



Awareness and effect of £2 bus fare

February 2023

Introduction



Transport Focus wanted to understand more about awareness of the recently introduced £2 bus fare and whether it has led to more journeys being made on buses.

From 1 January the government introduced a £2 capped single bus fare in England (outside of London). Participation in the scheme is voluntary and some bus companies chose not to take part but most major bus operators offer it. A £2 capped fare was introduced in Greater Manchester,

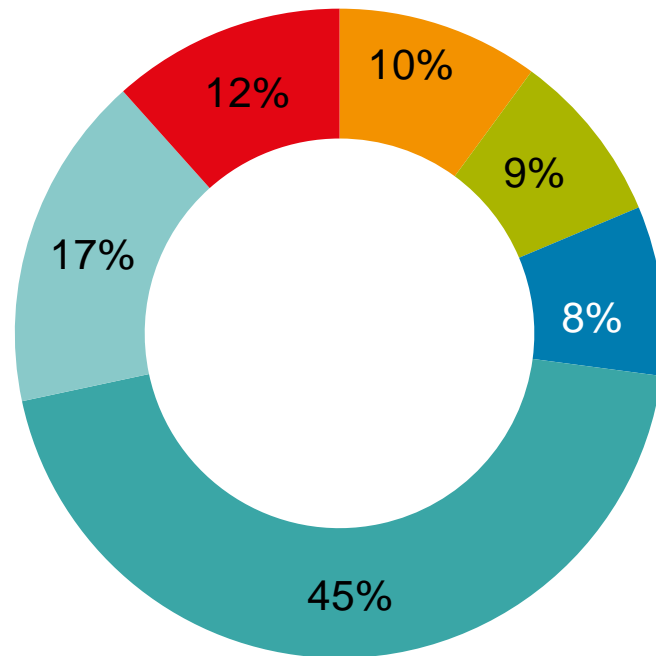
Merseyside and West Yorkshire in autumn 2022.

Transport Focus obtained the views of 1108 people; a representative subset of 2000 people across Great Britain interviewed over the weekend of 20-22 January 2023.

This report focuses on fare payers (under age 65) within England who live outside London. The questions we asked are shown in the appendix.

Just over a quarter use buses at least once a month. One in ten say they will never consider using them

Frequency of using buses



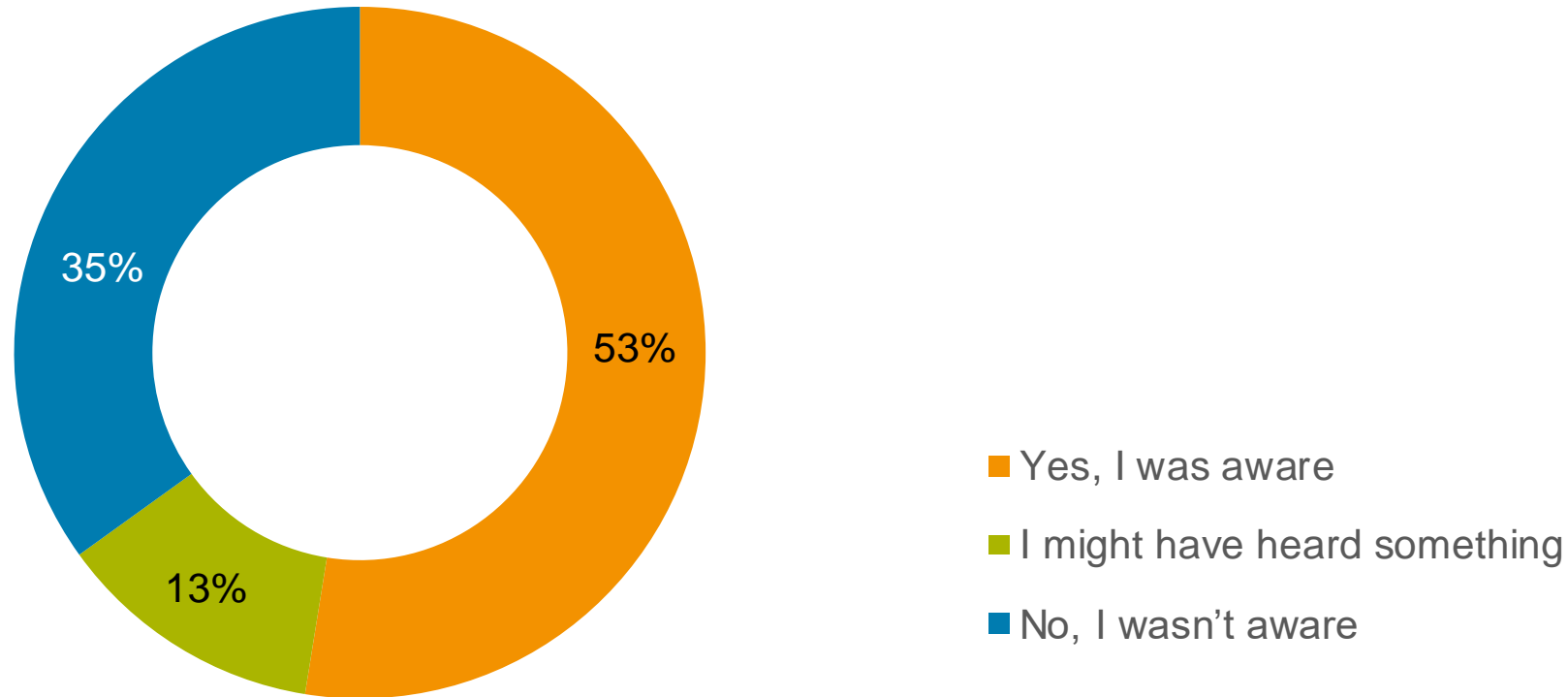
- Use at least several times a week
- Use around once a week
- Use at least once a month
- Use occasionally /only when I need to
- Never use buses but might consider using them
- Never use buses and would never consider them

Q2. Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses?

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Just over half are aware of the £2 capped single bus fare

Awareness of the £2 capped fare

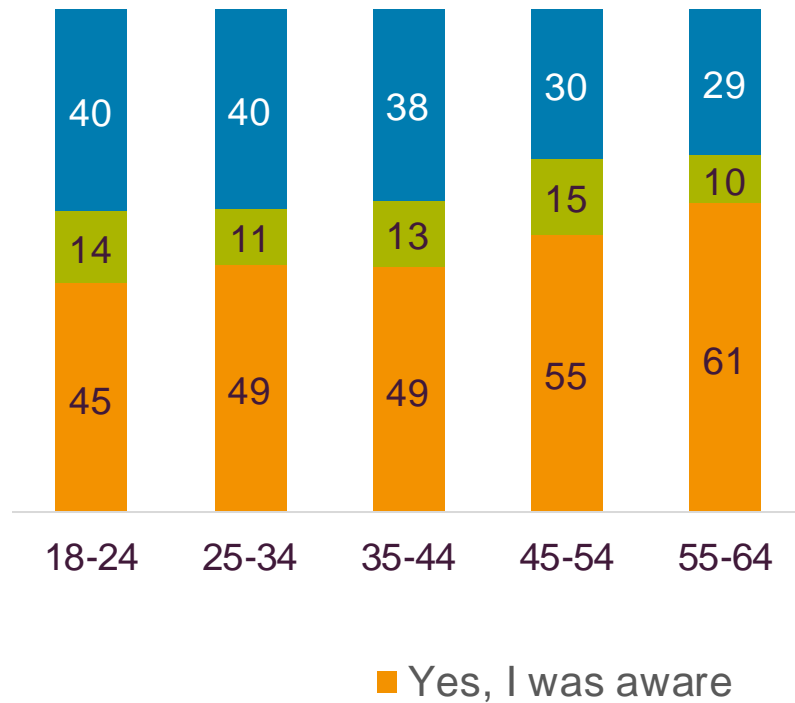


Q2. Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?

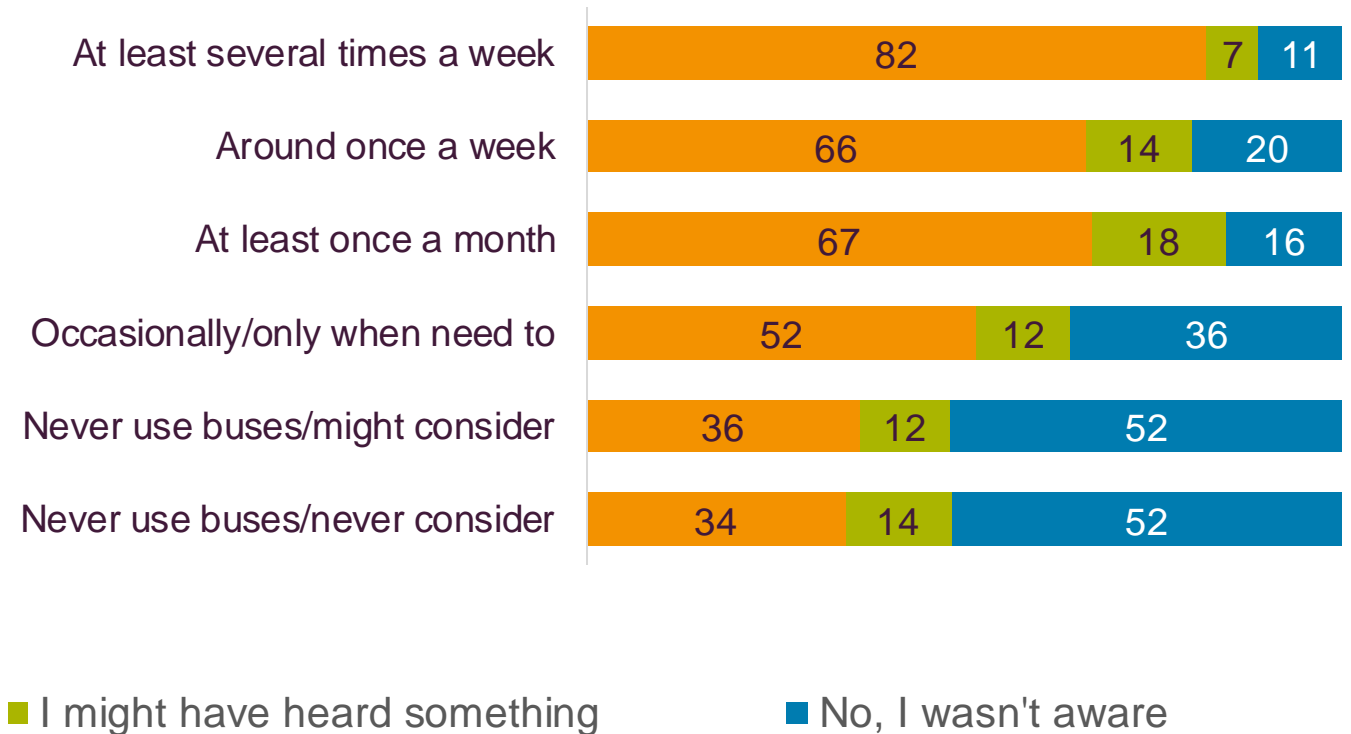
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Two thirds or more of regular users are aware of the £2 fare cap

Awareness by age



Awareness by frequency of use



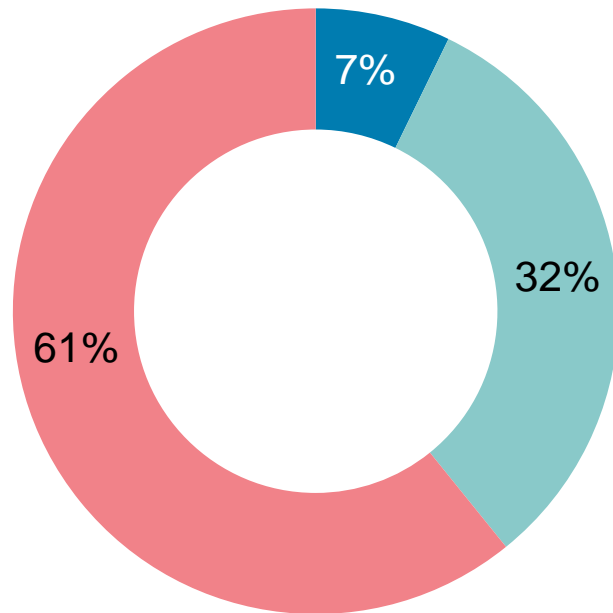
Q2. Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?

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Sample sizes: awareness by age (categories left to right): 163; 251; 244; 212 and 238. Awareness by frequency of use (categories top to bottom): 115; 95; 91; 504; 176; and 127.

Less than one in ten say it has already increased use, but almost a third might use buses more as a result of £2 fare

Whether £2 fare increases bus use



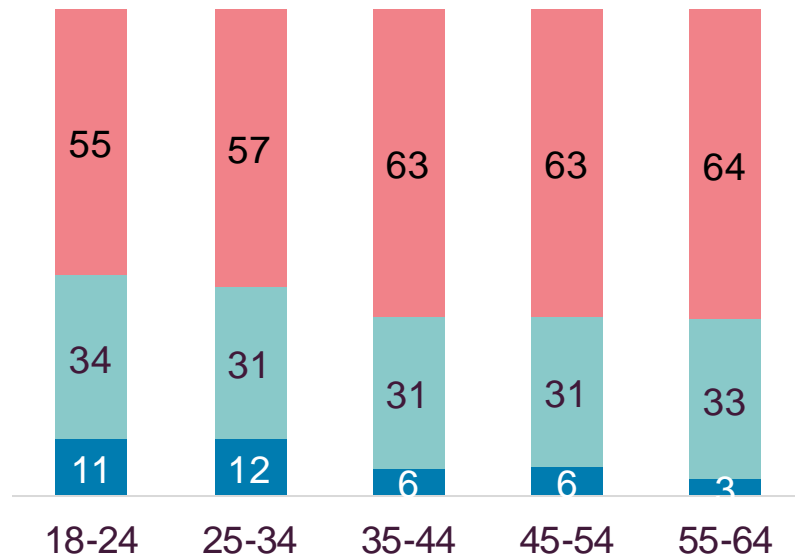
- Yes – I am already using buses more
- Yes – I might use buses more but haven't yet
- No – it makes no difference

Q2. Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses?

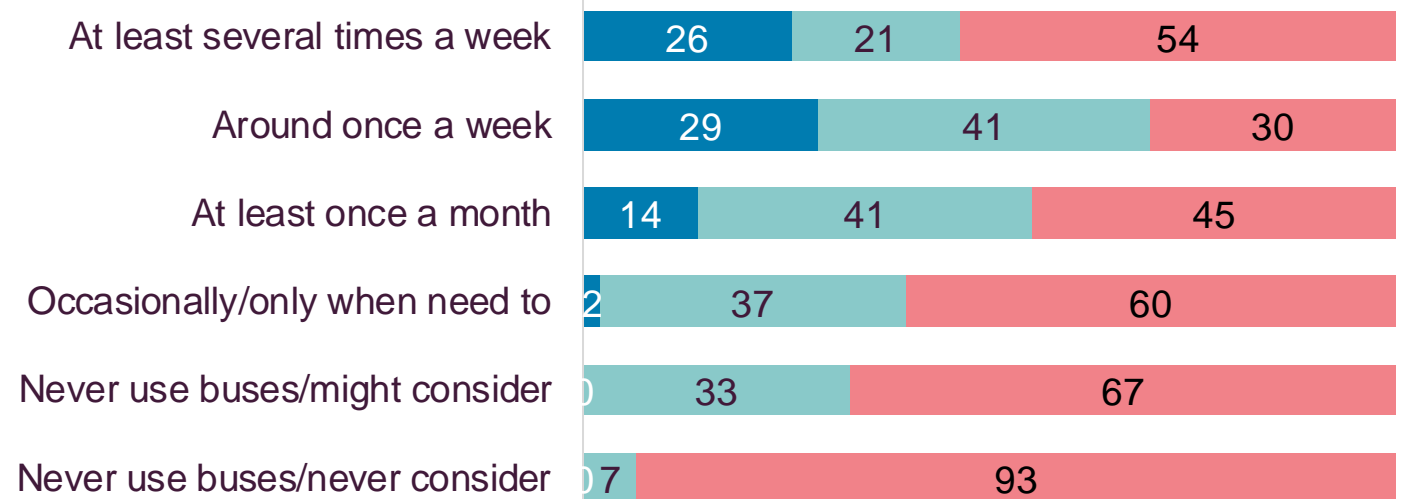
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The £2 fare has already increased use of buses for frequent users and the youngest age groups

Whether £2 fare increases use by age



Whether £2 fare increases use by frequency of use



- Yes - I am already using buses more
- Yes - I might use buses more but haven't yet
- No - it makes no difference

Q2. Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?

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Comments about
the £2 fare

Comments from those who are travelling more due to the £2 fare



My normal single ticket is £3.70 and I am therefore making a saving every time I catch the bus. I am now taking the opportunity to try places I haven't been to for a while and travelling by bus.

Yorkshire and Humberside, female, age 56

I feel like this is more of an appropriate price.

North East, male, age 24

It is so cheap and easy to get around by only paying £2. This will encourage me to use it more often.

East of England, male, age 48



Cheaper and easier than driving and parking.


East of England, female, age 30

It certainly makes it more affordable to afford buses during the cost of living crisis.

North West, male, age 27

My usual return fare to the nearest town is £9.60, so to be able to do the same journey for £4 for a while is amazing. I have no car so I am reliant on buses, so this is a great incentive to have and will give me more mobility and options, whilst saving money also.

East Midlands, female, age 44



Comments from those who might use bus more as a result of the £2 fare



It could work out cheaper than driving and paying for parking also will reduce pollution.

South East, female, age 62

Well because it used to be extortionate to get from my house in the outer suburbs to the town centre and not value for money as only a 15 min ride but now I feel it is fair.

North West, female, age 31

Would be handy for a day out at this new price.

North West, female, age 34



It will be cheaper than using the car and worth the inconvenience.

South West, female, age 60

I'm aware of spending in the cost-of-living crisis, and capping the bus fare would make me less concerned about racking up larger bus fees.

South East, female, age 22

Would make me less likely to use alternatives and consider the bus.

East of England, male, age 48



Comments by those who said the £2 fare would make no difference to their use of buses



Buses aren't reliable so I go by car so I know I will get there on time.

East Midlands, female, age 34

I buy a monthly ticket which is still the same price.

Yorkshire and Humberside, male, age 51

I very rarely use buses anyway, so I would be prepared to potentially pay more than this for the journeys I do take when necessary.

South West, female, age 23

I don't like buses they are not clean.

West Midlands, female, age 33



By time 4 of us get a return it's a lot.

East of England, male, age 44

It still takes long to get to your destination compared to tram and train.

North West, male, age 19

A day ticket would cost the similar amount to £4, which is two journeys capped at £2. So for me, this price cap doesn't make a difference for me.

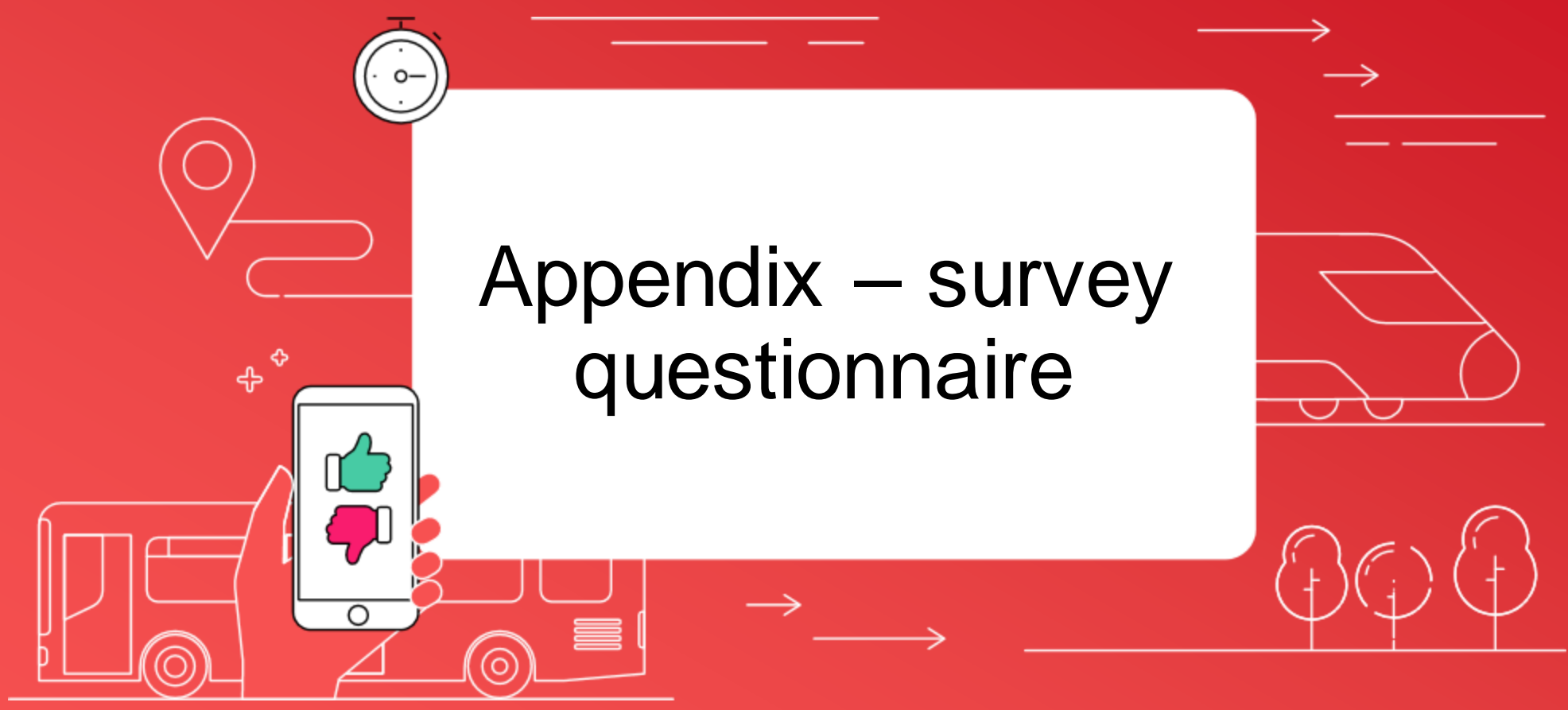
South West, male, age 21

From where I live a £4 return journey is still more expensive than using a car park in town.

South East, female, age 62



Appendix – survey questionnaire



Survey questions: awareness and effect of £2 bus fare

Q1 Which of these best describes how you use buses?

- a) Use at least several times a week
- b) Use around once a week
- c) Use at least once a month
- d) Use occasionally /only when I need to
- e) Never use buses but might consider using them
- f) Never use buses and would never consider them

a) Q2 Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?

- b) Yes, I was aware
- c) I might have heard something
- d) No, I wasn't aware

Q3 Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses

- a) Yes – I am already using buses more
- b) Yes – I might use buses more but haven't yet
- c) No – it makes no difference

Q4 Please tell us how and why the £2 capped fare [PIPE IN BASED ON Q3 ANSWER: has made you use buses more/might make you use buses more/makes no difference to your bus use]

TEXT FILL

Contact

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www.transportfocus.org.uk

Transport Focus is the operating name of the Passengers' Council

Transport Focus is the independent consumer organisation representing the interests of:

- rail passengers in Great Britain
- bus, coach and tram users across England outside London
- all users of England's motorways and major 'A' roads (the Strategic Road Network).

We work to make a difference for all transport users.

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