



Bus Passenger Survey publication and briefing event

15 March 2018



Welcome

Jeff Halliwell, Chair, Transport Focus

Today's agenda

11:05 Bus Passenger Survey Autumn 2017 results briefing

Robert Pain, Senior Insight Advisor, Transport Focus

11:25 The Government's view

Nusrat Ghani MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport

11:35 The opposition's view

Matt Rodda MP, Shadow Minister for Transport

11:55 Why bus drivers make a difference to passengers

David Sidebottom, Director, Transport Focus

12:00 Drivers – their role in delivering bus passenger satisfaction

Maks Pruszeicz, “Driver of the year” & Martijn Gilbert, Chief Executive Officer, Reading Buses

12.25 What should the industry do to help drivers deliver better service?

Alex Warner, Chief Executive, Flash Forward Consulting

12.40 Audience Q&A (chair: Jeff Halliwell, Transport Focus)

12:55 Sum up & next steps,



Bus Passenger Survey Autumn 2017 results

Robert Pain, Senior Insight Advisor



Bus Passenger Survey – autumn 2017

Presentation of results

15 March 2018

Bus Passenger Survey 2017 - Scope

48 areas in England:

- a. 6 former metropolitan counties,
- b. 13 unitary authorities,
- c. 8 two-tier authorities,
- d. 21 bus company divisions;

Around 70% of remit journeys covered

7 areas in Wales:

- a. 4 Welsh regions (covering the majority of the country)
- b. 3 bus company boosts (Newport Bus, TrawsCymru and TrawsCymru weekend)

8 areas in Scotland:

- a. 7 bus company divisions (for First, Stagecoach and National Express)
- b. 1 authority area boost (Aberdeenshire)

Across the entire survey, opinions gathered from 47,862 bus passengers.

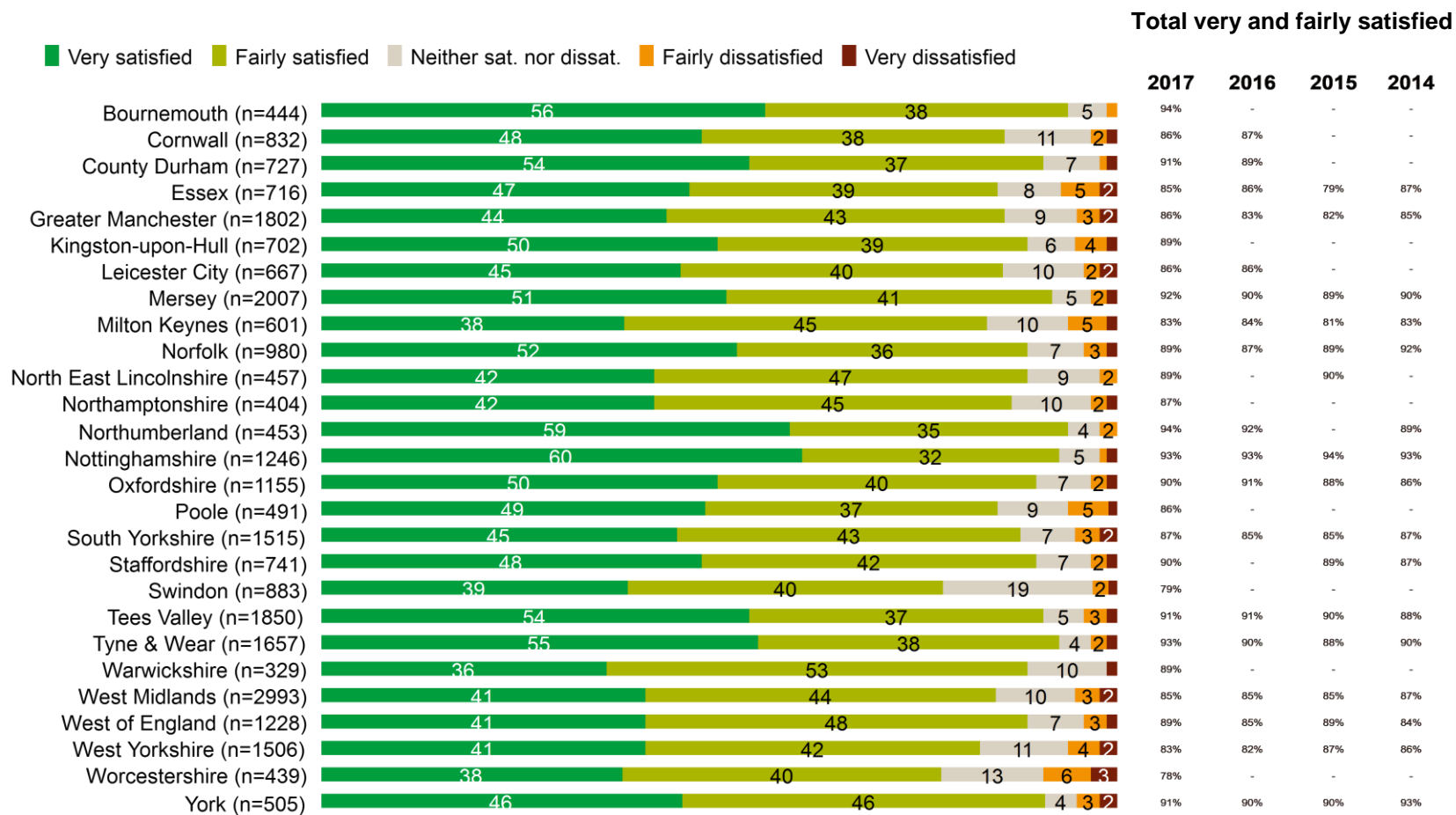


Bus Passenger Survey – autumn 2017

England Local Authorities – key measures

15 March 2018

Overall satisfaction - by local authority area



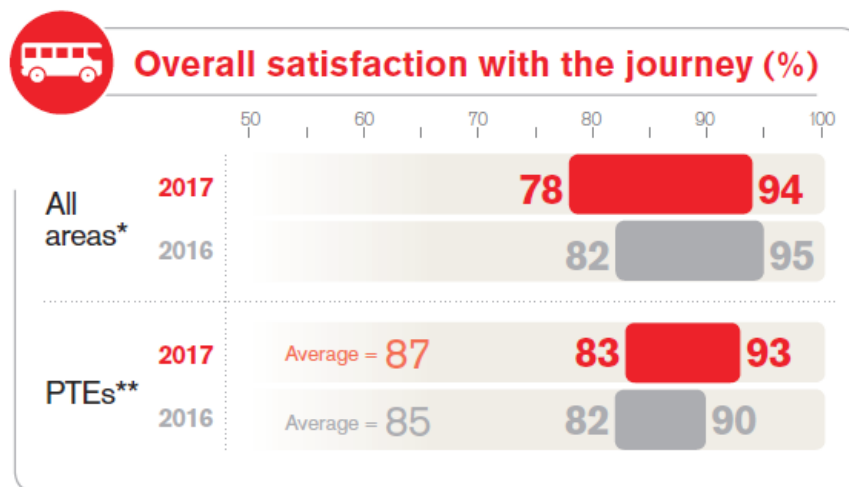
Filter: HierarchicalFilter = England - Year = 2017

Q. Overall, taking everything into account from start to end of the bus journey, how satisfied were you with your bus journey?

Overall satisfaction - by local authority area

Latest results show continuing variability in passenger journey experience across the country, but better news in PTEs

- Bournemouth and Northumberland are top of the table this time with 94% overall satisfaction
- Nottinghamshire (60%) and Northumberland (59%) have the highest levels of passengers 'very satisfied' with their journey
- West of England CA and North Somerset has seen the biggest improvement since 2016, going from 85% to 89% overall satisfaction
- Worcestershire (78%) and Swindon (79%) are both new to the survey, with the highest shares of passengers 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' with their journey overall (19% and 13% respectively)

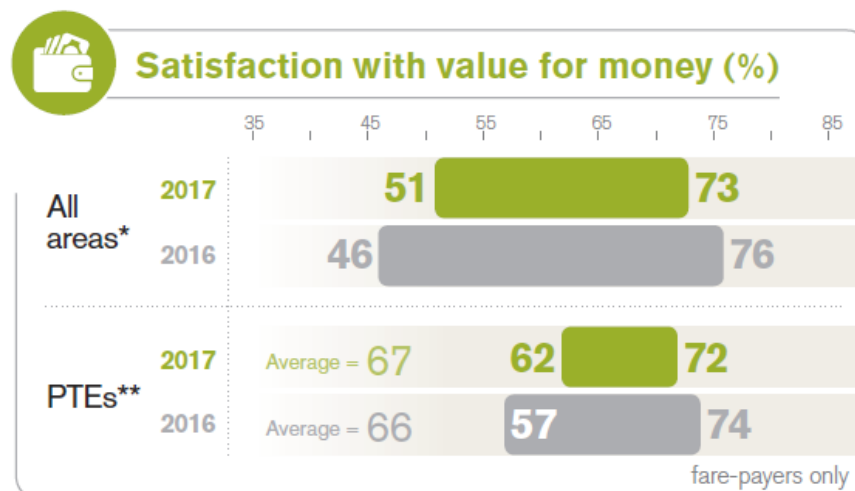


Q. Overall, taking everything into account from start to end of the bus journey, how satisfied were you with your bus journey?

Satisfaction with VFM for fare payers - by local authority area

Of our four key measures, value for money has the widest range in satisfaction, but this has narrowed in our latest survey

- County Durham (73%), Bournemouth (72%) and Greater Manchester (72%) are top of the table this time
- Bournemouth (46%) has the highest levels of passengers 'very satisfied' with the value for money of their journey
- Last times' lowest scoring areas have generally improved, with Essex going from 46% to 51% and West Yorkshire from 57% to 62%, but the biggest improvements are for County Durham (from 58% to 73%), Northumberland (56% to 65%) and West of England (56% to 64%)
- The sharpest decline has been seen in Cornwall, down from 61% in 2016 to 54% in 2017

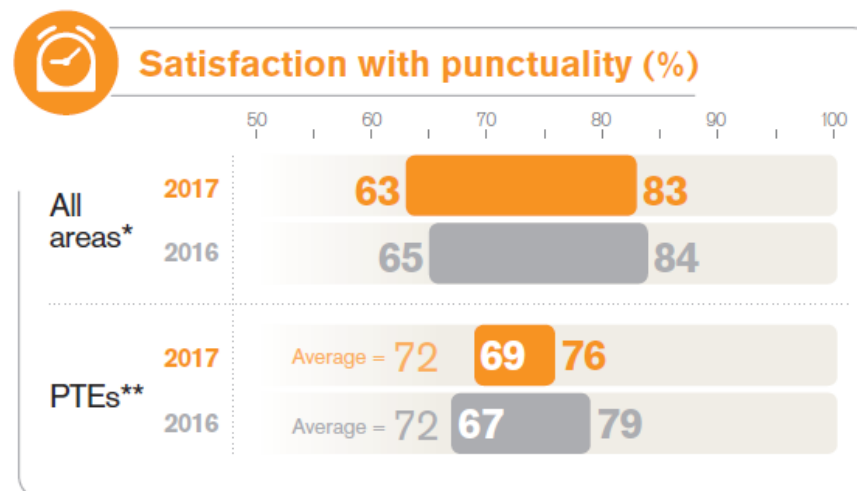


Q. How satisfied were you with the value for money of your journey?

Satisfaction with punctuality - by local authority area

Punctuality remains a challenge, with passengers in some parts of the country experiencing an improvement, others a deterioration

- Nottinghamshire and Northumberland top the table this time with 83% satisfaction with punctuality of the bus
- Greater Manchester has seen the biggest improvement since 2016, going from 67% to 73%
- Whereas, County Durham has seen the largest decline, going from 79% to 74%
- Worcestershire has the lowest level of satisfaction with punctuality, at 63%, while also having the highest share of passengers who were 'very dissatisfied' with the punctuality of the bus, at 17%

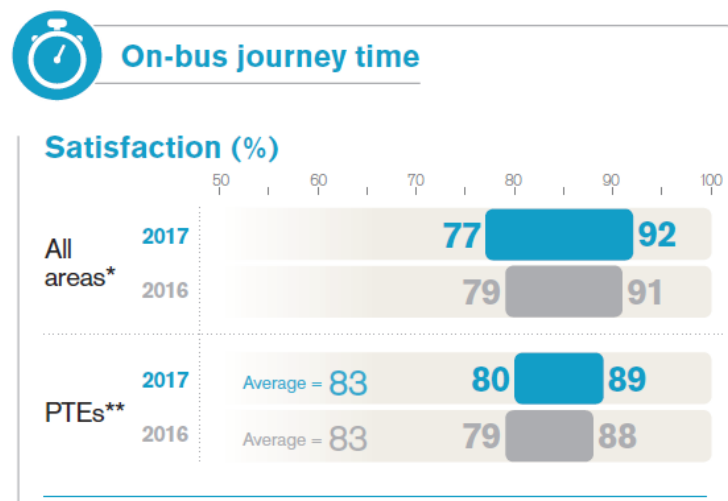


Q. How satisfied were you with the punctuality of the bus?

Satisfaction with on-bus journey time - by local authority area

Passengers continue to rate their on-bus journey time better than punctuality, but there are similar patterns

- Northumberland (92%) and Bournemouth (91%) are top of the table this time, while Mersey & Halton and Tyne & Wear top the PTE list (both 89%)
- The biggest improvements since 2016 have been seen in Greater Manchester (from 79% to 84%), Leicester City (81% to 85%) and Northumberland (88% to 92%)
- The sharpest decline has been seen in Cornwall, down from 85% in 2016 to 80% in 2017
- Passengers in Swindon had the lowest level of satisfaction with the time their journey took, at 77%, although 21% were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'



Q. How satisfied were you with the length of time your journey on the bus took?



Bus Passenger Survey – autumn 2017

Individual Operators in England (outside of London) – key measures

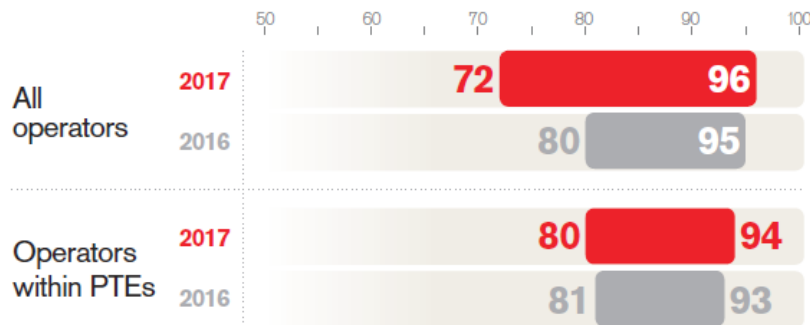
15 March 2018

Overall satisfaction - by bus operators

Latest results show wider variability in passenger journey experience between operators, both within major urban centres and beyond



Overall satisfaction with the journey (%)



National operators – averages

2017

Arriva 87%

First 84%

Go-Ahead 91%

National Express 85%

Stagecoach 90%

2016

Arriva 88%

First 84%

Go-Ahead 90%

National Express 84%

Stagecoach 86%

- Strong performances from Southern Vectis (96%), Go NE in Tyne & Wear (94%) and the major operators in Nottinghamshire (Nottingham City Transport, Stagecoach and Trent Barton all on 94%)
- Lower scores in Worcestershire reflected in those for Diamond Bus (72%) and First (82%) within the county

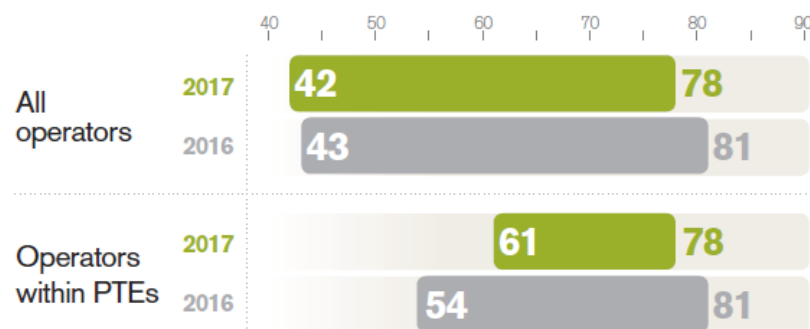
Q. Overall, taking everything into account from start to end of the bus journey, how satisfied were you with your bus journey?

Satisfaction with VFM for fare payers - by bus operators

Passenger ratings of value for money remain highly dependent upon local performance, ticket levels and other ticketing initiatives



Value for money (%) – fare-paying passengers



National operators – averages

2017

Arriva 65%

First 63%

Go-Ahead 65%

National Express 63%

Stagecoach 68%

2016

Arriva 66%

First 60%

Go-Ahead 63%

National Express 62%

Stagecoach 68%

- Stagecoach businesses achieved both the highest (78% in Mersey & Halton) and lowest (42% for the Cambridge Busway) levels of satisfaction with value for money
- Variability by operator within local authority areas is illustrated by the difference between First (68%) and Stagecoach (75%) within Greater Manchester, whereas in South Yorkshire the same two operators both received scores of 67%

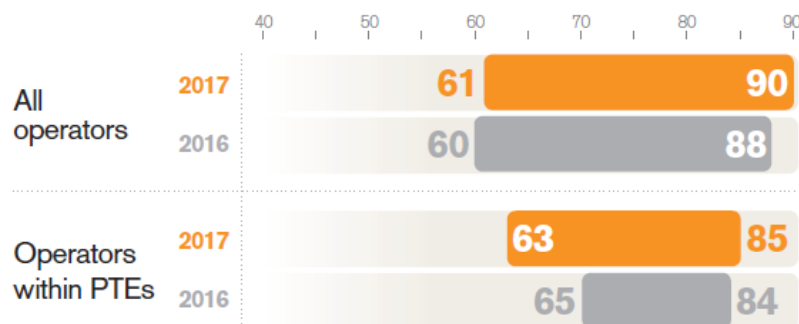
Q. How satisfied were you with the value for money of your journey?

Satisfaction with punctuality - by bus operators

Wide variation in passenger ratings of punctuality, both within major conurbations and beyond, illustrates the impact of local conditions



Punctuality (%)



National operators – averages

2017

Arriva 73%

First 68%

Go-Ahead 77%

National Express 70%

Stagecoach 75%

2016

Arriva 74%

First 67%

Go-Ahead 79%

National Express 70%

Stagecoach 72%

- Strong performances from Southern Vectis (90%), Konectbus & Anglian Buses (87%) and the major operators in Nottinghamshire (all between 84% and 86%)
- Within PTEs, where congestion can be a factor, scores ranged from 63% for Diamond Bus in West Midlands to 85% for Keighley & District in West Yorkshire; while in Manchester, satisfaction ranged from 64% for First to 77% for Stagecoach

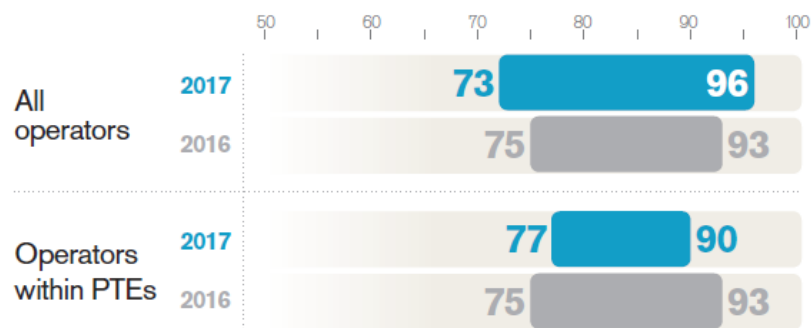
Q. How satisfied were you with the punctuality of the bus?

Satisfaction with on-bus journey time - by bus operators

Wide variation in passenger ratings of the time their journey took, even for the same national operator, illustrates the impact of local conditions



On-bus journey time (%)



National operators – averages

| 2017 | 2016 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Arriva 85% | Arriva 84% |
| First 81% | First 81% |
| Go-Ahead 86% | Go-Ahead 87% |
| National Express 79% | National Express 82% |
| Stagecoach 85% | Stagecoach 82% |

- Satisfaction with on-bus journey time was highest for Southern Vectis (96%) and within PTEs for Arriva in Mersey & Halton (90%)
- The lowest levels of satisfaction with on-bus journey times were recorded for Stagecoach in Swindon and Diamond Bus in Worcestershire (both 73%), while within PTEs it was Arriva in West Yorkshire (77%)

Q. How satisfied were you with the length of time your journey on the bus took?

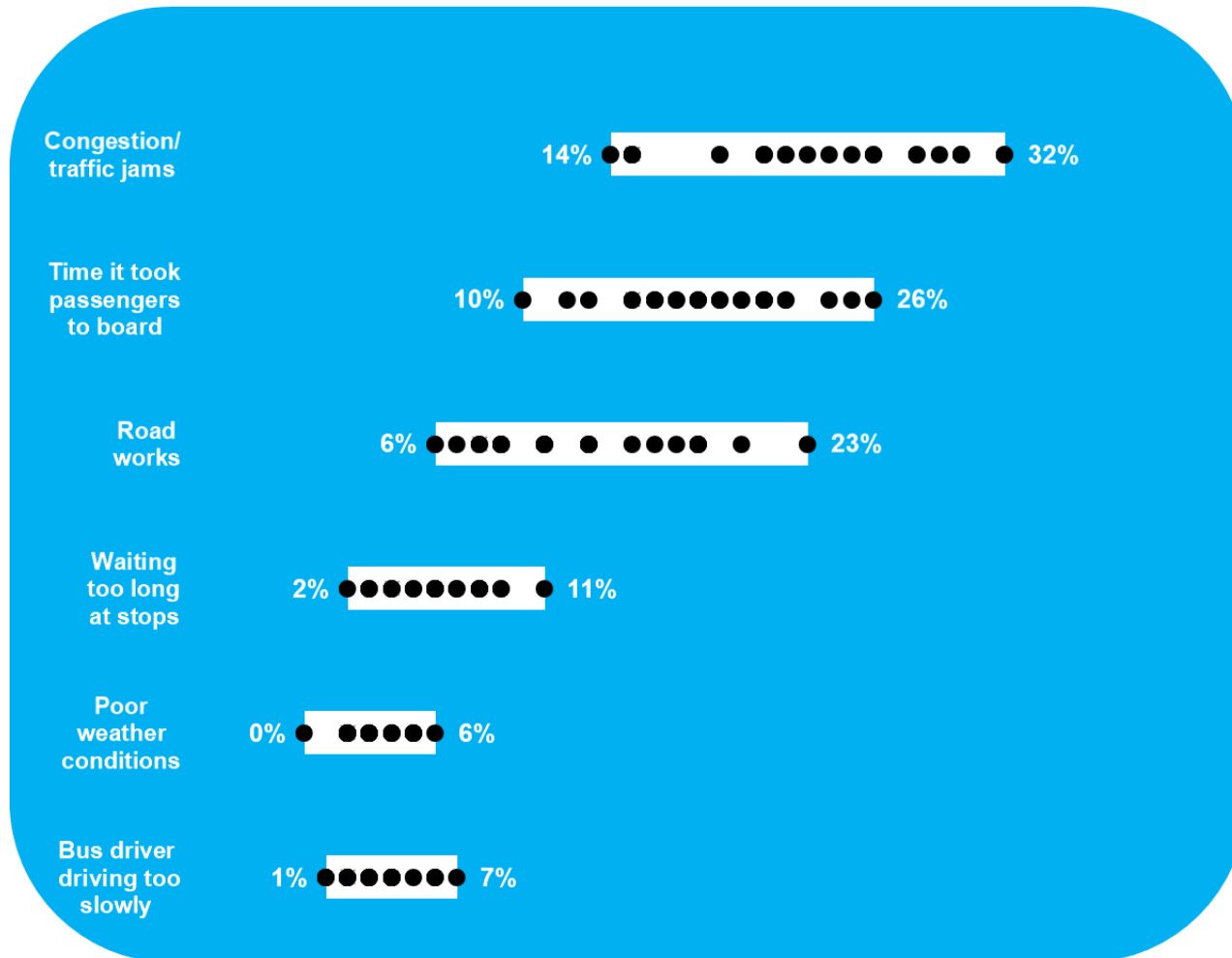


Bus Passenger Survey – autumn 2017

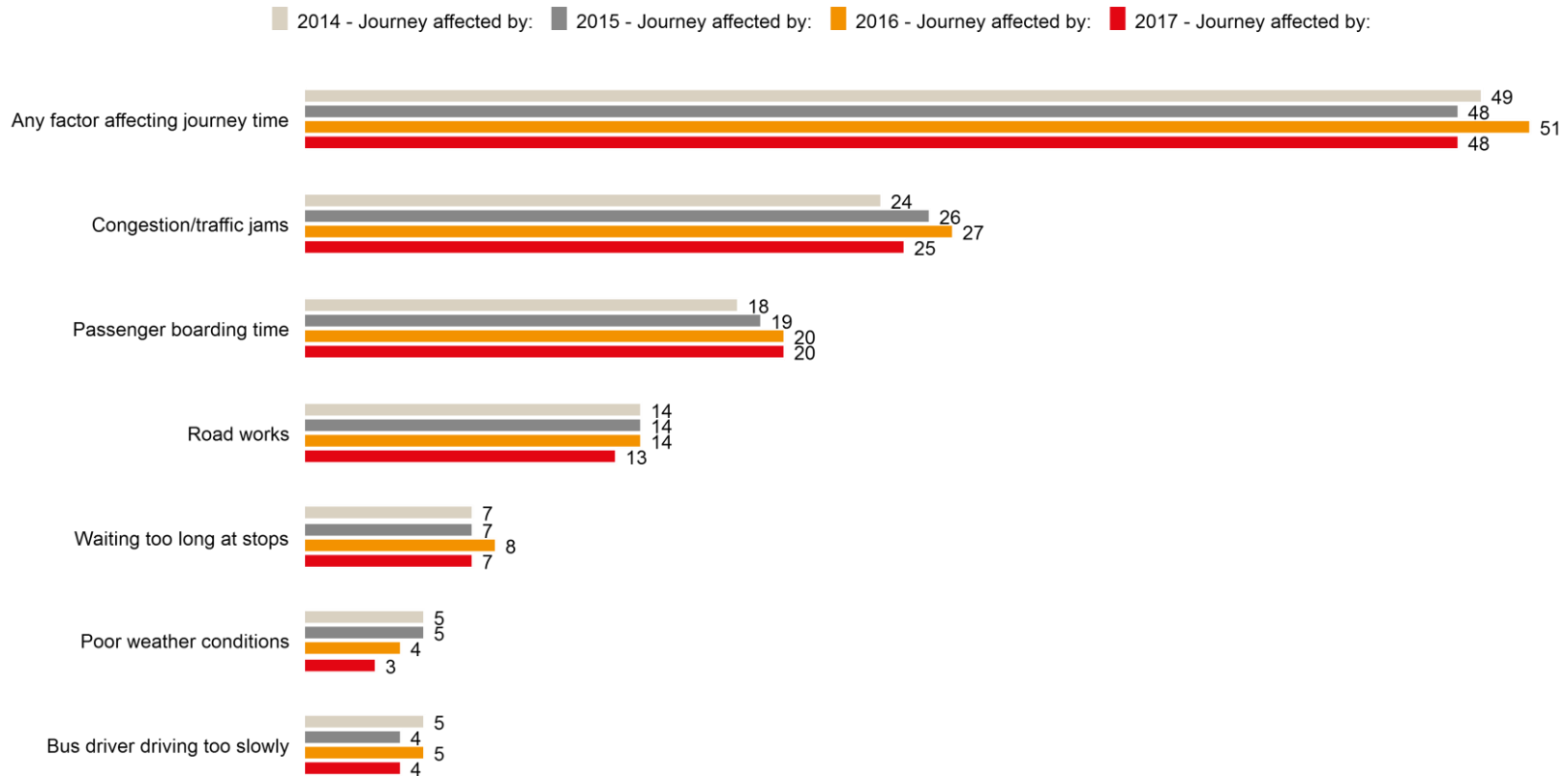
England (outside of London) – factors affecting journey times

15 March 2018

What affected journey time in England (outside London)?



What affected journey time in England (outside London)?

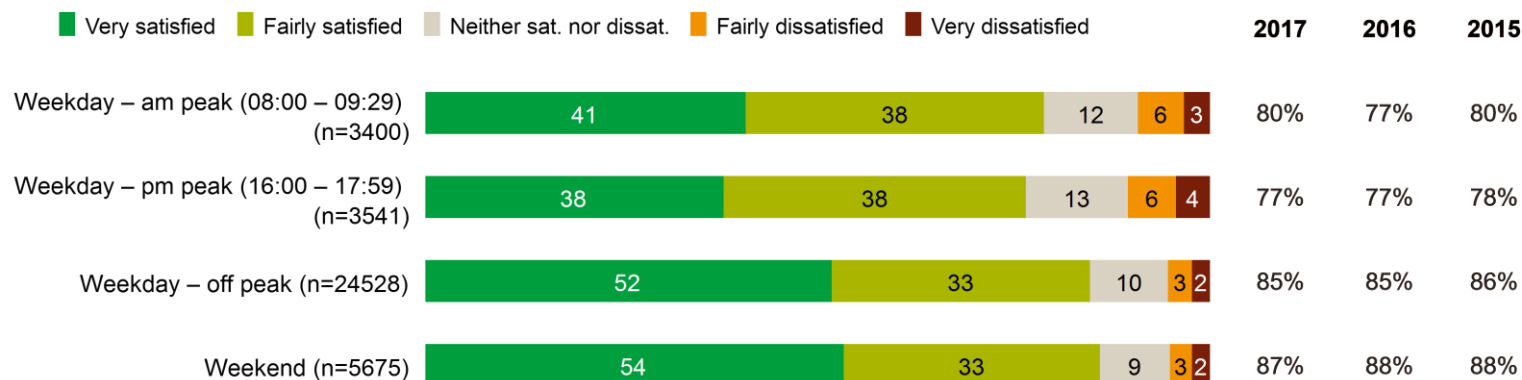


Filter: Hierarchical Filter = England

Journey time by travel time in England (outside London)

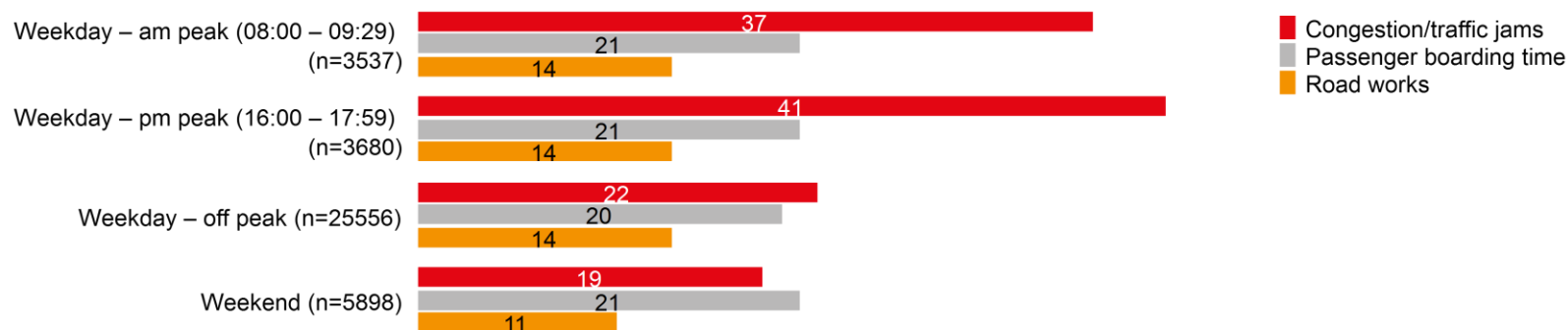
Satisfaction with on-bus journey time

Total very and fairly satisfied



Filter: Hierarchical Filter = England - Year = 2017

What affected journey time?



Filter: Hierarchical Filter = England - Year = 2017

Q. How satisfied were you with the length of time your journey took?

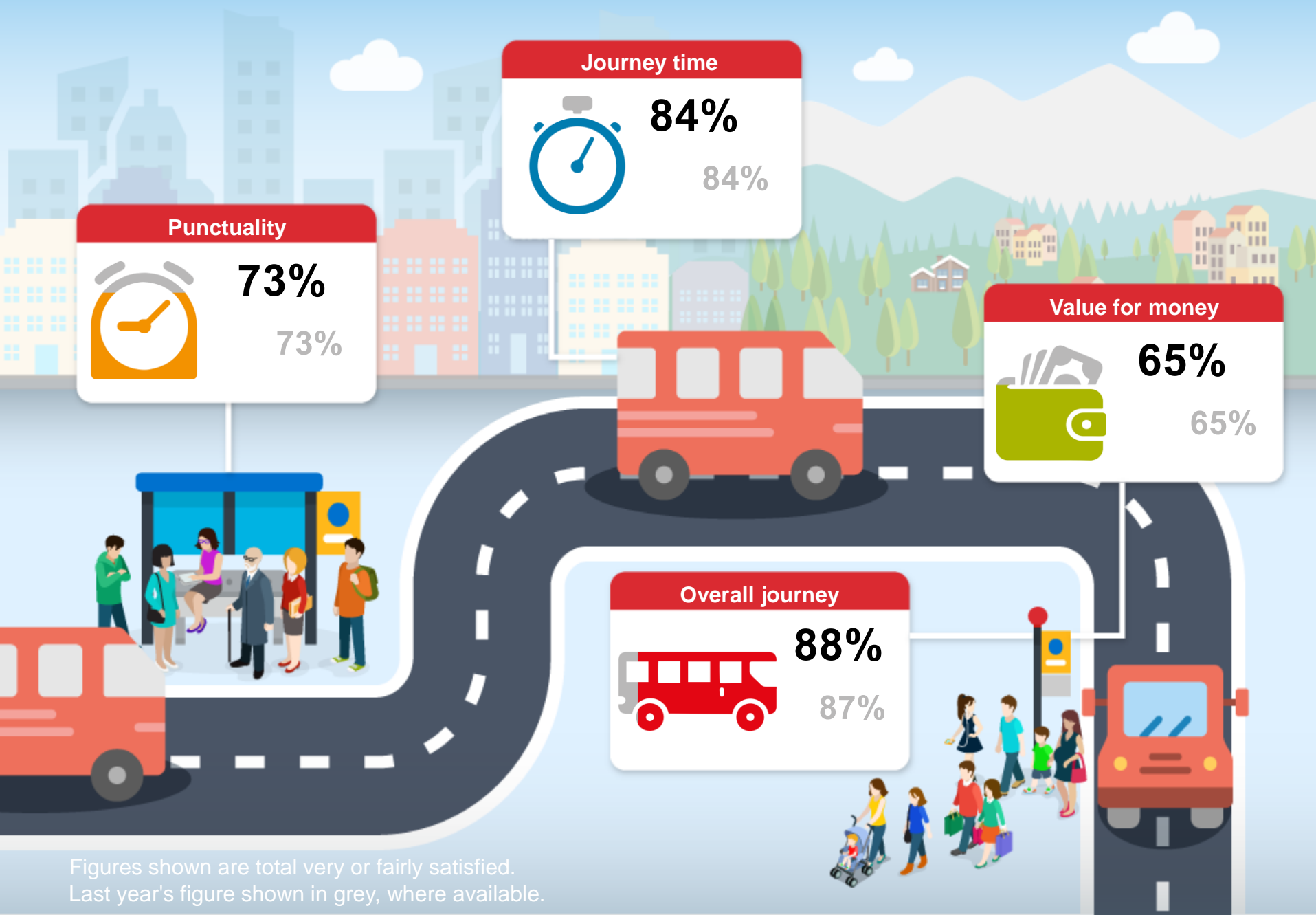
Q. Was the length of time your journey took affected by any of the following? [note: multiple responses permitted]



Bus Passenger Survey – autumn 2017

England (outside of London) – key results

15 March 2018



Figures shown are total very or fairly satisfied.
Last year's figure shown in grey, where available.

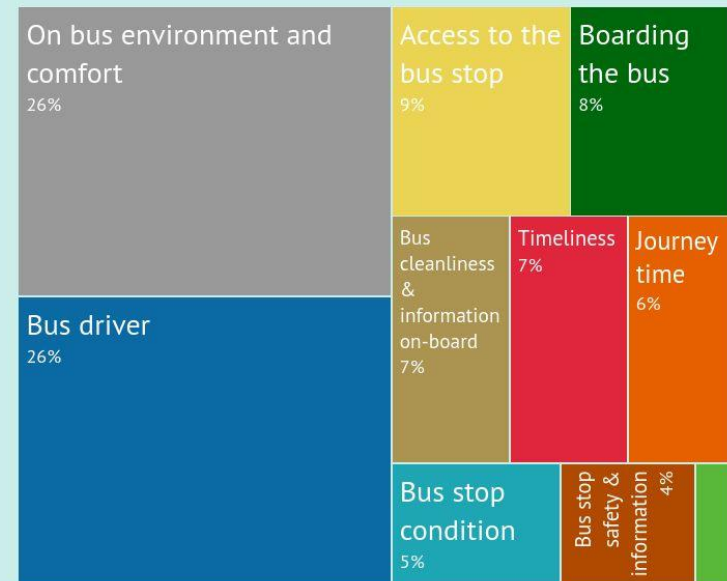
Overall experience: what makes a satisfactory or great journey?

What makes a satisfactory journey?



infogram

What makes a great journey?



infogram

Key Driver Analysis' looks at **fare paying passengers'** overall journey satisfaction response and their response to the 30 individual satisfaction measures in the survey (including value for money), which have been grouped into 10 themes based upon a statistical analysis of the responses. The left hand chart shows which themes most differentiate between those not satisfied and satisfied overall – making a journey 'satisfactory'. The right hand chart shows which themes most differentiate between those fairly and very satisfied overall – making a 'great' journey.

Overall experience: what could be improved?

% passengers who wrote an improvement comment

% passengers who wrote nothing could be improved

■ Any

■ Nothing could be improved

England (n=38671)

30

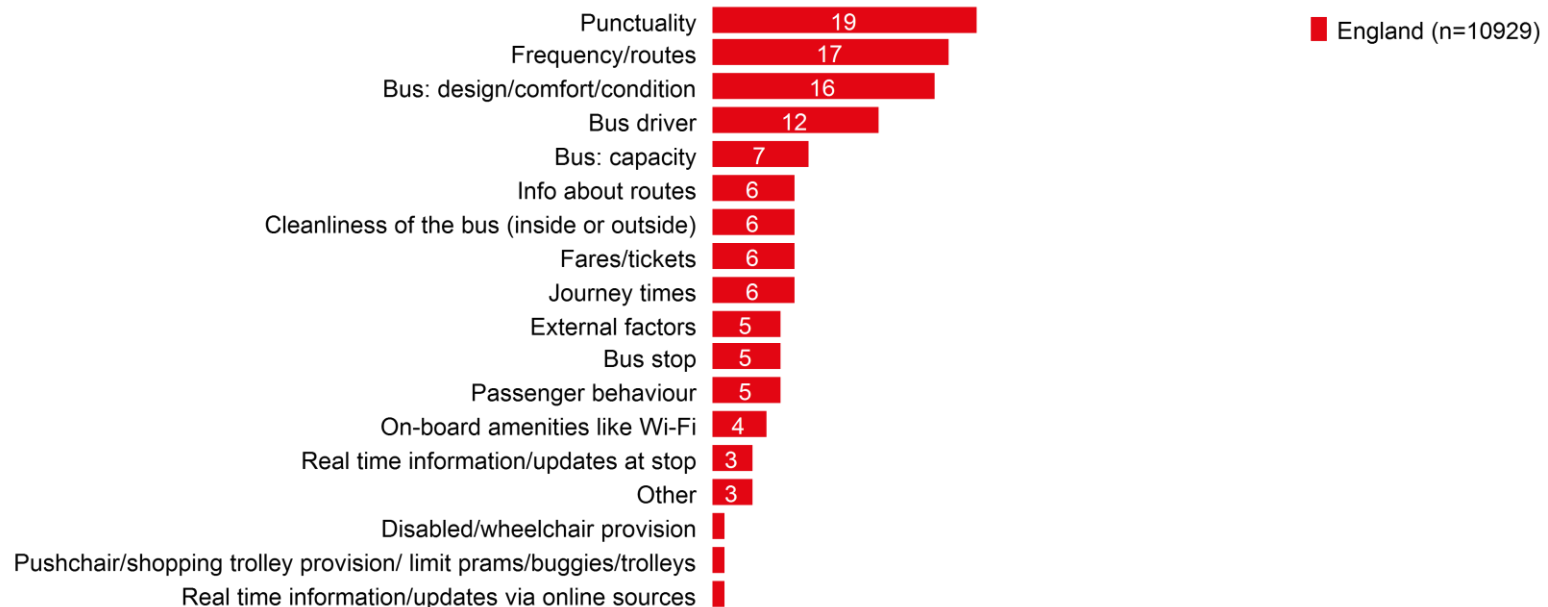
England (n=38671)

6

Filter: Year = 2017

Filter: Year = 2017

What could be improved - proportion of all those stating an improvement area



Filter: Year = 2017

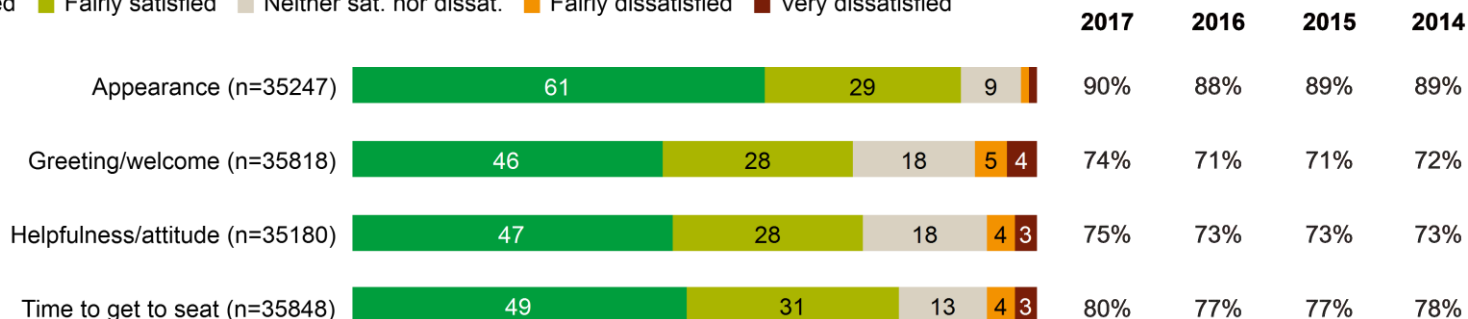
Q. If something could have been improved on your journey, what would it have been?

Bus driver interaction and the driving

England (outside of London)

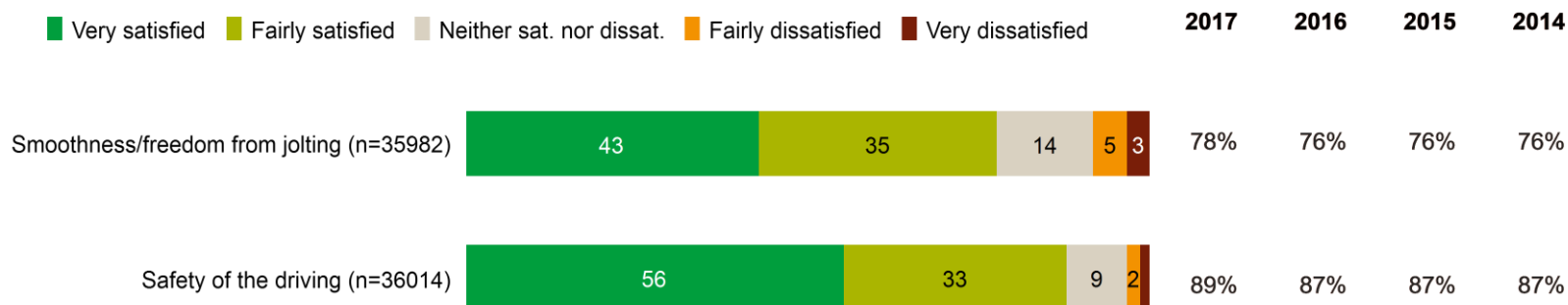
Total very and fairly satisfied

■ Very satisfied
 ■ Fairly satisfied
 ■ Neither sat. nor dissat.
 ■ Fairly dissatisfied
 ■ Very dissatisfied



Filter: Hierarchical Filter = England - Year = 2017

■ Very satisfied
 ■ Fairly satisfied
 ■ Neither sat. nor dissat.
 ■ Fairly dissatisfied
 ■ Very dissatisfied



Filter: Hierarchical Filter = England - Year = 2017

Q. Thinking about the driver, please indicate how satisfied you were with each of the following?

B) The driver's appearance; C) The greeting/welcome you got from the driver;

D) The helpfulness and attitude of the driver; E) The time the driver gave you to get to your seat;

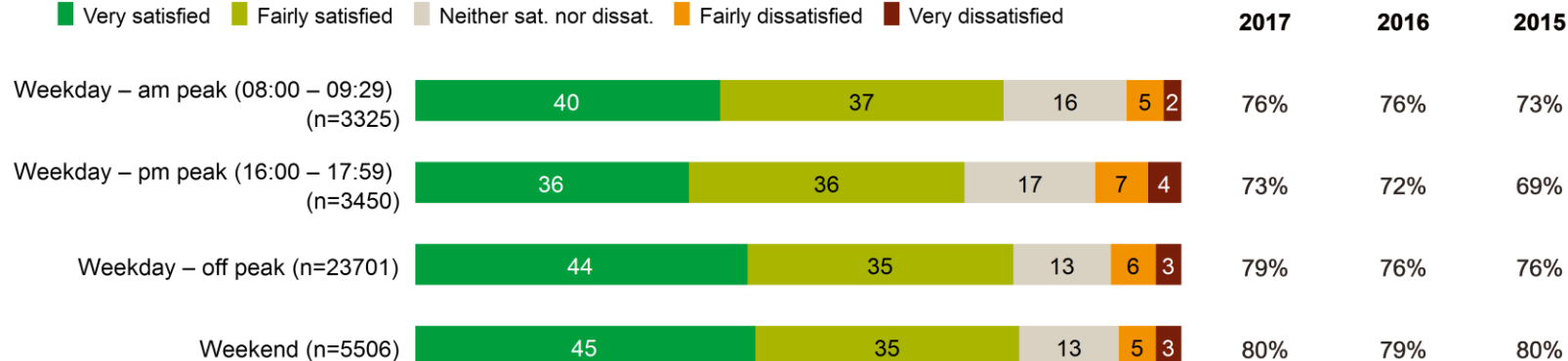
F) Smoothness/freedom from jolting during the journey; G) The safety of the driving (i.e. appropriateness of speed, driver concentrating).

On the bus: bus driver - the driving by travel time

Satisfaction with smoothness/freedom from jolting

Total very and fairly satisfied

■ Very satisfied
 ■ Fairly satisfied
 ■ Neither sat. nor dissat.
 ■ Fairly dissatisfied
 ■ Very dissatisfied



Filter: Hierarchical Filter = England - Year = 2017

Satisfaction with safety of the driving

2017 2016 2015



Filter: Hierarchical Filter = England - Year = 2017

Q. Thinking about the driver, please indicate how satisfied you were with each of the following?

F) Smoothness/freedom from jolting during the journey; G) The safety of the driving (i.e. appropriateness of speed, driver concentrating).

Bus drivers: safety of the driving – by bus operators

Passenger ratings for safety of the driving remain high; top scores are shared between national and local operators

- Arriva in Northumberland - 95%
- Yellow Buses in Bournemouth & Poole – 94%
- Trent Barton in Nottinghamshire – 94%
- Harrogate & District – 94%
- First in York – 93%
- Stagecoach South East – 93%
- Southern Vectis – 93%
- Konectbus & Anglian Bus – 93%
- Keighley & District in West Yorkshire – 93%
- East Yorkshire Motor Services in Hull – 93%
- Plymouth Citybus – 93%

Q. How satisfied were you with the safety of the driving (i.e. appropriateness of speed, driver concentrating)?

Bus drivers: helpfulness and attitude – by bus operators

Passenger ratings for the helpfulness/attitude of the driver are more varied; top scores more concentrated amongst locally branded operations

- Trent Barton in Nottinghamshire - 94%
- Harrogate & District – 92%
- Keighley & District in West Yorkshire – 91%
- Konectbus & Anglian Bus – 90%
- Yellow Buses in Bournemouth & Poole – 87%
- Southern Vectis – 87%
- East Yorkshire Motor Services in Hull – 87%
- Stagecoach in Oxfordshire – 87%
- Plymouth Citybus – 86%
- Reading Buses – 85%
- Arriva in Northumberland – 85%
- Stagecoach South West – 85%

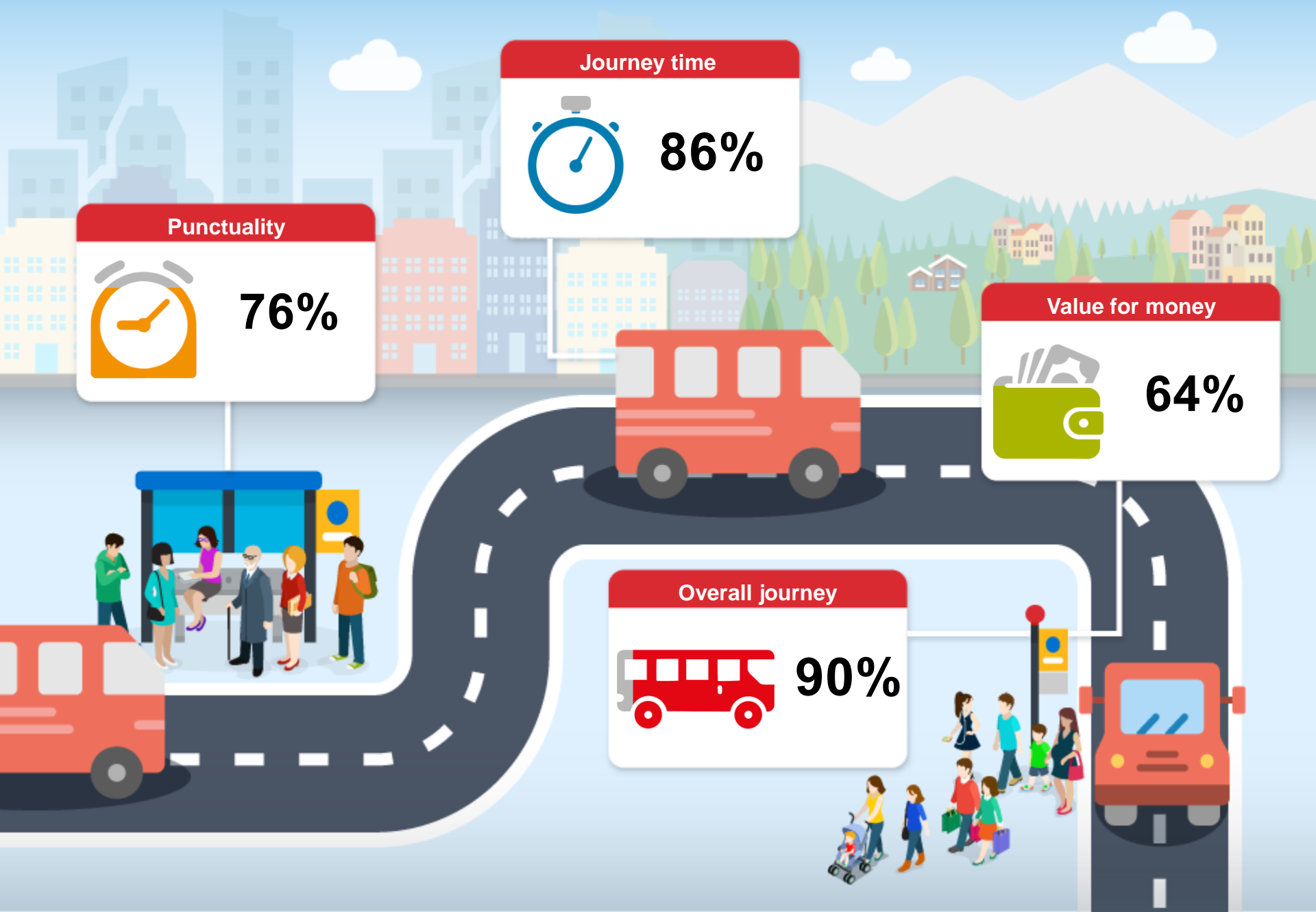
Q. How satisfied were you with the helpfulness and attitude of the driver?



Bus Passenger Survey – autumn 2017

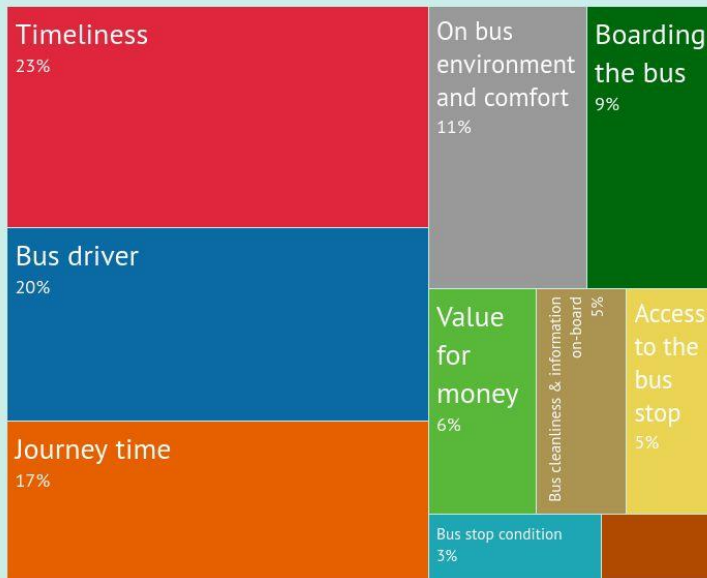
Wales – key results

15 March 2018



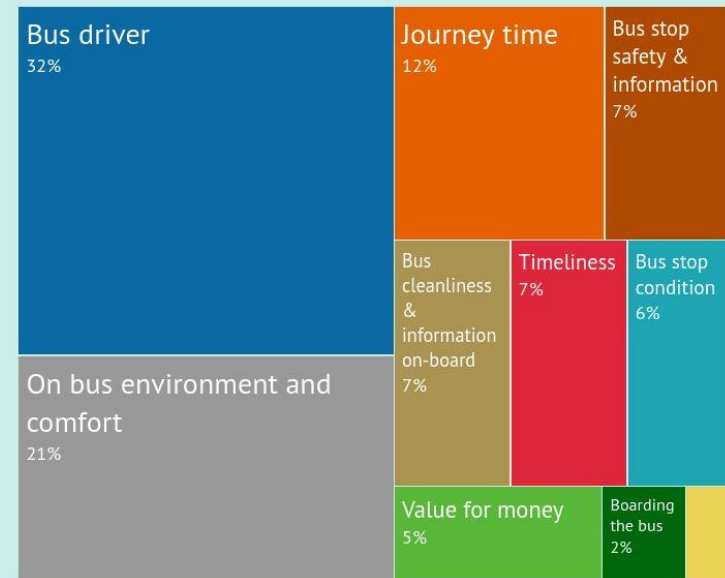
Overall experience: what makes a satisfactory or great journey?

What makes a satisfactory journey?



infogram

What makes a great journey?



infogram

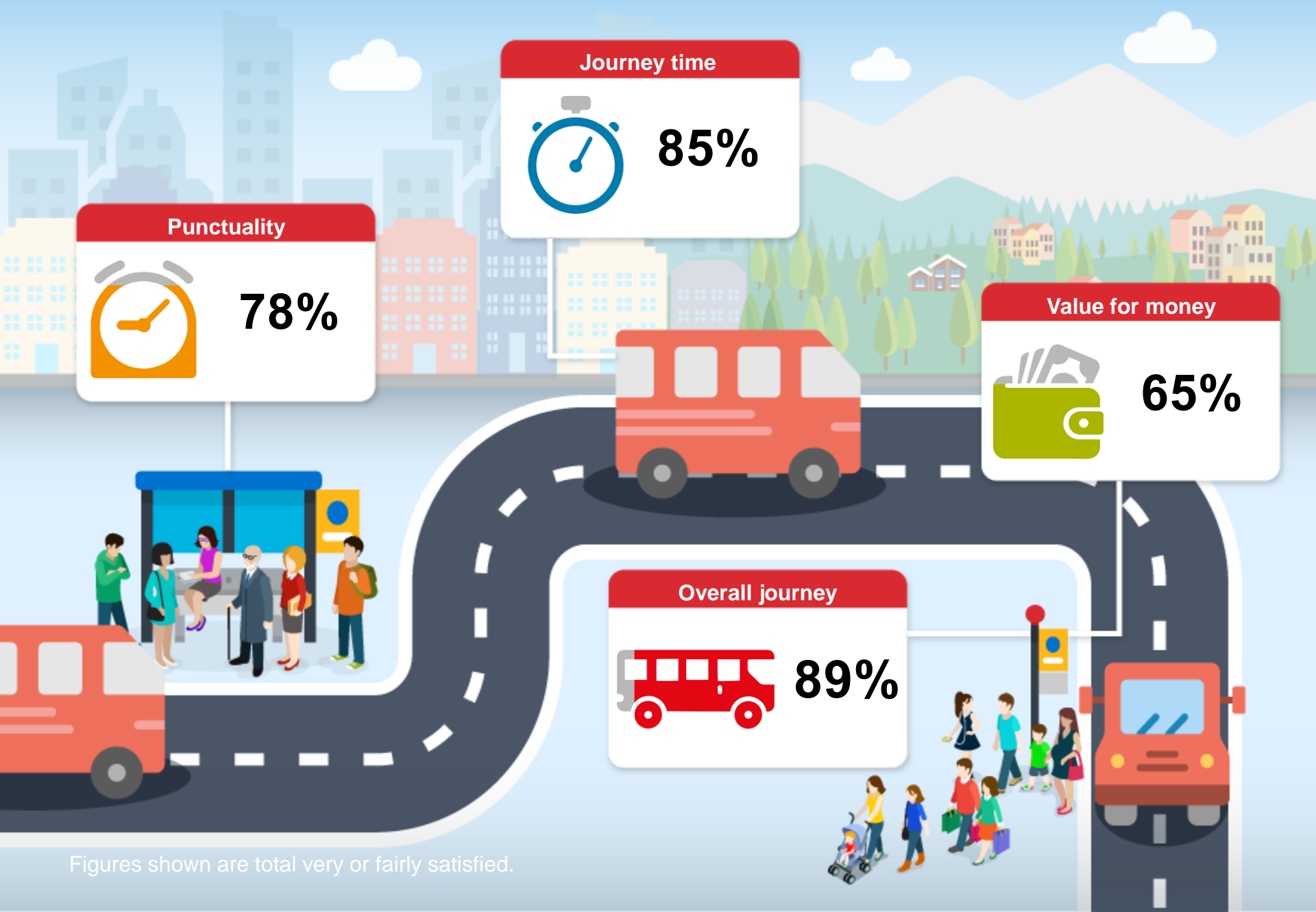
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Bus Passenger Survey – autumn 2017

Scotland – key results

15 March 2018



Figures shown are total very or fairly satisfied.



Bus Passenger Survey – autumn 2017

Emerging themes

15 March 2018

Some emerging themes

Here are a few more themes and stories emerging from the results that we will be sharing during our 'roadshow'

- How the passenger experience varies by peak and off-peak travel – which impacts upon waiting time, punctuality, journey time (including those factors affecting it), space on board and smoothness of the driving
- How younger passengers are more critical in their ratings of space on board (backing up what we saw in our young people's research)
- What impact have fare offers aimed at 16 to 21 year olds had?
- The positive impact of next stop audio and visual announcements upon the ratings of information provided on board
- The growth in smartcard, smartphone and contactless payments
- Are higher scores for seat comfort related to investment in new buses?
- Could a reduced frequency of bus travel, coupled with an increase in the proportion saying that they had no option to travel by other means provide clues to the decline in patronage?



Bus Passenger Survey – autumn 2017

Any questions?

Robert Pain and David Sidebottom



Nusrat Ghani MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport

The Government's view



**Matt Rodda MP, Shadow Minister for
Transport**

The opposition's view



David Sidebottom, Director, Transport Focus
Bus drivers: driving satisfaction!

What passengers say...the classic extremes!

- *“The driver was so polite, helpful and friendly. We wish there were more like him. Two weeks ago the same driver actually waited for my mother who is unable to walk, switched everything off, walked up to her shopping and accompanied her to her seat. What a perfect gentleman. Well done.”*
- *“The bus driver was miserable as usual. I don’t normally have issues with the buses, just staff.”*

Using the bus: what do young people think?

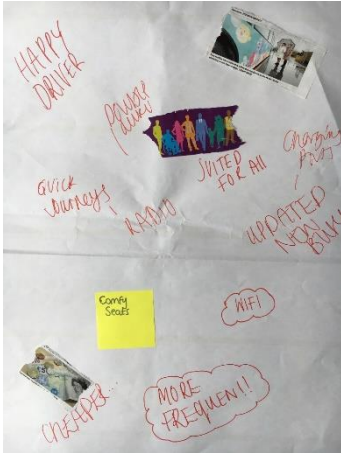


The role of 'freedom' and gaining independence

- Around 14/15yrs – starting to use different transport without parents. Gaining **independence**
 - Real appeal and like the idea of relaxing, talking to friends, enjoying the journey
 - Initial experiences inform development of attitudes towards buses & difficulties resonate for a while – not easily forgotten
- Getting the bus is a **core life skill** have to learn
 - Early experience can deter future use
- **Real fear factor: want to 'get it right' and not look/ feel silly**
 - How do I get there or find out best bus or route?
 - How do I catch the bus? Where is the stop? Is it safe?
 - How do I know what time will my bus arrive? What if it is late?
 - What do I say to bus driver? What fare am I asking for?
 - How much will it cost me? What if I get it wrong and asked to get off bus?
 - How will I know where to get off? What time are the buses coming back?

“The independence is a big one, being able to get the train and bus on their own is quite cool for young people who are still too young to drive”.
(Essex, 17-19s)

Key features of the perfect bus journey



“Clean, on time, drivers that greet you, maybe something to do on the bus like the Metro and more reliable, make sure it’s on time every time”. (Leeds, 17-19s)

- Main things are:
 - **Reliability of buses** (turning up on time)
 - **Clean seats and floors**,
 - Comfortable seats (leather effect)
 - Friendly bus driver – smile and say “hello”
 - Device charge points
 - Fast Wi-Fi (fast enough to stream music)
 - Better legroom
 - Newspapers?
- However, this in itself is not enough
 - It is also about **communication** of how easy and useful a bus journey can be
 - Digital display boards/live trackers

“Would be nice to have something that tells you where you are or when you are getting to a certain bus stop because I had to look on Google Maps on my phone, or at least for it to say the name of the bus stop at the actual stop”. (Essex, 14-16s)

Bus passengers' experience of delays and disruption

- Significant gap between passengers' experiences and their desire that bus drivers behave as the customer service representative during disruption
- Passengers want drivers to be providing **information**, demonstrating **empathy** and expressing **regret** during delays and disruption
- But they also recognise that, at times, there is genuine conflict between 'operations' and 'customer service' in a driver's role



Bus passengers' experience of delays and disruption

Research report
April 2013

Passenger**focus**
putting passengers first

What drivers said...

- Drivers tend to recognise disruption in the same way that passengers do (e.g. congestion, road works/blocks, diversions, weather, accidents, mechanical problems)
- Recognise that they are passengers' only point of contact
- But drivers tend to perceive passengers have more knowledge than they do – an assumption that things have been seen, read, understood and assimilated

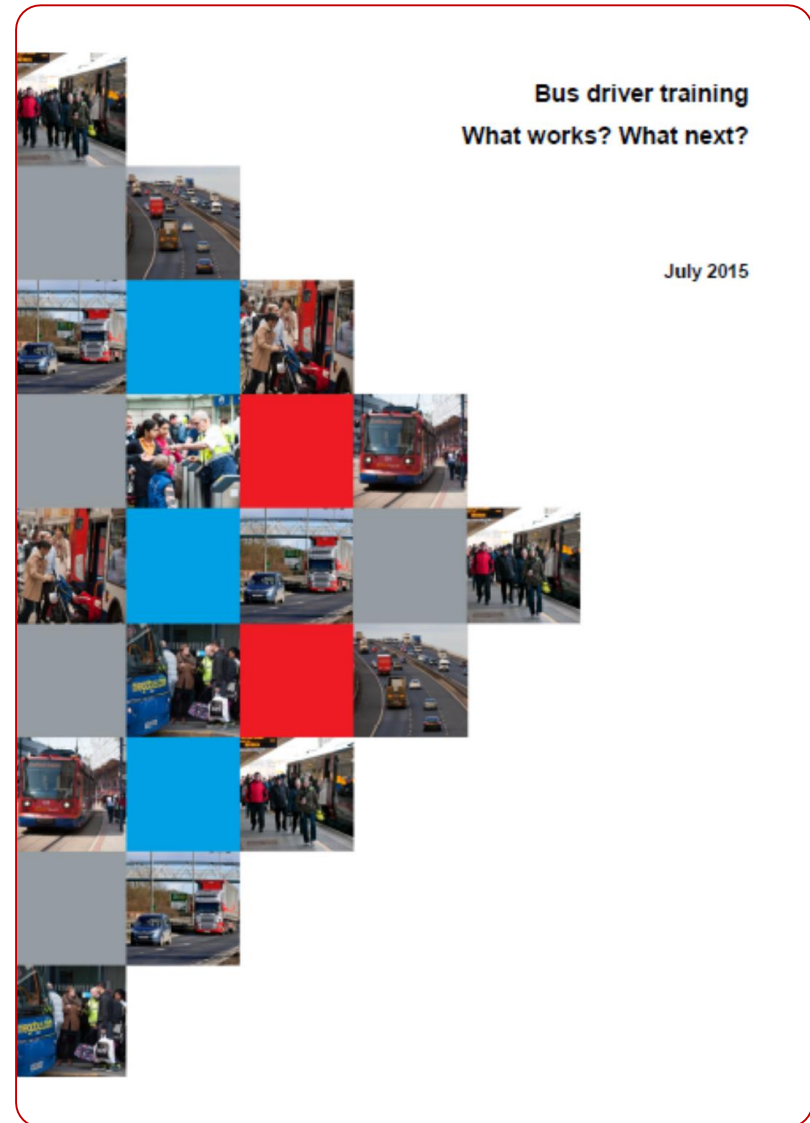
[For example] there's been an accident....you can get in touch with [your base] and say am I ok if I go up here, and they'll... say yes ok... and away you go – you're putting an effort in, which you know [the passengers] can see you doing so they appreciate that

They can see that something's happened there, it's not just a queue of traffic, they've probably seen that there's been an accident

You can see the posters up at the stop so they know the bus will divert

Bus driver training: What works? What next?

- Talked to a wide range of bus operator staff and other industry organisations
- 1-3 hours semi-structured interviews
- Provided with hours of access to training centres and training materials
- Watched training sessions and talked to trainers
- We even got to drive a bus!
- Reviewed our own passenger research data, verbatim comments from passengers and our own observations



Bus driver training. What works? What next?

Headlines...

- Recognising the central role of the driver and huge impact they have on passengers' travel experience
- Operators increasingly recruiting for customer service skills
- Significant gap between what passengers experience and their desire that bus drivers behave as the bus company's customer service representative
- Working to define best practice in bus driver customer service training

Bus driver training. What works? What next?

Headlines...

- Four fundamental pillars on which training rests
 - Recruitment and driver development
 - Development of training and training materials
 - Development of the trainers
 - Development of a customer service focused organisation
- Plus measuring effectiveness and outcomes
- Customer service does not begin and end with the driver, it is a whole-business responsibility



Maks Pruszewicz & Martijn Gilbert,
Reading Buses

Drivers – their role in delivering bus passenger satisfaction



Alex Warner, Flash Forward Consulting

What should the industry do to help drivers deliver better service?

FLASH FORWARD CONSULTING

What should the industry do to help bus drivers deliver better service?

15 March 2018

Alex Warner

Our passion for driving customer satisfaction

- Customer Experience Diagnostic Health Assessments for transport companies
- Deep, insightful analysis of every customer touchpoint in the end-to-end journey experience by experienced customer service commentators – focusing on factual evidence and the customer emotional aspects against their priority requirements for each touchpoint
- We then assess the internal inputs that drive the end experience
- Creating Customer Services Strategies and Action Plans for each company
- Customer Services training, coaching and mentoring – bus companies & bus stations
- Mystery shopping programmes
- Creation and auditing of Customer Services Standards
- Customer Service Columnist for “Passenger Transport” magazine
- Recruitment of key roles – Depot Manager to CEO



First impressions count



Induction 1-1 with Blazefield's Bearded Wonder



A zap-shot of a normal day for CityZap

 **Dale French**
@CityZapDale Following

Well done our **@yorkbus** 42 drivers! Really proud of all your communication with our passengers! Keep up the good work! 😊👍

 **Pauline Brelsford**
Excellent service thank you
2 h Like Reply  1

 **Dale French**
Thank you Pauline. We want to give you all an excellent service but a shame the traffic at the moment is making it hard for us to keep on time.
2 h Like Reply

 **Pauline Brelsford**
The communication you give give everyone makes a big difference. 😊
15 m Like Reply  1

 Write a reply...

 Write a comment...   

6:28 PM - 24 Nov 2017

5 Retweets 14 Likes 

  5  14 

Liverpool pools together for drivers





Groundbreaking First makes hay with journey makers



Stagecoach Yorkshire sets the record straight

Our Customer Care Code

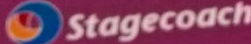

1. Take pride in your appearance (and that of your bus)
2. Stop at every bus stop when you see someone waiting (not everyone knows which bus they need)
3. Greet and make eye contact with everyone getting on and say "Thank you" or "Goodbye" when they get off
4. Keep calm and polite with every customer (even if they are not)
5. Use discretion and common sense to resolve a customer difficulty (don't start a conflict)
6. Say sorry when we're late, when things go wrong or if you can't resolve a problem (knowing our customer service contact details will help as well)
7. Always ensure customers are safely seated before pulling away
8. Provide extra assistance to customers who need it (more time, use the kneeler, ramp or give a helping hand)
9. Offer information about delays, diversions, service and fare changes
10. Drive safely and display courtesy to other road users (even when they drive badly)



Our Customer Care Code

Number 3

Greet and make eye contact with everyone getting on and say "Thank you" or "Goodbye" when they get off



Drivers' driving Dementia awareness



Route captains revolutionise Uno Bus!



**the crew are making
final preparations**
it's nearly here

DEPARTURE: 18-09-17

THE **COMET**



National heroes of our time



Getting under the pores of performance

join our team
vacancy: **mystery customer**



Are you due a check-up?



How healthy is your customer service? Let us take your pulse! Put your customer service proposition under the microscope of "Travel Test" columnist Alex Warner and the Flash Forward Consulting team with our root and branch Customer Health Assessment.



It's more than just a temperature check, our 'Customer Service Clinic' provides the ultimate fitness review of your customer experience, covering every touch-point, as well as those processes, behaviours and activities that impact the service your customers receive.



We'll diagnose those improvements that will best drive customer satisfaction and revenue, creating and helping implement your Customer Services Strategy to delight customers, day in day out.

To find out more, email enquiries@flashforwardconsulting.co.uk or check out www.flashforwardconsulting.co.uk



How was
your journey?



Driver attitude and helpfulness – key findings

- In 6 years, our average results have moved from Orange to Amber (Sub-standard to adequate, but unmemorable)
- Driver smartness/uniform adherence and appearance has improved most significantly
- Improvements too in driving standards (pulling away once seated and driving with caution)
- Eye-contact and driver greetings are getting better, however, those welcomes that leave a glow when taking one's seat are the minority
- Inconsistency between first and last impressions – there tends to be a correlation but still schisms
- Product awareness has still not really improved – leading to suspicion from drivers
- Pro-actively giving information during delays or when things go wrong more generally is limited
- Automation of the initial transaction means there is a greater challenge for drivers to give a greeting of sorts and over-compensate
- Processes for managing drivers haven't moved forward sufficiently back at the ranch – training is better and there is a greater level of intent and awareness that something needs to change amongst management, but it is still an aspiration, rather than genuine conviction
- Increased extent to which driver demographics reflect the communities that they serve and where this is the case, the rapport seems better

Some of the underlying issues

The Job

- Vehicle defects recorded but not followed-up on
- Running times too tight
- Lack of briefing on product changes
- Cut-backs in inspectors and travel shops as well as marketing collateral leaves drivers feeling overwhelmed with all the queries and unsupported
- Lack of simplification of fares/product overload
- Claim culture – accidents and customer expectations
- Congestion
- Social media

Structure

- No formal Customer Service benchmarking/body
- Late notification of rosters and if annual leave is granted
- Rosters are not family friendly
- Limited incentive to progress into management
- Performance management process undefined (and by exception)
- Impact of depot closures
- Controllers overworked and limited coaching around impact of decisions on customers
- No time built in to brief drivers on products

Culture

- The industry still doesn't make a song and dance about driver attitude issues
- Duty Managers or Allocators lack interpersonal skills
- No real feedback on how they are doing (unless there is a complaint)
- Not asked for views on network or product changes
- Lack of rounded training for managers
- Managers ground down by re-structures
- Pay-scales for first line supervisors and managers have fallen behind
- Diversity agenda barely visible

What drivers say - indeed.co.uk

- “Back-stabbers the lot of them”
- It will mess up your family time”
- “Vile place to work”
- “Management team make bad decisions to do with drivers rights, using the wrong equipment in wrong places, with a general feeling of a poorly managed supervisory team”
- “the hardest part of my job is not the driving, it’s having to deal with the company’s inconsistency’s I currently work for – expecting vehicles to be looked after and it’s clear they aren’t, placing the wrong vehicles on routes which are not suitable for said work. But the most rewarding and enjoyable thing is knowing I am providing a bus service to people who have no other means of getting about, I am providing a friendly face to their day out”



What drivers say - indeed.co.uk

Buses knew how to look after their staff. The routes were varied and they provided good training and career progression. The staff were friendly and everybody was made to feel welcome.

- “Horrible place to work – NOT a family friendly employer, they promise you the world to get you into the company, then treat you like dirt after you have signed an agreement with them that keeps you there for a minimum of 2 years”
- “They invite you in with a lot of promises that are not all they seem. You jump through hoops, get shafted after the hoops, customers are full of abusiveness, not respectful to you as a driver nor the companies vehicles. This job destroys families”
- It’s an easy flexible company to work for and as long as you’re able to be very patient, friendly person, then this can be a great job/career choice. On any typical day, you’ll get the odd couple of impolite passengers but as long as you don’t take things personally you’ll be fine. Only you as the driver can make your job difficult, such as coming to work tired or stressed”
- The experience of dealing with the public was the best part and being one of the biggest vehicles on the road. But the company itself didn’t care about the staff without the driver no money would be made and they looked at drivers as the lowest of the low, you’re just a number”

On-Board environment (& relationship with drivers)

- From our own reviews, operators have generally upped their game around the provision of on-board notices and information
- Poster frames have improved and there are less DIY notices out there
- Our record is 13 types of font size and house styles on one bus
- Cleanliness still remains a concern and outsourcing has worsened the situation
- We tend to find that where the driver is in a more welcoming environment, particularly in the vicinity of his cab, that it sub-consciously lifts his/her behaviour to customers
- There is a schism in terms of the interface between Operations and Engineering in bus companies when it comes to issues such as accountability for leaflets and maintenance of notices
- No standard in which drivers are responsible for clearing litter or security checks
- Drivers are still not reporting issues that undermine customer satisfaction
- But, some are ground down by a failure of management to deal with vehicle defects when they have been logged
- With drivers largely abdicating responsibility for information provision aspects, so too this leads them to be, in many cases, anything but product ambassadors
- Too many ticket and product types, too many marketing campaigns not briefed out properly – and that's even before we start talking about Apps, Wi-Fi and e-ticketing

20 point Blueprint to break the cycle!



- 1/. Customer Services Vision, Strategy and derivative Customer Service Plans
- 2/. Driver to Staff Manager ratio – it's a false economy and needs resolving!
- 3/. Proving you can emancipate the Staff Manager to exit the surgery – psychological block
- 4/. Proper process for senior leadership visibility with customers & drivers (non-patronising)
- 5/. Create momentum around customer service scores & insight – cascade briefs from TF
- 6/. National Customer Services Standards– & SOPs (particularly for on-board presentation)
- 7/. Invigorating industry-wide customer experience training– with external benchmarking
- 8/. Proper follow-up training – structured, recorded “Job Chats” – industry standard/process
- 9/. Mystery shopping with conviction – good, bad or indifferent, feed the results back
- 10/. Product awareness coaching, support & tools – national online app/manual and ambassador training

20 point Blueprint to break the cycle!

- 11/. Network Planning – involve drivers – running times & their insight on customer needs
- 12/. Programme to identify and fast-track future customer service leaders from driving team
- 13/. Competency framework for recruitment, performance management and development
- 14/. Stop incessant, debilitating re-structures, the grind factor ultimately impacts on drivers
- 15/. Properly pay and train first line managers (across full spectrum of skills)
- 16/. Relentlessly focus on the Diversity Agenda – not just rhetoric but action!
- 17/. Greater collaboration on developing drivers, including loan system
- 18/. Industry bodies / seminars raising profile of customer service
- 19/. Create pan-industry customer service group (like Customer Experience Board at RDG)
- 20/. Nationwide customer experience accreditation process for each operator





Jeff Halliwell, Chair Transport Focus

Q&A



Bus Passenger Survey Publication and briefing event

15 March 2018