



Transport User Community

How has bus travel changed and returning to school

September 2020

Who is in our bus community?

60

people using bus prior
to COVID-19



Across England,
Scotland and Wales



Mix of payment
methods



Mix of those currently
using bus and not
using bus



A spread of age,
gender and ethnicity



Some have
disabilities

What did we ask our community?



Q1. How do you feel about bus travel?

How have bus users' perspectives about bus travel changed as a result of COVID-19? What does the bus feel like, and how is it experienced on an emotional level during the pandemic?

Q2. Returning to school

How do bus users feel about the prospect of children returning to school this week? What impact, if any, do they expect it to have on their bus journeys?



"I feel like the buses are a lot more procedural and structured, and consequently a lot more empty and clean. There's a lot less rubbish!"

Female, 21, South East

"Since COVID the buses are very different with a lot less people on board giving you a lot more room which is nice. In addition, people wearing masks tend to talk less so it's a more relaxing peaceful journey."

Male, 39, South East

"I'm apprehensive about using the buses because half the time people aren't obeying the mask rule and even if they arrive on time it's not always the case that you'll be allowed on board."

Male, 55, North West

"No fun! Meeting people on the bus and having a chat or getting to know people on the bus is no more because nobody's free to have a conversation with others"

Male, 39, Yorks and Humber

The community is stoic about children returning to school and the impact it will have on congestion

It is widely recognised that children going back to school will make buses more crowded and the roads more congested at peak times.

However, many (particularly, perhaps unsurprisingly, those with children) have a sense of the **greater good** – children need to go back to school more than the community needs to use the bus. Most are happy to **avoid peak times** and have sufficient flexibility in their work or leisure commitments to allow for this.

Most feel that it's too early to say – they are still **committed to the bus**, and many do not have much choice in the matter. They will figure out a way of adapting to the congestion, most likely taking earlier buses into work (for example 6am rather than 7am).

"I have no choice because that'll be the cheapest means of taking my children to school. So it's not going to have any impact on me personally."

Male, 39, Yorks and Humber

"I'm glad they're going back to school, I'm fed up of having them around the house all day. I imagine this will cause the buses to be busier; it'll be annoying for adults and you know the kids won't wear the masks."

Male, 55, North West

"I'll happily continue to take the bus, but I think the buses will be overcrowded. Children will be late for school and adults will be late for work – there'll be a few teething problems to start."

Female, 40, North West

"I'd either travel for the first bus at 6:40am and earlier home to avoid the school kids. My bus is standing room only and it passes three schools. I'll avoid this at all costs."

Female, 46, North West