



Transport User Community

Summer travel plans

May 2021

What did we ask our community?

Summer travel plans

In this research we asked respondents what their plans are for the summer. Will they travel for leisure purposes as lockdown eases? What do they think of the different 'steps' of easing restrictions in their area, and what is their overall level of confidence using public transport?

We have periodically checked in with our participants over the course of nine months to gauge their level of confidence in taking public transport. How, as the route out of lockdown emerges, has this changed?

Who is in our rail and bus communities?

60|60

60 people using rail to commute and 60 using bus, prior to Covid-19



Across England, Scotland and Wales



Mix of payment methods



Mix of those currently using public transport and those not



A spread of age, gender and ethnicity



Some have disabilities

Who is our road users community?

40

people using
motorways and major
'A' roads in England



Across England



Mix of vehicle types



Mix of commuters,
leisure and business
travellers, and those
who drive for work



A spread of age,
gender and ethnicity



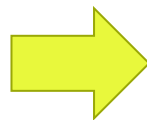
Some have
disabilities

As of April 2021, respondents feel more confident taking public transport for leisure purposes this summer

- **Public transport feels a great deal safer now than it did at the start of our research.** However, passengers have to weigh up multiple risks as restrictions ease.
- **Taking public transport is still seen as a risk**, and one that is *compounded* by the risk of going to the pub, or seeing a friend indoors. Many expect to 'hedge their bets' by using a private vehicle to reach their leisure destinations so that they are not undertaking more than one (perceived) risky behaviour in one go.
- **However, respondents are very willing to see public transport as an *option*.** Inevitably, there are cases where the train or the bus has significant benefits over car or motorcycle, and users will take advantage of these benefits when restrictions allow. This includes members of the roads community, although they are more likely to default to the car unless they see public transport as being more convenient for a particular journey.

August 2020 (Male, 55, South East, Bus)

I am apprehensive about using the buses because 50% of the time I've used the buses I've seen people not obeying the mask wearing rule. The buses are unreliable at the moment because even if they arrive on time, due to the limited capacity it's not always the case you will be allowed onboard. More random spot checks by the police should be made with higher fines.



April 2021

From 17th May I'll still plan to remain cautious and wait until the covid figures drop to a level where I'm happy. From the 21st June - at this point I might be happy to make visits to the pub etc. I still would not be happy in large crowds. I would wait until a larger percentage of the population was vaccinated. All trips I'll be making as much as possible using my own transport (ie car). It's not that I feel not safe using public transport but I why would I take the risk unless I must.

August 2020 (Female, 56, Scotland, Bus)

Before the virus, the bus was a very easy, convenient and cheap means of travel for me. Now I am too worried to go by bus because I need to touch metal surfaces while travelling which increases my anxiety level. I'm also confused if it's good idea to go to bus.

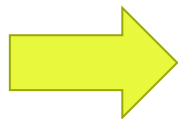


April 2021

I will be making trips to non-essential shops on the bus and I'm definitely going into town. Thinking of visiting my sister in Southampton Manchester and Nottingham and I'll be going by train for definite and then maybe travel with them in the car if we go out and about.

August 2020 (Female, 25, South East, Rail)

*They need to introduce more staff to control the carriages and seating, masks need to be worn at all times, hand sanitiser on carriages and stations. The companies need to have guidelines for passengers. **I haven't seen anything from any company at the minute and it's worrying me.***



April 2021

*I'll use the train to go to the Metrocentre because I hate driving there. **On the 17th May we would love to go on a train to York.** My daughter loves trains and I want to show her a big one.*

Almost universally, respondents will avoid international travel this summer

- **Air travel is seen as the most risky travel option during the coronavirus pandemic.** This is exacerbated by the virus resurging in European countries like France, and a general sense of uncertainty as to which countries might be added to the banned list at short notice.
- **A small handful have booked travel abroad,** having made sure they can receive a refund in case of cancellation. However, this was rare.
- **Respondents felt more comfortable booking staycations within the UK.** Most intend to make these journeys using the car if possible.
 - *However, this is often for pragmatic rather than risk-related reasons. They expect to travel with children, luggage, pets and so on, and probably would not have made these journeys by public transport even pre-Covid.*

*I will definitely start increasing the travel I make on buses and trains now given the stay at home message has been lifted. I look forward to seeing friends and family. **I am still being careful, but I will absolutely be travelling more than I have over the past few months!***

Female, 21, South East (Bus)

If all goes to plan, by the 21st of June I will be back in the office two days a week so it will mean regular travel on trains. My hours will be flexible so I will try out different times on the trains to find a setting I'm most comfortable with, like 8am arrival or 10am arrival. And in general I will be getting out and about to see people on buses and trains.

Female, 35, East of England (Rail)

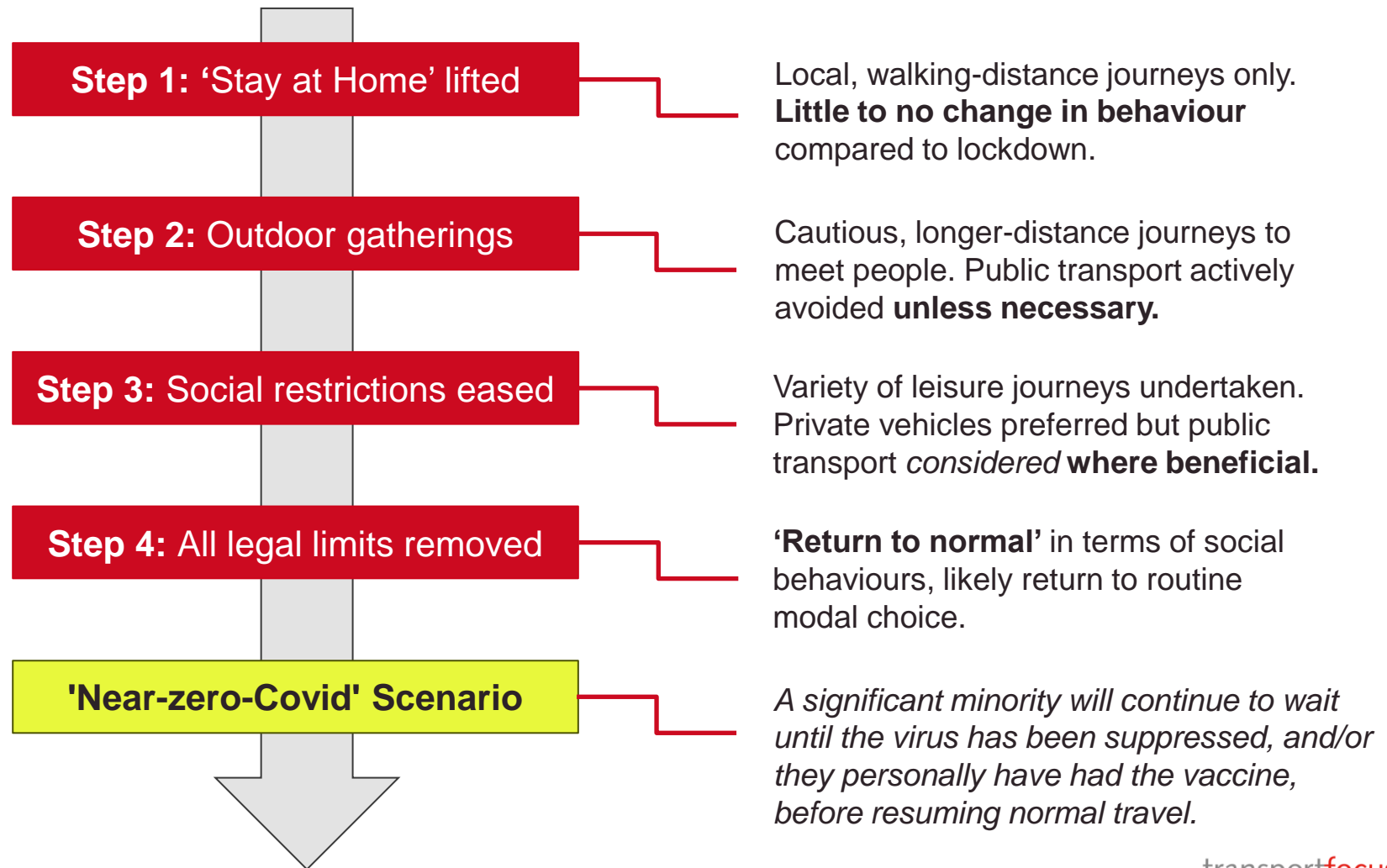
*Most if not all of these trips involve my use of the car. Staycations are high on the list and we will be travelling to Scotland, Liverpool and Norfolk on short breaks. These will all necessitate the use of our car. So in this respect my travel arrangements will stay the same as pre-COVID. **I don't have any objection to public transport after the 21st June, when all our plans are in force.***

Male, 54, South East (Bus)

I will continue to be careful as restrictions ease. I won't rush back to the office or attend any outdoor gatherings. I have received my first vaccine, however i will still be cautious about where I go. I don't intend to rush to a bar or restaurant. I will continue to drive, or use the train if travelling into the city centre. I would rather stay at home for a few months longer just until more people have been vaccinated.

Female, 46, Scotland (Rail)

How do our community members expect their travel behaviours to change as lockdown eases?



Note: A "generic" roadmap to account for the fact that our community includes those from Scotland, England and Wales

I hope to launch my new business at that time as it evolves around social contact. So from June the 21st I hope to be fully active in visiting companies, doing promotions, and getting people together, which will potentially involve being back on the road a couple of days a week.

Female, 56, North East (Roads)

Again I have stayed away from making too many plans, just in case they get cancelled. I do have a hen do and a wedding booked for the second half of the year and I've planned to drive to both of those. They are a few hours' drive away. If things lift, and I get the vaccine, I hope to look ahead and make more plans to see friends and family who live across the UK or overseas, and maybe book a holiday too!

Female, 35, North West (Roads)

*Well I was really hoping to be in a pub watching Scotland smash up England in the Euro's and have a dance in the fountain at Trafalgar Square but I guess I will just have to watch it at home... Jokes aside I can't wait for summer, in truth it's more like September because realistically that's when events are likely to be moving up a notch and that is my industry of work. **I want to hug people again, I want to jump on a plane, and sit in a café.***

Male, 39, South East (Roads)

Respondents feel that public transport will need to win passengers back, even in the summer of 2021

- **People benefit from being able to see friends and family again.** They are excited to do so, and will happily resume normal behaviours like going to restaurants as soon as, or shortly after, they are allowed to do so. However some will continue to remain very cautious until they have had both doses of the vaccine.
- **Being able to use public transport again is not seen as a benefit in the same way.** It is still seen as a risk, and passengers feel that *even a small risk* should be avoided if possible until the very end of the roadmap.
- **As a result, transport operators will need to continue to minimise risk, and push the benefits of public transport.** Respondents finally feel more willing to 'trade off' risk for some kind of reward after months in lockdown. whether in terms of convenience, price, or comfort, and it is up to transport operators to provide these benefits.
- Members of the **roads community are likely to default to the car** for their journeys, although they would consider the train or bus if they see them as more convenient or cost effective than the car for a particular journey.