a fifth wanted it raised to 19 years.

In the focus groups, young people at schools and in youth projects described the difficulties they associate with the current age limits on the concessionary fare. These difficulties are not only faced by those still in education but affect those in training and the unemployed:

"the drivers often try to charge me the full fare now, I was told by one driver to get off the bus 'cos I wouldn't pay the full fare...but I'm not old enough yet to pay it"
[young woman in Wolverhampton school]

"the concessionary fares end at 16...that's the most important thing for young people...now we can travel for 25p - that's one way with a pass. Then, there's this big jump to £1.10!"
[young woman in Newcastle]

"people of our age don't receive any benefits and we have to pay full fares as well...there should be a pass available for people in education or training and those on low wages"
[young woman in Newcastle]

"there is such a big gap from a child's fare to an adult's at 16 years, it really puts people off travelling by bus. The child's fare return is £1.85 and the adult fare is £3"
[young woman in North Somerset school]

"I think we should have a cheaper half fare until we are 18 years of age, I'm not earning or anything so it's very difficult to get around"
[young man in North London youth project]

These discussions also highlighted the confusion that exists in many locations about who qualifies for a pass to qualify for a concessionary fare in training or education and how to obtain one:

"the pass to show your age is quite difficult to get...I'm not sure where you get them from and it needs a photo"
[young man in Wolverhampton school]

"between 14 and 16 years of age, you have to pay the full fare unless you have a green pass - but I think this is only available from a building in town but I don't really know"
[young woman in Newcastle]

"I know that you can write off somewhere and order ID cards but we have to pay £10 to get one...that's too much and that's why most people don't bother"
[young man in North Somerset school]

"there should be bus passes for unemployed young people...I think there's cheaper travel for young people who are on a Government Training Scheme but not for anyone else, but I'm not sure really"
[young man at central Edinburgh youth project]

3.4 Satisfaction with public transport services

Many of the issues discussed by young people in relation to public transport services were similar to the concerns of adults with criticism of availability, frequency, reliability and comfort. Compared with adults, however, young people expressed much higher concerns about the cost of travel, the attitudes of transport staff, and the availability of evening, late night and weekend services.

Availability and frequency

The paucity of bus transport, especially in the evenings and at weekends affects the lives and options for many young people:

"on Sundays, I have to wait two hours to catch a bus from where I live"
[young woman at Bristol training centre]

"buses are irregular and they don't run on Saturdays and Sundays when we really need them because we are isolated in the country"
[boy in North Somerset school]

"it's crazy, kids from here go to night clubs in Weston Super Mare, there's about seven or eight there, but the buses stop at 6 or 7 pm...the bus to and from Bristol runs later but still only to 10 or 11pm and that's still too early for the clubs. There used to be later buses at 12 or 1 am but they were stopped because the drivers got too much hassle. If they can afford to go out at all now, the kids get in a group and take taxis"
[youth worker in North Somerset]

"the Tubes should run all night and not stop so early...it's stupid with so many places open to 2 or 3 in the morning"
[young man in North London youth project]

"there's just not enough buses at weekends and in the evenings...that's when young people really need transport to get to places"
[young man at central Edinburgh youth project]

"Going out for the night...the buses finish too early at 11 pm and they only run every hour from 6 pm. The last train from the interchange is 11.30 but we can't get back from the Interchange because there's no bus, so we have to get a taxi back from the clubs and that costs £12!"

[young man in Bradford secondary school]

Cleanliness and comfort

In common with adult passengers, there was criticism about the age and condition of some vehicles:

"just look at the state of some of the buses...the seats ripped, it smells and we have to pay to travel on them"

[young woman in Newcastle]

"the trains to Glasgow have really hard and uncomfortable seats...the express coaches are a lot more comfortable but they are dearer which is why I can't use them"

[young woman at central Edinburgh youth project]

"when my grandfather worked on the buses, he says they were cleaned every night, now I reckon some of them are cleaned less than once a fortnight"

[young woman at central Edinburgh youth project]

"buses can be very cold in winter and there's no air conditioning in summer..."

[young man in Wolverhampton school]

"buses need to be a lot cleaner, although they are a lot better than the Tubes...the mess in some carriages is disgusting, they have people keeping the platforms clean now but they don't go into the carriages during the day"

[young woman at North London youth project]

Young people appreciated vehicles were of a better quality:

"the trams are better - they are cleaner and smoother...not so cramped and a lot more comfortable...that's really good, I only wish they went to more places"

[young man at Sheffield secondary school]

There was criticism from young people from many different locations outside London about bus drivers who smoke on duty, sometimes under a sign telling passengers 'no smoking'. Some young people also commented that taxi drivers should not be allowed to smoke.

Information

Some young people referred to the importance of up to date information on bus and train services, especially to help address concerns for personal security:

"I reckon the timetables at the bus stops around here haven't been changed for ten years...the timetables are dirty and no one could rely on them"

[young woman at North Somerset school]

"in Glasgow, as you stand at the bus stop, there's information on when the next bus is due. I think real time information is really important for safety, you know how long you will have to wait and, if it's too long, you can make a decision on what else to do"

[young woman at central Edinburgh youth project]

"on the buses, the routes and services seem to change without anyone asking anyone or thinking about what we need"

[young woman with learning difficulties]

"the interchange at Bradford is good. It's easier with the bus and train in the same place like that. There's information on all the different services and that means I don't worry about being stranded"
[young woman at Bradford secondary school]

3.5 Young people's attitude to the private car

Irrespective of the age or gender of the focus group participants or their geographical location, almost all of the children and young people expressed a great deal of enthusiasm for the private car and almost all expected to be car owners and anticipated pleasure from driving. To give a sense of the views expressed, the discussion at five very different focus groups is summarised below:

9 and 10 year old girls and boys at a rural school in Somerset, all white -

All the children in the two focus groups lived in car owning households and all wanted a car when they were an adult. The benefits of the car compared with public transport were described as getting to places faster, not having to wait for the bus, able to go out in the evenings and weekends when there are no buses, and driving puts you in control. The disadvantages were described as pollution and effects on the environment, congestion and the costs of parking in town centres.

11 and 12 year old girls and boys at a school in Leeds, many Asian -

All of the children lived in car owning households. Only one child said she did not expect to drive as an adult. The benefits of the car compared with public transport were described as safer driving, got seat belts, greater personal safety, able to get to more places, quicker, and do not have to wait for the bus or train. The bad things about the car were the car is too small for large families, the fumes, and affects the environment. All easily remembered their favourite car adverts.

11 to 14 year old girls and boys at Sheffield secondary school, white and Asian -

All young people except one had a car at home and all want to and expect to be car drivers. All were excited about the prospect of driving and were keen to describe their favourite car adverts and car models. The good things about car driving were described as: not having to wait for transport; goes to more places; quicker and faster; and can travel with other people. The bad things were: traffic congestion; people who drink and drive; accidents; road rage; and pollution.

15 and 16 year old young women and men at Wolverhampton School, black and white -

All of the young people in the focus groups lived in car owning households and, with the exception of one young woman, all were very committed to driving. The advantages of the car compared with public transport were described as much faster, can travel with a good music system, can get to more places, get to places where buses do not, much cheaper, go where and when you want, can get up to London and back in a day, and a car is much safer. The disadvantages were described as the cost of petrol, the cost of any repairs, the cost of MOT, Road Tax and Insurance [especially high for young motorists], and pollution. The typical bus traveller was described as mainly old people and people without a job or money. In contrast, the typical car driver was younger, in business and had plenty of things to do and places to go.

17 and 18 year old young women and men, at a training centre in Bristol, most white -

Most lived in car owning households. One trainee already had a car and about two-thirds were taking driving lessons. All want to own and drive a car. Once they are car drivers, the trainees only expected to use public transport if they have been drinking alcohol. The benefits of the car were described as: more freedom, greater convenience, feeling good and looking good, quicker, and greater security. The disadvantages were congestion, parking costs and difficulty in parking. The bus passenger was described as typically "a very old or very young person - there's no one in-between and not business people". In contrast, the car driver was described as "intelligent, got money and co-ordinated".

In other discussions, young people discussed the other merits and disadvantages of car driving compared with use of public transport:

"we'd all rather drive a car than go on the Metro, anyone would..."

[young woman in Newcastle]

"...OK, but the car is so much more expensive and the Metro is quicker..."

[young woman in Newcastle]

"...but with a car you can just go anywhere...some of the lads have cars already and they can go anywhere" [young man in Newcastle]

"we'll all want to get a car and that's because the buses are so unpredictable and the trains are often cancelled or late"

[young woman in South London school]

"the good thing about cars is not having to rely on buses or having to wait around at night when it's unsafe"

[young woman at North London youth project]

"but the car isn't always safer, things still get stolen and there's thieving from cars at the traffic lights" [young man at North London youth project]

Car driving was often associated with status and income:

"people who drive are busy people, they need to get around...they have a good job and money to buy a car"

[young man at Bradford secondary school]

"the car you drive says whether you are posh and how much money you have"

[girl at Sheffield secondary school]

But, alternative views were occasionally expressed:

"I think the typical car driver is arrogant and impatient, that's the only problems with driving from what I can see, the impatient drivers and the traffic of course"

[young woman in central Edinburgh youth project]

Differing views were expressed about how the costs of driving compared with the travelling by public transport:

"even paying for the car, petrol and everything, I think it's still a lot cheaper than going by public transport everywhere"

[young man at Bristol training centre]

"driving a car may be a waste of money, but it's fun to do"

[boy at North Somerset school]

"I think you'd waste more money if you went by bus or taxi all the time"

[girl at North Somerset school]

"cars can be very expensive for young people 'cos the insurance is much higher but it's still worth it, at least with the car you have got it for all the time and all your journeys"

[young woman at Wolverhampton school]

"I'd use the tube still 'cos the costs of parking and driving are very high in London, and the tube would still be cheaper"

[young man at North London youth project]

Some young people said they would use a car for all journeys however short, whilst others felt that walking was to be preferred or more environmentally responsible:

"if I had the money, of course I'd get a car and drive. But I wouldn't use it for going round the corner, I think I'd still walk then"

[young man in central Edinburgh youth project]

"people use their cars sometimes for really stupid things, just for going round the corner, any really short journey, they should walk"

[girl at North Somerset school]

"cars shouldn't be used for short journeys...they shouldn't be used because of the cost and pollution"

[girl at Sheffield secondary school]

Whilst others felt that the convenience of the car was an advantage irrespective of the distance:

"if I had a car, I'd use it to go everywhere, I wouldn't ever use anything else"

[young man in central Edinburgh youth project]

"the good thing about a car is when you're knackered, you can just get in and drive off, even if it's just up the road"

[young man at North London youth project]

Although some young people expressed concern about the environment and the consequences of pollution for health, these were rarely seen as a reason for not driving a car or using it frequently. Some young people were angry that it should be their generation that was being asked to consider or address these concerns:

"why should we be the ones to stop driving? Other people should have stopped years ago, I don't see why it has to be us"

[boy at Croydon secondary school]

Other young people were fairly confident that, at the time they would be driving, problems of pollution would be largely a problem of the past:

"in five years time, when we're driving, they'll have solved the problems of pollution" - "there won't be pollution with electric cars".

[girl at Leeds secondary school]

"we are already well on the way to solving the problems of pollution...there are electric cars being developed now"

[boy at Croydon secondary school]

"I think about pollution, but I think they are on the brink of curing it, there's electric cars and solar power...by the time we are driving, it won't be a problem"

[girl at North Somerset school]

"cars won't be that bad by the time we are driving...there may be solar cars or electric cars and they'd be OK"

[boy at Sheffield secondary school]

Most young people identified that they would use public transport, including taxis, when going out involved drinking alcohol. Generally, there was a strong feeling that no one should drink and drive. There were a few exceptions, with the respondents displaying great confidence in their yet to be learnt driving skills:

"I will definitely use the car to get from clubs, even if I'd been drinking...I know I wouldn't crash. If someone runs out into the road, that wouldn't be my fault anyway"
[young man at North London youth project]

3.6 Attitudes to cycling

Among the survey respondents, bike ownership was high, but this varied with age. About 85% of those aged 11 to 13 years had bikes; ownership declined to 75% for those aged 14 and 15 years of age, and was nearly 70% for those aged 16 to 18 years. Bike ownership was slightly higher in rural areas compared to urban areas. Despite the comparatively high levels of bike ownership, less than 5% of young people cycled to and from school or college. The focus group discussions identified lack of secure cycle parking at the school, journey length and risks from traffic, especially in rush hours in large urban areas, as the main reasons deterring cycle use. In Newcastle, young people and youth workers said cycles were not allowed on the Metro system and this was an important issue locally.

One feature which was highlighted through some focus groups was the greater interest of young people in roller blades for leisure. For example, in one rural primary school, although all the children in the focus groups had bikes, between a half and two thirds also had roller blades. The speed of roller blades and the use with which they could be used on pavements meant they were often preferred to bikes for leisure activity.

3.7 Encouraging young people to use public transport

Reflecting young people's concern with the cost of travel on public transport, when asked through the surveys to describe what would encourage them to use and keep using public transport, cheaper fares was the most popular answer and was proposed by a third of respondents. Similar support for lower fares and for those unemployed or in training to receive concessionary travel was expressed through the focus groups. Lower fares were more likely to be suggested by older young people than children.

Again consistent with young people's concern with the attitudes of transport staff, nearly a fifth of respondents suggested that friendly or polite staff would encourage young people to use public transport, especially buses.

The next most common group of suggestions referred to improved safety and security when travelling. Just over 15% of survey respondents described a range of measures which could make young people feel more safe when waiting or using public transport and, as a consequence, encourage their use of buses and trains. The provision of CCTV camera surveillance at bus and train stations and on vehicles was the most common suggestion. Other measures included:

'tell young people about safety on public transport'
'more control over people on the bus'
'staff to chuck bullies and drunks off buses and trains'
'no drinking or drugs allowed'
'have a section on the bus just for children'
'more security for young people travelling, bullying has taken place in front of me'
'not let drunks on the bus'
'more lights at bus stops'
'a place where people can get an escort on the bus'
'people being nice and kind to each other will make it safer'

Often linked to enhanced safety, about 6% of young people identified that cleaning graffiti would improve the travelling environment and encourage use of public transport. The comments made included:

'graffiti taken off bus stops - it makes people feel uneasy'
'more CCTV and less graffiti'
'more action to prevent graffiti'
'lot of lighting to make it bright and get rid of graffiti'
'install graffiti boards'

Nearly 15% of young people suggested music, television or a radio on the bus or train could encourage their use of public transport. The suggestion for music was also frequently raised in the focus groups:

"it would be great to have good music on the bus, something you'd want to listen to"
[young woman at central Edinburgh youth project]

Other measures suggested to reduce the perceived boredom of travel for young people were:

'head phones to listen to radio like on a plane and magazines to read'
'provide activities, books to look at and read'
'the environment should be changed - more things for young people, posters, more colourful surroundings'

Nearly 10% of young people suggested more quality transport and comfortable travelling. Among the suggestions were:

'comfortable seats'
'more quality bus, train and coach services, more luxury in all'
'wider aisles, windows which open, air conditioning in summer and heating in winter'
'windows easier to open, no unpleasant smells'
'buses more comfortable with bigger seats and wider aisles'
'more pleasant bus stops with shelter and seats'
'having better waiting rooms and a cafe in train and bus stations'
'trains should always have refreshments and better seats'
'trains with more tables and curtains and could we have lights over the top of seats for night times'

Chapter 4 - Young people's experience of crime and anti-social behaviour on public transport

4.1 Introduction

The literature review and earlier research with young people and transport providers reveal that many of the problems of vandalism and anti-social behaviour on public transport are attributed to the activities of young people. Research, albeit limited in coverage, also identifies that young people can be the victims of crime and anti-social behaviour by other young people and adults. The research conducted for this study through the questionnaire surveys with young people and the focus group discussions provides greater insight into the experiences of young people as both the perpetrators and the victims of nuisance and crime on public transport. This Chapter also explores the attitudes of the young people to their own behaviour when using public transport and how they believe this impacts on the safety and comfort of other passengers and staff.

Children and young people are major users of public transport and are 'tomorrow's market' for these services. It is important that their concerns for personal security when using public transport are identified and addressed. The research explores with young people how safe they feel waiting for or travelling on public transport and what physical or social features of the travelling environment and the walk to and from the bus stop or train station make them feel unsafe.

The chapter begins by looking at the relationship between young people and public transport staff. Other research also suggests that the relationship between young people and public transport staff is a source of much friction and both parties often blame the attitudes or behaviour of the other. Again, through the questionnaire survey findings and the focus group discussions, this study explores in detail the views of young people from different parts of the country on their relationship with public transport staff and the source of the friction.

4.2 The relationship between young people and public transport staff

Friendly or helpful?

Young people have most regular contact with bus drivers. It was evident from the focus groups and questionnaire survey that it was their contact with drivers which influenced their views of public transport staff more generally. Only a minority of young people of all ages usually find public transport staff friendly or helpful [Table 4.1]. This minority is slightly larger for those aged 10 to 12 years [18%] than those aged 15 years and older [10%].

	<i>Yes, Usually</i>	<i>Yes, Sometimes</i>	<i>Not Really</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
10 to 12 years	18%	38%	26%	18%
13 & 14 years	16%	48%	34%	2%
15 years plus	10%	43%	47%	-

A quarter of those aged 10 to 12 years, a third of those aged 13 and 14 years, and nearly half of those in the oldest age group described public transport staff as not really friendly or helpful. There was no significant difference between the responses of young women and young men. Although the results of the questionnaire surveys did not point to a valid statistical difference, the focus group

discussions with older young people identified that black and ethnic minority young men and women sometimes experienced problems, abuse or intolerance from bus drivers.

Table 4.2: Do Young People Find Staff on Public Transport Friendly or Helpful? -By Urban and Rural Areas

	<i>Yes, Usually</i>	<i>Yes, Sometimes</i>	<i>Not Really</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
Urban areas	14%	44%	41%	1%
Rural areas	15%	47%	26%	12%
All respondents	14%	45%	36%	5%

The analysis of survey responses by urban and rural areas shows little difference in the percentages of young people who usually or sometimes find transport staff friendly or helpful [Table 4.2]. However, the percentage of young people holding the most negative view of transport staff was much higher in the urban areas. Young people living in rural areas were much more likely not to have regular experience of public transport staff and give a 'don't know' response.

Young people's experience of public transport staff gave rise to some of the strongest comments made in the focus group discussions. Most were made in respect of bus drivers. The negative views expressed were common across all locations, both rural and urban, and similar between young women and young men. There was some acknowledgement that "some could be nice and friendly", but most of the comments expressed through the focus groups were critical. Some children and young people identified train staff as more helpful and polite. However, few tended to travel regularly by train and journeys tended to be in the company of adults.

A better relationship with younger children ?

Younger children were generally less critical in their views of bus drivers and more likely to identify examples of friendly or helpful staff. For example, in a primary school in South Wales visited regularly by staff from the local bus company, young children generally felt that most of their regular bus drivers were "friendly and liked us". Children in an East London primary school also felt more positive than older young people about the attitude of bus drivers, although their views were dependent on "how they are to me" and reflected a respect for authority:

"I try to be good, 'cos if you are cheeky to them, they can tell us to get off the bus"
 [boy in East London primary school]

Impatient and unfriendly

Most comments in the focus groups referred to the unfriendly or unhelpful attitude of bus drivers and their lack of patience which could be directed towards older as well as younger passengers:

"the worst problems are on the buses - drivers ignore us, they are rude, they swear or shout, they drive past bus stops where there are groups of young people, and they try to close the doors when we are getting on"
 [young Asian woman in South London school]

"most of them don't smile or say hello...why are they so miserable all the time?"
 [boy in Leeds secondary school]

"the drivers are so impatient, they have no respect for young people or old people... they close the doors and start up before people have sat down"
 [young woman in central Edinburgh project]

"yesterday, the bus driver left an elderly disabled man who could hardly walk at the bus stop...we all felt sorry for the old man...I don't think the driver wanted to wait while he got on"

[young woman in Wolverhampton secondary school]

"they are always telling elderly people to hurry up and they don't give them enough time to sit down before driving off"

[young woman in Sheffield secondary school]

"not all drivers are polite...some swear at you, and they are so miserable"

[young woman in Bristol training centre]

"bus drivers are very rude to young people, that's why I don't like them, they have an attitude problem"

[young man in North London youth project]

"most of the time, they are pleasant enough...but it's the nasty ones that stick in your mind"

[girl in Sheffield secondary school]

Young people are all the same?

It was a commonly expressed view that transport staff, especially bus drivers, always assumed that young people were going to be trouble and responded accordingly.

"most bus drivers have an attitude towards young people...I know that some kids really push their luck when they get on the bus but that doesn't excuse those drivers who always have a poor view of young people"

[young woman in Wolverhampton secondary school]

"drivers tend to stereotype all young people...you're young and that means you are going to be trouble, however you behave"

[young man in North London youth project]

"I find some drivers are quite nice, but I think they are different with adults. I notice with children they can be very sharp...they tend to stereotype children as soon as they go to get on the bus...they expect trouble"

[young woman working in Reading]

Similar sentiments about the assumptions which transport staff could make about young people were expressed by respondents in the questionnaire surveys:

'they could be more open minded because even if they are friendly they often ask if we are going to make any trouble and even when we say we aren't, they still worry'

'they should not assume because we are a group of friends that we are trouble'

'they expect every child to be a vandal'

Buses not stopping for young people

There were specific complaints about bus drivers deliberately not stopping to pick up young people, especially if they were in a group:

"bus drivers don't like stopping for children, they think it's going to be a hassle"

[boy in Leeds secondary school]

"drivers just rush past stops, if they see kids waiting there"

[young man in Newcastle]

Some teachers confirmed that they saw buses driven past stops to avoid picking up young people at the end of the school day:

"I've been out there with the kids at the bus stop and seen it for myself...the bus sails past at speed but I can still see that there's plenty of room. The driver just didn't want to pick up the kids, it's as simple as that."

[teacher at Bradford secondary school]

Fares, concessions and change

Another frequent criticism of bus drivers was associated with the fares charged or the lack of change given:

"they do not give young people their change...it happens all the time"

[young man in Wolverhampton secondary school]

"if you are young, you get tricked on the fare...staff seem to have no respect for us"

[young woman in Newcastle]

"buses and taxis can charge you more as a young person, just because they can get away with it"

[girl in Leeds secondary school]

A significant cause of friction in many places arose because drivers asked young people for confirmation of their age to qualify for a child's fare. Even where young people had a pass, some resented having to show it to the driver on the grounds that it was "obvious that I'm under 16, so why do they keep asking for it, if it's not to wind me up". Many young people did not appear to be aware that bus drivers are usually required by their company to ask to see all passes as confirmation of the passenger's right to the concessionary fare. The irritation of young people at being asked for their pass is fuelled by their much wider dissatisfaction with fare levels and the age at which they no longer qualify for a concessionary fare. Many young people felt strongly about fares and concessionary rates and this has been discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Some bus companies operate a fare system where the driver does not handle money or have the facility to give change should a passenger not have the correct fare. This can be another source of friction between young people and the driver. Some young people felt it was very unfair to operate a system where no change was available, and were often unaware that such a system was usually introduced to safeguard the driver by reducing opportunities for robbery.

Travelling in a group or alone

An analysis of the survey data compared how young people travelled with their views of transport staff [Table 4.3]. This table excluded the 'don't know' responses. In interpreting this data, it is important to remember that it is younger children who are most likely to travel with an adult or a brother or sister, and younger children are also less likely to describe transport staff as unfriendly or unhelpful.

From the survey data, how young people usually travelled did not appear to have a significant impact on their perception of transport staff's attitude. About a third of those travelling with an adult or brother or sister said that public transport staff were not really friendly or helpful and there was a similar proportion for those travelling in a group of friends. For those travelling alone, 43% said transport staff were not really friendly or helpful. However, those travelling in a group with friends were the least likely to find public transport staff usually helpful or friendly.

How Travel -	<i>Whether find staff friendly or helpful</i>		
	<i>Yes, Sometimes</i>	<i>Yes, Usually</i>	<i>Not Really</i>
Usually on own	19%	38%	43%
Usually in a group of friends	13%	50%	37%
Usually with brother/sister	28%	38%	34%
Usually with parent/adult	16%	50%	34%

However, in the focus groups, some young people tended to associate travelling in a group with friends with an unfriendly attitude from staff:

"I've found that they are nicer when I'm on my own and not in a group - it's then that they often say hello"

[boy in Leeds secondary school]

"they always seem to assume problems from a group of young people and that's when they are bad tempered from the start"

[young woman in Sheffield secondary school]

Young people's behaviour

Some participants in the focus groups attributed the behaviour of young people as a direct response to the poor attitude of public transport staff:

"I don't know why they are always so bad tempered. I think it makes kids behave badly just to get back at them"

[boy in Bradford secondary school]

"they shout and scream at young people, it's no wonder that they take it out on the driver and mess about on the bus...they don't give us any respect, so why should young people give them any?"

[young woman in Sheffield secondary school]

In contrast, few young people were prepared to acknowledge that their own behaviour could have a negative effect on public transport staff.

Greater understanding for the driver?

Through the focus group discussions an attempt was made to try and get the participants to identify the reasons why the bus drivers they met could be miserable or bad tempered. There was usually some acknowledgement that there are aspects of the job which could be stressful or unsatisfactory:

"I suppose it would make you grumpy, driving about all day in a bus...it would get really boring after a while"

[young woman in Somerset secondary school]

Other responses, however, could be far less sympathetic:

"if they can't cope with the job, why do they do it?"

[boy in Croydon secondary school]

"I think all they want is a job and they don't want to have to think about the passengers, but that's no good when you're working for public transport"

[young man in Wolverhampton secondary school]

'you know they don't want to be there...'

[survey respondent]

However, most young people were prepared to give greater recognition to the difficulties associated with working for public transport when they were asked whether it was a job that they might want to consider in the future. Almost all the young people met through the focus groups felt strongly that they would not want to be a bus driver and the suggestion was frequently met with laughter or incredulity.

In describing why they would not consider being a bus driver, many young people identified problems or risks associated with the job which they were often unwilling to acknowledge in their response to other questions. These problems or risks included:

'it's boring - driving along the same roads every day'

'it's very unhealthy driving around all day'

'the pay is poor'

'it's shift work'

'it's a hard job - people do not like you and you get abused'

'it can be dangerous - drivers can get hurt'

'it's not a safe job - too risky - what with the responsibility of all those people and you could get mugged'

'you would have to spend your time dealing with drunks'

Through the focus group discussions, it was possible to ask young people whether they thought all the problems and risks they had identified could help explain why they thought bus drivers were unhappy or unfriendly. Many did make that connection, but still thought this did not provide an excuse for drivers to assume "all young people were trouble" and treat them accordingly.

In addition to these risks or problems, young people's perception of bus drivers was often incompatible with their own circumstances. For example, some young people identified most bus drivers as old and it was a job which you did "*when there's nothing else available*". It was seen as a low status job and most young people assumed they would "*get more out of life*" with qualifications and a career. Some young people assumed all bus drivers were male. With this experience, girls and young women often assumed that the job was not for them anyway. There was an indication, however, that young people would welcome women drivers:

"I think it would encourage more people to use buses, if there were more women bus drivers...I've only met a few, but most times they seem more good tempered, especially with older people and kids"

[young woman in central Edinburgh project]

"I've never seen a woman driver around here, but I think young children might feel happier and safer...especially if they were on the bus on their own"

[boy in Leeds secondary school]

How could staff be more helpful?

Children and young people were asked through the questionnaire surveys how they thought public transport staff could be more helpful [Table 4.4]. The most popular ways identified by young people were for staff to be friendly, respectful and polite:

'be more polite and treat us like citizens - after all we are paying!'

'be polite, treat us like human beings! and try to be less unhappy'

'they could treat young people like they would treat adults, so long as they give them respect'

[survey respondents]

Ways of Being Helpful	% of Survey Respondents
Could be friendly, say hello, smile	34%
Be more respectful, polite, not shout	33%
Not judge all young people the same, trust young people more	18%
Give us change, charge the proper fare 1	5%
Do not ask for our bus pass when we are obviously under age	12%
Give more help to older people, people with shopping and young children, disabled people	10%

A minority of young people also identified the need for drivers to be more helpful in providing information and assistance:

'they could be more willing and able to help you use the timetables and to tell you when and where the stops are'

'by being willing to help you with bus times etc and places of arrival...and also not to treat us as bad just because we are in a large group'

'try to explain where the bus is going to stop and stop in the right place as well'

There was recognition through the focus groups and the surveys that drivers on their own could experience difficulty in resolving problems from bad behaviour amongst passengers. However, some kind of intervention was wanted to safeguard other passengers.

With exceptions in London and Reading, most young people had no experience of bus conductors and did not understand the term when used. Some felt that 'an assistant' travelling with the driver could help to resolve problems of dangerous or anti-social behaviour and smoking, especially on the upper deck.

4.3 Young people as the victims of crime or anti-social behaviour

There is some evidence from existing research that children and young people can be the victims of crime and anti-social behaviour on public transport and not only the perpetrators of crime, nuisance and vandalism. Where incidents do occur, those most likely to be the perpetrators are other young people. Many parents tend to be most fearful of incidents involving adult strangers and this fear can be a significant barrier to allowing children to travel independently to school or for other activities. Whilst it is important for children and young people to be aware of the dangers which could come from adult strangers, they are much more likely to have direct experience of the risks to their personal security which come from other young people.

During the consultations, young people were asked about their experiences whilst waiting for or travelling on public transport. In the questionnaire surveys, the pre-listed experiences included rudeness from an adult passenger or driver, being bullied by other young people, being frightened by an adult, and having something stolen. Over the previous twelve months, 53% of those aged between 10 and 12 and nearly 70% of those aged 13 years and older had experienced one or more of these incidents.

Table 4.5: Incidents Experienced By Young People in the Previous 12 months while Waiting for or Using Public Transport			
	% of total incidents in each age group		
Type of Incident	<i>Age of Respondents</i>		
	10 to 12	13 & 14	15 years plus
an adult passenger was rude to me	21%	32%	29%
a driver was rude to me	16%	31%	34%
I was bullied by young people from my school	15%	6%	7%
I was bullied by young people from another school	17%	7%	7%
I had something stolen from me	16%	12%	8%
I was frightened or upset by an adult	13%	13%	14%

As Table 4.5 shows the bulk of incidents experienced by those aged 13 years and older were associated with rudeness from an adult passenger or driver. Whilst fewer younger children [10 to 12 years of age] experienced incidents, nearly a third of these related to bullying and 16% involved having something stolen. Incidents involving the rudeness of other passengers and staff only accounted for just over a third of incidents. For all age groups, just over 10% of incidents involved being frightened or upset by an adult.

The focus group discussions provided an insight into the kind of incidents where children and young people had been frightened, many involving drunks or a lone passenger staring at them, sitting next to them in an almost empty vehicle or behaving erratically.

An analysis of the frequency of incidents by age group reveals that only a minority occur on a regular basis and most are described by young people as happening 'sometimes' [Table 4.6]. It is interesting that despite the strength of feeling expressed about the attitude of bus drivers, only 15% of those aged 13 years and older said that rudeness from the driver happened often. Nearly a third, however, said that it happened sometimes and clearly these incidents influenced their general perceptions of transport staff and their attitudes to young people.

The analysis also shows that younger children were more likely than older young people to be bullied whilst travelling, either by pupils at their school or by young people from another school. Other research shows that parents can be reluctant to let their children travel to and from school by public transport because of the risk of bullying. To encourage bus travel, this is clearly an issue that needs addressing and will be referred to later in the case studies [Chapter 6].

Table 4.6: Any of the Following Incidents Happened in the Last Year while Waiting for or Using Public Transport?			
	% of total respondents in each age group		
Type of Incident	<i>Age of Respondents</i>		
	10 to 12	13 & 14	15 years plus
an adult passenger was rude to me			
happened often	3%	12%	10%
happened sometimes	18%	34%	32%
a driver was rude to me			
happened often	3%	15%	15%
happened sometimes	13%	29%	34%
I was bullied by young people from my school			
happened often	4%	2%	5%
happened sometimes	11%	7%	5%
I was bullied by young people from another school			
happened often	7%	1%	3%
happened sometimes	10%	8%	8%
I had something stolen from me			
happened often	6%	2%	4%
happened sometimes	10%	14%	8%
I was frightened by an adult			
happened often	5%	2%	1%
happened sometimes	8%	16%	19%

That older young people are more likely to have been upset or frightened by another adult on public transport is likely to be linked to the greater numbers in this age group travelling independently, especially in the evenings. As mentioned earlier, drunks or people acting strangely were often the cause when older young people felt frightened or upset.

Through the questionnaire surveys, young people were asked whether they had told anyone about the incident and, if yes, whom they had told. Children aged between 10 and 12 years were the most likely to tell someone about an incident and young people aged 15 years and older were the least likely [Table 4.7]. For all age groups, the most popular person to tell about an incident was a parent or parents. For younger children, telling a teacher was the next most popular, but for older young people telling a friend or mate was much more popular. Only a small minority reported the incident to a member of public transport staff.

Table 4.7: Telling Someone About an Incident			
	% of total respondents experiencing an incident		
Type of Incident	Age of Respondents		
	10 to 12	13 & 14	15 years plus
Yes, told someone about an incident	64%	52%	47%
Who did you tell?	% of respondents who told someone		
my parent[s]	94%	73%	76%
a teacher	30%	4%	2%
public transport staff	-	5%	4%
the police	3%	1%	6%
a friend or mate	9%	29%	23%

In the focus groups, young people sometimes described some of the more serious incidents which had affected them personally or where they had seen another young person as a victim:

"it started when I was on the train, this lad kept looking at me, really scary it was -and then he got off here, at the same stop as me, and I had to walk...there was no one about...and he followed me. He grabbed me and I was really scared, but then my brother came round the corner...the lad said he was only being friendly and ran off...it has meant that I don't travel late any more, not by myself anyway"
[young woman in Newcastle]

"there were three boys trying to kiss this girl on the bus and I took her home with me and her Dad picked her up later...she was only about 11 and these boys were from her school and they were about 18, she was very upset and frightened"
[young woman in Sheffield secondary school]

"my 19 year old sister had her phone stolen off her by a gang of young people on a bus - nobody did anything to help"
[boy at Croydon secondary school]

Some of the incidents involved drunks or lone adults behaving strangely:

"this tramp came on to the bus and sat right by me, even though it was an empty bus and he started talking to me, it gave me the creeps but I was too frightened to move away"
[boy in Croydon secondary school]

"it is very unsafe when it's dark and you are travelling out in the country all alone...but I know you are more unsafe in the city with weirdoes at night...and the drunks...I suppose you just have to get used to the drunks on the buses"
[young women at Bradford secondary school]

Trains and stations could also be made unsafe by drunken people:

"the trains from Leeds and Bradford can have down and outs and drunks on them...late at night and I feel unsafe and try to sit by ordinary people, if there are any!"
[young man at Bradford secondary school]

4.4 Young people as perpetrators of crime and anti-social behaviour

Young people are more often identified by adult passengers and transport staff as the perpetrators of nuisance, anti-social behaviour and crime on public transport. From our surveys, young people themselves identified that they had seen significant numbers of other young people responsible for incidents whilst waiting for or using public transport.

Through the surveys, young people were deliberately not asked about their own behaviour but what they observed as the behaviour of other young people. Earlier research has shown that young people can be reluctant to acknowledge their own poor behaviour, but are more willing to identify the activities of young people, more generally. For example, a survey of young people at a secondary school in Yorkshire asked students about their overall perceptions of behaviour on the school bus and how they felt they behaved as an individual passenger [Crime Concern, 1996]. Nearly two thirds of the students said, as an individual, they behaved 'quite well' or 'very well', although their perception of general behaviour on the bus was much less favourable. As that research commented, the reason for the discrepancy could be that the young people were not aware of the impact of their own behaviour on others. The focus groups for this research would tend to reinforce this view.

In the survey responses, only a small minority of respondents refused to complete the question identifying the frequency of incidents where they had seen young people involved in anti-social or nuisance behaviour. There were only occasional comments to the effect that 'it's unfair to say that teenagers and young people cause trouble'. However, much greater numbers of young people were upset when 'members of the public and bus drivers tend to stereotype all young people as trouble makers'. Thus, whilst many young people were prepared to acknowledge that the behaviour of others could be anti-social, dangerous or even criminal, they were anxious to emphasise that not all or even the majority of young people were the perpetrators.

Through the focus group discussions, some young people stressed that experiences on public transport reflected the level of incidents in their area generally:

"things aren't different on the buses to what they are on the street, it's usually the same people causing trouble"

[young man from Avon secondary school]

"this isn't a safe area so you expect the same things to happen on the buses"

[young woman from South London school]

From the surveys, the majority of those aged 13 years and older sometimes or often saw other young people putting graffiti on a shelter or station; being rude or annoying a member of staff or other passengers; hanging around a bus or train station in a group; being rowdy or noisy on a bus or train; and not paying their fare [Table 4.8]. With the exception of fare evasion, similar common activities were identified through the focus groups, especially in urban areas. Except for rowdy or noisy behaviour on the school or service bus, most of the other incidents tended to be less common in rural areas.

Table 4.8: How Frequently Young People Saw Incidents Being Carried Out By Young People Using or Waiting for Public Transport

	% of respondents in each age group		
Type of Incident	<i>Age of Respondents</i>		
	10 to 12	13 & 14	15 years plus
putting graffiti on a shelter/station			
happened often	12%	33%	41%
happened sometimes	18%	32%	32%
being rude or annoying a driver or other member of staff			
happened often	12%	28%	39%
happened sometimes	31%	46%	42%
bullying other young people			
happened often	5%	18%	20%
happened sometimes	32%	33%	35%
being rude or annoying other passengers			
happened often	11%	23%	25%
happened sometimes	28%	44%	57%
being rowdy or noisy on the bus or train			
happened often	16%	46%	49%
happened sometimes	32%	36%	41%
not paying their fare			
happened often	5%	21%	28%
happened sometimes	10%	29%	28%
hanging around a bus or train station in a group			
happened often	19%	42%	63%
happened sometimes	28%	36%	28%

Compared to younger children, older young people were either much more aware or less tolerant of the rowdy behaviour of others. Nearly half of young people aged 13 years and older said that young people being rowdy or noisy on a bus or train happened often. Less than a fifth of those aged 10 to 12 years said that young people were often rowdy or noisy on a bus or train. The focus group discussions identified that older young people tended to associate noise and rowdy behaviour with the younger age group. For some older young people, it was a reason why they disliked or avoided travelling with younger children on the school bus service.

About a third of children and young people in all age groups said that they saw bullying happen sometimes and an additional fifth of those aged 13 years and older said bullying happened often while waiting for or travelling on public transport. The prevalence of bullying on public transport is an important issue for schools and reinforces the need for teachers and others to be actively involved in helping establish a safe travelling environment for their pupils.

The surveys also asked young people to describe any other kinds of anti-social or dangerous behaviour which they associated with young people in their use of public transport. Those most commonly described were: smashing windows or setting fire to shelters; smoking on the bus;

pushing and shoving on the bus and preventing other children and passengers from getting on or off the vehicle; spitting at each other and other passengers; throwing paper, snow in winter or other objects at passengers and children; ringing the stop bell to distract the driver; standing on a moving bus or climbing over the seats; and throwing objects like bottles, bags, food and balls from the bus windows. A wide range of other activities were described by the survey's respondents:

'beating someone up - and this person was being beaten up with a train full of people and no one did anything, it shows what the public is like now'
'pulling moonies out of the back window'
'setting fire to bus seats upstairs'
'pressing the button on the outside of the bus and stopping the bus door from closing'
'opening the safety doors and windows on the bus and jumping out'
'opening doors on a moving train and hanging out'
'sticking heads out of windows'
'drinking alcohol'
'throwing stones at buses and trains'
'playing on train lines, crossing the railway tracks'
'setting off fireworks'
'asking people for spare money or ciggies'
'ride in front of the bus on their bikes'
'hang off the back of the bus on their bike or blades'
'kicking litter bins'
'trying to push each other off the train station platform'

During the school term, incidents occurred most frequently at the end of the school day with the journey to school comparatively quiet. The sheer numbers of young people travelling at the same time and the excitement of the end of the school day are factors which contribute to the greater scale of incidents on the bus or train. School holidays and the summer evenings are associated more commonly with problems of vandalism and young people hanging about in train and bus stations and shelters.

Given the number and variety of incidents observed by young people, it is understandable that public transport staff and adult passengers can feel less than enthusiastic when travelling with large groups of children and young people. Some of these activities are also life threatening, either to the young person involved, their friends or for other passengers or staff. The next section of the report explores some of the motivation for such activities and why young people do not appear either to be aware of or to be deterred by dangers involved.

Graffiti

Graffiti on transport infrastructure or vehicles is one of the most common incidents associated with young people, especially children. Although, as we shall explore later in this Chapter, the presence of graffiti does not appear from the survey findings to make young people feel particularly unsafe, some participants in the focus groups did express negative feelings about graffiti which made them feel threatened and vulnerable:

"I feel surrounded by a dirty atmosphere...it could be racist and it could be threatening"
[boy in a Croydon secondary school]

"people don't care, that's where graffiti comes from, it shows nobody cares"
[girl in Leeds secondary school]

"graffiti everywhere on the buses and shelters makes it look untidy and messy"
[young woman in central Edinburgh youth project]

"they write 'Bow Massive' everywhere...that's the name of a gang to make us frightened, to show off...I'm very frightened when I see that"
[girl in East London primary school]

At that same East London primary school, children had written poems describing their feelings about graffiti in their neighbourhood. One Asian girl had written:

*Graffiti's bad
Graffiti's sad
I hate graffiti, it makes me mad!*

*Graffiti here
Graffiti there
Graffiti nearly everywhere*

*Why do people choose to write graffiti?
Graffiti's only unwanted words
Graffiti makes our neighbourhood ugly
You will never be able to live with graffiti*

*Graffiti's bad
Graffiti's sad
I hate graffiti, it makes me mad!*

Across the country, there was a fairly clear view expressed by young people about why this activity took place. Its presence is commonly associated with children's keenness to mark out their territory and "so other people know me" or "know that I'm here". It is a commonly accepted way of communicating:

"just writing your name isn't really graffiti...all it is, is having a pen and letting people know where you are and where you've been"
[girl in Newcastle]

"it's fun, one person gets a pen and writes everyone's name up there...sometimes they don't even write their own!"
[young woman in Edinburgh Youth Project]

There is a low awareness amongst children and young people about the impact of graffiti on other passengers. In fact, since some young people feel aggrieved by the perceived negative attitudes of older people and transport staff towards them, the thought that their actions might be upsetting or make these people fearful may not act as a deterrent. Awareness is also low about the cost of cleaning graffiti or repairing criminal damage. The case studies described in Chapter 6 include some innovative approaches to tackle and prevent graffiti and vandalism by young people.

The influence of peer pressure and group excitement

Although children and young people may be well aware of the dangers of certain activities, such as track trespass, the excitement and energy that comes from being part of a group can over-ride good sense and safe play:

"when they are in a group, young people act very differently than when they are on their own...it's as though they go mad and lose all sense. That's when they can do very dangerous things. Afterwards they may think about it, but not at the time"
[young man at North Somerset secondary school]

"I remember when I was young, I was the same. You just go mad...you get caught up in the excitement of it all, it's fun and you can't think anything could go wrong"
[young man at central Edinburgh youth project]

Even those who had recently attended a Junior Citizen course recognised the power of peer pressure:

"sometimes, someone makes you very naughty and I forget what I've learnt and do something really silly or bad...I just feel I have to"
[girl at East London primary school]

Hanging about stations and shelters

A common problem for transport staff and passengers is the use that young people make of bus shelters and train stations and platforms as a place to meet and generally hang about. The group of young people may be intimidating by its size but may also be engaged in smoking, drinking alcohol and using illegal drugs. The most common reason for 'hanging about' is the absence of alternative facilities where young people can meet free of adult supervision and the associated restrictions on their behaviour. Despite limited comfort, public transport stations or shelters fulfil this need because of the relative freedom which they offer and there are usually few staff to regularly move on the young people.

Stations and shelters also provide the kind of 'semi-public' space where young people could argue that they are there legitimately, waiting for a bus or train. Vagrants and street drinkers, often the target of young people's mistrust or dislike, frequently hang about public transport infrastructure for similar reasons. The case studies in Chapter 6 include initiatives by PTEs to help divert young people away from public transport infrastructure through detached youth work.

Some older young people also identified that cars could fulfil a similar role as a place to 'hang out' away from adult supervision and constraints:

"I get into my car and just drive out of the city, we usually just go and sit in a lay-by...it's great, we all meet there, talk, smoke and then drive back"
[young man in central Edinburgh youth project]

"I wouldn't be sitting in a Metro station all night if I had a car, I'd be in my car...driving around, meeting people, stopping in places...and there'd be no one to move us on and I'd have my music as well"
[young woman in Newcastle]

"young people often use their cars as a place to meet...I see them in the evenings parked along the main road, three or four cars together. It's away from people and they can smoke, talk, listen to music, do what they like"
[taxi driver in North Somerset]

Targeting buses and trains

A particular danger to passengers and staff comes from the increasing tendency of young people to use buses and trains as targets for stones, brick slabs and other missiles. As part of this growing trend, cars travelling at speed along motorways are increasingly at risk from young people throwing missiles from overhead bridges. In the summer of 1998, the West Midlands Police were so concerned at the growth of these incidents that they introduced a special surveillance operation to identify and catch offenders, most of whom were known to be young people. Whether targeted at public transport vehicles or at cars, the potential for serious injury and even death is real.

In research undertaken by Crime Concern for Merseytravel, young people described that those throwing stones and other missiles at a local bus service, were "looking for excitement" and they do it "...to be mad...to get a chase..." For a minority, the object was stated quite simply "to cause crashes and accidents". Negative attitudes towards public transport was also a source of this anti-social and criminal behaviour.

In this study, young people in the focus groups were well aware of the risks and dangers involved in targeting buses and trains with missiles. It was described variously as a "foolish", "stupid" or "evil" activity, often led by the need for excitement. It was thought unlikely that the young people engaged in these activities would be influenced to stop by appeals to a sense of responsibility or making them aware of the dangers to the public and themselves. A greater degree of understanding about the reasons for such dangerous behaviour and how to develop effective deterrents is likely to come only by making contact with the perpetrators themselves.

4.5 Young people's feelings about personal security using public transport

Other research conducted by Crime Concern with children and young people using public transport has revealed that they have a great deal in common with adult passengers in their perception of personal security and what makes them feel unsafe. Most young people feel much less safe after dark and less safe when they are alone. In general, young women and girls tend to feel less safe than young men and boys. In particular, young women and girls tend to feel unsafe where there is a lone man in the vicinity. Young men and boys, however, tend to feel more unsafe in the vicinity of gangs or groups of young men.

Waiting for public transport

Through the questionnaire surveys and the focus groups, children and young people were asked about their feelings of personal security whilst waiting alone at a bus stop or train station. For all three age groups, there were striking differences between perceptions of personal security by day and after dark [Table 4.9].

Table 4.9: How Safe Do Young People Feel Waiting on Their Own - By Age				
	<i>Very Safe/ Safe</i>	<i>Uneasy</i>	<i>Very Unsafe</i>	<i>Never Wait Alone</i>
At Bus Stop By Day				
10 to 12 years	62%	5%	2%	31%
13 & 14 years	93%	4%	1%	2%
15 years plus	96%	4%	-	-
At Bus Stop After Dark				
10 to 12 years	20%	13%	8%	59%
13 & 14 years	40%	38%	18%	4%
15 years plus	54%	30%	16%	-
At Train Station by Day				
10 to 12 years	38%	9%	6%	47%
13 & 14 years	86%	9%	1%	4%
15 years plus	89%	9%	2%	-
At Train Station After Dark				
10 to 12 years	8%	9%	14%	69%
13 & 14 years	6%	30%	39%	5%
15 years plus	35%	29%	36%	-

High percentages of children in the 10 to 12 age group do not wait alone, especially after dark. This may not be because of fear for their personal security but because younger children are less likely to be out after dark for other reasons. Of those children and young people who do wait alone at a bus stop or train station, the majority feel safe or very safe whilst waiting alone by day. After dark, the majority of 13 and 14 year olds and 46% of those aged 15 years and older feel uneasy or very unsafe waiting at a bus stop. Two thirds of young people aged 13 years and older feel uneasy or very unsafe waiting at a train station after dark.

The findings from the surveys with children and young people are consistent with the earlier DETR research with adults in their perception that waiting alone on train stations after dark is less safe than at a bus stop [Crime Concern and Transport & Travel Research, 1997]. From the research with adults, women identified waiting on a train station as the location where they felt least safe and men identified it as the second location, after walking in a multi-storey car park.

The focus group discussions revealed views consistent with the survey findings. The youngest participants tended not to wait alone for buses and trains, especially after dark. Other young people expressed much greater concerns for their personal security after dark. Such concerns were partly associated with the fact that fewer people were usually around. Also, those people who were around were more likely to be drunk or rowdy. Their concerns were also associated with fewer

evening services and the likelihood that the young person would have to wait for longer at the bus stop or station.

Our surveys show a significant difference between young women and young men on their perceptions of personal security waiting alone, after dark, for public transport. Two thirds of girls and young women either felt very unsafe or uneasy waiting alone at a train station after dark and 57% felt very unsafe or uneasy alone at a bus stop after dark. Although just over half of boys and young men felt uneasy or very unsafe at a train station after dark, this fell to 37% whilst waiting alone at a bus stop. Girls and young women were more likely than boys and young men to feel very unsafe. Despite these differences by gender, the survey findings reveal that significant numbers of boys and young men still feel uneasy or very unsafe whilst waiting for public transport.

Again, earlier research for the DETR on perceptions of personal security when using public transport revealed similar differences between women and men at different transport locations. For example, only 10% of women and 3% of men felt unsafe waiting alone on a train station during the day, but this increased to 53% of women and 23% of men waiting after dark. Very few women or men felt unsafe waiting at a bus stop alone during the day but, after dark, 44% of women and 19% of men said they felt unsafe. For comparison, the findings in Table 4.10 reveals that a greater proportion of boys and young men said that they felt uneasy or unsafe waiting at a bus stop [47%] or train station [52%] after dark.

The focus groups [which had greater numbers of black and ethnic minority young people] revealed that black and ethnic minority children usually felt as safe waiting for transport as their white peer group, usually because they were not waiting alone and were in an area with which they were familiar. Some older black and ethnic minority young people were more likely than their white peer group to express greater concerns for personal security when waiting for public transport. This was especially in areas with which they were not familiar.

Table 4.10: How Safe Do Young People Feel Waiting on Their Own - By Gender				
	<i>Very Safe/ Safe</i>	<i>Uneasy</i>	<i>Very Unsafe</i>	<i>Never Wait Alone</i>
At Bus Stop By Day				
Girls & Young Women	87%	6%	1%	6%
Boys & Young Men	89%	2%	1%	8%
All respondents	88%	4%	1%	7%
At Bus Stop After Dark				
Girls & Young Women	31%	36%	21%	12%
Boys & Young Men	49%	26%	11%	14%
All respondents	40%	31%	16%	13%
At Train Station by Day				
Girls & Young Women	74%	12%	3%	11%
Boys & Young Men	81%	6%	1%	12%
All respondents	77%	9%	2%	12%
At Train Station After Dark				
Girls & Young Women	17%	25%	41%	17%
Boys & Young Men	34%	26%	26%	14%
All respondents	25%	26%	33%	16%

What makes young people feel unsafe waiting for public transport

Young people were asked to select from a list of possible features what made them feel unsafe whilst waiting for public transport. Children in the youngest age group tended to identify fewer features which made them feel unsafe, possibly reflecting that many use public transport infrequently or only use it in the company of an adult.

Findings from the earlier study of perceptions of personal security using public transport [Crime Concern and Transport & Travel Research, 1997] identified that it is a combination of features and factors which make adults feel unsafe when waiting for public transport. These include design features, isolation, the absence of CCTV cameras for surveillance, poor or inappropriate lighting, the lack of information and signage, and the absence of other bona fide passengers. This research found that older young people also identify a number of features which contribute to their sense of insecurity [Table 4.11]. Similar to the conclusions of the study of adult perceptions, this points to the need to develop a package of measures to address issues of personal security whilst waiting for public transport.

Table 4.11: What Makes Young People Feel Unsafe Waiting For Public Transport?			
	% of respondents in each age group		
	<i>Age of Respondents</i>		
	10 to 12	13 & 14	15 years plus
waiting in lonely places	31%	46%	51%
drunks or rowdy people around	55%	66%	78%
kids from other schools waiting for me	14%	22%	27%
a lot of fast traffic passing	18%	51%	53%
when I'm on my own	35%	53%	41%
a lot of graffiti at the shelter or station	8%	6%	7%
a lot of noisy kids around	18%	37%	51%
no staff at the bus or train station	19%	62%	75%

Drunks or groups of rowdy people around is the feature which is most likely to make young people in all three age groups feel unsafe when waiting for public transport. Some survey respondents described their concerns in more detail:

*'when I'm on my own waiting at the stop and there's lots of lads coming back from the pub'
 'when there's gangs of men walking about with bottles in their hand and they're staring at me like I shouldn't be there'
 'a big gang that's drunk and I'm on my own really frightens me'*

In the focus groups concerns about drunks or rowdy people were also high in young people's concerns whilst waiting for public transport:

"drunks are the main thing, especially late at night...there can be a group of lads waiting at the stop...I'm never sure what they are going to do and that makes me feel afraid"
 [young woman in Newcastle]

"there's always drunks waiting around on the platform, maybe they're alright but how can you tell..."
 [young man at Wolverhampton secondary school]

"The town at night can be scary...when there are big groups of people around...I don't like it when the pubs are turning out and there are drunks out on the pavement waiting for buses"
 [young man at Sheffield secondary school]

In common with the fears expressed by young people, the earlier research on adult perceptions of personal security on public transport [Crime Concern and Transport & Travel Research, 1997] identified that a greater presence of drunken people, especially after the pubs closed, was a common reason or contributing factor for not choosing to wait for or use public transport at that time.

In London particularly, some young people described their fears that, for no apparent reason or by accident, they might be pushed off a train platform:

"I don't feel safe on the tube stations when it's crowded, I'm frightened that I'll get pushed off the platform on to the track"

[boy at East London primary school]

"there's mad people walking about at stations, I'm not really frightened of them but they could suddenly decide to push you on to the tracks"

[young man at North London youth project]

No staff at the bus or train station is the second most likely feature to contribute to feelings of unsafety by those aged 15 years and older. The prominence given to a lack of staff may seem surprising in view of the criticisms made by many young people about transport staff and comments about their unfriendly attitude to young people. In the focus groups, there was evidence that, although many young people described a poor or negative relationship with transport staff, the presence of staff was still reassuring:

"stations are run by computers these days. I feel a lot less safe when there's no staff about"

[boy at Croydon secondary school]

"train stations can be quite scary...it's when there's no staff around and the booking office is all locked up and there's just you on your own"

[young woman working in Reading]

Young people did not necessarily feel they would approach a member of staff for assistance, but having staff at the bus or train station meant potential perpetrators of incidents, especially an adult or a group of adults, would be deterred. Some young people linked the importance of staff to feeling less at risk from 'stranger danger'.

Older young people were much more likely than younger children to feel unsafe with a lot of noisy kids, although that may also reflect their irritation. With their greater understanding of the risks, older young people were also more likely than younger children to feel unsafe waiting in areas with fast traffic. Across all age groups, less than 10% of respondents said that graffiti at the station or shelter made them feel unsafe. However, as mentioned earlier, in the focus groups with more scope to explore issues in more depth, young people were more likely to describe the negative impact of graffiti.

There was also a widely held perception that services were less reliable in the evening, with uncertainty about when the bus or train would arrive and fears of being stranded without a means of getting home. Survey respondents described:

'I'm frightened if the bus is late and it's dark'

'you feel very unsafe when the bus is late and you don't think it's going to come'

The analysis by gender [Table 4.12] shows the presence of drunks or rowdy people is the most common feature which makes both young women and young men feel unsafe.

Similar percentages of young women and young men identified no staff at the train or bus station and waiting in lonely places as the next most common features associated with feeling unsafe.

Table 4.12: What Makes Young People Feel Unsafe Waiting For Public Transport?			
	% of Male and Female Respondents		
	<i>Boys & Young Men</i>	<i>Girls & Young Women</i>	<i>All Respondents</i>
waiting in lonely places	45%	44%	45%
drunks or rowdy people around	64%	71%	67%
kids from other schools waiting for me	22%	21%	22%
a lot of fast traffic passing	37%	43%	53%
when I'm on my own	29%	53%	40%
a lot of graffiti at the shelter or station	6%	5%	5%
a lot of noisy kids around	21%	34%	27%
no staff at the bus or train station	42%	46%	44%

Young women in the survey identified the fear caused by cars passing or stopping at a bus stop while they were waiting alone:

'when it's dark and I'm on my own and a car pulls up in front of me, that's really scary'

'when people in cars stare at me as they drive past and I'm frightened that they are going to stop, when they see me on my own'

Girls and young women were more likely to feel unsafe in the presence of a stranger, especially a man, and children were more likely than older young people to feel unsafe when someone 'odd' was around. Survey respondents were made to feel unsafe by:

'when there's a man that looks weird',

'a man watching me'

'when I'm on my own and a person might hurt me'

'people who come up to you when you are alone in the dark'

'when people I don't know are there'

'when strangers ask me questions'

The design or the location of the transport infrastructure was more likely to contribute to young women's fears for personal security:

'if the bus stop is by a field or alleyway, I feel very unsafe'

[woman survey respondent]

'when I have to wait in the dark by bushes and someone could be hiding there'

[women survey respondent]

"I don't feel safe at some stations...there's the long spooky corridors, I feel very unsafe and I'd never use them on my own late at night"

[young woman at North London youth project]

"there are buses as late as 11pm or 11.30pm...the bus is OK but I don't like waiting for the bus...it's very dark where the stop is and often there's no one else around"

[young woman working in Reading]

Improvements to the condition or security of public transport infrastructure were also recognised as reducing fears:

"what a difference it's made now they've put the ticket barriers in at the station...I feel a lot safer on my own knowing that anyone can't just wander into the station..."

[young woman working at Reading]

"the [train] stations do not always feel very safe, but since they have decorated our local station, I find it much less threatening...decorating the stations and keeping them clean makes them look a lot more welcoming and we feel a lot safer"

[young woman in South London school]

Personal security travelling on public transport

The survey findings show that, for all modes of transport, significant numbers of young people feel safe or very safe travelling with friends or family [Table 4.13]. When travelling alone, the pattern varies between different transport modes. Most young people who travel alone on a bus feel safe or very safe. On a train, however, nearly a third of those aged 13 years and older said they feel uneasy travelling alone and nearly 10% feel very unsafe. Alone in a taxi, about a third of those aged 13 years and older feel either uneasy or unsafe.

Table 4.13: How Safe Do Young People Feel Travelling on Public Transport - By Age				
	<i>Very Safe/ Safe</i>	<i>Uneasy</i>	<i>Very Unsafe</i>	<i>Never Travel or Travel Alone by Mode</i>
By Bus Alone				
10 to 12 years	57%	5%	6%	32%
13 & 14 years	84%	11%	1%	4%
15 years plus	89%	10%	1%	-
By Bus With Family/Friends				
10 to 12 years	75%	-	1%	24%
13 & 14 years	98%	-	-	2%
15 years plus	100%	-	-	-
By Taxi Alone				
10 to 12 years	30%	16%	8%	46%
13 & 14 years	63%	30%	4%	3%
15 years plus	70%	26%	4%	-
By Taxi With Family/Friends				
10 to 12 years	70%	1%	-	29%
13 & 14 years	95%	2%	-	3%
15 years plus	98%	2%	-	-
By Train Alone				
10 to 12 years	21%	18%	7%	54%
13 & 14 years	56%	31%	10%	3%
15 years plus	62%	29%	9%	-
By Train With Family/Friends				
10 to 12 years	69%	3%	-	28%
13 & 14 years	95%	1%	-	4%
15 years plus	97%	3%	-	-

Table 4.14 reveals small variations between girls and young women and boys and young men on their perception of personal security when travelling on public transport. Although the differences are only minor, they still reveal that young women are likely to feel less safe than young men. For example, when travelling on a bus alone, 14% of girls and young women feel uneasy or very unsafe compared with only 9% of boys and young men. All feel equally safe when travelling with friends or family.

Table 4.14: How Safe Do Young People Feel Travelling on Public Transport - By Gender				
	<i>Very Safe/ Safe</i>	<i>Uneasy</i>	<i>Very Unsafe</i>	<i>Never Travel or Travel Alone by Mode</i>
By Bus Alone				
Boys & Young Men	84%	8%	1%	7%
Girls & Young Women	77%	11%	3%	9%
all respondents	81%	9%	2%	8
By Bus With Family/Friends				
Boys & Young Men	94%	-	-	6%
Girls & Young Women	94%	-	-	6%
all respondents	94%	-	-	6%
By Taxi Alone				
Boys & Young Men	70%	17%	3%	10%
Girls & Young Women	47%	36%	7%	10%
all respondents	58%	26%	5%	11%
By Taxi With Family/Friends				
Boys & Young Men	92%	-	-	8%
Girls & Young Women	90%	3%	-	7%
all respondents	91%	2%	-	7%
By Train Alone				
Boys & Young Men	59%	23%	8%	10%
Girls & Young Women	42%	33%	10%	15%
all respondents	51%	28%	9%	12%
By Train With Family/Friends				
Boys & Young Men	91%	1%	-	8%
Girls & Young Women	90%	3%	-	7%
all respondents	91%	2%	-	7%

When travelling by taxi alone, the difference is more striking. Less than half of girls and young women feel safe or very safe and 43% feel uneasy or very unsafe. In contrast 70% of boys and young men feel safe or very safe and only a fifth feel uneasy or very unsafe. Again, all feel equally safe in a taxi with friends or family. The focus groups identified that the unease of young women was associated with being alone with the male driver. Some young women felt safer travelling with a cab driver whom they knew, even though this might not be a licensed taxi driver.

Travelling by train alone, girls and young women feel less safe than in a taxi with only 42% feeling safe or very safe. In contrast, 43% of girls and young women feel uneasy or unsafe compared to 31% of boys and young men. More boys and young men feel uneasy or unsafe travelling alone by train than by any other mode of transport.

From the focus group discussions, some black and ethnic minority young people expressed greater concerns for personal security when travelling by public transport. Teachers tended to identify some of the reasons for these concerns by their students. In one secondary school with a large number of Asian students, there had been tension between some of the bus drivers and these pupils. Another school which had experienced similar problems said these had been reduced significantly by the bus company employing more Asian drivers. In response to other problems experienced on-

bus, this same school had carried out a survey with pupils to identify which were the best routes to and from home for the service buses to take. The routes which used to take many of the Asian students used to go through a predominantly white estate where many felt unsafe. After the results of the survey were discussed with the bus company, the routes were changed and the problems fell sharply.

Table 4.15: What Makes Young People Feel Unsafe When Using Public Transport?			
	% of respondents in each age group		
	<i>Age of Respondents</i>		
	10 to 12	13 & 14	15 years plus
when bus or train is crowded	21%	15%	16%
drunks or rowdy people travelling	52%	65%	78%
after dark	35%	50%	54%
when a stranger comes and sits by me	52%	52%	46%
when there are no staff on the train	26%	29%	33%
kids from other schools on train or bus	14%	22%	26%
when there is nobody or only 1 or 2 people there	20%	27%	25%
when bus goes too fast or brakes suddenly	21%	15%	18%
noisy or rowdy young people travelling	12%	31%	43%
when there is a lot of graffiti on the bus	9%	5%	3%

There was little difference between the three age groups on those features of the travelling environment which made children and young people feel unsafe [Table 4.15]. The most frequently chosen feature from the list provided in the questionnaires was drunks or rowdy people travelling, chosen by two thirds of those aged 13 and 14 years of age and by nearly 80% of those aged 15 years and older. Travelling after dark and 'when a stranger comes and sits by me' were the next most common reasons for feeling unsafe.

Noisy or rowdy young people travelling was a common reason why older young people felt unsafe, but this was not a prominent feature for those aged between 10 and 12 years. The latter was probably because it is usually the younger children who are responsible for most of the noise.

From the analysis by gender [Table 4.16], girls and young women identified more features that made them feel unsafe. For both young women and young men, drunks and rowdy people were the most frequently chosen reason for feeling unsafe. For both genders, travelling after dark and 'when a stranger sits by me' were the next most frequently chosen reasons for feeling unsafe. However, young women were more likely to feel unsafe because there was no staff on the train and when there was nobody or just one or two people around.

Table 4.16: What Makes Young People Feel Unsafe When Using Public Transport?			
	<i>Boys & Young Men</i>	<i>Girls & Young Women</i>	<i>Total Respondents</i>
when bus or train is crowded	17%	17%	17%
drunks or rowdy people travelling	61%	73%	66%
after dark	40%	58%	48%
when a stranger comes and sits by me	46%	54%	50%
when there are no staff on the train	25%	34%	30%
kids from other schools on train or bus	24%	20%	22%
when there is nobody or only 1 or 2 people there	21%	29%	25%
when bus goes too fast or brakes suddenly	15%	20%	17%
noisy or rowdy young people travelling	31%	27%	29%
when there is a lot of graffiti on the bus	6%	5%	5%

The focus group analysis reinforced the findings from the surveys that those features which contributed most to a lack of personal security were drunks, strangers and being alone. The discussions further highlighted that young women were made most unsafe by being alone or where another person was present, usually a man. In contrast, it was gangs or groups of young adults which could most frighten young men. Such differences - also evident from the research on adult perceptions of personal security - appear to stem from deep rooted fears. Most women fear personal attack or sexual assault from one person, usually a man, whilst men are most likely to fear an attack or assault from a group of men.

The presence of drunks and their rowdy behaviour, especially on evening or late night services, was the most frequently identified reason given in the focus group discussions for feeling unsafe:

"travelling late at night on the trains...drunks are the main thing and groups of lads riding about usually with cans and smoking"
[young woman in Newcastle]

"I'm used to the trains late at night but after 11pm it's always full of drunks...I'd rather take a taxi back"
[young man in Newcastle]

"when I take a late bus, there are usually young lads on it, some have been drinking...I usually sit up close to the driver. I feel a lot safer when it's not a double decker"
[young woman working in Reading]

A lone person acting strangely was identified through the focus groups and the questionnaire surveys as a feature associated with travelling by public transport, especially buses, and made many young people feel unsafe:

'when a person keeps looking at me'
'people being weird'

*'when people stare or make horrible comments'
'when I think someone has followed me on the bus'*
[survey respondents]

"there was this bus, completely empty and this old man comes and sits by me...he stares and rocks back and forward...it's happened a few times now and I don't really know what to do"
[young woman working in Reading]

"there was this old woman on the bus - screaming and swearing...I know she was ill, but it's still not very nice for everyone is it?"
[young woman at Bristol training centre]

"the buses can be worse than the tubes for strange people, but it depends where you are...late in the evening and very early in the morning, there's parts where all kinds of strange people are travelling, most of them seem to have come straight out of the hospital, there's always an incident...and you see how uneasy people feel"
[young man in North London youth project]

Sometimes, it was just the proximity of strangers which made young people feel unsafe:

*'I feel unsafe when a stranger sits by me'
'being talked to by strangers makes me feel unfraid'
'if someone comes and sits by me and talks to me'
'when a youth I don't know sits by me'*
[survey respondents]

Travelling on their own without friends or family was a major factor contributing to a lack of personal security, especially by girls and young women, and was often linked to fear of strangers or one other person present, including concern when there was only one member of staff there:

*'when only one member of staff is there'
'I don't like it when there's just me on the bus with the driver'
'if you and the bus driver are the only people there and I think they are going to take the bus a different way'*
[survey respondents]

"there's never a conductor or guard on the train when it's late...some coaches are empty and there's usually a few drunks in some compartments. When I get on, I go through the train and try and find a family to sit with...sometimes, if there's no one, I lock myself in the toilet...it's not nice but it's safer!"
[young woman working in Reading]

As a striking difference between young people and adults, young women in particular, often described the unease which they felt travelling alone in a taxi or private hire with a driver they did not know:

*'I feel unsafe when on my own in the taxi and the driver goes down little alleyways'
'in taxis, if they take an unknown route'*
[young women survey respondents]

"I always sit in the back of the cab...I still feel a little scary...I always feel uncomfortable when I get out of the cab at the end of the evening"
[young woman working in Reading]

"what I don't like about black cabs is that the driver can lock you in...he operates the door locks and there's nothing you can do about it...it makes me feel uneasy and sometimes I feel really unsafe, especially if the driver goes a way I don't know"
[girl in Croydon secondary school]

"it is different for a man but it can be quite frightening for a woman alone in a cab...whether I feel safe or not depends on if I'm with someone"
[young woman in Bristol training centre]

Knowing the drivers could contribute to a greater sense of personal security:

"the taxis are OK, I know all the drivers now so that's why I feel safe...our company has an account with them and they are registered as well"
[young woman working in Reading]

Compared to personal security, the difference in cost between a taxi and a minicab was a more critical factor and minicabs were usually perceived to be cheaper than licensed taxis:

"when I come home from a club, I don't take taxis...they are too expensive...minicabs are a lot cheaper and they will go to where I want to go, black cabs don't like going to certain areas"
[young woman in North London youth project]

Other young women described the advantages of using taxis, especially as a reliable means of getting home late at night:

"taxis are a lot more expensive but it's better than waiting half an hour or 40 minutes for a bus, especially late at night when the bus might not come anyway...that's why having real-time information is so important...you can judge what to do and that makes me feel safer"
[young women in central Edinburgh youth project]

Young people's confidence in travelling was affected by incidents which they had seen or knew about:

"the tubes aren't safe really, I've seen people pushed about...I've seen things happen even during the day and in the evenings especially..."
[young woman in North London youth project]

"I wouldn't travel late on trains round here...I know there are gangs about stealing things and steaming...it's too dangerous"
[boy in Croydon secondary school]

"I feel more afraid when I see people arguing with the driver, I worry what is going to happen next"
[girl at Bradford secondary school]

"I feel unsafe if someone on the bus is being bullied and you don't know whether to help or not"
[survey respondent]

Personal security on late night services

Although young people identified a need for more evening and late night bus services, those who had used those services often described the experience as unpleasant or unsafe. Again, it was the presence of drunks and rowdy behaviour which was the most frequent source of unease:

"I've been home on the late bus...I found it really scary. The bus goes a different way than it does during the day and I wasn't sure where I was going and if I'd end up at home...there's no one to ask and most people are so drunk, they wouldn't notice where they are anyway"
[young women in central Edinburgh youth project]

"I wouldn't want to use the services late because of the drunks"
[young man in Newcastle]

"late night travelling on the buses can be the worst thing...the night buses are all packed and there's so many drunks...I don't think they should allow drunk people on the bus...they insult people, are

abusive...they've had a few drinks and think they can take on anyone"
[young man in North London youth project]

In Wolverhampton, there was a late night service from the town centre which has a security guard on board:

"I've used the late night bus at about 2.30am...it cost about £1.50, it was very quiet because most of the other people were asleep...also there's usually a guard travelling as well"
[young man in Wolverhampton school]

Other young people observed that the absence of any staff other than the driver could mean that offensive or dangerous behaviour could go unchecked:

"I've taken a bus at 2 in the morning from the clubs, they're very popular and a cheap way of getting home...I suppose the drivers know what they are getting into when they take the job...but I still think that they need extra staff with them to stop trouble, that's nothing really that a driver can do on his own"
[young man from North Somerset school]

"on Fridays, there's a special bus service that picks you up from the pub - not everyone but a special pub - and takes you on to the club. It picks young people up about 11pm and brings them back to the centre of town at about 2 or 3am... I get a taxi back home after that. You have to buy your ticket before getting on the bus. It's a double decker. I've taken it at times...it's very rowdy and there's plenty of drunk people and because there's only the driver on the bus, so there's no one to stop any trouble"
[young woman working in Reading]

However, despite concerns for personal security, night services could still be seen as safer than some other modes of transport:

"yes, I use night buses to get home from the city centre...it's cheaper than taxis and means that I don't have to travel late at night alone with a male taxi driver"
[young woman in Bristol training centre]

The small number of late night services and the length of time it could take to arrive home was also a criticism:

"the night buses are OK but they take so long to get home...they go through all the housing estates...there's only one bus to some areas as well"
[young man in central Edinburgh youth project]

"the trouble with some of the night buses is that they go all round the houses to get anywhere and that means you are stuck on the bus for ages..."
[young man in North London youth project]

Personal security on the whole journey

As other research with adults has shown, the walk to and from the bus stop or train station can be the time when many people feel most unsafe. The focus groups with young people identified that young women and children had the strongest concerns for their personal security when walking to and from the stop and station. Often, these concerns were associated either with particular features of the walking environment or after dark:

"after six o'clock, the route for the bus changes...it means I have to walk up the hill, it's much further for me to get home...in the winter, it's dark as well...the area I have to walk through hasn't got many lamps working, there's woods and trees, some women have been raped there in the past...I always carry my personal alarm but I'm still very very frightened at times...it's the worst time of the

journey for me"

[young woman working in Reading]

"the most frightening time is getting off the Metro late at night and alone...walking home alone after dark that's the worst"

[young woman in Newcastle]

"I'm frightened walking through the subway, if there's no one I know...I've seen it on TV, Crimestoppers...where this man followed a woman down a subway and raped her...I would feel a lot safer, if there was CCTV in the subways"

[girl at East London primary school]

"I feel most unsafe on a dark night when I'm walking on my way home...I'm frightened of being attacked by a man"

[young woman in Wolverhampton school]

In a Sheffield secondary school, all the girls in the focus group said they felt quite safe walking home after dark, but that was because:

"the bus stop is so close to home that I never have far to walk"; and

"the buses are safer than the trams or the trains because with those we have to walk further to get home"

Similar to the views of adult pedestrians, subways were a particular feature where many young people felt particularly unsafe and often avoided using:

"we have to go down the subway, you can't cross the road any other way...but I don't like it...there's not enough lighting, usually there's only 2 or 3 lights working and it's dark and dingy...I'm frightened when I'm on my own and there's just one other person there..."

[boy at East London primary school]

"there are only a few subways round here...I feel unsafe using them...there's often weirdos using them and homeless people begging...there's shadows and the walls are full of graffiti"

[young man in Wolverhampton school]

"I don't even look at the subways, day or night, there are stories about attacks and rapes...no one could feel safe in a place like that, it's underground and no one would hear you scream"

[young woman in Wolverhampton school]

Chapter 5 - Measures to address concerns: young people and public transport

5.1 Introduction

One of the DETR's guidelines for transport operators is specifically concerned with young people and identifies approaches for improving relations with young people, encouraging their use of public transport and reducing anti-social behaviour [DETR, 1996]. These approaches include: work in schools; staff training; involving young people in transport initiatives; diverting young people at risk of offending; and working with other agencies. The information which we have now gathered through the survey of organisations and the assessment of the individual case studies will build on this initial guidance for operators by identifying best practice for working with children and young people.

This chapter draws on the results of our survey of organisations and the literature review to identify current initiatives designed to address concerns about young people and public transport. Such measures are not only concerned to address crime and anti-social behaviour for which young people may be responsible but also to address issues about their own personal security. The range of measures also embraces initiatives to encourage the greater use of public transport by young people and their more responsible use of vehicles and infrastructure.

5.2 The possible effectiveness of interventions

Whilst many of the initiatives described in this chapter are constructive and worthwhile, doubt has been expressed about whether they reach and influence those young people who are most involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour on public transport. Whether such initiatives do reach the young people most at risk of offending or re-offending is one of the issues which is explored through the case studies.

Earlier research has provided some information on young people's views about the effectiveness of different kinds of initiatives. The research with young people using school buses to and from a Yorkshire secondary school [Crime Concern, 1996] revealed that students gave strongest support to those interventions which involved young people in cleaning up the mess caused; making known perpetrators pay for the damage; and, for very serious or persistent offenders, banning them from the bus. Although cleaning up the mess was not thought to be an effective deterrent on its own, charging for any damage caused and banning offenders from the bus were seen by the students as more likely to be successful in preventing repeat incidents of seriously bad behaviour and vandalism.

These students gave little support for the introduction of written guidance on good behaviour on public transport, especially where it was prepared by adults. A process for agreement on general standards which involved students representatives, the bus company and school staff was considered the most productive way forward.

A further indication of the effectiveness of different types of initiatives is provided by the recent MORI survey for Railtrack which asked young people about their views on interventions [Railtrack, 1998]. Nearly two thirds of children said they could remember being given a talk at school on the dangers of track trespass and nearly 80% of these children said it would deter them from such activity. However, a tenth of those children who could remember the talk said it would only deter them for a while and slightly more than a tenth said a talk would not deter them at all. The response on parental interventions was similar in its effectiveness.

From a given list of ten types of interventions to tackle track trespass and vandalism, about a third of children said they preferred a talk at school or from their parents and about the same proportion said they would prefer a television programme. About a quarter of the young people said they would like drama or celebrity campaigns, and less than a fifth preferred television adverts, a video or computer based publicity. Only 5% said they preferred posters and leaflets.

The young people were also asked who they thought would be an effective person to deliver the message explaining the dangers of track trespass and vandalism. Over 80% thought that the parent of a dead victim would be effective, followed by 60% who favoured an injured victim and 40% who chose a teenage vandal. A police officer was chosen as an effective person to deliver the message by 37% of young people, with a train driver chosen by 29% and a teacher by only 10%.

5.3 Current practice: Survey of initiatives and literature review

Response to the survey of organisations

Questionnaires requesting information on past, current or planned initiatives directed at young people and public transport were sent out to all local authorities, Passenger Transport Executives [PTEs], the British Transport Police, Railtrack, Train Operating Companies, bus companies and interest groups. In total, 315 organisations were asked for information and completed questionnaires were returned by 125, a response rate of 40%. All PTEs completed the questionnaire.

Table: 5.1 Initiatives Grouped By Main Category	
To raise awareness of public transport issues, including personal security - visits to schools and youth clubs, visits to bus garages etc providing curriculum material for schools young people's direct involvement through youth action groups etc	32% 12% 3%
Promoting public transport - campaigns providing sponsorship providing activities, fun-days, events	14% 7% 5%
Encouraging responsible behaviour on public transport - participating in Junior Citizen and Crucial Crew through videos and books theatre, music and arts projects other initiatives including developing codes of conduct, reparation schemes	15% 6% 2% 2%
Diversionsary activity - detached youth work and truancy initiatives	2%

The responses to the survey identified nearly 380 initiatives addressing issues relating to young people and public transport. The data provided by the survey was analysed by different types of initiative and these also provide the structure for this Chapter and Chapter 6. As Table 5.1 reveals, the most common initiatives currently in place are intended to raise awareness of public transport issues, including concerns for personal security. These initiatives account for nearly half of all those reported through the survey, with visits to schools and youth clubs or visits by children to garages and depots amongst the most common.

Just over a quarter of organisations have initiatives in place to promote public transport with young people. These include campaigns targeted at young people and their use of public transport, providing sponsorship of events, activities and fun days. The third category of initiatives, reported by a quarter of organisations responding through the survey, are targeted at encouraging responsible behaviour on public transport. These initiatives include the participation in Junior Citizen or Crucial Crew, the production of videos and the use of theatre or art to promote responsible behaviour. The final category of initiatives was specifically to provide diversionary activity, usually to those most at risk of offending, and only 2% of organisations said they had such initiatives in place.

Current initiatives

5.4 Raising awareness of public transport issues, including personal security

Visits to schools and youth clubs

From the survey with organisations, it appears that many of the visits to schools and youth clubs by the local Home Office police, British Transport Police, local authority staff and transport operators have the primary focus of road and track safety. For example, NEXUS visits about sixty schools each year advising on the dangers of trespass on railway tracks and the cost of vandalism to the Metro service. First Cymru, First Bradford and First Mainline are all examples of bus operators who regularly visit schools to explain the risks of vandalism and rowdy behaviour. These opportunities are also used to encourage young people's use of public transport and, for example, to explain the layout of bus timetables and tickets.

Although financial constraints have caused them to reduce this activity in recent years, the British Transport Police have a long tradition of visiting schools, mainly to explain the dangers of track trespass and the consequences of vandalism and dangerous behaviour. It is often targeted at schools adjacent to the railway lines to receive talks and usually a video presentation given to young people aged between 9 and 14 years of age.

London Transport Buses encourage bus operators in their area to have Schools Liaison Officers. These Officers not only deal directly with schools when any problems arise but also make visits and forge links between the bus operators and students and staff in schools. London Transport Museum has encouraged Schools Liaison Officers within London Underground. These Officers are all volunteers and their managers create time in staff rosters to allow them to go out to schools and work with classes. The London Transport Museum provides these Officers with resources and training. There are about ninety Schools Liaison Officers for the Underground.

As further examples of visits to schools, Bridgend Council holds sessions for all Year 6 pupils in the County's schools on cycle, in-car and pedestrian security. However, these sessions do not refer specifically to personal security on public transport. Hammersmith and Fulham Council, in association with the local Urban Studies Centre, holds regular sessions in schools to promote green transport issues.

Visits by young people to transport depots and infrastructure

Popular with children are the visits to bus garages and bus and train stations as a practical way of raising awareness about public transport issues. As an example, Hammersmith and Fulham Council organises regular visits to their main bus and Underground interchange station, especially to explain the advantages of integrated transport. Some Train Operating Companies arrange visits to their stations with the common message that 'travelling by train is fun and environmentally

friendly, but there are dangers'. It is generally felt, however, that such activities are unlikely to have a lasting benefit unless they are explicitly linked to the young people's curriculum studies.

The Education Department of the London Transport Museum has links with schools all over London and encourages their use of Museum materials as a teaching resource. The Museum also relies on the teacher to make best use of the Museum's resources by preparing the children for their visit to the Museum and following up issues.

Providing curriculum material for schools

Of those organisations which provided curriculum material for schools, the majority appear to focus on road safety and accident prevention. Some information packs include issues about public transport, but few make specific mention of personal security issues. Much valuable work is also done, especially in science and geography, on environmental issues including pollution. In addition, 'citizenship' will soon be introduced as part of the core curriculum and may well include environmental awareness.

Examples of curriculum material with a focus on public transport include those prepared by Merseytravel, NEXUS, Railtrack and Connex. In addition, Fife Council has prepared primary school material on 'Getting to Grips with Public Transport' and First Cymru's have a pack for a GNVQ project on designing a bus route. Hertfordshire County Council has education packs which focus on green transport issues and Hammersmith and Fulham Council provide information on using public transport, cycling or walking to local sites of interest.

Those providing materials which do include a personal security dimension are those provided by London Transport Buses, the London Transport Museum Education Department and South Yorkshire PTE as part of its SAFE strategy. Most curriculum materials are aimed at Key Stages 1 and 2 when children are young and receptive. The material provided by the London Transport Museum addresses operational, environmental, safety and security issues.

Young people's direct involvement through action groups

In some schools, young people have become directly involved in gathering views or carrying out research for improvements to transport locally. For example, Camden Council has participated in the Children's Society partnership project 'Children and Neighbourhoods in London' and has involved young people in the decisions about their local environment, including road safety. A project worker works with the young people to identify their concerns and ideas for improving the local environment. The Hammersmith and Fulham Urban Studies Centre is another participant in this partnership and evolved a research study where young people worked alongside a range of people to follow routes through central Hammersmith and record their comments on the difficulties of access and using public transport. The young people took photographs which were converted into postcards and used as part of a campaign to improve access and mobility.

Wolverhampton's 'Youth Against Crime' groups bring together volunteers who focus on ways of making schools and their local community safer. Some of these groups have included issues about crime and anti-social behaviour on public transport. A Youth Action group has been established at the Ranalagh School in Bracknell. It has carried out an audit at Bracknell train Station and identified measures to improve personal security, such as improved lighting and greater visibility.

Thameslink have been involved with young people in an action project to improve local public transport in Wimbledon, especially the train station, and reduce misuse by young people. Supported by a youth worker, two action groups have been established in local schools and conducted surveys with their peers on their perceptions of transport locally. The action groups have met with

Thameslink and local bus management and their local MP to describe the findings of their surveys with students at their school.

A recent development has been the Railwatch Youth Project in Strathclyde which is a partnership of ScotRail, the PTE and the British Transport Police. Following the introduction of the wider Railwatch Scheme by the British Transport Police, it was evident that many of the incidents were committed by young people and many of the victims of youth crime are other young people. The Youth Project conducted a survey with 450 pupils who use the rail network locally. This survey identified that a fifth of young people had been the victim of crime whilst using the rail network, most the victim of a robbery or assault, and over 70% had seen a crime being committed.

In the next stage of the Youth Project, an interactive package will be developed. This workbook will be entitled 'Frizzo's Fast Track to Personal Safety' and involve exercises, discussion and feedback. First year pupils at secondary school will be targeted and the core themes are: education in providing safety advice and information, and the importance of reporting crimes; and developing awareness of a young person's own personal safety and security and how to reduce risk.

Research with young people on Merseyside suggested that they should be involved in the design of service information and timetables [Crime Concern, 1995]. Merseytravel's Community Links team is working with young people to produce child-friendly travel information which could be distributed through schools, youth clubs, community centres and shops.

5.5 Promoting public transport

Campaigns

Over 40% of the organisations contacted said they were running campaigns to promote young people's use of public transport. Few of these campaigns made reference to personal security issues. An example that did refer to personal security is Merseytravel's promotion of its Travel Safe strategy and its Youth on the Move initiatives to develop safe and responsible use of public transport. The South Yorkshire PTE's SAFE campaign is a local partnership to promote a safe travelling environment and encourage use of public transport. The campaign, through publicity and a touring exhibition to libraries and schools, is linked to practical initiatives such as the development of a 24 hour SAFE helpline. Another example of promotion which includes a safety message is First Cymru's use of local radio to appeal directly to young people for their increased patronage and responsible use of the buses. Transport operators have also been considering the use of television advertising as an effective means of promoting public transport with young people.

South Tyneside Council has a campaign highlighting the 'Real Costs of Travel'. The campaign, publicised through a report, leaflets and the Council's website, aims at encouraging more sustainable modes of travel by raising awareness about the actual costs [including 'unseen' costs] of different modes of transport. As another innovative measure, ScotRail have a Kids' Loyalty Club to promote young people's continued and increasing use of train services. London Transport has recently introduced a scheme to give lower fares to students through the use of its new student photocard. It follows a pilot scheme at two colleges in 1996. London Transport identified at least 200,000 eligible students and hopes that the availability of reduced rate travel will encourage them to become life-long public transport users.

An article in Global Transport [Yearsley, 1997] identified the need to press for a national campaign to educate people from an early age *'not only to see public transport as a viable alternative to the car, but to have the skills and confidence to use it'*. As that article emphasised *'if it is worthwhile giving senior scholars pre-driving school training, then it is doubly worthwhile teaching them to*

navigate their way through a fare structure...they need criteria to enable them to plan a journey, filling gaps with taxis when appropriate, but using buses as well as trains and planes'. The author of the article identified a clear advantage in the Chartered Institute of Transport spearheading a campaign for training in public transport skills because it was an organisation impartial between public transport modes.

Providing sponsorship

A fifth of organisations said they used sponsorship as a means of promoting public transport. The most common types of sponsorship were providing free travel days or cheaper fares for events or family travel. Other examples involved the sponsorship of sports and football clubs and sporting events, and contributions to local charities. Those specifically targeted at personal security and crime prevention included First Cymru's sponsorship of an art competition in schools with the theme of crime on buses. A calendar was produced from the winning entries.

Activities, fun days and events

Among the more innovative ideas for fun days included the quiz nights and social evenings provided for young people by Rider Calderdale; visits to the London Transport Museum; and First Cymru's 'school into industry' days to raise young people's awareness of the bus industry and employment opportunities.

ScotRail's 'travelling classrooms' held on board trains is a particularly exciting initiative for primary school children. The idea came from a train driver who had been involved in giving safety talks in schools. Once the children are on board the emphasis is on history, nature and conservation with staff providing a running commentary on the features and places to be seen. The children are given a talk on rail safety by the British Transport Police. About 80% of the children who have attended so far have never been on a train before. The experience '*introduces them to rail travel, teaches them about safety and lets them see the wonderful countryside*' [Thompson, 1998].

The first travelling classroom ran from Inverness to the Kyle of Lochalsh and due to its popularity and the positive response from schools, it has been decided to run the classroom as a regular event for a minimum of eight weeks a year. The travelling classroom is being expanded to run on the route from Inverness to Helmsdale. Feedback received from the schools suggests that the children retain more safety information through the travelling classroom than they usually retain through a talk in the school classroom.

5.6 Encouraging responsible behaviour on public transport

Participating in junior citizen and crucial crew

Nearly half of all organisations said that they participated in Junior Citizen or Crucial Crew events. Most of these activities only refer to personal security issues within the 'stranger danger' element of the programme. Most references to public transport were either in relation to road safety or track trespass.

Some examples of local initiatives with Crucial Crew and Junior Citizen schemes include Rotherham, where a Crucial Crew programme run annually by the South Yorkshire police and other agencies aims at teaching children how to respond to potential emergencies. Each young person attends for a full day with fourteen different scenarios provided by the agencies. The programme is held over a three week period and involves about 2,000 Year 6 pupils. In East Dunbartonshire, the Crucial Crew event includes a scenario about the consequences of on-bus vandalism.

In Wolverhampton, the annual Crucial Crew programme involves about 1,500 primary school children and professionals from a variety of agencies. The local authority Road Safety Unit delivers scenarios highlighting the dangers which children could encounter whilst travelling, including aspects of pedestrian security.

In Newham, the Junior Citizen scheme involves the police, Fire Brigade, British Waterways, a local bus company, the London Transport Education Department with London Underground, East London Drugs Advisory Unit, British Telecom and St John's Ambulance. Each provides a scenario highlighting the risks which children can face and how they should respond safely. Southwark's Junior Citizen scheme is funded by the Council's Health Promotion Unit and is organised by the Metropolitan Police. Participating agencies include Railtrack which concentrates on promoting railway and track safety, and delivers an anti-vandalism message. Personal security on the bus may be an added element in the future.

Through videos and books

In addition to material produced for the national curriculum, some organisations also produce videos or books for young people linked to public transport and its responsible use. Among those organisations producing such videos were First Cymru, Strathclyde Buses, First Bus Aberdeen, South Yorkshire PTE, London Transport and the London Transport Museum. Merseytravel have produced a video called the 'M Files' which link, through drama, a series of mysteries to public transport. Railtrack and other train operators tend to focus most of the material [video and written] around issues of track safety and trespass.

The action research study which was undertaken in a secondary school in Yorkshire [Crime Concern, 1996] also involved young people in making a video about behaviour on the bus. The video was aimed at reducing damage and nuisance carried out by school children on buses to improve the travelling environment for staff and all passengers. A professional video company worked with the young people on the script and students from the school also provided the actors and the bus company was fully involved.

In 1997, the Confederation of Passenger Transport produced information packs for primary and secondary schools. The primary school material focused on safety and the secondary school material encouraged students to participate in projects to plan for public transport.

Hertfordshire County Council and Strathclyde PTE have written materials linked to wider campaigns for the promotion of public transport for young people. South Tyneside Council has produced an attractive book called 'Stepping Out Together' which is designed to help very young children understand basic road and traffic safety.

Theatre, music and art projects

Within its wider 'Youth on the Move' programme, Merseytravel has extensively used drama and art projects to foster young people's responsible use of transport and promote their future use of buses, trains and ferries. Merseytravel's programme to date has included: involving young people at a youth club in producing a large abstract picture with a transport theme; young people at a youth club involved in producing videos targeted at public transport issues; and a specially scripted play delivered to secondary schools across Merseyside by the First Bite Theatre Company. In all these initiatives, funded through the PTE's Travel Safe programme, issues of behaviour and personal security are addressed.

NEXUS has been involved with other partners in the annual 'Spirit of Youth' event in Tyneside. In its third year, the 1998 event concentrated on the good citizenship theme with schools and

community groups giving a performance of song, dance or drama that promotes the contribution of young people to society. The success of the programme has resulted in follow-up work being undertaken in many schools to reinforce the many positive messages that came out of the performance.

Hertfordshire County Council also has a theatre in schools initiative which is linked to its Travelwise campaign. Birmingham City Council has a video competition for secondary school pupils which focuses on Travelwise themes. The top three videos chosen through the competition receive prizes and the overall winner travels to Copenhagen to prepare a parallel video in the city.

As an anti-graffiti measure, Wandsworth Council, in association with a local Junior Environment Forum, have established a group of young people to design and paint a mural at a train station. Railtrack is working with graffiti artists to decorate stations and other transport infrastructure. A station in south London has been painted with a transport theme. The mural was completed within several months of the initial commission. The painting took only a few days but identifying the young people to be involved, negotiating the design, and building trust and mutual respect with the young people and graffiti artists took several months to develop. Anecdotal evidence from the project at the south London station suggests that there may have been a decrease in local incidents of graffiti and vandalism, and Railtrack believe they have learnt about how to produce well designed murals and organise similar projects for the future.

Research with young people in Merseyside identified that the concept of involving children in painting the bus was popular. Although not taken forward for practical reasons, it was felt that painting the bus could help develop a sense of ownership and young people would be less inclined to vandalise the vehicles.

5.7 Diversionary activity

Detached youth work

In contrast to activities based in a youth centre or club, detached youth work involves outreach contact with young people on the street or in other public places. Many young people do not visit youth clubs, including those most at risk of offending or causing persistent nuisance by hanging around public places, including train and bus stations and shelters. Detached youth workers make contact with the young people and often seek to involve them in alternative, more positive activities.

A small number of operators and PTEs have recently employed detached youth workers or expanded the remit of posts which previously were only considered school liaison. Merseytravel, NEXUS and Connex South Eastern are examples of organisations which are involved in youth work and have made staff available to work in youth clubs or with young people at bus and train stations and stops.

Merseytravel has employed a detached youth worker and sessional youth workers to engage young people in conversation and activities. This is part of the PTE's much wider Youth on the Move strategy. This strategy and the detached youth work initiative developed out of research undertaken with children and young people on Merseyside [Crime Concern, 1996 and Harris Research Services, 1996].

NEXUS has employed detached youth workers to meet with young people hanging about Newcastle's Metro system. These youth workers contact and advise disaffected young people with a view to involving them in more positive activities. The posts evolved from an audit to identify

issues and potential action that could assist relevant agencies in tackling youth disorder and crime on the Metro system [North Tyneside Council and Nexus, 1997]. Part of the audit involved interviews with persistent young offenders. There were common factors, such as all having been permanently excluded from school. The findings of the audit suggested that persistent young offenders were likely to respond to the provision of interesting alternative activities, one to one support, induction back into secondary school, and support for the family.

Other diversionary initiatives

To dissuade young people from hanging about a Metro station, NEXUS had classical music played through the public address system. The young people disliked the music played [especially Delius!] and have moved away from the station. Incidents of nuisance and crime have been reduced.

5.8 Other initiatives

Codes of conduct

Codes of conduct which could influence young people's behaviour when travelling to and from school have been developed by some schools, often with the co-operation of transport providers. Honley High School involved the students and local bus company in developing a code of conduct for young people using the school bus services. Codes of conduct have also been developed by Aberdeen City Council and Kent County Council in liaison with Connex South Eastern.

Truancy patrols

In Staffordshire, a partnership approach to truancy patrols was developed and evaluated [Lewis, 1995]. In a short term initiative, the business community joined with local police officers and the Education Welfare Service to make the town centre a 'truancy free area'. The evaluation revealed a 30% fall in vehicle related crime and a 48% fall in the arrests of young people during school hours. The research identified that, although the majority of those who truant do not commit crime, a small number of regular truants are responsible for a high proportion of crime in school hours. The truancy patrols have the benefits of: identifying vulnerable young people; offering support to those at risk; and deterring truants from visiting town and city centres. Truants often use public transport to reach these centres or hang about bus or train stations.

NEXUS, in association with Education Welfare Officers and the local police, are co-operating with a truancy patrol and have participated in three major truancy campaigns. A truancy initiative involving the schools, the police, PMT buses and the local authority has been operating in Stoke on Trent. As another example, Connex South Eastern has co-operated with Greenwich Council's Truancy Officer and the British Transport Police on a successful pilot truancy patrol.

Personal security of young people travelling

Great North Eastern Railways has recently launched a new service for children travelling alone on its trains. The 'Kids Go First' scheme is the first in the UK and is for young people aged 8 to 15 years. Children travelling alone are escorted to and from the train before being handed over to an authorised adult on arrival. During the journey, regular checks are made on the child and, for a small administration charge, the child gets a first class seat and a drink. Reservations can be made through a special booking line. The aim is to make children safer and more secure in the travelling environment and give parents peace of mind.

Reparation schemes

There are few examples of reparation schemes in operation. One example is a short term scheme which was operated by First Bradford in liaison with schools, police, the youth justice service and parents. If there was a serious incident of vandalism, the young people responsible for the damage were involved in cleaning the bus. The objective was to get the messages of cost and safety across to the young people. The parents are generally supportive and prefer this action to paying for the damage. However, problems in identifying which young people were responsible for the damage has meant very limited use of this measure.

School transport advisory group

The Government recognises that concerns about personal security can be a considerable deterrent for both parents and pupils to increasing bus use. It is also essential to improve the quality of the experience and build up the habit of using public transport, if young people are to continue using the bus in adult life. This is particularly important for those young people who are already travelling to school by bus.

These issues are among those being considered by the School Travel Advisory Group (STAG) established by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions in December 1998. STAG will contribute to the development of a coherent approach to school travel by identifying practical means of influencing behaviour and leading the dissemination of best practice on school travel. Guidance for local authorities on best practice is in preparation and will be issued in summer 1999, together with a separate guide for schools by Transport 2000.

5.9 Selection and role of the case studies

Using the data from our survey of initiatives, case studies were selected to reflect the wide range of measures in place or being developed and, where possible, to identify good practice which addressed issues about young people, crime and public transport. The case studies were not necessarily the 'best' but were used to provide key lessons to inform the conclusions and recommendations from this research.

Through interviews with key players, the process of implementation was explored as well as the outcomes. Focus group discussions with young people were used to help identify the effectiveness of the initiative and, where possible, its longer term impact or influence on behaviour. It was central to our investigation of the case studies to identify to what extent the initiative reached those young people most at risk - both those at risk of offending and those at risk of experiencing crime or anti-social behaviour as a victim. The longer term effectiveness of initiatives was also an important consideration.

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Chapter 6 - Initiatives for young people and public transport: lessons from the case studies

6.1 Introduction

The literature review and our survey identified a range of initiatives targeted at young people's use of public transport. PTEs, the Home Office police, British Transport Police, transport operators and Road Safety Units within local authorities tend to be the main providers of these initiatives. Many initiatives stem from concerns for personal security in the context of track trespass and the responsible use of bus transport to avoid accidents. There are, however, other notable examples which seek to explicitly tackle issues around young people's behaviour when using or waiting for public transport and to deter anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

The case studies range from PTEs with a package of initiatives in place, to individual transport providers visiting schools, producing videos, taking part in truancy projects, and working with teachers to develop codes of practice and transport plans. There is a great deal of variety in the type of initiative and the scale of resources deployed.

Only a few of these initiatives have been independently evaluated. Many survive precariously and are frequently under threat when the company or authority seek to reduce costs. Some rely on the commitment of a few individuals to promote and sustain their work with young people. Despite knowing the high costs of vandalism and the detrimental impact on staff and passengers of anti-social behaviour, it is often difficult to identify the direct benefits which can accrue from working with young people. The future of initiatives addressing issues around young people and public transport requires more information to be available on these direct effects and to what extent their influence is long term and substantive.

The case studies

6.2 A comprehensive approach

Although a number of agencies have developed more than one initiative to address issues around young people and public transport, Merseytravel and Nexus are notable because of their comprehensive approach which embraces a whole range of complementary initiatives. For this reason, this first section focuses on their initiatives as a whole which includes the use of drama and art, detached youth work, curriculum material and videos. For both these PTEs, their measures are designed as part of a package both to promote young people's use of public transport and prevent anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Merseytravel [Merseyside PTE]

The need to engage with children and young people has been a recurrent theme for Merseytravel, both for improving the behaviour of young people when using public transport and to ensure, as the market of the future, that they are encouraged to retain their use of public transport in the years to come. As a starting point, Merseytravel's concern about the behaviour of young people on public transport led the PTE to commission two studies across Merseyside which identified young people's views and their experiences of the transport system [Crime Concern, 1995; Harris Research, 1995].

Since 1996, a programme of initiatives under the banner 'Youth on the Move' was gradually developed along the twin tracks of 'promotion and prevention'. This programme has been

developed by the PTE's Community Links Team in regular consultation with youth workers and educationalists from across Merseyside. The aim of the 'Youth on the Move' programme has been both to promote young people's use of buses, trains and ferries and to prevent their misuse of public transport.

This work is also a part of Merseytravel's wider Travel Safe Strategy whose overall goal is to '*work with our partners to create a public transport system that offers the opportunity for all members of the community to travel without fear*' [Merseytravel, 1997]. Research with transport providers, staff and passengers which underpinned that strategy identified the need to make young people more aware of the impact of their anti-social behaviour on other passengers and staff, and the costs of vandalism to vehicles and the infrastructure [Crime Concern, 1995/6].

For Merseytravel, developing the 'Youth on the Move' programme has been, in part, a learning experience. In the absence of information from elsewhere, one of the intentions in sponsoring these projects was to explore and identify what works. Thus, as well as the project managers usually providing their own assessment of the process and outcomes, most of the projects funded to date through the 'Youth on the Move' initiative have also been independently evaluated. These independent evaluations have included consultations with the young people participating in the project to identify whether their awareness of public transport issues has been raised and whether it has had a beneficial impact on their attitudes towards misuse and anti-social behaviour.

As data drawn from these independent evaluations reveals, although all can be said to have made a beneficial impact on the young people participating, the relative effectiveness of the different initiatives has varied.

Nexus [Tyne And Wear PTE]

Research conducted with young people on their use of the Metro service in Tyne and Wear found that 'the apparently high levels of disorder witnessed by them makes young people feel vulnerable and yet stations prove to be popular meeting places notably because they are bored at night' [Groves and Gates, 1996]. The conclusions of this research advocated the development of alternative activities to anti-social behaviour, including issues-based activities provided by detached youth workers and developing ways of encouraging young people to be involved and behave responsibly.

In response to this research and a growing concern with the problems that could be caused by children and young people misusing the transport network, Nexus has put in place a package of initiatives to improve security by involving young people. These initiatives include the development of a Youth Forum, participation by NEXUS in the annual 'Spirit of Youth' event, visits to schools, preparation of curriculum material, a pen pal project and detached youth work. These initiatives are co-ordinated by the Customer Services and Crime Concern Manager and the School and Community Liaison Officer; and they are part of the Tyne and Wear Metro's personal security strategy. A strategy document sets out the principles and objectives for the work with young people. This document is based on the DETR's Guidelines for Operators: Work with Young People [DETR, 1996].

Key Lessons - A Comprehensive Strategy

- The development of an overall strategy is of key importance to clearly identify the overall objectives of a package of measures to ensure a consistent approach.
- Such a strategy should be informed by research into young people's experiences of using public transport, including as victims and as perpetrators.

- The strategy should address the concerns of young people as well as those of other passengers, staff and the transport providers.
- A strategy which encompasses both the prevention of misuse and the promotion of public transport with young people is best placed to gain the confidence of young people and encourage their continued use of public transport as adults.

6.3 Raising awareness of public transport issues

Work with schools

Many transport operators are particularly active through work in schools and by inviting young people to visit transport garages and train and bus stations. The objective is to increase knowledge about public transport issues and make children and young people more aware of the risks to their personal security which can result from play and misuse.

First Cymru - Work in Schools

First Cymru is a large bus company with its headquarters in Swansea. It has an established tradition of visiting primary schools to talk to children about using bus transport. The talk is accompanied by a video highlighting examples of misuse and dangerous behaviour on the bus and usually takes about a morning to deliver. Section 6.5 of this report discusses the video and its impact. In this section, the discussion focuses on the visits to schools and associated activity.

The whole presentation is interactive with questions and answers throughout. At the start of the presentation, there is a description of First Cymru which highlights the teamwork to deliver the bus services. To illustrate how the design of the bus has changed and why, the class is shown pictures of buses from 1914 to the current day. Arising out of this historic 'snapshot', there is a discussion about conductors. The children are often not aware of conductors or their role, although some know that, in the past, there were two members of staff on the bus. Many children are aware that most drivers have a radio to summon assistance.

The children are shown a large scale version of the bus ticket and, through a question and answer session, are given an explanation of its detail. A written quiz is used to help children to accurately read a bus timetable. However, no link is made with the problems resulting from the vandalism of timetable cases or from graffiti.

Finally, large scale newspaper cuttings are shown with stories of children hurt or damaged when misusing public transport. Most of these dangers are related to traffic accidents with children injured when leaving the bus and running across the road or jumping out of the emergency exit.

Children in a Year 6 class who had been given the presentation three months earlier said that the most memorable lessons from the visit were: *learning how to behave on the bus; that safety is important; and you have to board on the bus safely and not push*. Those aspects of the presentation which they most enjoyed were: *the history of the bus; how to read timetables; and the video*.

The interactive nature of the presentation was a particularly welcome feature and appeared to be much more effective in helping the children to retain messages.

The visits are very popular with schools and many primary schools are visited on a regular basis. Feedback from teachers on the presentation gives a flavour of how much they value the event and suggests its effectiveness with the children:

'the attention of the children was captured and held throughout'

'an excellent morning to make children aware of dangers...the children were so enthusiastic'

'having the opportunity to participate was so important'

'being able to watch the children working in groups and how well they coped with each activity was the best thing. The children were actively involved throughout,

not just sitting and listening...they gained a lot of knowledge'

'getting the children working in groups was very good....and the talk about the company and the video were the best'

'an excellent mix of talking to and talking with the children'

Teachers were asked to make suggestions for improving the presentation and these included:

- more visual aids, more resources which children can touch;
- more about the history of the bus and public transport, and local transport linked to the national curriculum;
- include a history of bus conductors; and
- emphasis on the consequences and cost of vandalism.

SAFE, South Yorkshire PTE - Work in Schools

The SAFE initiative is a partnership which has been developed by South Yorkshire PTE with the Police, British Transport Police, Northern Spirit, Stagecoach Supertram, Bus Operators Serving South Yorkshire [BOSSY] and First Mainline buses. Its objective is to create and sustain a safe travelling environment for all public transport passengers.

The partners in SAFE have been active in using talks and written material to deliver positive messages to schools on the safe use of public transport. In particular, the school liaison officers from the South Yorkshire Police talk regularly to young people on safe behaviour whilst travelling on the buses and, as part of their Crucial Crew programme, the problems of vandalism are explored and discussed with 10 and 11 year olds. Northern Spirit and the British Transport Police deliver a presentation to schools on track safety. Supertram personnel also have a programme of school visits which discuss use of the system and place emphasis on personal security measures.

First Mainline Buses - Work in Schools

First Mainline are a partner in the SAFE initiative. Their work in schools started in the early 1990s and pre-dates SAFE. The talks by First Mainline are aimed at Year 7 pupils in secondary schools [11 and 12 year olds], when many are travelling independently for the first time. The talks are delivered by the security department and highlight the risks and consequences of misbehaving on the buses. They last about an hour.

The talks begin with slides showing graphic headlines from local and national newspapers and emphasising the risks to young people of misbehaviour. They stress the legal responsibilities of passengers and use cartoons to illustrate the dangers of pushing on the bus, using the emergency exit door, continually ringing the bell and vandalism. A short video shows buses that have been burnt out. The talks also cover use of bus passes and are followed by a question and answer session.

There are sixty schools in South Yorkshire and the company cannot visit all of them. First Mainline commented that those schools which have been in regular receipt of the talks do not give the company serious problems. However shortage of time means that students from other secondary schools, some of which tend to be responsible for persistent problems, are often those which do not regularly receive visits.

First Bradford - Bus Monitors

First Bradford has an inspector whose remit includes schools and community liaison. The post, established in September 1996, was in response to growing problems of rowdy behaviour on school and service buses and because of increased incidents of damage to vehicles. To encourage more responsible behaviour, the inspector meets with and talks to young people in schools.

The school is also encouraged to develop a system of bus monitors. These young people are given free travel on school journeys with the responsibility of reporting on-bus incidents to their Head Teacher. They are told not to intervene in an incident. The other young people travelling are not told the identity of the bus monitors. Initially, the bus monitor scheme was piloted in one school and, following its success, extended to other schools and services. It is seen as a part of giving young people 'ownership' of their bus and being responsible for helping to resolve problems.

NEXUS - Christchurch Primary School Pen Pal Project

NEXUS and Christchurch primary school in Newcastle have developed a pen pal project. The initiative arose out of contacts made by the Newcastle Education Business Partnership. In recent years, the primary school has experienced problems of attendance and it is trying to encourage pupils to be punctual, raise school attendance and to complete homework. There was a suggestion that NEXUS staff could help through a mentoring project. It was decided that to embark on a personal mentoring scheme would be too ambitious and, as an alternative, a correspondence scheme has been developed.

The objectives in developing the exchange of letters is to help foster the children's letter writing skills and, through NEXUS staff acting as mentors, encourage the young people to share their work experiences and foster a greater understanding of work and commitment and the importance of punctuality and school attendance. Also, through contact with different NEXUS staff, it is hoped that the children will be made more aware of the range of career opportunities available within the PTE. As the scheme develops, the NEXUS logo may be used on attendance certificates and target books.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are involved and paired with a NEXUS employee. Strict guidelines for contact arrangements were established for the scheme. Letters are exchanged between the pupils and individual NEXUS staff. In addition, there are opportunities for NEXUS staff to visit the school, see homework and applaud achievements.

Prior to the commencement of the project, the class teacher had a short placement at NEXUS. This was to enable the teacher to become familiar with the operations of NEXUS; explore the opportunities for learning, for example by using timetables and maps; develop focused citizenship projects which explore the costs of vandalism; discuss target setting for young people on punctuality and attendance; and meet those willing to be mentors. In an evaluation of the placement, the class teacher commented:

'the two days were packed with new faces and masses of information. It was quite amazing to discover the extent of the work that NEXUS is involved in and the range of skills that are needed to carry out its work'

'the placement was well organised...All staff were keen to offer advice, information and took time to answer questions. Many employees from the Director General down showed interest in pursuing the partnership further and welcomed further contact. The placement was informative and enjoyable'

In addition to the pen pal project, the school's students have been involved in making a safety video for NEXUS. That they are made aware of the dangers of misusing the system is all the more important because many of the children live close to Manor Metro Station. Another project

associated with the initiative is the involvement of children in costing the damage caused by vandalism. The PTE's School and Community Liaison Officer identified that both NEXUS and Christchurch School are pleased with the initiative, and that attendance and homework have improved.

London Transport Museum - School Visits

The Education Department of the London Transport Museum has links with schools all over the Capital and encourages their use of museum materials as a teaching resource. The Museum's Education Department has established a network of about eighty Schools Liaison Officers within London Underground. These Liaison Officers are volunteers, but managers create time within their staff rosters to enable them to visit schools and work with classes. Staff may nominate themselves as a Liaison Officer or may be invited to do so by their line manager. Once nominated, a member of staff is briefed on the responsibilities of the role and this is in effect a discreet interview and vetting procedure. The Museum also provides the Liaison Officers with training and resources.

London Transport strongly advocates education liaison because: it serves communities; is a public institution and public service; is a major employer with more than 18,000 direct employees; and use by young people of public transport is in decline. The Museum encourages schools to use them as a holistic resource. For example, on the first day, a visit by the school to the Museum; on the second, a visit is made to the school by the Schools Liaison Officer with a video and follow up discussion; and, on the third, the use of curriculum materials in school to draw together all the themes. London Transport Museum relies heavily on the teacher to make best use of its resources by preparing the children and following up issues in discussion and through the use of curriculum material.

Although the London Transport Museum does monitor use of its resources and ask schools for regular feedback, it acknowledges an inherent difficulty in assessing the success or otherwise of educational measures in terms of their impact on accident levels. However, the feedback from the schools is consistently very positive.

Key lessons - work with schools

- Talks in schools combined with a visual presentation can be an effective means of exploring with young people concerns around their use of public transport, including issues about personal security and behaviour. There is less scope for effectively addressing these issues when young people make visits to transport infrastructure and depots.
- The age of those targeted through presentations in schools is crucial to its effectiveness. At Year 6 in primary schools and Year 7 in secondary schools, it is effectively targeted at those on the brink of extensive independent travel on public transport, but before bad or dangerous behaviour has become entrenched.
- The session should address the concerns of the young people themselves as well as those of adult passengers and staff.
- A presentation which actively involves young people, for example, through question and answer sessions, a project or a quiz, is more likely to gain and keep their attention than a session where they are just listening. Also, the messages are more likely to be retained where the young people are actively involved.
- The active participation of the teacher in the session can also contribute by ensuring the young people are reminded of the presentation and its messages in the weeks following the session. When possible, teachers should be provided with teaching resources which enable them to reinforce positive messages.

- As well as personal security and behaviour, the session can be an important means of teaching young people about the skills needed in using public transport, for example in reading timetables and successfully changing between different modes of travel.
- The choice of schools in receipt of these presentations should have greater regard to 'hot spots' of bad or dangerous behaviour. Usually, it is those schools who have historically received the presentations who go on receiving them. Sometimes, schools known to generate serious problems of behaviour or vandalism are not included because it is thought the use of presentations would be ineffective.
- As good practice, the presentation should explain to the young people the consequences of graffiti and vandalism for them as passengers, for example, by making the link between the problems of reading timetables which have been damaged by graffiti.
- The 'pen pal' mentoring project developed by Nexus has been mutually beneficial for the school and the PTE. A similar project, if organised through a transport provider and with the necessary safeguards for contact, could help to make the young people more aware of transport staff as individuals with feelings.

Providing curriculum material

A number of PTEs and transport operators provide curriculum material for primary and secondary schools. Much of this material is geographical or historical in content, but some relates to the Personal and Social Education curriculum.

London Transport Museum

Materials are provided to link in with the National Curriculum. Most are aimed at Key Stages One and Two when children are young and receptive. The materials address operational, environmental, safety and security issues. There is a strong ethos within the organisation that materials for schools need to be well produced and delivered effectively.

London Transport Museum is alert to changes in the Underground Service which could require new or updated materials. For example, the East London Line had been closed for three years and it was known that children who have been travelling by bus [during the closure] might not remember the Underground or know how to use it. The London Transport Museum are compiling materials for schools which cover the history of the East London Line and encourage safe and responsible travel. This pack will be distributed to schools throughout Lewisham, Newham, Southwark and Tower Hamlets. Similarly with the opening of the Jubilee line extension, there will be materials produced and a school based project to accompany its launch in 1999.

SAFE, South Yorkshire PTE

The PTE has developed three education packs as teacher resource materials. These packs are linked to the National Curriculum and are aimed at primary schools and the early years of secondary schools. Supertram education packs have also been developed.

Merseytravel

Merseytravel has produced an Education Pack for primary and secondary schools throughout Merseyside. It is designed to be used for the geography element in the National Curriculum. An in-house evaluation has taken place. Whilst the response rate to the evaluation questionnaire was fairly low, the overall impression was that the pack had been well received.

Key lessons - curriculum material

- Although the involvement of PTEs and others in the preparation of curriculum material is an important means of raising young people's awareness of public transport issues, there is greater potential for using such material as a means of improving behaviour on transport or tackling issues about personal security and vandalism.
- The use of curriculum material is more likely to be of lasting impact when the messages are sustained and are integrated into the young person's on-going studies.
- Personal security issues and messages about responsible behaviour should be integrated into teaching about other subjects, such as the geography of public transport services.

Young people's direct involvement through action groups

Thameslink - Youth Action

In response to concerns about personal security and the extent of vandalism and graffiti on the South London 'loop stations', the London Borough of Merton was contracted by Thameslink to open and close the un-staffed stations and to have responsibility for cleaning and removal of graffiti. A programme of refurbishment was also put in place with the demolition of unused buildings and walls to improve visibility and extend clear sight lines. New lighting, modern shelters and an updated public address system was also installed. Started in 1995, the contract with the London Borough of Merton has been continued by Thameslink.

In November 1997, a partnership was established between Thameslink, Railtrack, the British Transport Police, Wimbledon Police and the London Borough of Merton. The Abbey Partnership Policing Initiative has as one of its objectives to improve personal security at stations on the South London 'loop line'. The partnership has Single Regeneration Budget funding and is responsible for a range of crime prevention projects in the Abbey area of Merton. Thus, the Safer Stations Initiative is part of this wider crime prevention programme.

The Youth Action initiative is one of the components of this Safer Stations Partnership. It aims to increase young people's awareness of crime prevention and to reduce crime and fear of crime, particularly at Wimbledon Station. The initiative was developed out of research by visiting American students into crime issues at the 'loop line' stations and because of concerns raised by town centre retailers about young people congregating around Wimbledon Station. Young people were known to be responsible for much of the vandalism and graffiti at the 'loop line' stations and it was felt to make good sense, therefore, to involve young people in the partnership's prevention efforts.

In addition, young people from four local secondary schools were consulted about how Wimbledon town centre could be improved. The consultations revealed that young people's perception of the town centre, how long they stay and how safe they feel are strongly influenced by their experience of the train station and bus services, either while travelling home after school or in the evening.

At the start of the initiative, a youth worker spoke in assembly to two local secondary schools for girls and described the Safer Stations programme and the commitment to involving young people. He asked for volunteers and gradually established the Youth Action Groups, each with about seven pupils from Years 9 and 10. The young women who were consulted at one of the secondary schools said they had become involved because:

"we all use public transport and we know about its problems...it has to be more reliable or we can't get to school or home again...we know that our involvement can make transport better around here"

The youth worker remains involved to support and guide the groups in developing their agenda for public transport security. There is no time limit on the initiative and, importantly, each group works at its own pace. The group with Year 10 girls has progressed well, but a younger group, from Year 9 in the second school, has taken much longer to complete the work involved.

At the start, time was spent in team building and ensuring the members of each group learnt to trust each other. The youth worker said his involvement was crucial in getting the young people to work together as a team and to facilitate their meetings. Independently, the young women agreed with this:

"it is much better to have someone from outside working with us. If it were a teacher it might be difficult for us to be so honest...they might not agree with us and we wouldn't be so free to say what we think..."

"...also someone from outside has different experience and that can help as well"

The next step was for each group to carry out a survey of their school's students to identify the use of public transport for school journeys, which routes are used and perceptions of personal security. At first, a lack of confidence meant the groups were reluctant to carry out the surveys, but support and guidance overcame these difficulties. Completing the survey gave a boost to the confidence of the young people.

One of the Youth Action Groups surveyed all pupils in their school, with a 65% return rate. This survey found that most young people used public transport to and from school and nearly 60% travel to and from Wimbledon town centre. Three bus routes account for the journeys to and from school of over 80% of the pupils. The survey revealed that changes in bus and train timetables have negatively affected many young people with longer waits for transport or longer journeys home. Just over 40% of the young people said they felt unsafe at train stations.

The youth worker was instrumental in preparing the young people for meetings outside their school and how to behave professionally. The Youth Action Groups have met with Thameslink and their local Member of Parliament and now plan to influence other transport decision makers, including local bus companies. They have also seen successful action taken to reduce overcrowding on one popular bus service where double rather than single decker vehicles have been introduced at the end of the school day. The groups plan further action to influencing the rail timetable, campaign for a dedicated school bus, and publicise their strategy for improving public transport.

The Abbey Partnership Policing Initiative manages and funds the initiative on behalf of the Safer Stations Partnership. The modest costs include funding for a sessional youth worker and occasional printing and publicity costs. The key factors which Abbey Partnership staff suggest have contributed to the effectiveness of this initiative are: employing a sessional youth worker who has an understanding of 'empowerment' and can help focus the efforts of the young people; and the presence of existing Crime Prevention Partnerships which are willing and able to respond to the issues raised by the Groups.

The Abbey Partnership has identified the following benefits from the establishment of the Youth Action Groups:

- the young people involved are developing their own agenda for improving public transport and learning how to influence different organisations;
- the peer-led model allows the young people to tackle issues that are most relevant to them and the school-based surveys has given them quantitative information about students' concerns;

- the retailers, transport operators and the young people have developed a consensus about how young people use the town centre and the concerns that can result. The young people also recognise that they can be a cause of concern; and
- a bus operator has responded by introducing double deckers on the most popular school route and this has reduced waiting time and overcrowding in the town centre.

The young women who were consulted at one of the secondary schools emphasised the importance of the initiative being a peer-led project:

"it works much better with us because other young people relate to us and it is much easier for them to tell us things, things they wouldn't tell adults"

The young women report back regularly to the Heads of Year in the school. They also report through assembly and through the school newsletter.

The young women described the benefits as:

"we found out what other people in the school felt about transport locally and that's been important in making sure other people take notice of what we are saying to get improvements to the stations and buses"

"we have been able to voice our opinions and try to influence the people making the decisions"

"it's much better to try and do something about these problems rather than just moaning about them"

London Transport Buses - Peer Education Project in Croydon

The bus awareness project developed in response to a substantial increase, during 1995/96, of incidents of damage, rowdy behaviour and accidents involving young people. It developed through a partnership between London Transport Buses, the police, schools and the local authority. The project involves pupils from Year 10 or 11 receiving instruction on the various aspects of bus travel, including the job of a bus driver and police response to incidents. The training session is organised by the local police Community Liaison Officers. The students are actively involved in several scenarios. After the initial training is complete, there is follow-up work by pupils involving workshops, drama and a poster competition.

Subsequently, these older pupils make a presentation to new Year 7 pupils at their respective schools. At one school, the presentation to Year 7 spans two lessons of twenty minutes each. The aims of these lessons are to make young people aware of: the dangers that they could encounter when travelling on the bus and how to avoid these dangers; the role of the police and bus staff in dealing with problems; and the difficulties which bus drivers face dealing with large groups of school children. Each class is asked to produce a poster describing what they have learnt and this is used in a school-wide publicity campaign.

Four secondary schools were involved in the initial pilot. In July 1996, ten Year 10 or 11 pupils and a member of teaching staff from each school attended a training session at a local bus garage. All senior pupils who took part in the peer education sessions received certificates acknowledging their contribution. In 1997, more secondary schools participated and two days were set aside for the training. Each school provided ten pupils to attend a half day session. There are now about 20 schools involved in the project in Croydon. The project has been extended London-wide, with over 100 schools involved.

The police also produced a short training video covering three scenarios: refusing to pay; the irate passenger; and pushing to get on the bus. Subsequently, the pressure of academic commitments meant that some schools had to withdraw from the initiative.

The police evaluated the pilot project and identified that all four secondary schools thought the project was worthwhile and looked forward to continuing their involvement. The evaluation report comments that the teachers:

'liked the idea of the presentation to new year 7 pupils being carried out by older students as this gave them the responsibility and confidence that would stand them in good stead for the future'

The teachers also identified the certificates as *'a big incentive...and made them aware that their efforts were very much appreciated'*. The evaluation also commented that, following on from the introduction of the initiative, there had been no major on-bus incidents involving pupils from these schools.

Issues of concern raised in the evaluation included the need for more control to be exercised over students during the training sessions. In addition, there was a need for greater liaison between the pupils and the transport operators and, it was suggested, that the young people should be invited to a meeting with the bus operators and the police.

A secondary school which was involved in the pilot project identified some of the difficulties in progressing the initiative. The Year 11 pupils in receipt of the training had now left the school and there had been no follow up for the training session to be repeated for the current Year 11 pupils.

Although the school felt that the initiative had worked well, it had been quite a difficult task for older young people to *"tell other youngsters how to behave"*. The teachers felt the older young people:

"completed the task to the best of their ability but, with hindsight, there should have been greater recognition of the difficulties involved and the young people should have been given a greater reward"

The certificate was not considered a strong inducement to the participation of the older young people and the teachers considered that the offer of free local bus travel over the life of the initiative should have been given serious consideration. As one commented: *"it was an onerous task for 15 and 16 year olds to attempt to tell 11 and 12 year olds how to behave on the bus...they were willing to do it but there should have been more in it for them"*.

These comments have been taken on board and the scheme is further supported by the 'A Laugh on the Bus' video which is described later on in the chapter.

London Transport Buses have welcomed the initiative because it puts the focus on the problem and gives young people the opportunity to identify the solutions. A video was produced on the pilot project and further information is available from London Transport Buses.

Key lessons - direct involvement through action groups

Involving young people in developing measures to improve public transport and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour appears to be an effective way of gaining their interest and commitment.

Initiatives which seek to involve young people directly require the time and commitment for those participating to build their confidence and develop measures at their own pace.

- The aims of the initiative need to be clearly set out and explained to the young people, both to focus their efforts and to ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved.
- There needs to be an annual commitment to ensure the changing population of the school is aware of the initiative and is given the opportunity to participate.
- The success of direct involvement is enhanced by the young people having access to support and guidance, especially if this is provided independently.
- The rewards offered to the young people who participate in initiatives should be commensurate with the difficulties of the tasks undertaken. There should also be opportunities for the young people to be formally associated with the successes of the project.

6.4 Promoting public transport

Campaigns, sponsorship and events

Most of the examples of campaigns, sponsorship and events seek to promote young people's use of public transport, with new initiatives suggesting the use of celebrities. Usually these campaigns have little or no association with concerns about personal security and the behaviour of young people. The examples given in this section are the exceptions.

SAFE, South Yorkshire PTE

The SAFE campaign was launched in September 1997 with an important role of improving passenger perceptions of security when using or waiting for public transport. It developed in response to problems of anti-social behaviour and crime on public transport, including those caused by children and young people. As well as publicity accompanying the campaign and practical initiatives to enhance personal security on public transport, there is an exhibition which has toured local venues including public libraries.

A sub group of the main SAFE working group has been established to involve South Yorkshire schools, in particular, to improve young people's behaviour of buses. Some schools have been reluctant to take part and admit to the poor behaviour of their students. In order to encourage schools, a SAFE Mark scheme [along the lines of the Charter Mark scheme] is being developed with the assistance of a number of head teachers. Through the scheme, all schools exhibiting good practice in home-school transport would be awarded. This scheme will be piloted in 1999 with the aim of the final scheme to invite all Secondary Schools in South Yorkshire to participate.

A major initiative of the South Yorkshire PTE has successfully targeted problems arising from the reluctance of young people to carry or show a 'proof of age' card. After research conducted with young people, the 'proof of age' card has been renamed as 'MegaTravel' with a modern format and image. Bus operators have identified fewer problems since 'MegaTravel' was introduced.

To encourage young people to obtain the card, 'MegaTravel' entitles the owner to discounts at shops and venues throughout South Yorkshire. It also has its own popular quarterly magazine [Megafile] designed to appeal to a young audience and this lists the current discounts available. Sponsorship and advertising helps to finance the 25,000 copies of the magazine produced quarterly. For example, the local radio station - Hallam FM - funded a special issue of 'Megafile' and sponsored an open air music event for young people.

NEXUS - Spirit of Youth Event

NEXUS has been involved with other partners in the annual 'Spirit of Youth' event in Tyneside. This involves school children performing their theatre, music and dance to an audience of about eight hundred people. Developed through the Gateshead Community Safety Partnership's youth

strategy, the event aims to provide opportunities for young people to improve their quality of life by providing an experience which will increase their self esteem and dissuade them from anti-social behaviour. In doing so, it is also intended that links will be forged between the generations, thus dispelling the often unjustified images that adults have of young people.

In its third year, the 1998 event concentrated on the good citizenship theme with schools and community groups tasked with arranging a performance of song, dance or drama that promotes the contribution of young people to society. The success of the programme has resulted in follow up work being undertaken in many schools to reinforce the many positive messages that came out of the performance.

Key lessons - campaigns, sponsorship and events

- *Campaigns need to use images and the media which 'speak to' young people and attract and maintain their interest. The use of appropriate celebrities could be particularly effective in promoting public transport amongst young people.*
- *The use of imaginative proof of age cards not only encourages their use by young people but will also reduce the friction between transport staff and young people.*
- *Campaigns or events need to integrate messages about safety and security in a way which young people recognise and understand, but does not lecture them or make assumptions that all young people 'are the same'.*

6.5 Encouraging responsible behaviour

Junior Citizen and Crucial Crew

Many transport operators participate with the police and statutory authorities in contributing expertise and materials for Junior Citizen and Crucial Crew events every year. Bus operators often provide buses to transport the young people to and from the event at no charge.

London Transport Education Liaison [London Transport Museum]

For a decade, London Transport Education has been involved in Junior Citizen events. Junior Citizen events run for two weeks in each London Borough with Year 6 children from a primary school attending for a half day. The involvement of this age group, as they are about to transfer from primary to secondary school, is said by London Transport Education to be '*perfect timing in terms of their use of public transport*'. Over the two week period, twenty primary schools will participate with each sending between forty and fifty children.

London Transport Education is responsible for organising the staff and materials for the London Underground scenario. There are sometimes difficulties in arranging staff cover from some of the individual London Underground line-based businesses and proving the benefits of participating in Junior Citizen events. Those involved are convinced that attending Junior Citizen has a positive impact on the safety and behaviour of the children, but it is not possible to directly identify the financial benefits for the operating company.

There are ten scenarios delivered in each half day session. The young people are divided into groups of 4 or 5 to participate in each scenario. At most schemes, points are awarded for their participation and an overall winning group is identified at the end of the half day event. Young people are actively involved in each scenario.

The scenario from London Underground takes place on a mock-up of tracks and a platform with map, alarm and Help Point. Young people are asked about the costs of graffiti to London

Underground and to identify its impact on safety and security, including the problems caused by graffiti on the Underground map. The session also covers the dangers of playing on the platform, track safety, bomb alerts, the use of the Help Point and stranger danger. The importance of not being influenced by peer pressure is emphasised. The London Transport Museum has a video equipped single decker bus which is on offer as an alternative or 'extra'.

The local bus company provides transport to and from the event. The driver uses a session with the young people to describe the link between bad behaviour on the bus and risks to personal security. The young people are told that, if they lose their bus pass, the driver must still let them travel because the priority is for the young person to travel home safely. The dangers of misusing the emergency door and surfing on the back of buses are described. Finally, the driver emphasises that, travelling in the evening, a young person on their own would be safer sitting downstairs and within sight of the driver.

The other sessions at the Junior Citizen event include: first aid from the Red Cross; water safety from the Metropolitan Police Thames Division; fire in the home from the Fire Brigade; a traffic accident involving a cyclist from the local authority Road Safety Team; a quiz on illegal drugs, smoking and alcohol; and how to respond to a burglary. A scenario, presented by the police, focuses on the risks that young people face from stranger danger. Education Social Workers held a question and answer session on bullying. This session also describes the pressure on young people being bullied to stay away from school and the added dangers which they may face when out on their own.

During the event which is the subject of this case study, the young people were very attentive. The question and answer sessions and active involvement was an effective means of getting the young people to think about the risks and issues. There was a good rapport between the participants and those delivering the London Underground scenario. It was clear that, before attending the event, the cost of graffiti and its consequences for the passenger had not been considered by the young participants. That graffiti cost London Underground £2 millions a year was a surprise to almost all. The session was a good mix of making young people aware of the risks and consequences of bad or silly behaviour and giving them the skills to use the Underground safely and responsibly.

A group of young people who had attended an earlier Junior Citizen event all enjoyed the event, but appreciated that *"it wasn't really for fun, it was to learn and to remember"*. When asked what they remembered about the half day, the children identified the following:

- 'the robbery'*
- 'not to pick up a bag on the Tube and not to write graffiti'*
- 'not to go on the track or play on the platform'*
- 'not to play with the Help Point button'*
- 'get everyone out of the house in a fire'*
- 'never to go off with someone you don't know'*
- 'never to pick up a needle'*
- 'what you should do, if someone falls off a ladder'*
- 'if you are being bullied, phone the Childline number'*
- 'how to cross the road, to wait on the kerb'*
- 'on the bus, never put your hand outside the window'*

All the young participants were users of the Underground. When asked specifically how they felt attending the Junior Citizen had affected their behaviour:

- "we know you mustn't damage things or put graffiti on maps or timetables, it means people can't read them and it costs a lot to keep clean"*

"you shouldn't play on the Underground, run about or play ball...it's dangerous to go near the edge of the platform..."

"sometimes, I know someone can make you naughty and I forget what I know is right"

"yes, but you must ignore someone who is trying to make you do something naughty, you must remember what we have been told..."

Key lessons - Junior Citizen, Crucial Crew

- The variety of scenarios and the interactive nature of each event, including those addressing personal security and public transport, make a strong impression on the young participants.
- The age targeted by these events is key for giving young people positive messages about the safe and responsible use of public transport.
- The evidence is that, in the short term at least, the positive messages about safe and responsible use are retained by the young people. An assessment with secondary school children of whether attending the event and the messages given have a longer term influence would be valuable.
- Unfortunately, participation in Junior Citizen and other similar schemes often relies on the commitment of one or two people within an organisation and interventions are often poorly resourced with a low and rarely guaranteed budget.

Addressing behaviour through drama

Merseytravel

Projects which use art and drama to raise young people's awareness of public transport issues and the impact of irresponsible or anti-social behaviour has been a vital element in Merseytravel's package of initiatives. In these initiatives, the PTE has funded specialist art and drama groups to work with young people on specific, time-limited projects focused on public transport issues.

Funding has been provided through the Travel Safe programme which is partly supported by finance from the wider Safer Merseyside Partnership. This partnership is the result of a successful Single Regeneration Budget bid in 1996 which targets community safety issues across Merseyside and is not specific to public transport. Although Merseytravel has had funding from this source for its 'Youth on the Move' initiatives, the costs involved have been high. Most individual projects have had a modest budget.

First Bite Theatre Company

Taking the theatre to young people in schools is a well tried means of raising and exploring many social and personal issues with young people. There is some evidence that theatre in education has been effective in raising awareness about community safety issues, personal security and health issues such as bullying, drugs and smoking awareness, and how to resist peer group pressure.

Merseytravel, with monies provided through the Safer Merseyside Partnership, funded the First Bite Theatre Company to write and perform the play entitled 'Move It' to young people aged 11 and 12 years. The play draws on First Bite's wide experience of writing and performing for young people on a variety of topics, including smoking, drugs, and bullying. It has a number of different scenarios with the young people placed in a variety of situations and explores their relationship with each other, with adults, and with public transport. The actors use the language of young people.

The approach advocated by First Bite is that any production should be skills based rather than issue based and should encourage the young people to develop skills that will enable them to make responsible, informed decisions for themselves. Their plays do not make judgements or promote

'messages'. The aim of the production is that issues are raised and audiences see characters reacting in particular ways.

The play was made up of a series of events and experiences faced by young people starting at secondary school. In this respect, it relates well to the audience who were of the same ages and have only just started a new school. The play gradually charts a deterioration in behaviour not only on the bus but also in other settings. It shows various experiences on the bus from pushing and shoving to throwing bags out of the window, intimidating other passengers, and vandalism. The play also includes a scenario about young people's relationship with a bus driver, which includes a bus not stopping to let them on and not being issued with a ticket. It also shows young people not wanting to pay or being rude.

As part of an independent evaluation, a questionnaire survey was conducted with young people who had seen the performance. This revealed that the dominant themes of the play as identified by the young people were about bullying, growing up, going to a new school and behaviour in school. The general themes about bullying and behaviour were linked to issues of behaviour and safety on the bus.

An important part of the package provided by First Bite is the workshops that follow on from the performances. The workshops are facilitated by two actors [teaching staff are also present and participate] and are used to draw out the play's themes. Young people are encouraged to discuss issues and associate themes in the play with their own experiences and behaviour.

Nearly 60% of the young people said they thought the play had helped them to understand a lot more or quite a bit more about using the bus. However, four out of ten young people were negative in their views. A fifth of young people thought seeing the play and attending the subsequent workshop would change behaviour on the bus for the better, but a third said it would make no difference and 44% did not know what effect it would have.

First Bradford - the Mock Trial

With the assistance of the local police and magistrates, about a hundred young people from secondary schools were involved in a drama taking the form of a mock trial. The drama involved the young people for a school day and took place in the Council Chamber. This partnership initiative evolved gradually from discussions between teachers, the police and First Bradford. Its intention was to help make young people aware of the seriousness of bad and dangerous behaviour on the bus, the role of the police and workings of the legal system.

Young people from a school in Leeds described how they had prepared ideas for the drama and, with the assistance of the teacher, invented the characters. Their script was about a drunken man, late at night, who was insulting other people waiting at a bus stop. The drunk got on the bus and assaulted the driver and continued to be abusive to the passengers. The drunken man was subsequently arrested, charged and now on trial. Despite these problems, the young people decided to make the man a sympathetic character by identifying that he was very unhappy because his wife had recently died. The driver was also shown as a sympathetic character who had suffered from assault and abuse. The story was not developed by the young people from their personal experiences because few travelled late at night. However, from the views they expressed, it did make them think that this scenario could be what it was like to travel late at night on the bus.

The young people said that the most important lesson learnt from the drama was that "you cannot get away with things...you should not do wrong". From the discussion, participating in the drama had made some feel sorry or sympathetic for the driver and all had a greater understanding that it

"was a risky job". However, none felt that this was an excuse for drivers to be "grumpy" or "bad tempered" with young people.

Key lessons - use of theatre

- If drama projects are to have an impact in reducing anti-social behaviour directed at public transport, it is important to attract a wide range of young people to participate, including those most at risk of offending.
- Taking theatre to schools appears to be a successful means of conveying messages to young people in a way which they accept and retain, albeit sometimes only on a short term basis.
- Targeting the first year at secondary school is clearly beneficial and the best time for presenting the play and workshops is at a time when the young people are confident with one another, but not fixed in their behaviour.
- If the behaviour of the young people on public transport is to be effectively challenged, the drama and workshops need to place emphasis on vandalism and nuisance behaviour in that environment.
- A subsequent discussion or workshop on the themes identified through the drama is a key element of the package and the facilitator of the discussion needs to be skilled in this task and knowledgeable about public transport issues.

Addressing behaviour through art

Merseytravel, Art Project at Centre 63 [Kirkby]

This initiative involved young people in the preparation of a piece of artwork at a youth club with guidance and specialist skills provided by local artists. The work with young people extended over an eight week period with a three hour session held each week by the artists. There was a core group of about ten boys and girls, aged 9 to 12 years, who were involved throughout. The youth workers had anticipated that an older age group would participate, but the project failed to sustain the interest of 14 and 15 year olds.

Although guidance to the youth workers and the artists was provided by Merseytravel's Community Links team, the brief was flexible enough not to restrict the creativity of the artists. The young people designed and produced an abstract artwork which combined text and images and used a variety of techniques and materials. It included three words chosen by the young people as their positive message about public transport - 'explore, discover and change'.

The artwork included images of children using public transport, the photographs taken by the young people of buses and shelters, and their drawings of passengers. The artwork not only focussed on public transport issues but was also closely orientated to Merseytravel with use of the corporate yellow and 'M' of the organisation. The artists commented that "*everything in the artwork has a relationship with public transport and is directly what the young people have felt and said about using it*". To provide recognition of their work, the artwork was launched formally and went on public display.

For the independent evaluation, Centre 63 and the artists were asked for their conclusions on the project and how successful they thought it had been [Crime Concern, 1997]. Both judged the project to have been successful with the young people having enjoyed their participation and a finished piece of artwork had been successfully produced. A subsequent discussion with the young people who had been involved confirmed their enthusiasm for the project. The young people also said that their participation had made them more conscious of the problems of damage and graffiti and given them a greater awareness of its cost and consequences.

Railtrack Southern, Reclaiming the Lineside - A Fresh Approach to Graffiti Related Trespass and Vandalism

From Waterloo to the South coast, Railtrack Southern has a serious problem with trackside and station graffiti. The aim of the graffiti arts project is to reduce vandalism and opportunities for graffiti at train stations and trackside walls in South London. The rationale is to involve young people who are responsible for 'tagging' and graffiti to design and paint a mural with the help of graffiti artists. The project is part of Thameslink's Youth Action Programme in Merton.

The experience from the project is that when walls are painted by artists and the young people, there are few examples of graffiti or damage to the painted wall or mural. There have been a number of successful examples. At Wallington Station, there was a dark and shabby wall and underpass. In October 1997, it was painted by the young people and the artists. As well as brightening up a dark and intimidating walkway, there has been no more 'tagging' or graffiti. This was part of a Safer Stations programme and there have been positive comments from the public.

The graffiti artists who are involved in the Railtrack initiative are well known and respected in the 'graffiti' world and produce quality artwork. The initiative is welcomed by the graffiti community, mainly because Railtrack sought out known names who agreed to participate.

Railtrack provide the space or wall and the paint, and tend to target areas which have been heavily hit by random graffiti. A series of station surveys have been conducted to identify sites for the murals. Once the concept has been agreed, Railtrack establish a time when the work could be carried out within strict safety constraints, funding is identified and, if possible, the local authority is involved.

The overall objective of the initiative is to establish legal sites for graffiti which can be seen by train passengers. As the artists revealed, the attraction of railway sites is that *"a lot of people see what you do and we get recognition for our art... we get a reaction from other people and it helps to break down people's preconceptions"*. There is a gradual movement within the graffiti community to use more legal walls where they can display and widely advertise their skills and work. It is important for those responsible for the graffiti that their artwork can be seen by as many people as possible and inaccessible places are particularly attractive.

Railtrack and the artists consider that this initiative is particularly important because it acknowledges the problem and uses it constructively to create art for the community. The communication with the young people and between Railtrack and the artists has helped to change the perceptions of those participating. Graffiti can be very territorial, but by involving the young people it breaks down barriers between groups of young people, between them and Railtrack, and can give them access to a wider audience. The young people were initially suspicious and the artists were key in gaining their confidence and respect. Young people who were previously engaged in 'tagging' and random graffiti have been encouraged to develop as artists and use colours and learn different techniques to create an art form. The repainting with community murals of Tooting Station took fifteen people just ten hours to complete. The cost to Railtrack was £6,000.

The initiative must work flexibly so as not to constrain the artists, although there are restrictions that the artwork must not be racist or sexist or promote drug use.

Thameslink have identified the following benefits of the project: it creates an attractive colourful environment; there has been a decrease in graffiti and this has reduced maintenance costs; trespass and vandalism have decreased; it has helped to build relationships with local communities; and it has provided positive publicity.

On a more general point about graffiti as an art form, the artists commented about a striking age difference in the public's perception of graffiti. In their view, young people are much more accepting of graffiti and it is for them a common and often welcome feature of everyday life.

For many older people, the fear of graffiti is said to be about the fear of the unknown and once the barriers between graffiti artists and the public are dismantled, that fear is dispersed as well. A recent issue of the world-wide graffiti artists' magazine 'Graphotism' was focused on Britain and the editorial argues that the link between graffiti and fear of crime is misplaced.

Key lessons - use of art

- Art can be useful in engaging young people in the subject of public transport and raising issues about their behaviour and misuse.
- A key challenge is to allow artistic licence, but still ensure that the art is acceptable to passengers and other users.
- During the process of deciding on and developing the artwork, there needs to be real consultation with the local community and/or local users of a bus or train station to ensure it is acceptable and wanted. Such steps will help minimise the risks of vandalism.
- Graffiti projects can be successful in reducing graffiti and trespass, creating an attractive and colourful environment, and building links with young people.

Addressing behaviour through videos

First Cymru

In the early 1990s, two drivers with First Cymru were concerned about increasing levels of poor behaviour amongst children and young people. The concern was not only about behaviour on the bus but also young people throwing stones at the bus and placing passengers and staff at risk. Some buses were taken out of service. At the same time, these drivers were asked to represent the company at a safety day being held at a local community centre. As a consequence of that day's attendance, the drivers decided to develop a similar presentation to take to schools.

The drivers also met with the police on this safety day and jointly they worked through some ideas for a video. The video entitled 'No Fuss on the Bus' was made for free by the BBC's Casualty team with the co-operation of the police and First Cymru. The video and presentation are targeted at young people in Year 6 at primary schools in South Wales, when they are on the brink of travelling alone. The video has been shown in schools since 1993. Between September 1997 and April 1998, over 1,000 children in primary schools had seen the video.

The video only lasts for about four minutes and shows children in various dangerous and anti-social activities while waiting for or using public transport. For example: children are playing ball in the road and one falls in front of the bus; pushing to get on the bus all at once and the impact on other passengers; pushing on the bus; playing ball on the bus; and the dangers of throwing things out of the window and misusing the emergency door. Finally, the most explicit scenario shows what happens when young people throw stones at a bus. A window is smashed and a young woman is injured by glass fragments.

The video is shown twice: once through without interruption and a second time with explanation and a question and answer session. From observation, the second time the sequence was shown with the window smashed and the child injured, some children looked away or closed their eyes. However, the teachers commented that the children were not really upset by this sequence, but that it had the necessary impact. When the video is shown to children younger than Year 6, this scenario is not shown.

The choice of schools to see the video is not made on the basis of problem areas or routes. However, drivers can highlight schools where there are known to be problems.

Written comments from teachers on the effectiveness of the video included:

'...the video has made some of our class quite angry about people who do silly things like that'

'...I learnt a lot from the video especially about the dangers of children playing in the road and vandalism...'

Year 6 pupils who had seen the video some three months previously commented that they remembered that:

"playing at the bus stop is stupid, I remember the boy that was pushed into the road and the bus had to brake"

"there was an old man who was pushed trying to get off, throwing things out of the window is dangerous for people waiting, not to hang on the back of the bus"

"on the bus it's important not to use the escape door..."

"to keep your ball in the bag, not to jump about, not to stand up"

"to let people off the bus, not playing about"

"I remember the face when that girl got hurt from the glass...it was horrible but I wasn't really upset"

London Transport Museum

Some London bus companies have contributed to a video produced by London Transport Museum and London Transport Buses by providing buses and staff. 'A Laugh on the Bus' is a bus safety video targeted at pupils aged 10 to 14 years and was piloted successfully in schools before its public release. The aims are to develop an awareness of safety issues and encourage responsible behaviour; and for young people to consider the needs of different kinds of passengers and be polite and considerate. Rather than separate scenarios, the video develops a story through a 'soap' format. It reaches a tragic and dramatic conclusion.

The central characters are a young girl and boy and the story opens with them making bus journeys during which they display inconsiderate or rude behaviour to other passengers and to the bus driver. An older young person is also seen misbehaving and smoking on the bus. Not only the young people display risky behaviour. The video shows an older woman who is intolerant of the younger passengers and distracts the bus driver by asking her to intervene. The main story continues with the younger children getting money from their parents to go to the zoo, but they go shopping instead. As the video closes, an older friend of the two young people throws a bottle at a bus [driven by the parent of one of the young girls] and, as a consequence, the bus collides with the young boy's mother who is badly injured.

London Transport Museum has produced a leaflet to accompany the video with discussion points for pupils including:

- buses are used by all sorts of people - not just schoolchildren
- bus drivers are human and do a difficult job
- 'having a laugh' can be fine, but it could put others in danger
- most emergency incidents on buses happen between 3.30pm and 4.30pm on school days.

The leaflet also gives statistics on the weekly cost of vandalism on the buses.

Merseytravel - Video Project, Beacon Youth Project in St Helens

The Beacon youth project was funded by Merseytravel to work with young people in the production of a video about public transport in Merseyside. This video was to look specifically at the issues of cost, personal security, vandalism and the relationship with transport staff. The Beacon project adapted their existing life and social skills course, targeted at young people who had already rejected formal education. The video production took place on one day a week, over a four week period. Youth workers and a video production worker supported and advised the young people.

Fifteen young people [13 young men and 2 young women] started the short course to make the video. They were aged between 16 and 18 years. There were eleven young people still involved at the end. Given the number of young people involved at the start, it was decided to make three videos rather than one. Each video was about 'our day out with Merseytravel' and filmed the young people's experience of using the bus, ferry and train. The quality of the videos produced by the young people was variable, but each was a finished product of about ten minutes duration. All three did address the issue of vandalism, although only one video located included an example of a badly vandalised bus shelter and bus seats. A second video ended with a question and answer session which explored the issues around cost, vandalism, graffiti, bad language on buses and smoking.

Youth workers described the process of meeting with Merseytravel and talking to staff at bus and train stations as a positive experience for the young people. The young people had found the experience enjoyable and had learnt more about the costs of public transport and the impact of vandalism. For example, the young people said they now noticed vandalism and graffiti, thought smoking on the buses was unacceptable, and recognised the importance of leaving front seats for older people or those with heavy shopping.

Key lessons

- Videos have been shown to be a very effective means of gaining young people's interest in issues around public transport, including its promotion as well as deterring misuse.
- Videos need to be accompanied by an interactive session and supported by materials which stimulate discussion and draw out learning points for the young people.
- Videos date easily and those which use music or other contemporary interests such as fashion or popular 'soaps' are particularly likely to have a limited 'shelf life'.
- Involving young people in making a video can be a useful learning mechanism for them, but is unlikely to produce a video which is a useful learning tool for other young people.

6.6 Detached youth work

Working with young people in the places where they choose to 'hang about' is a proven means of making contact with those young men and women who rarely or never access clubs or make contact with mainstream services. Earlier research has identified that young people were choosing to 'hang about' bus shelters and on train station platforms and their presence could be both intimidating to passengers and staff, and often resulted in misuse of the infrastructure.

NEXUS [Tyne and Wear]

NEXUS and North Tyneside Council jointly fund two part time detached youth workers who spend two or three evenings each week with groups of young people at stations on the North Tyneside stretch of the Newcastle Metro. The detached youth work was initially funded as a four month pilot in response to the recommendations of a study of youth disorder and crime on the Metro.

In the initial stage of the pilot, all stations were visited although more regular visits were made to known or anticipated hot spots. In the pilot's later stages, liaison between the youth workers and station managers had facilitated more refined targeting to take place. During the life of the pilot, the young people became involved in activities to promote personal security through photography projects, posters and advertising campaigns; more positive links with Metro staff were established; and one group designed and saw the installations of litter bins at a station.

An interim evaluation of the project by the University of Northumbria concluded:

'it is clear that the project itself is applying good youth work practice and that elsewhere evidence suggests that this can lead to reductions in crime and nuisance. The data currently available shows little evidence that it has, in its short life, had an impact upon the levels of crime reported to the police, but there is fairly strong evidence, both from the figures and from the interviews, that there has been an impact upon nuisance and minor damage as reported by the Area Managers'.

The evaluation of the pilot found slight falls in criminal incidents during the operation of the detached youth project, but there were no significant differences between the stations visited regularly by the youth workers and other Metro stations. However, Area Managers did identify a steady decline in minor incidents and that this decline was more significant at the stations visited regularly by the youth workers. Interviews with the station managers identified that this decline might be due to the influence of the detached youth work project.

The youth workers emphasised the need for time to establish a good relationship with the young people and to develop a sense of trust:

'the young people responded to us warmly, but were suspicious as to our role with NEXUS at first. But we explained our role and the young people relaxed and spoke freely with us'

The topics of discussion with the young people were wide ranging and included housing problems, benefits, drug use, sexual health, family issues, and employment. One of the stated intentions of the project was to involve young people in other activities in the area. However, this proved difficult because of the lack of opportunities locally.

After the completion of the pilot period, the detached youth work project has been continued and is now into a second six months of funding. The same youth workers have remained with the project. On four evenings a week, the youth workers meet regularly with eight groups of young people either hanging about the Metro stations or within ten minutes walking distance. The young people travel between the Metro stations to meet each other and gather information. The work is organised in such a way that the youth workers spend time with each group.

One aspect of the work is to help young people to be safer and to know where to seek help. On this aspect of their work, the youth workers commented:

"these young people have a fear of authority. We work with the young people to get them to see that authority is there for their safety as well"

"young people feel they are not believed, not taken seriously - yet they are often more the victim than the perpetrator"

Two of the young people contacted by the youth workers have attended a local police forum which was held to discuss how the police respond to young people and to begin to break down barriers. Those attending the forum said there was a strong sense expressed by the young people that "the police are not here for us". On the effectiveness of the forum, the young people commented:

"it was a bit helpful...but it did not stop six busies turning up the next night to move us on..."
[young woman in Newcastle]

Young people who regularly hang about on or near a Metro station described their reasons for doing so:

"we hang about the station because there's nothing else in the area...the swimming baths are closed and there's no youth club anymore"
[young man in Newcastle]

"there's a community centre but it's got nothing for us - it seems to have a lot of dog and rabbit shows!"
[young woman in Newcastle]

"we've nothing else to do, we don't want to scare anyone or hurt anyone"
[young woman in Newcastle]

The young people said they are regularly moved from around the station:

"...the police drive past, stop and tell us to move away from the station... some of the people locally ring up and tell them about us...there are other things the police should be doing, like dealing with burglary...but it's easier to move us on, not so risky"
[young woman in Newcastle]

The young people valued the support provided by the youth workers:

"the help and having someone to trust is what we really like...it means we have someone who takes notice of us, someone who responds to us"
[young woman in Newcastle]

"they take notice of us, we can talk to them like a friend, they don't judge us"
[girl in Newcastle]

"they see us for what we are and not for what people think we are"
[young man in Newcastle]

Although they still hang about the stations because there is nowhere else to go, the young people described how their behaviour had changed:

"we used to put graffiti on the walls, but that's changed now - if we do graffiti which isn't much these days, then we do it in chalk instead"
[girl in Newcastle]

"the stations are much cleaner now and it's noticed by people using it...we pick up the litter, and we painted two bins for Nexus"
[young woman in Newcastle]

The youth workers have suggested the effectiveness of the project depends on: ensuring good information exchange between all organisations e.g. the local authority, NEXUS staff and the police; having clear lines of communication between organisations; good line management support for the youth workers with regular meetings to identify and maintain progress; and setting realistic goals.

Merseytravel, Detached Youth Team

As part of 'Youth on the Move', Merseytravel decided to fund a detached youth work project which would be dedicated to work on public transport in response to concerns about the activities of young people. The aims were to safeguard the infrastructure, passengers and staff and to prevent misuse by engaging with the young people and providing diversionary activities for those at risk of

offending. The age group was roughly 11 to 25 years. This project started in 1997 with one full time youth worker and four sessional workers each providing two sessions of youth work a week. The early stages of the team's work was spent in meeting frontline staff and receiving a full induction training course about public transport and Merseytravel.

The first focus of the team's work was a bus route linking the city centre to the North of Merseyside. Taking an area of about 100 yards around the bus stops, the detached youth team observed the popular places for young people to meet and 'hang about' on the street and also on the buses. Those 'hot spots' where young people were regularly involved in anti-social behaviour were a priority for the team.

At first, the members of the team made contact with the young people and spent time to gain their trust and confidence. The experience of other detached youth work is that the process of gaining trust can be very time consuming, but essential. It is crucial that those working with the young people do not stereotype or 'scapegoat' them as troublemakers but understand the young people's problems and why they are 'hanging about'. Following a similar process, the project will also be extended to young people 'hanging about' train stations and on trains.

Once the trust has been gained, monies were available to the project to take the young people out to activities and there was also a small budget for residential weekends. The aim of this activity was to introduce the young people to alternative activities, widen their experiences of what is available and enhance their self esteem.

Merseytravel, On-Street Youth Work, CASM in St Helens

CASM [Community Awareness Self Motivation] is a voluntary youth work project based in a converted former bus garage. The project works with disaffected young people. It came to the attention of Merseytravel because young people were congregating and causing a nuisance for drivers and vehicles at the bus terminus near the project. The group of young people who concentrated their activities around the 'terminus' bus stops were known to be particularly difficult. Most were aged between 13 and 16 years, and most were young men. There could be as many as twenty five young people involved. There were concerns from local residents and the nearby church about the noise and vandalism.

The aim of the CASM initiative was to: 'encourage young people to take up alternative facilities/activities and to change their behaviour pattern'. The youth workers at CASM sought to achieve this aim by: building up a relationship with the young people who are known to be in a street gang culture; actively involving the young people in the planning of the initiative; and informally educating the young people on the dangers of misusing public transport.

The initiative lasted six months with two youth workers funded for twelve hours a week. In the first month, CASM's workers concentrated on building the relationships and understanding the group dynamics of a core group of 16 to 17 young men. During the next four months, the youth workers took a group of about 8 to 10 young men out to activities. In late March 1998, CASM took the young men away for a residential weekend on a barge in the country. Young women were not involved directly in the nuisance and, in any case, were said to be far more confident at accessing facilities.

When asked for their views, the young men were positive about the opportunities provided through the initiative, including the weekend away:

"we liked best getting away from here...away from this and going somewhere new...that was the best"

"it was great to get away from the main roads...it was something really new... being in the country..."

The youth workers described the residential weekend as a success in changing the attitude and behaviour of the young men:

"brilliant...one of the best we have done...the group were very motivated and keen and looked after one another"

"the way the group has come on...young people who have moved from surfing off the backs of buses through to behaving and controlling themselves"

During the life of the initiative, there was an indication that damage to vehicles and problems to bus drivers has lessened. The young men felt they had "grown out" of causing this sort of trouble, although the youth workers commented that *"if there's nothing else to do, then other young people will get up to this kind of mischief"*.

Key lessons - detached youth work

The approach and skills of the youth workers is key in making effective contact with disaffected and disadvantaged young people who have low self esteem.

The wider benefits from diversionary initiatives come from working with the young people to challenge their anti-social behaviour in relation to public transport. To effectively achieve this aim, those working directly with the young people need to be fully briefed on public transport issues and the concerns raised by misuse by young people.

Those involved in the youth project need to make the public transport provider's involvement explicit and to ensure the young people know and understand the reasons for the provider's involvement.

6.6 Other initiatives

Truancy Patrols on the Connex South Eastern Network

For two weeks in November 1997, staff from Greenwich Council's Education Welfare Service patrolled the Connex network with the British Transport Police. During the nine two hour shifts, thirty young people between the ages of 9 and 16 years were approached and, of these, a half were out of school without authorisation and a third admitted truanting.

The Council's truancy team were impressed with the support from Connex station managers and staff and the commitment from the British Transport Police. The Council identified the benefits of the initiative as increasing awareness amongst train staff and improved liaison. During the life of the pilot initiative, there was high profile publicity and this increased awareness amongst adult passengers. The truancy patrol is now a feature of standard practice.

The team saw scope for building on this pilot project and, from January 1998, the truancy team patrol the Connex South Eastern network for half a day each fortnight. With the support of Connex staff and the British Transport Police, the team are able to patrol different parts of the network.

It is considered that other ways of building on the success of this initiative could include: extending the poster campaign; articles in the local press; displaying advice to Connex staff on dealing with truants and whom to contact; and producing a card for staff giving the details of the Council's hotline number.

Key lessons

- Partnership activity which is built on mutual concerns and clearly defined roles for each agency is likely to lead to action which bring benefits for all parties.
- Truancy patrols need to be sustained as part of normal practice and not just introduced as a short term and one off initiative.

First Mainline Buses - Cautionary Work with Young People

First Mainline operate 54,000 school journeys per day. Since the late 1980s, problems on buses caused by children and young people have been growing and represent a cost to the company through vandalism and graffiti, and are a nuisance or worse to bus drivers.

The Company has developed a number of initiatives to address the behaviour of children and young people. When an incident occurs involving unruly behaviour or vandalism, an individual report is received from the bus driver, recorded on the computerised database and the contact teacher at the relevant school is informed. If the incidents are regular and prolonged, First Mainline may use a bus with video cameras to record the behaviour. The parents of the perpetrators will be sent a letter informing them of their child's behaviour and the possible consequences, if it does not cease. If the activity still persists, the young person can be excluded from using the bus. The Company's main policy is to warn and caution, and they will only exclude young people if their bad behaviour is part of a persistent pattern.

More recently, in some schools, behavioural contracts have been agreed between First Mainline, the school, students and, importantly, their parents. Before a student is issued with a boarding pass, the respective parent must agree to accept responsibility for the behaviour of their child on the bus. Conditions apply with the parent agreeing to pay compensation for any damage caused by their child. This requires a commitment from the school as well as the bus company, but where used it has proved effective.

First Mainline has tried to curb problems of rowdy behaviour by issuing boarding passes with photos and setting out rules and regulations for the young people, but can only do this on tendered services. Passes were issued on May 4th 1998 and no further problems have occurred so far.

Key lessons

- Direct action aimed at the parents of young people can succeed if the operator can produce evidence of bad behaviour and is willing and able to adopt a consistent approach in giving warnings and taking action.

Nexus - Customer Assistants

As an initiative which positively deploys young people to improve the personal security of all passengers using public transport, in 1998, Nexus began employing a team of twelve young people aged 18 to 24 years of age as 'Customer Assistants'. These young people were previously jobless and are employed by Nexus under the Government's New Deal scheme.

The young people travel on the Metro from 3 pm to 11 pm on weekdays and Saturdays to provide a reassuring presence and give advice and assistance to passengers. The young people are in casual uniform and equipped with two way radios, so they can report incidents and summon assistance. They are given training by Nexus and are instructed not to tackle troublemakers but to seek assistance from the Northumbria Metro Police Unit. On completion of the first team's short term employment, they will be considered for a permanent post that is vacant within Nexus.

Key lessons

- Using young people in a formal capacity to regulate the behaviour of their peers can be beneficial, if the 'Customer Assistants' are properly trained and equipped to manage conflict and provide assistance without provoking abuse and violence.

Chapter 7 - Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Young people's experiences and perceptions of public transport

The extent to which young people use public transport for leisure trips varies with age and whether the family has regular use of a car.

The use of buses for purposes other than to school or college increases sharply at around the age of 13, when independent travel with friends becomes commonplace.

Reflecting differences in availability of public transport, young people living in urban areas are more likely than those in rural locations to travel regularly by bus for leisure purposes. Trains appear to be used more for longer journeys.

Ownership of a bike appears to decline, from around 85% amongst young people aged 11-13 years, to 70% amongst those aged 16-18 years. While bike ownership is high, very few (less than 5%) cycle to school. Some express a wish to do so, but traffic dangers and a lack of secure parking facilities deter them. Walking to school or college decreases with age, perhaps reflecting the longer distances to secondary school or college. Travel by bus increases (from 28% to 39%) between the ages of 10 to 15 years, and is associated with the transition from primary to secondary school. Only a very small minority (around 1%) travel to school by train. Travelling to school by car remains fairly constant at around 15%.

Fare levels and the attitudes of transport staff are the two main reasons for young people feeling alienated by and poorly served by public transport, particularly buses.

The age at which concessionary fares are no longer available is a source of frequent and fierce criticism. The study reveals a range of schemes around the country with differing eligibility criteria for young people and considerable confusion about who qualifies. Not only does this give young people a negative perception of public transport but it also draws them into conflict with transport staff.

Young people are particularly affected by the high cost of public transport because of their limited income, and the study reveals that this can be a real deterrent, especially to those in education, training or the unemployed.

Many of the concerns and criticisms of public transport expressed by young people are similar to those of adults. Issues of availability, frequency, reliability and comfort are of concern to both.

Irrespective of their age or gender, or their geographical location, most of the children and young people express a great deal of enthusiasm for the private car and almost all expect to be car owners. Although some express concern about the environment, this is rarely seen as a reason for not driving. Many are confident that by the time they are driving, the advent of electric cars will mean that pollution will be largely a problem of the past.

Most young people feel strongly against drinking and driving, and see the use of public transport (including taxis) as being useful when they have been drinking alcohol.

7.2 Young people's experience of crime and anti-social behaviour on public transport

Young people's perception of public transport is significantly influenced by their experience of transport staff. In reality, on the whole, this means bus drivers. Only 18% of those aged between 10

and 12 years describe staff as 'usually helpful', and this declines to 10% for those aged 15 and over. Young people in urban areas appear to have a slightly more negative experience than their counterparts in rural areas.

Young people give examples of an unfriendly and unhelpful attitude towards them [and towards older passengers], including driving past them at bus stops, starting off before they have sat down, and refusing to give change. Many young people feel that drivers treat them all alike, stereotyping them as troublesome. Those travelling in groups are least likely to find staff helpful and friendly, which may be because being in a 'gang' contributes to drivers' perceptions of them as a potential problem.

Public transport staff - and especially bus drivers - have a low status with young people, and bus driving is therefore not seen as an attractive job prospect. The work is seen as boring, poorly paid, dangerous and unrewarding. Some young people assume that bus drivers are all male.

Young people would like transport staff to be more friendly, respectful and polite, and more helpful in providing information and assistance.

Young people can be the victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as the perpetrators. Where young people are victimised, the most likely perpetrators are other young people. Younger children are more likely than older young people to be bullied whilst travelling, either by pupils at their school or by young people from another school.

Incidents where the adult - driver or passenger - is an aggressor are most likely to involve rudeness rather than intimidation or violence. Older young people are more likely than young ones to have been upset or frightened by an adult, perhaps because they are more likely to be travelling independently and they travel more frequently.

Younger children are more likely to tell someone about an incident than older ones. The most popular person to tell for all age groups is a parent. For younger children the next choice is a teacher, while for older young people it is a friend.

Young people have similar anxieties to adults about waiting for and travelling on public transport. As with adults, there are striking differences between perceptions of security by day and after dark, and between the perceptions of young women and young men. Girls and young women are more likely than boys and young men to feel very unsafe.

Drunks or groups of rowdy people are most likely to make young people feel unsafe while waiting for public transport. The second most important factor is a lack of staff. Despite their poor relationship with transport staff, their presence is seen on the whole as reassuring. Young people do not necessarily feel that they would approach a member of staff for assistance, but having them there is seen as a deterrent to potential perpetrators.

Young women identify the fear caused by cars passing or stopping at a bus stop while they are waiting alone. Girls and young women are more likely to feel unsafe in the presence of a stranger - especially a man - and younger children are more likely to feel unsafe when there is someone 'odd' around.

While travelling alone on a bus is generally perceived as safe, nearly a third of those aged 13 and older feel uneasy travelling alone on a train. On vehicle, the main sources of concern are darkness or night-time travel and the possibility that a stranger will approach them. For young people, the 'stranger' might be a member of staff, who can therefore, in some circumstances, be perceived as a threat rather than a reassuring presence.

Unlike adult women, young women report a strong sense of unease in travelling alone by taxi. The sense of isolation and lack of control [because the passenger can be locked in by the driver] are seen as threatening.

While young people are prepared to acknowledge that the behaviour of other young people can be anti-social, dangerous or even criminal, they are anxious to emphasise that not all or even the majority of young people are the perpetrators.

Older young people appear to be considerably less tolerant than younger children of rowdy behaviour. This may be because the older ones tend to associate this behaviour with the younger ones. For some older young people this is a reason why they dislike or avoid travelling with younger children on the school bus services.

During the school term, incidents occur most frequently at the end of the school day, with the journey to school being comparatively quiet.

In contrast with its effect on adult passengers, graffiti does not appear to be perceived by young people as intimidating. An exception to this appears to be when the graffiti is seen as personally threatening, for example where it is racist. It is commonly associated by them as marking out territory and an accepted way of communicating. There is little awareness of its impact on other passengers, and of the costs of cleaning graffiti and repairing criminal damage.

Although young people may be aware of some of the dangers of their actions, such as track trespass, the excitement and energy that comes from being part of a group can over-ride good sense.

7.3 Measures to address concerns about young people and public transport

Most transport operators recognise the impact that young people have on their business, both as an important market and as the cause of some of their problems. Responses to our survey of organisations [including from Passenger Transport Executives, the police, the British Transport Police and transport operators] identified nearly 380 initiatives addressing issues relating to young people and public transport. Nearly half of those responding are involved in raising awareness of public transport issues, including personal security. Just over a quarter have initiatives in place to promote public transport amongst young people and around a quarter are engaged in initiatives which encourage responsible behaviour on public transport. Only 2% are involved in providing diversionary activities for young people.

The most popular means of **raising awareness** is through making visits to schools and youth clubs and arranging visits by young people to transport depots and infrastructure.

A more ambitious and costly method is to provide curriculum material for schools, the aim being to make a more substantial and sustained impact through the child's learning in school. Finally, awareness can be raised by involving young people themselves in local action related to use of public transport.

Campaigns which **promote public transport** amongst young people do not tend to refer specifically to issues of personal security, but there are some that do. Some transport operators use sponsorship to promote themselves to young people, and some provide activities, fun days and events.

The most common means of **encouraging responsible behaviour** is through Junior Citizen or Crucial Crew, which involves primary school children in participative learning. Videos and books

are used by some operators, and recently there has been some exploratory use of theatre, music and arts projects as a means to encouraging responsible behaviour.

Some PTEs and operators have started to use detached youth workers to engage with the young people who are presenting most problems for them, in order to establish a relationship with the young people and offer **diversionary activity** which will draw them away from the transport network and provide alternative and more positive activities.

Some PTEs and operators have been highly imaginative and resourceful in finding approaches to the problem. For example, codes of conduct are used by some to influence young people's behaviour. Truancy patrols are in operation in some locations to identify young people who are absent from school and causing problems on public transport. Finally, reparation schemes are a means by which young people who have caused damage can be confronted with the consequences of their actions.

7.4 Key lessons and recommendations from the case studies

A comprehensive approach

1. The development of an overall strategy is of key importance in clearly identifying the overall objectives of a package of measures and ensuring a consistent approach.
2. Such a strategy should be informed by research into young people's experiences of using public transport, including as victims and as perpetrators.
3. The strategy should address the concerns of young people as well as those of other passengers, staff and the transport providers.
4. A strategy which encompasses both the prevention of misuse and the promotion of public transport with young people is best placed to gain the confidence of young people and encourage their continued use of public transport as adults.

Raising awareness of public transport issues, including personal security

5. Talks in schools combined with a visual presentation can be an effective means of exploring with young people their concerns about using public transport, including issues about personal security and behaviour. There is less scope for effectively addressing these issues when young people make visits to transport infrastructure and depots.
6. The age of those targeted through presentations to schools is crucial to their effectiveness. At Year 6 in primary schools and Year 7 in secondary schools they are effectively targeted at those on the brink of independent travel on public transport, but before bad or dangerous behaviour has become entrenched.
7. A presentation which actively involves young people, for example through question and answer sessions, a project or quiz, is more likely to gain and keep their attention than a session where they are just listening. Also, the messages are more likely to be retained where the young people are actively involved.
8. The active participation of the teacher in the session can also contribute by ensuring that the young people are reminded of the presentation and its messages in the weeks following the session. When possible, teachers should be provided with teaching resources which enable them to reinforce positive messages.

9. As well as personal security and behaviour, the session can be an important means of teaching young people about the skills needed in using public transport, for example in reading timetables and successfully changing between different modes of travel.
10. The session should address the concerns of the young people themselves as well as those of adult passengers and staff.
11. The choice of schools in receipt of these presentations should have greater regard to 'hot spots' of bad or dangerous behaviour. Usually, it is those schools who have historically received the presentations who go on receiving them. Sometimes, schools known to generate serious problems of behaviour or vandalism are not included because it is thought that the use of presentations would be ineffective.
12. As good practice, the presentations should explain to the young people the consequences of graffiti and vandalism for them as passengers, for example by making the link between the problems of reading timetables which have been damaged by graffiti.
13. The 'pen pal' mentoring project developed by Nexus has been mutually beneficial for the school and the PTE. A similar project, if organised through a transport provider and with the necessary safeguards for contact, could help to make the young people more aware of transport staff as individuals with feelings.
14. Although the involvement of PTEs and others in the preparation of curriculum material is an important means of raising young people's awareness of public transport issues, there is greater potential for using such material as a means for improving on-transport behaviour or tackling issues about personal security and vandalism.
15. The use of curriculum material is more likely to be of lasting impact when the messages are sustained and are integrated into the young person's on-going studies.
16. Personal security issues and messages about responsible behaviour should be integrated into teaching other subjects, such as local geography and the history of transport.
17. Curriculum materials are more likely to be used if they provide teachers with options and information which enable them to deliver the national curriculum.
18. Involving young people in developing measures to improve public transport and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour appears to be an effective way of gaining their interest and commitment.
19. Initiatives which seek to involve young people directly require the time and commitment for those participating to build their confidence and develop measures at their own pace.
20. The aims of the initiative need to be clearly set out and explained to the young people, both to focus their efforts and to ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved.
21. There needs to be an annual commitment to ensure the changing population of the school is aware of the initiative and is given the opportunity to participate.
22. The success of direct involvement is enhanced by the young people having access to support and guidance, especially if this is provided independently.
23. The rewards offered to the young people who participate in initiatives should be commensurate with the difficulties of the tasks undertaken. There should also be opportunities for the young people to be formally associated with the successes of the project.

Promoting public transport

24. Campaigns need to use images and the media which 'speak to' young people and attract and maintain their interest. The use of appropriate celebrities could be particularly effective in promoting public transport amongst young people.

25. The use of imaginative proof of age cards not only encourages their use by young people but will also help reduce the friction between young people and transport staff.

26. Campaigns or events need to integrate messages about safety and security in a way which young people recognise and understand, but does not lecture them or make assumptions that young people are 'all the same'.

Encouraging responsible behaviour

27. The variety of scenarios and the interactive nature of each Junior Citizen/Crucial Crew event, including those addressing personal security and public transport, makes a strong impression on the young participants.

28. The age targeted by Junior Citizen/Crucial Crew - primary school Year 6 - is key for giving young people positive messages about the safe and responsible use of public transport.

29. The evidence is that, in the short term at least, the positive messages about safe and responsible use are retained by the young people who attend Junior Citizen/Crucial Crew. An assessment with secondary school children of whether attending the event and the messages given have a longer term influence would be valuable.

30. Participation in Junior Citizen and other similar schemes often relies on the commitment of one or two people within an organisation and interventions are often poorly resourced with a low and rarely guaranteed budget.

31. If drama projects are to have an impact in reducing anti-social behaviour directed at public transport, it is important to attract a wide range of young people to participate, including those most at risk of offending.

32. Taking theatre to schools appears to be a sustainable means of conveying messages to young people in a way which they accept and retain.

33. Targeting the first year at secondary school is clearly beneficial and the best time for presenting the play and workshops at a time when the young people are confident with one another but not fixed in their behaviour.

34. If the behaviour of young people on public transport is to be effectively challenged, the drama and workshops need to place emphasis on vandalism and nuisance behaviour in that environment.

35. A subsequent discussion or workshop on the themes identified through the drama is a key element of the package, and the facilitator of the discussion needs to be skilled in this task and knowledgeable about public transport issues.

36. Art can be useful in engaging young people in the subject of public transport and raising issues about their behaviour and misuse.

37. During the process of deciding on and developing the artwork, there needs to be real consultation with the local community and/or local users of the bus or train station to ensure it is acceptable and wanted. Such steps should reduce the risks of vandalism.

38. Graffiti projects can be successful in reducing graffiti and trespass, creating an attractive and colourful environment, and building links with young people.

39. A key challenge in the use of art is to allow artistic licence, but still ensure that the art is acceptable to passengers.

40. Videos can be an effective means of communication, but need to be accompanied by an interactive session and supported by materials which stimulate discussion and draw out the learning points for the young people.

41. Videos date easily and those which use music or other contemporary interests such as fashion or popular 'soaps' are particularly likely to have a limited 'shelf life'.

42. Involving young people in making a video can be a useful learning mechanism for them, but is unlikely to produce a video which is a useful learning material for other young people.

Diverting young people

43. The approach and skills of youth workers is key in making effective contact with disaffected and disadvantaged young people who have low self esteem.

44. The wider benefits from diversionary initiatives come from working with the young people to challenge their anti-social behaviour in relation to public transport. To achieve this aim effectively, those working directly with the young people need to be fully briefed on public transport issues and the concerns raised by misuse by young people.

45. Those involved in the youth project need to make the public transport provider's involvement explicit and ensure the young people know and understand the reasons for the provider's involvement.

Other initiatives

46. Partnership activity which is built on mutual concerns and clearly defined roles for each agency is likely to lead to action [such as truancy patrols] which brings benefits for all parties.

47. Direct action aimed at young people and their parents can succeed if the operator can produce evidence of bad behaviour and is willing to adopt a consistent approach in giving warnings and taking action.

48. Using young people in a formal capacity to regulate the behaviour of their peers can be beneficial, if the 'Customer Assistants' are properly trained and equipped to manage conflict and provide assistance without provoking abuse and violence.

Appendix 1 - Profile of survey respondents

Total Questionnaires returned 582

Two thirds of the respondents attended schools in urban areas and one third in rural areas.

The age breakdown of respondents was:

10 to 12 years of age 20%

13 and 14 years of age 50%

15 years and older 30%

The gender breakdown was:

Female 49%

Male 51%

The ethnic breakdown was:

White UK and Irish 84%

Black and ethnic minorities 14%

Other groups 2%

Over 80% of respondents lived in households with at least one car at home. This was higher for those attending schools in rural areas [96%] than urban schools [72%].

Appendix 2 - Focus group discussions with young people

The focus group discussion will cover similar issues to the questionnaire survey but, in particular, will provide a deeper understanding of:

- young people's attitudes towards public transport [buses, trains and taxis] and car ownership:
 - how do they travel to and from school/college/training centre/place of work, frequency of using different forms of public transport
 - how do they normally travel on public transport - on their own, with friends, with adult[s]
 - views on public transport fares and concessions
 - do they travel in the evening, later at night on public transport - any problems, their perceptions of travelling late
 - what do they most like and dislike about different forms of public transport
 - what about their relationship with transport staff - does any member of their family work for public transport, will they want to work in transport
 - car ownership at home, do they think they will want to own a car, what do they think are the benefits of car driving, what are the problems associated with car driving, when do they think they will still use public transport
- what has influenced their attitudes to public transport - is there any link between a young person's bad or negative experience of public transport and their desire or strength of desire to become a car driver
- do they have concerns for their own personal security when using, waiting for or walking to and from public transport:
 - explore what are those concerns and why - what makes young people feel unsafe and when
 - any personal experiences associated with crime or anti-social behaviour - what happened, did they tell anyone
- their perceptions of the behaviour of children and young people on public transport, what are the most common incidents, what are the main causes of bad behaviour
- refer to initiatives taken by operators and other agencies to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour by young people, what particular factors make or could make an initiative work, and what they feel should be done differently
- are their travel needs being met by public transport now - what unmet needs are there, what are their priorities for improvements on public transport.

Profile of Focus Group participants

In total, there were 21 focus groups with a total number of 185 participants. The numbers in the individual groups ranged from 4 participants to 18.

Participants coming from urban schools and clubs accounted for about 68% of the total and from rural schools and clubs about 32%.

Age breakdown of participants:

10 - 12 years of age	34%
13 and 14 years of age	30%
15 to 22 years of age	36%

Gender breakdown of participants:

Girls and young women	47%
Boys and young men	53%

Ethnic breakdown of participants:

White UK and Irish participants	68%
Black and ethnic minority	30%
Other Groups	2%

Appendix 3 - Issues for case study evaluation

Basic elements

Although the case studies chosen are very different in content, process and outcome, each evaluation needs to address five basic elements:

what problem[s] or issue[s] prompted the introduction of the initiative or project?

what have been the aims and outcomes of the initiative or project and who has benefited and how?

how effective is the process as a means of delivering the initiative or project?

how far has the initiative or project met its objective[s]?

to what extent could the initiative or project [in whole or in part] be replicable elsewhere and what would be the ingredients for success?

Required background to the evaluation

Information on the aims of the project or initiative.

Description of the project or initiative.

Identification of key personnel involved. As well as interviewing managers involved in the project/initiative, it is important to talk to frontline staff who have been involved or have experience of its effectiveness.

If it is possible to obtain information about the cost and where the funding came from.

Any written material on the evaluation of the project/initiative.

Issues for the five basic elements

1 What problem[s] or issue[s] prompted the introduction of the initiative or project?

Broad description of the kind of problems faced by the Authority/ Company? Were the issues or problems leading to the development of this initiative mainstream or special?

Were issues around community safety or nuisance the main reason why the initiative or project was developed or were other issues [for example, revenue, road safety, environmental] more or equally important?

Is there any written material/statistics available on the kind of problems faced? Are there contacts [for example, police, head teacher, bus company maintenance staff] who could provide information on the scale of the problem or its cost?

2 What have been the aims and outcomes of the initiative or project and who has benefited and how?

3 How far has the initiative or project met its objective[s]?

Has there been adequate time to identify outcomes or changes resulting from the project/ initiative?

Are there any measurable outcomes from the project/initiative? Do they show any improvement in the problem/issue? Were these changes due solely to the project/ initiative or could have they been the result of other initiatives or elements of the wider programme?

What are the views of managers and frontline staff on the effectiveness of the project/ initiative and how has it met expectations?

What are the perceptions of other agencies [e.g. police, teacher] on the effectiveness of the project/initiative and how has it met expectations?

Is there any information available on the views of those who have been involved in the project/initiative - students, pedestrians, parents?

4 How effective is the process as a means of delivering the initiative or project?

How long has the project/initiative been in existence? how long did it take to set up or develop? Is the project/initiative still 'live' or has it ended? If no longer 'live', are there any plans to continue or revive the project/initiative?

Are there elements of the project/initiative not yet in place or complete?

Has the project/initiative been developed as planned or are there differences - changes made as it developed?

Is the project or initiative part of a wider programme or package directed towards tackling young people and crime on public transport or is it a one off?

If part of a wider programme or package, is the project or initiative capable of 'standing alone' or does it rely/is an integral part of this wider programme? Is there any written material on this wider programme or package?

Were there problems or difficulties in getting the project or initiative accepted and/or funded? What were these problems or difficulties?

Was the project/initiative set up or supported by a multi-agency group or committee? What agencies or service providers have been involved - at the start and as it has been developed? How has the involvement of different agencies or service providers changed over the life of the project/initiative?

Has the project/initiative received support from a key 'champion' within or outside the organisation [for example, politician, director]? To what extent has the support of this 'champion' been important for the acceptance and/or the development of the project?

How much did the project/initiative cost? How was it funded? Is the funding 'time limited' and what impact - if any - has this had on the success of the project/initiative?

Is there anything that should be changed about the process of the project/initiative? How would these changes improve its development or effectiveness?

5 To what extent could the initiative or project [in whole or in part] be replicable elsewhere and what would be the ingredients for success?

Was the project/initiative designed to tackle issues or problems which are known to be more than local?

Are there aspects of the project/initiative which relied exclusively on local circumstances which are not more widely available?

If the project/initiative has been successful or effective, are there key reasons for this and to what extent could these be replicated elsewhere?

If there are ways in which the project/initiative did not work, how could these be avoided elsewhere?

Would replication of the project/initiative rely on the introduction of a wider programme or package?