



Transport Focus

Your Bus Journey

Methodological overview – 2025 (full year)

June 2026



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1 Background

Your Bus Journey (YBJ) completed its third year of fieldwork in 2025 in 50 areas across England and Scotland. Since 2023, Your Bus Journey has been used to measure passengers' experiences of using bus services in England (excluding London), Scotland and Wales. Your Bus Journey provides evidence for decision makers, leading to improvements in the day to day running of bus services and better outcomes for passengers. The survey content includes the bus stop environment, punctuality, 'on bus' comfort, and the standards of the bus driver, together with overall journey satisfaction, value for money ratings, and more.

Transport Focus had previously run the Bus Passenger Survey (BPS) from April 2009 to provide a robust and comprehensive measure of bus passengers' journey experiences within its remit area (England outside of London). The survey could not take place during the Covid pandemic, which gave Transport Focus an opportunity to completely review the way it was conducted. With the review complete, and following pilots and trial surveys, the updated survey was re-launched as Your Bus Journey in 2023, with the same broad objectives as its predecessor.

From 2023 onwards, Your Bus Journey, fieldwork took place either 'on bus' or 'at stop'. For at stop shifts, fieldworkers were given a map and postcodes of a cluster of bus stops within a busy area (likely to be a town centre or bus station) and instructed to roam around these stops, concentrating on recruiting bus passengers from the busier stops. Transport Focus invited local transport authorities and/or bus service operators to commission the survey for their area using the same methodology and questionnaire.

BVA BDRC was appointed by Transport Focus to provide the market research agency services needed to carry out the survey from 2023-2025. In June 2025, BVA BDRC was acquired by Ipsos, and the contract moved with BVA BDRC. As such, most of 2025 was conducted by BVA BDRC, but towards the end of the year, use was made of interviewers working for Ipsos as well as the BVA BDRC/Perspective interviewers for recruiting passengers. Throughout this report, we will refer to BVA BDRC, but it is to be understood that the company was transitioning to Ipsos systems during this time.

BVA BDRC conducted research in accordance with the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct; it was also accredited with the ISO 20252 Quality Assurance and ISO 27001 IT and Data Security Standards. BVA BDRC was an MRS Company Partner Scheme member.

This document describes the methodology in general and specifics as they relate to the 2025 YBJ survey. If there are any further questions about the methodology deployed in the survey, please contact Transport Focus by email at yourbusjourney@transportfocus.org.uk.

2 Survey Overview

Your Bus Journey (YBJ) was designed to provide results that are statistically representative of bus passenger journeys made within a Primary Sampling Unit (PSU). A passenger journey is defined as one leg of an individual trip made on a local bus service. In 2025 PSUs were typically local transport authority areas or in a small number of cases, a bus operator. The survey measured individual journey experience. It was designed to provide results that can be used at the local area level, and at the broader country level.

Recruitment of survey respondents took place both at bus stop clusters and on-board buses. For operator samples, all recruitment took place on board buses as it would be too logistically difficult to recruit those just boarding one operator's buses at stops. For local transport authority (LTA) areas, the number of fieldwork shifts were split relatively evenly between on board buses and at bus stops, although this did vary a little by area with some areas having more shifts on bus and some more at stops, depending on how well different methods performed in terms of the number of people completing the survey in 2023 and 2024. This was standardised later with weighting applied to all local authority areas, as detailed in section 7.3 in this report.

Fieldworkers discussed the survey briefly with individual passengers on board buses or while they were waiting for a bus or just departed from a bus and invited them to take part in the survey. Those passengers wishing to take part filled in a self-completion questionnaire after their journey (details of the questionnaire and data collection method are given in sections 4 and 5). The survey was open to passengers aged 16 years and over due to Market Research Society guidelines preventing the interviewing of people aged under 16 years without parental consent. Weighting was applied at PSU level to correct for differential response rates by age, gender, the day and time of day when travelling and by whether the passenger was recruited at a bus stop or on board a bus. Weighting was also applied to proportionate the individual PSU relative to all the others included in the survey when reporting on national results.

The following two tables show the PSUs, or areas, split by two different forms of classification:

- Area type (based upon local authority government structure, or bus operator network)
- Area rural/urban category (based on the 2011 Local Authority Rural Urban Classification).

Table 2.1 shows area type – this was split into PTE (Passenger Transport Executives), Unitary Authorities, Two Tier Authorities, Operators and Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships. This classification was previously used for the Passenger Volumes model discussed later at the sampling stage. Table 2.2 shows area rural/urban category, split into Urban Metropolitan, Urban Other, Semi-rural, Rural and Scotland. This was based on the general make-up of the area and was used for the Passenger Volumes model used in 2025. This was also used in the reports, for areas to compare themselves to other similar areas.

2.1 The Primary Sampling Units surveyed in 2025 – by area type

PTE Authorities	Unitary authorities	Two tier authorities	Operators not aligned to any authority areas	Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships
Greater Manchester	Blackpool	Derbyshire	Reading Buses	HITRANS (Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership)
Liverpool City Region	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	East Sussex	Cambridge and Peterborough Busways	
South Yorkshire	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	Hampshire	West of England Bristol Boost	
Tyne & Wear	Cheshire East	Lancashire & Blackburn with Darwen		
West Midlands	Cheshire West & Chester	Norfolk		NESTRANS (North East of Scotland Transport Partnership):
West Yorkshire	City of York	Nottinghamshire		
	Cornwall	Oxfordshire		
	Derby City	Staffordshire		
	County Durham	Suffolk		SEStran (South East of Scotland Transport Partnership)
	East Riding of Yorkshire	Surrey		
	Greater Nottingham	Warwickshire		
	Leicester City	West Sussex		SPT (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport):
	Luton	Worcestershire		
	Northumberland			
	North East Lincolnshire			SWESTRANS (South West of Scotland Transport Partnership)
	North Yorkshire			
	Plymouth			
	Portsmouth			Tactran (Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership)
	Stoke on Trent			
	Tees Valley			
	Thurrock			
	West of England CA and North Somerset			
	Warrington			

2.2 The Primary Sampling Units surveyed in 2025 – by rural/urban category

Urban Metropolitan	Urban Other	Semi-Rural	Rural	Scotland
Greater Manchester	Blackpool	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	Cornwall	HITRANS (Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership)
Liverpool City Region	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	Cheshire East	County Durham	
Tyne & Wear	City of York	Cheshire West & Chester	East Riding of Yorkshire	
South Yorkshire	Derby City	Derbyshire	Norfolk	NESTRANS (North East of Scotland Transport Partnership)
West Midlands	Lancashire & Blackburn with Darwen	East Sussex	Northumberland	
West Yorkshire	Leicester City	Hampshire	North Yorkshire	
	Luton	Nottinghamshire	Oxfordshire	SEStran (South East of Scotland Transport Partnership)
	North East Lincolnshire	Staffordshire	Suffolk	
	Greater Nottingham	Warwickshire		
	Plymouth	Worcestershire		SPT (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport)
	Portsmouth			
	Reading Buses Network			
	Stoke-on-Trent			SWESTRANS (South West of Scotland Transport Partnership)
	Surrey			
	Thurrock			
	Tees Valley			Tactran (Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership)
	Warrington			
	West of England and North Somerset			
	West Sussex			

3 Sampling

The sampling process was designed to ensure representative results were achieved for each Primary Sampling Unit (PSU) surveyed. Sampling was carried out by BVA BDRC and checked for sense from Transport Focus.

Sampling was conducted assuming an average of 9 surveys completed per shift for most new areas, and using average completes per shift from the 2023 and 2024 surveys for areas that took part in those. The number of shifts in each area was split between fieldwork that was to take place on bus and at stop. In most places, this was an even split, but in some cases more shifts were planned to happen on bus or at stop, based on how productive each type of shift had been in 2023 and 2024. A different approach was taken to sampling each of these shift types:

3.1 Sample design – on bus sampling

3.1.1 Sample universe

A sample of bus routes was designed for each PSU. When planning the sample for 2025's survey in late 2024, the sample universe was sourced from the Department for Transport's (DfT's) Bus Open Data (BODs). To ensure the research encompassed the totality of routes in any given PSU, the starting point was to use the information from the Bus Open Data to make a list of every bus service and every timetabled occurrence of each service that runs within each PSU. Bus journeys that started outside the hours of 06.00 and 21.59 were excluded, as these were outside the fieldwork hours.

This data source had some additional key fields, including: the local transport authority through which the route runs, whether or not it crossed a local transport authority boundary, the journey length in minutes, the start/finish bus stops. Some minor points are acknowledged regarding the use of these files as a sample source.

- In isolated cases, some routes or operators have been found to have been omitted. This is particularly the case in Scotland, where data was instead collected from Travelline Scotland, due to the Bus Open Data missing the majority of routes. For other areas, this did not affect a noticeable proportion of journeys and only occurred occasionally in the databases for one or two local authority areas. It has been the result of data being provided to Bus Open Data at a slightly different time for some regions or local authorities.
- A small proportion of journeys sampled in advance of the fieldwork have been withdrawn or changed (i.e. timetable changes) by the time of fieldwork itself. The effect of this has been relatively minor and has usually been due to local changes made in the period between sampling and fieldwork.
- There are also some instances of journeys being added or amended in some areas – e.g. due to journeys being switched to different operators.

Steps have been taken to mitigate the effect of these. Local authorities and operators were sent a list of routes being included in the survey and were asked to inform the research agency about any routes or operators which were likely to change significantly (e.g. be withdrawn or see major timetable changes) within the next few months, or any major routes or operators that were missing from the files. Additionally, at the midpoint of the survey, a further file was drawn from Bus Open Data. This was compared to the current selected sample to identify withdrawn routes, timetable changes and new operators or routes not included in the original file.

This resulted in some small changes to the route selection, where local authorities provided information about:

- Services which had been selected, but which were due to change significantly by the time of or during the fieldwork (e.g. be withdrawn or reduced in frequency or see a major route change).
- Services which covered certain areas which were missing from the original selection.
- High-patronage routes which were missing from the selection.

3.1.2 Sampling process

The sampling process is described below:

The journey duration of every timetabled occurrence of every bus service was calculated using the stated start and end times provided by Bus Open Data. Journeys reaching beyond the Area boundary used the proportion of the journey within the Area boundary (unless this was less than 30% of its total route time, and the portion of the journey within the area was under 15 minutes; such journeys were removed from this initial list). The PSU list (of every timetabled occurrence of every bus route) was then sorted in descending journey lengths.

A 'Passenger Value' (PV) was then applied to each individual bus journey, representing a relative volume of passengers estimated to be on board during each vehicle journey. This was based on the footfall counts conducted on bus during the 2024 survey, and subsequent modelling work:

- The total number of passengers who were on the bus or who boarded the bus during a five minute period were counted by interviewers on the majority of on bus shifts, with counts taking place on both outbound and inbound journeys (as, for example, journeys going into town centres in the morning are likely to be busier than those going out of town, and vice versa in the evenings). The counts were scheduled to take place within the first and last journey legs that interviewers would take on buses within each shift. Interviewers set alarms on their phones to remind them to complete these counts at these times, but to continue recruiting if they were in the middle of talking to someone when the alarm went off and conduct the count immediately after they had finished recruiting the current person.
- This data was used to generate models to predict the number of people travelling on each bus service depending on:

- Area (or type of area type if that PSU was not surveyed in 2024 and did not therefore have its own counts and model)
 - Duration
 - Time of day and day of week when travelling
 - Operator (one of the 'big five'², another major operator in certain areas, or 'other' operators)
- Passenger values determined in this way have been found to correlate well with published journey volume statistics when aggregated at total Local Authority level (but are superior to the published figures because they are applicable at the level of individual bus journeys).
 - The models used for sampling are provided in Appendix 2, along with an example of the passenger value (PV2) applied to bus services in one of the areas covered in this survey. These models have been updated again in advance of the 2026 survey, based on new passenger counts undertaken during the 2025 fieldwork.
 - This passenger value, known as 'PV2'³, thus gave a good estimation of how busy each individual bus service was relative to all others.
 - This knowledge was used in the next stage (3) to enable systematic selection of a representative sample of vehicle journeys on which to recruit respondents.

Next, the database was sorted by route, day-part⁴, journey start time and day of week. In practice, each row of the database (i.e. each journey) showed a cumulative passenger value (PV2). Probability proportional to size was then used to sample the required number of journeys; i.e. probability proportional to PV2. A sampling interval for the PSU was calculated which was the total Passenger Value divided by the number of fieldwork shifts required. For example, a PSU with a total of 30,000 Passenger Value units and 30 shifts required, would have a sampling interval every 1000th fraction of the total value. In practice, to allow for some journeys being infeasible to cover (e.g. non-returning market day services), or if a need was to arise during fieldwork to add supplementary shifts through low return rates, a sample 'overage' was built into calculating the sampling interval. This overage was 75% of the required number of shifts. So, in the example for the PSU requiring 30 shifts, in practice 53 journeys would be sampled, and the sampling interval would be 566.

The actual sample was struck by choosing a random start point between 0 and the row with the cumulative Passenger Value of the required sampling interval and then selecting the service corresponding to every sampling interval gap down the list. So, from the example in the previous paragraph, if the random start point was 326 with 53 shifts required and a

² The 'big five' are: Arriva, First, Go-Ahead, National Express and Stagecoach. Other major operators given their own co-efficient in the modelling work are: Reading Buses in their operator sample, Nottingham City Transport and Trent Barton in Nottinghamshire.

³ The PV2 model replaced the initial PV model in the predecessor to BPS (the Bus Passenger Survey), from 2018 onwards. The main difference in this PV2 model compared to the previous version is that in addition to taking into account daypart and area type, it also took into account whether the area included any of the "big 5" operators (Stagecoach, First, Arriva, Go Ahead or National Express).

⁴ Day-parts are weekday morning peak (07:00-09:29), weekday off-peak (before 07:00, 09:30-15:29, or after 18:30), weekday evening peak (15:30-18:30) and weekends.

sampling interval of 566, the selected services would be taken from the rows which contained cumulative passenger values of 892, 1458, 2024, etc.

The result of step 4 was a list of bus vehicle journeys, which would form the basis of fieldwork shifts (during which fieldworkers board the bus and make outward and return journeys within a three-hour period). Fieldwork shifts are typically three hours long; therefore to allow for the fact that, for example, passenger journeys happening at 06.00 could only ever be picked up by fieldwork shifts arranged to start at 06.00 – whereas journeys starting at 8.00 could be picked up by shifts starting at 06.00, 07.00 and 08.00, and anywhere in between – the sampling database used a programme to find the same journey as the one selected, but starting 1.5 hours earlier, for all bus vehicle journeys selected. That is, a journey with the same start and end point, the same operator, the same overall duration, and on the same day of the week. Inevitably, bus timetables do not run with journeys exactly 1.5 hours apart, and so the identical journey which was nearest to 1.5 hours earlier was identified (and in some cases this was actually the same journey, if the original selection was the first of the day or the first for some hours). This newly ‘adjusted’ journey then became the start point for the fieldworker’s shift, meaning that, in practice, the originally selected start time became the mid-point of the shift. This means that the overall profile of fieldwork shifts matched the PV2 profile for each PSU, for different times of the day.

Finally, any journey which had a start time at, or later than, 19.30 was removed and manually replaced by the instance of that journey which started closest to, but before, 19.00. For example, if a journey was selected which started at 19.56, and there was another instance of the same journey at 18:56, it was replaced with the 18.56. This was to ensure that a three-hour shift could be worked, while still finishing at a reasonable time for the fieldworker (no later than 22.00). Similarly, any journey which now had a start time before 06.00 (as a result of the adjustment in step 5) was replaced by the instance of that journey starting at or closest to, but not before, 06.00.

At the data cleaning stage, respondents who stated they had travelled after 22.00 were verified against the time of the shift, and in most cases, it was found that it was more likely they had mistakenly coded PM rather than AM, and so their journey time was amended. In isolated circumstances, respondents were kept in the data who reported later journey times. These were usually when a fieldwork shift had been scheduled for late in the evening and there had also been some kind of delay on the buses covered during that shift meaning the fieldworker finished a little later than normal. Additionally, in a small number of instances passengers chose to provide feedback about a different bus journey than the one recruited for.

FreelyGive developed software which enabled BVA BDRC to collate the Bus Open Data and Travelline data for 2025, as well as automate steps five and six once the selected sample was put back into their database.

3.1.3 Sample review

Following the systematic selection of the routes, a further process was undertaken which checked the suitability of each route for a three-hour shift in practice. The guideline was that a shift was feasible where two hours or more of a three-hour shift could be spent on board a bus (rather than waiting at a stop, which is non-productive time). All selected bus journeys where this would not be possible, along with all obvious school-bus-only routes, were excluded during this process and replaced with a randomly selected alternative journey from the sampling 'overage' already provided.

In practice, the timing of bus services meant that some fieldworker shifts were a little shorter or longer than three hours. The general principle used was that a bus journey could be selected and covered by a fieldworker shift if:

- It would yield a shift of no less than two and a half hours total duration.
- It would yield a shift of no more than four hours total duration (although there were a small number of four+ hour shifts, where this was necessary to ensure that a reasonable proportion of all routes in a PSU had opportunity to be covered – this is particularly the case in more rural PSUs).
- At least around two hours could be spent on board a bus rather than waiting at a stop.
- At least one full outward and one full return trip could be made on the selected route within the LA boundary.

The FreelyGive software was used to create journeys based on the criteria listed above, and calculated on board duration so that this could be checked when selecting shifts.

At this point, a pool of possible journeys was available, including some overage, as the basis for fieldworker shifts, and from this pool the final selection was made. This was done by listing the possible journeys in a randomised order (FreelyGive completed this process automatically), and selecting the top n in the list, where n was the number of shifts required.

The profile of the selected shifts was then compared to the universe profile of all bus passenger journeys (using the number of journeys previously estimated in the PV2 process). Their profile was observed in terms of operator mix, day-part and day of week. For operator-only PSUs, the profile of routes within these relevant operators was also observed. Where the profile of the fieldwork shifts was not close enough to that of the journey universe (specifically, where the profile differed by more than 5% on one or more of the parameters), different journeys (from the overage) were swapped in manually to achieve a better profile.

Once the profile of fieldwork shifts was acceptably close, the selection of routes was shared with Transport Focus, who checked that the sample covered bus routes within the whole of the sample area. Once this was confirmed, it was shared with contacts at the PSU for final review. As described earlier, this resulted in a small number of further amendments to the selection before being deemed final and then booking the fieldwork.

In some cases, if the whole pool of 'possible' journeys could not yield a set of journeys and therefore fieldwork shifts with a reasonable profile, slight amendments would need to be made to other, previously not 'possible' journeys, in order to make them feasible for fieldworker shifts. For instance, cases were included where:

- If a fieldworker stayed on a bus to the end of its journey, there would be no suitable return service to catch; but if they disembarked two or three stops early, they would be able to catch a return service. In such cases the journey would be included in the survey, and the fieldworker would be instructed to disembark a little before the end of the journey.
- A bus journey could be included in the survey if the shift it yielded was allowed to run a little over four hours (this was particularly the case in Cornwall, where some bus routes were particularly long).
- A route was able to be included if it was paired with another run by the same operator; for example, where the fieldworker might make the outward journey on route number 1A, but return on the 1B if in practice both had the same or a very similar route.
- The bus was a circular route, and so an uneven number of journeys could be used and still return the interviewer to the starting point.

Once the pool of possible journeys for use as the basis of fieldwork shifts had been reviewed and refined into a workable fieldwork plan, the result was a set of 2807 on-bus shifts which were planned at the outset of the project.

Halfway through the year, a review of the routes was undertaken, by pulling a new file from the Bus Open Data website, and comparing this to the original file created, to identify:

- Any routes which were new and so were not included in the original sample selection process.
- Any routes which had now been removed.
- Any routes where the timetable had changed by more than 5 minutes, so the times for interviewers would need to be adjusted.

This ensured that interviewers were not attempting to complete shifts where buses were no longer running, or running to a different timetable, as well as ensuring any new major routes were included in the survey.

3.2 Sample design – at stop sampling

3.2.1 Sample universe

For at stop sampling, the sample universe was defined as all bus stops within an area, as detailed from DfT Bus Open Data.

For new areas which had not taken part in the survey in 2023 or 2024, the following approach was taken to decide on where to survey:

- All the stops within an area were grouped into clusters, with clusters all defined as being within a 100-metre radius of a central point.
- In the absence of nationally available bus stop usage figures, bus visit figures (i.e. the number of buses due to stop at each bus stop) were used as a best estimate proxy for how busy each bus stop could be. The number of bus visits to each of these clusters was then counted. The top nine clusters with the most frequent bus journeys, and top three clusters in terms of number of bus stops within each area (12 clusters in total) were selected and placed on maps to be shared with local authority contacts at each of the PSUs. When some of the top three by number of stops were already in the top nine by number of services, further bus stop clusters were selected by picking further clusters by number of services, rather than picking more from the top by number of bus stops.
- For most local authority areas, six clusters of bus stops were selected, at which passengers would be invited to take part. Transport Focus made recommendations and suggestions as to which six clusters to use, the starting point for which was the top six clusters, i.e. those with most bus visits. Adjustments to this 'default' position were made in some situations such as; where several clusters were very close together (and often covering the same bus routes); or the geographical coverage was heavily focused on one or two areas, leaving other parts of the PSU with no sample points. In larger metropolitan areas, the top 24 clusters were identified with 12 of these being selected to be used for surveying rather than six. Additionally, in smaller areas, the number of clusters was reduced to three (Thurrock) or four (Nestrans) or five (other Scotland areas).

Transport Focus, local authorities/local transport authorities, Transport Scotland and BVA BDRC worked together to agree on the clusters to use – in most cases these were agreed upon using the original 12 or 24 clusters found (ensuring a good spread across the region where possible). In some instances, the local contacts had specific requests about including bus stops or clusters of stops in specific areas. These were accommodated where possible, but with the understanding that these would be reviewed after a few shifts and if footfall was deemed to be too low to allow for interviewers to recruit enough respondents, then they would have to be amended.

For 2025, this work had already been done for the majority of areas that had taken part in 2023 or 2024. As such, rather than sampling from scratch, a review of the productivity of these bus stop clusters in 2024 was conducted using footfall information (recorded by interviewers), number of passengers recruited, and number of passengers completing the survey. Where some clusters had underperformed compared to other clusters in the area, suggestions were made to the contacts at the PSUs to either drop them (if the majority of the area was already covered with remaining clusters) or replace them. In some cases, the teams in the local authorities suggested alternative locations for clusters based on their local knowledge.

Once the final clusters were agreed upon, shifts were listed as separate rows in an Excel sheet, and an equal number of shifts were assigned to each cluster (or reasonably equal,

depending on the number of shifts and clusters in that area). These were then assigned to day parts and days of the week, with a view to having around 20% of shifts during the weekend, and an even proportion of shifts at different parts of the day.

The shifts, systematically assigned to times and days thus far, were then checked to ensure there were a suitable number of buses stopping at the relevant cluster of stops, during the three-hour shift time that had been assigned to it. For example, a cluster of bus stops may have many buses stopping during peak times, but it may have only a few buses stopping on a Sunday afternoon, so in practice would not be suitable for conducting fieldwork at this time. In most areas, the threshold was 72 buses within the three-hour shift, but in some areas, this was reduced:

- Cheshire West & Chester (Cluster 6 – Ellesmere Port Bus Station, where the number of visiting bus services was reduced to 48)
- County Durham (Cluster 6 – Ferryhill reduced to 45)
- East Riding of Yorkshire (all clusters reduced to 48)
- Stoke on Trent (Cluster 6 – Longton reduced to 48)
- SWESTRANS (Clusters 4 and 6 – Dumfries Lochside Rd and Annan reduced to 36)
- Luton (cluster 4, Luton Airport, reduced to 60)
- West Sussex (Cluster 7, Bognor Regis High St, reduced to 58).

In some areas it was also necessary to bring forward the 'evening' shift time as all cluster stops in this area were too quiet in the 19,00 - 22.00 evening slot.

Where shifts would not have sufficient buses stopping during a three-hour shift, they were moved to an alternative suitable day part (or in the case of Sunday shifts, may have been moved to a Saturday if there were no suitable Sunday time slots).

Once suitable shifts were established, these were passed on to the fieldwork team and booked out with interviewers.

Final clusters were confirmed with the participating local authorities before fieldwork was due to start. At this point any instructions for interviewers to follow when working at particular locations, such as bus stations, airports, shopping centres or hospitals (for example, reporting to a member of staff on arrival), were also confirmed. These were passed on to the fieldwork team as a set of 2318 shifts which were planned at stop at the outset of the project.

The productivity of fieldwork at the clusters was reviewed as fieldwork took place on an ongoing basis, and in some instances individual clusters were replaced or removed if they were very quiet across different days and times of day. In practice, one cluster was amended in each of Leicester (Jubilee Sq/St Nicholas gate had some shifts removed and replaced with others), Thurrock (Aveley shifts removed and replaced with others), and Warrington (Warrington BQ/Sankey St shifts removed and replaced with others).

4 Fieldwork

Using the sampling processes described above, 5145 shifts were planned to take place for 2025 fieldwork. In practice, 5553 shifts took place - the difference being due to top up shifts added in some areas where the number of completed surveys achieved per shift was lower than anticipated.

Fieldwork started in most England areas during the week commencing 17 February 2025, with other England areas and Scotland following during the week commencing 3 March. Staggered fieldwork starts were due to a delay in commissioning the survey for some areas. Fieldwork was scheduled so that half of shifts would be completed by the end of June, so that midyear reporting would cover half of fieldwork – in part to compensate for the fact fieldwork did not start at the beginning of January. The West of England Bristol Boost was commissioned in September, so fieldwork only took place from October onwards for that area.

Areas starting during each time period are listed below:

17 February 2025:

- Cheshire West & Chester
- Derbyshire
- Hampshire
- Durham
- Northumberland
- Tyne & Wear
- Staffordshire
- West of England
- Worcestershire
- Reading Buses
- Cornwall
- Leicester City
- Liverpool City Region
- Nottinghamshire
- Oxfordshire
- Thurrock
- West Midlands
- West Yorkshire
- East Riding of Yorkshire
- Norfolk
- North Yorkshire
- Suffolk
- Warrington
- East Sussex
- Surrey

- Blackpool
- Cheshire East
- Derby City
- Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen
- Nottingham City
- Plymouth

3 March 2025:

- Greater Manchester
- North East Lincolnshire
- Warwickshire
- West Sussex
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole
- Portsmouth
- Luton
- South Yorkshire
- Stoke on Trent
- SPT
- Sestrans
- Nestrans
- Tactran
- Swestrans
- Hitrans
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CA [NEW] - Busway boost sample 400 option
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CA
- City of York

9 October 2025:

- West of England Bristol Boost

Fieldwork was spread throughout the year, although front loaded with the aim of completing 50% by the end of June as previously stated.

Fieldwork was originally planned to finish by 14 December but continued until 31 December 2025. This was to a number of reasons such as rescheduling resulting from interviewer illness and other unexpected issues, additional shifts being added to make up for shortfalls in responses throughout the year, and bad weather and storms meaning some shifts were cancelled later in the year. West of England Boost, which was commissioned in September

2025, and required more shifts than planned due to low levels of interviews achieved continued fieldwork until the 21 January 2026.

4.1 Data collection

4.1.1 Distribution of surveys

Before working their first shift on the project all fieldworkers received a detailed briefing from BVA BDRC and Transport Focus via Teams. This was recorded so it could be shared with any fieldworkers joining the team part way through fieldwork or who were unavailable when the briefing took place.

For shifts taking place on bus, fieldworkers joined the bus routes selected from the sampling process on the specified day and start time. They travelled to the final destination of the route and made the first return trip possible on that route, returning to their start point. They repeated this process to make as many trips as possible within their three-hour shift. During this time fieldworkers were required to approach all passengers who boarded the bus and invite them to participate in the research. They did not approach those who were already on the bus when they got on board, as they may have travelled from outside of the Local Authority boundary.

For shifts taking place at stops, fieldworkers arrived at the bus stop cluster at the beginning of their shift and moved around the cluster to find passengers waiting to board buses. Where bus stops were quiet, fieldworkers would move on to find a busier bus stop within the same cluster.

In all shifts, passengers were first offered the option to complete the survey online and only offered a paper questionnaire (with a pre-paid return envelope) if the online survey was refused. If taking part online, passengers were offered the option of completing the survey via an online link sent via text or email (with telephone number or email address collected and a survey invitation sent to them instantly where signal was available, or as soon after the shift as possible) or via QR code which could be scanned from the interviewer's device screen. Interviewers also had some paper leaflets with QR codes on them which could be handed out e.g. if the passenger's bus had arrived so they did not have time to scan the QR code on screen. All those recruited were asked to complete their questionnaire after they had finished their journey.

Fieldworkers were issued with 12 paper questionnaires and 10 paper QR codes for each shift. These numbers were derived by estimates from the YBJ refinement work carried out in March 2022. In Scotland, fieldworkers had 15 paper questionnaires per shift, as it was noted during the 2023 survey that passengers in Scotland tended to prefer paper questionnaires and this helped to improve response rates in Scotland in 2024.

During 2025, the following numbers of recruits were achieved in total:

	QR codes scanned	Emails collected	Phone numbers collected	Paper QRs	Actual paper qnres	Total	Number of shifts	Average per shift
On bus	38047	18058	6330	6032	23281	91748	3064	29.9
At stop	32402	16374	6778	6509	19159	81222	2454	33.1
Total	70449	34432	13108	12541	42440	172970	5518	31.3

4.1.2 Reminders

For those who received a link via email or text message to complete the survey, reminders were sent 12 hours later to encourage participation, or two hours after the survey was started, if it was started but not completed.

4.1.3 Travelling on buses in practice

If the PSU was a Local Transport Authority, where a route crossed the boundary of that Authority area, the fieldworker treated the route as truncated to the portion within the PSU, i.e. only passengers boarding within the PSU would be approached. To achieve this, fieldworkers themselves would only travel within the boundaries of the Authority area, alighting at the border and boarding the next bus back in the opposite direction from that point. The last stop before the Authority border was identified within the bus timetable information supplied within the Bus Open Data.

In advance of each shift, fieldworkers were instructed to double check the journey details they had been given (since, as described above, changes could be made to bus services between the sampling and fieldwork stages). This sometimes resulted in changes to a shift; either:

- If the timetable had been altered, the fieldworker may have needed to start the journey at a different point or at a slightly different time, or
- if a service had been withdrawn it would be replaced with another from the 'overage' in the initial sample.

For shifts taking place at bus stop clusters, fieldworkers would move around the different stops within the cluster (as defined on maps provided for each shift) throughout their shift, depending on how busy the stops were.

4.1.4 Further tasks performed during fieldwork

As described in the later section on weighting, fieldworkers also recorded the observed age and gender details of all passengers who were on the bus, or at the stops, at a given point in

time. For on bus shifts, this observation was conducted twice within a fieldworker shift: at the mid-point of the first outbound journey, and again at the mid-point of the last inbound journey. These details allowed the creation of a representative passenger demographic profile to be used for weighting purposes. This is because we are aware that buses travelling in one direction (e.g. into town centres in the morning) are likely to be busier than those going the opposite direction at different times of day. For at stop shifts, observation counts were only conducted once during the shift, at a random interval during the three-hour period, which was assigned when shifts were created and passed on to interviewers with their shift information, with instructions to set an alarm on their phones for this time.

4.2 Authorisation to work on buses and at bus stations

Regarding permission to conduct interviewing on board buses or at larger bus stations, Transport Focus provided a letter which the fieldworkers were able to show drivers or bus station staff to vouch for the bona fides of the survey, and Transport Focus communicated to operators, via the local authorities, that the survey might take place on their services, or at their sites, during the intended period. In 2025 a relatively small number of shifts were disrupted by bus drivers refusing to allow fieldworkers to work on their bus or staff not allowing fieldworkers to work at bus stations.

Fieldworkers also wore high-visibility jackets with Transport Focus' logo and "Passenger survey" printed on them.

4.3 Monitoring fieldwork

Throughout fieldwork, fieldworkers reported the number of questionnaires they had handed out, and how many email addresses, telephone numbers, QR codes scanned and paper QR leaflets they had handed out. This was also collected from the recruitment screener form filled in on their tablets. These metrics were monitored by the team at BVA BDRC.

As paper questionnaires were returned to BVA BDRC's head office, they were scanned and added to the data in batches, generally every two weeks.

Shift numbers were used to link up completed questionnaires (both online and paper) to a shift, identifying the PSU and date of journey, as well as route number and operator number for on bus shifts. The numbers of completed and validated questionnaires were matched with the reported recruitment figures, to allow the project team to monitor the overall productivity of the fieldwork, and for each shift. Several actions had potential to be triggered by this information, including for example:

- If the sample sizes in certain areas appeared likely to fall below the target, additional 'top up' shifts could be scheduled using the sample overage.
- If it was found that all of the available paper questionnaires were routinely given out in certain areas or on certain routes, this was recorded and more questionnaires may be printed where relevant in future waves.

- Steps could be taken to address lower productivity in certain fieldworkers if this was found to be the case.

BVA BDRC carried out all fieldwork in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct, the IQCS (Interviewer Quality Control Scheme) and ISO 20252. Exceeding normal industry standards, at least 10% of all YBJ shifts were subject to unannounced spot-checks by BVA BDRC supervisors and other project team staff. Most shifts to be spot-checked were selected at random, but some were chosen specifically, to monitor new or less productive fieldworkers or areas more closely, and indeed to observe more productive fieldworkers in order to study and pass on best practise techniques. Random unannounced spot-checks were also made by Transport Focus staff.

5 Questionnaire

The 2025 questionnaire is largely the same as 2024. The questionnaire could be completed online or on paper. The paper questionnaire has to be limited to eight pages. This is a self-completion booklet that was handed out along with a reply-paid envelope to all passengers who were willing to take part but didn't want to complete an online survey. The online questionnaire has modifications in order to work appropriately depending on the type of device (desktop, smartphone, etc.) being used by the respondent and also includes automatic routing based on previous answers which minimises later edits.

The questionnaire had a core set of questions to provide consistent measurement of the components of journey experience. A copy of the standard version of the questionnaire is shown in Appendix 1.

In 2025, three questions about zero emission buses were added to the inline version of the questionnaire, space meant these could not be added to the paper questionnaire as well.

Some PSUs chose to add their own bespoke questions into the survey (a maximum of five were allowed and an additional charge was applied). These were accommodated within the online survey script (but did not feature in the paper questionnaire, for the purpose of overall project efficiency and controlling complexity).

In order to optimise response rate, the main survey measures were included at the start of the questionnaire, so a survey could be counted as complete if a respondent only completed the first 12 questions. Out of the total of 54,038 completed surveys, 7,749 (14%) were counted as having qualified as they answered question 12 but had not completed the questionnaire. As some respondents who completed the paper survey didn't answer all of the questions, we allowed surveys to count as qualified if they answered the key questions Q9 (overall satisfaction), Q11 (gender) and Q12 (age).

5.1 Aborted journeys

From 2024 onwards, an open-ended question was added for passengers who had been recruited at bus stop but had subsequently been unable to complete their journey. These passengers were asked to tick a box when inputting details about their journey start time and were then asked about what route and operator they had been planning to travel on, followed by an open-ended text box to include details about why their journey did not take place. The survey then closed after this question. This allowed these passengers to pass on their feedback, without having to complete a whole survey which is mostly irrelevant if a journey has not taken place. The open-ended responses about why journeys did not take place were made available through Transport Focus' online data portal (the live dashboard that is accessible to participating authorities and stakeholders), but since the majority of the questionnaire was not answered, these respondents were not included in wider analysis and the PowerPoint reports produced by area.

6 Response rates, and validation of returns

6.1 Response rates achieved

The core fieldwork outcome metric (number of responses per shift) was the product of recruitment rates and response rates achieved. The tables below show the metrics achieved from fieldwork across the Primary Sampling Units in 2025.

It should be noted that actual recruitment rates for paper questionnaires may not be accurate, as these rely on the interviewer recording the paper questionnaires they have handed out, and in some instances we are aware that interviewers did not record any paper questionnaires being handed out for a shift, but some were returned – in these instances we amended the hand out figure to match the number of returns. Additionally, in some cases it may be that the interviewers were holding up the QR code on screen for more than one passenger to scan, although we are not able to quantify this. Counts were added to the recruitment screener in 2024 to allow interviewers to track how many passengers had been recruited by each recruitment method in order to encourage full completion of the recruitment questionnaire for each passenger. This has helped so that interviewers can check the numbers throughout their shifts and compare to how many they have spoken to, but it is still not perfect. While this is not critical to the success or robustness of the survey, it is an area in which Transport Focus will seek ongoing improvement.

6a. Fieldwork metrics

	No. shift s	Recruits: paper	Response s: paper	Response rate: paper	Recruits text SMS	Responses text SMS	Response rate phone	Recruits QR (paper/ scanned)	Response QR	Response rate QR	Recruits: email	Response s: email	Response rate: email	Recruits: total	Response s: total ⁴	Response rate: total	Average responses per shift (total)
Blackpool	202	1715	414	24%	223	81	36%	1642	479	29%	671	149	22%	4251	1123	26%	5.56
Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	95	718	246	34%	676	286	42%	943	333	35%	946	233	25%	3283	1098	33%	11.56
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	100	628	193	31%	286	115	40%	3074	1058	34%	426	121	28%	4414	1487	34%	14.87
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Busways	40	226	100	44%	80	39	49%	1248	517	41%	196	70	36%	1750	726	41%	18.15
Cheshire East	102	884	276	31%	366	155	42%	519	173	33%	1253	339	27%	3022	943	31%	9.25
Cheshire West & Chester	178	1734	507	29%	217	81	37%	996	394	40%	606	147	24%	3553	1129	32%	6.34
Cornwall	98	810	328	40%	464	192	41%	1893	634	33%	1126	386	34%	4293	1540	36%	15.71
Derbyshire	150	1206	437	36%	281	102	36%	1293	438	34%	777	143	18%	3557	1120	31%	7.47

⁴ Note that some of these responses were later removed due to quality controls as having taken part on coaches or other non-qualifying routes

	No. shifts	Recruits: paper	Responses: paper	Response rate: paper	Recruits text SMS	Responses text SMS	Response rate phone	Recruits QR (paper/scanned)	Response QR	Response rate QR	Recruits: email	Responses: email	Response rate: email	Recruits: total	Responses: total	Response rate: total	Average responses per shift (total)
Derby City	199	1722	508	30%	224	65	29%	2128	468	22%	905	131	14%	4979	1172	24%	5.89
Durham	62	593	182	31%	184	72	39%	1435	472	33%	418	121	29%	2630	847	32%	13.66
East Riding of Yorkshire	143	961	339	35%	310	161	52%	1022	450	44%	763	238	31%	3056	1188	39%	8.31
East Sussex	160	967	380	39%	479	121	25%	2021	468	23%	857	215	25%	4324	1184	27%	7.40
Greater Manchester	109	673	231	34%	348	124	36%	2766	783	28%	634	115	18%	4421	1253	28%	11.50
Greater Nottingham	214	1433	298	21%	241	71	29%	2181	527	24%	1684	137	8%	5539	1033	19%	4.83
Hampshire	88	675	237	35%	353	146	41%	1235	413	33%	843	242	29%	3106	1038	33%	11.80
Lancashire with Blackburn & Darwen	153	1194	411	34%	112	43	38%	1776	606	34%	306	84	27%	3388	1144	34%	7.48
Leicester City	178	1385	237	17%	487	152	31%	2702	549	20%	1427	250	18%	6001	1188	20%	6.67
Liverpool City Region	130	873	252	29%	243	107	44%	966	389	40%	462	108	23%	2544	856	34%	6.58

	No. shifts	Recruits: paper	Responses: paper	Response rate: paper	Recruits text SMS	Responses text SMS	Response rate phone	Recruits QR (paper/scanned)	Response QR	Response rate QR	Recruits: email	Responses: email	Response rate: email	Recruits: total	Responses: total	Response rate: total	Average responses per shift (total)
Luton	104	698	150	21%	91	21	23%	1884	618	33%	186	22	12%	2859	811	28%	7.80
Norfolk	91	754	267	35%	192	79	41%	1768	651	37%	531	177	33%	3245	1174	36%	12.90
North East Lincolnshire	77	516	108	21%	498	73	15%	628	182	29%	510	41	8%	2152	404	19%	5.25
North Yorkshire	103	822	313	38%	243	122	50%	1006	482	48%	657	208	32%	2728	1125	41%	10.92
Northumberland	87	907	293	32%	467	214	46%	861	371	43%	230	64	28%	2465	942	38%	10.83
Nottinghamshire	133	1014	319	31%	272	102	38%	1293	436	34%	1040	184	18%	3619	1041	29%	7.83
Oxfordshire	117	913	263	29%	21	10	48%	2302	664	29%	1067	224	21%	4303	1161	27%	9.92
Plymouth	100	801	279	35%	650	323	50%	2333	943	40%	1500	455	30%	5284	2000	38%	20.00
Portsmouth	94	620	232	37%	282	110	39%	1668	566	34%	830	180	22%	3400	1088	32%	11.57
Hampshire	88	675	237	35%	353	146	41%	1235	413	33%	843	242	29%	3106	1038	33%	11.80

	No. shifts	Recruits: paper	Responses: paper	Response rate: paper	Recruits text SMS	Responses text SMS	Response rate phone	Recruits QR (paper/ scanned)	Response QR	Response rate QR	Recruits: email	Responses: email	Response rate: email	Recruits: total	Responses: total	Response rate: total	Average responses per shift (total)
Reading Buses	106	713	193	27%	303	98	32%	1494	505	34%	1298	234	18%	3808	1030	27%	9.72
South Yorkshire	200	1449	360	25%	565	202	36%	3103	539	17%	1440	305	21%	6557	1406	21%	7.03
Staffordshire	112	665	368	55%	216	84	39%	2599	1020	39%	391	90	23%	3871	1562	40%	13.95
Stoke on Trent	77	618	253	41%	187	71	38%	1961	887	45%	187	35	19%	2953	1246	42%	16.18
Suffolk	100	842	334	40%	151	72	48%	1121	311	28%	513	191	37%	2627	908	35%	9.08
Surrey	94	743	211	28%	206	61	30%	1273	448	35%	1433	296	21%	3655	1016	28%	10.81
Tees Valley	46	419	104	25%	181	61	34%	1151	389	34%	143	37	26%	1894	591	31%	12.85
Thurrock	61	308	130	42%	146	37	25%	1121	297	26%	261	40	15%	1836	504	27%	8.26
Tyne & Wear	115	1227	273	22%	473	170	36%	2868	1026	36%	1064	243	23%	5632	1712	30%	14.89
Warrington	177	450	325	72%	109	34	31%	2077	630	30%	282	53	19%	2918	1042	36%	5.89
Warwickshire	112	1173	612	52%	118	41	35%	1088	684	63%	299	76	25%	2678	1413	53%	12.62

	No. shifts	Recruits: paper	Responses: paper	Response rate: paper	Recruits text SMS	Responses text SMS	Response rate phone	Recruits QR (paper/ scanned)	Response QR	Response rate QR	Recruits: email	Responses: email	Response rate: email	Recruits: total	Responses: total	Response rate: total	Average responses per shift (total)
West Midlands	91	416	190	46%	216	64	30%	2693	724	27%	810	145	18%	4135	1123	27%	12.34
West of England CA and North Somerset	95	689	219	32%	599	223	37%	2248	703	31%	1338	308	23%	4874	1453	30%	15.29
West Sussex	100	789	229	29%	154	57	37%	2114	664	31%	559	165	30%	3616	1115	31%	11.15
West Yorkshire	169	716	274	38%	343	105	31%	3417	723	21%	934	204	22%	5410	1306	24%	7.73
Worcestershire	112	635	405	64%	269	107	40%	1347	497	37%	421	115	27%	2672	1124	42%	10.04
City of York	90	692	252	36%	264	129	49%	1984	1081	54%	893	294	33%	3833	1756	46%	19.51
West of England Bristol boost	39	110	36	33%	131	59	45%	762	328	43%	180	47	26%	1183	470	40%	12.05
Total England	5203	38096	12568	33%	12921	4842	37%	78004	25520	33%	33297	7662	23%	162318	50592	31%	9.72

	No. shift s	Recr uits: pape r	Resp onses : paper	Res pons e rate: pape r	Recru its text SMS	Resp onses text SMS	Res pons e rate phon e	Recru its QR paper/ scann ed	Resp onse QR	Resp onse rate QR	Recru its: email	Res pons es: emai l	Res pons e rate: emai l	Recru its: total	Resp onses : total	Res pons e rate: total	Avera ge respo nses per shift (total)
HITRANS	50	693	174	25%	2	1	50%	1440	315	22%	57	7	12%	2192	497	23%	9.94
NESTRANS	42	626	130	21%	1	0	0%	1592	397	25%	55	12	22%	2274	539	24%	12.83
SESTRANS	46	634	139	22%	141	58	41%	649	317	49%	575	161	28%	1999	675	34%	14.67
SPT	73	850	470	55%	38	13	34%	763	158	21%	105	13	12%	1756	654	37%	8.96
SWESTRANS	78	722	178	25%	97	43	44%	265	117	44%	424	118	28%	1508	456	30%	5.85
TACTRANS	61	929	193	21%	39	11	28%	1039	435	42%	99	28	28%	2106	667	32%	10.93
Total Scotland	350	4454	1284	29%	318	126	40%	5748	1739	30%	1315	339	26%	11835	3488	29%	9.97

7 Reporting and data validation

7.1 Standard reporting outputs

Regular updates were provided by BVA BDRC to Transport Focus throughout the project life cycle. These included:

Raw data and updates:

- Weekly fieldwork productivity monitoring, to ensure fieldwork was running smoothly and highlight any issues, such as areas where additional shifts may be needed to reach the target sample size.
- An online dashboard updated every 4 weeks with the latest data and passenger comments, this data was unweighted and still subject to further cleaning and included the first 12 questions in the survey and other key rating questions. Participating local authorities and other key stakeholders were given controlled access to this online dashboard, and the results for their area(s) only, throughout the year.
- Weekly data files containing respondent level data on date of journey, route and operator and answer to Q7 - the open-ended question 'Please tell us in your own words what was good or bad about this journey. We're interested in anything that stood out about this journey.'

Fully comprehensive, cleaned and weighted results deliverables:

- A bi-annual weighted SPSS file, with cleaned data. Cleaning included the removal of any journeys on coaches, cleaning of erroneous route numbers entered by respondents, misspellings of operator names and so on. Transport Focus used this to facilitate other analysis and publications, including a national report, its public facing online data hub, league tables reports, and other bespoke analysis.
- Interim area level PowerPoint reports, based on data collected up to the end of June for each PSU. These were approximately 73 pages long and used weighted data to provide charts and tables for all questions within the survey, including with trends over time where relevant.
- Full year PowerPoint reports. These were the same as the half-year interim reports and produced for each local authority area as well as some combined areas, for larger operators within each area, and for each nation (England and Scotland). These reports were shared with relevant stakeholders.
- In areas with bespoke questions, these were charted in PowerPoint and supplied as an additional deck. This were supplied to areas with the interim and final year data.

7.2 Validation of completed surveys

Completed surveys were subject to checks and validation:

- Paper questionnaires were checked to ensure that the respondent had answered the questions and not returned a blank form. If questions up to Q12 were answered, it was treated as a completed questionnaire. In 2025, some responses were allowed through who had not answered all questions leading up to Q12 but had answered questions later on in the survey. These were reviewed, and allowed to be included as long as age, gender and overall journey satisfaction had been answered.
- From March to August 2025, paper questionnaires were input using a different link into the online survey. This ensured all routing was followed but also allowed for the fact that with paper questionnaires, some questions may have been missed or not answered correctly. From August 2025 onwards, paper questionnaires were scanned rather than entered into the paper questionnaire link.
- Online responses were counted as 'complete' providing that they had reached and answered at least question 12. Of course, the questions up to this point would also have all been answered in the online questionnaire since, unlike the paper version, there was no possibility of a respondent accidentally missing any.
- Passengers were asked to confirm the details of their journey (route number, operator name and date of travel) in the survey. These details were checked electronically against sample information to ensure shifts took place as expected.

It was useful to carry out this stage of the validation immediately (rather than later alongside other Data Processing checks), because it enabled more accurate monitoring of the real number of 'useable' responses which had been collected in each PSU, throughout the fieldwork.

7.2.1 Processing data for the online dashboard

Unweighted data was reported every four weeks on an online dashboard, with passenger comments released at this stage too. This dashboard was available for areas via a log in and Transport Focus staff. Data was 'cut off' two weeks after the end of a wave to allow time for paper completes to be posted back and included with online data.

The dashboard contained results on a 'year to date' and 'wave by wave' (every four weeks) basis, showing results for:

- Overall satisfaction
- Value for money
- Influence on value for money
- Key measures – satisfaction with bus stop, length of wait, punctuality, bus driver and length of journey
- Further ratings – bus stop, bus arrival, bus driver and facilities on the bus
- Ratings of bus services overall
- Passenger comments
- Aborted journey comments (where passengers had not actually travelled on the route as planned)

Users from Transport Focus were also able to see information on time of day, journey purpose and passenger demographics.

The dashboard was launched in June with the first three waves of data. Each area was set up with their own logins for all who required access, meaning areas could only see their own data. For operators within areas, logins were set up so they would only see results for their own routes. Transport Focus set up an 'all England areas' report, which was available to download from the dashboard, for each wave of research, so areas in England could compare to the total. Results for samples of under 30 were hidden, as they may be misleading due to the low base size.

Verbatim comments were reviewed weekly, along with area, date of journey, bus number and operator. These were reviewed by BVA BDRC, and then Transport Focus, before being published on the dashboard each wave.

Passenger comments received the following checks:

- Verbatim comments were used to further validate survey answers – e.g. if respondent said in the verbatim that the bus had been cancelled so they had got a taxi instead, their responses would be removed.
- Verbatim comments were cleaned, removing any offensive language, any identifying information, or any information that was not relevant to the journey – e.g. mentions of the interviewer or being asked to take part in a survey. Any potentially inflammatory comments were sent directly to the relevant area or operator ahead of publishing.

Checks on the data included the following checks:

- Where an operator had not been specified, but it was clear from the route number and area what the operator should be, this was added in.
- Checking that operators actually operated within the area specified and with the route number specified (and, for example, reallocating the response to the correct area if required).
- Date of interview was checked against shift number and when shift should have taken place- in some cases it was clear the passenger had answered the survey about a different journey.
- Shift numbers were also checked for accuracy.

Data on the dashboard was not weighted, and included some records which were later deleted, as detailed below. The data in the previous wave was also amended when the next wave was uploaded, as some (paper) completes came in after the cut off for loading the data (two weeks after the end of the wave). These completes would be accepted and processed for the previous wave only, so for example, when wave four was loaded, we would accept and process completes that were from the wave three time period. Any completes from a wave before the previous one were removed as it was considered that as they had been returned so long after the bus journey, the person filling out the survey may have not recalled the journey with accuracy when completing the survey (in practice this was generally less than ten each wave).

7.2.2 Further data processing for interim and end of year SPSS files and reporting

At the mid-year, and year end, reporting stages, additional checks and amends were made to the data before creating an SPSS file. This weighted SPSS data file was used for area and operator reports:

- Time of day was validated to ensure it was correct – in some instances it was clear that the respondent had put ‘am’ when in fact it should have been ‘pm’ based on time of shift or e.g. a time of 3:30am when buses would not have been running.
- Some journeys were removed which were completed on services outside of the scope of the survey, for example Megabus or National Express coach services.
- Verbatim comments were coded based on whether they were discussing the current bus journey or another bus journey, the topic of discussion, and whether the comment was positive, negative or neutral.
- Multicoded questions which should have been single coded (e.g. ticking ‘no disability’ but also selecting a disability) were cleaned up in paper survey responses (as routing ensured this was not possible for the online survey).

After the data was validated, coded and edited, an SPSS data file was provided to Transport Focus to their specification. Transport Focus also ran comprehensive checks on this file. Weights were applied to the data at these points, as described in the next section.

The Cambridge and Peterborough Busways and West of England Bristol Boost areas data was excluded completely from the final SPSS file for simplicity, with separate SPSS files supplied for each of these areas.

7.3 Weighting

The survey weighting was designed to:

- Offset the effects of both non-response bias and non-participation bias based on age, gender and day-part.⁵
- Mitigate any effects of whether respondents were recruited on board or at stops.
- Proportion each PSU to the number of passenger journeys it represented within the total set of areas surveyed.

Weighting took place at the mid-year stage of fieldwork and then was completed again for the whole data file (including the first half of the year that had previously been weighted) at the year-end stage taking account of the full years’ worth of data.

⁵ Day-parts are weekday morning peak (07:00-09:29), weekday off-peak (before 07:00, 09:30-15:29, or after 18:30), weekday evening peak (15:30-18:30) and weekends.

7.3.1 Weighting by age, gender, day-part and recruitment site

7.3.1.1 Age and gender weights

No known existing source of information exists to detail the demographic of journeys by age and gender consistently for each PSU to be able to be used to weight the data, but it is considered important to do so as bus satisfaction differs by gender and age. Therefore, this information was collected through the fieldwork.

During the survey, fieldworkers broke from recruiting passengers at points through their shift, to observe and record the age (within 3 bands: 16-25 years, 26-64 years and 65+years) and gender of every passenger of the bus or waiting at the bus stop with intention to board a bus. As described earlier, on board the bus this age and gender record was made at the mid-point of the first outbound journey, and again at the mid-point of the last inbound journey. At bus stops, the observation was conducted once at a random point during the shift.

The passenger age and gender profiles were aggregated at the PSU level. Rim weights were applied for each PSU for age and gender (which were not interlocked), based on the observed profiles made during fieldworkers' shifts. A small proportion of respondents did not declare their age and / or gender in the questionnaire itself and the observed profiles were adjusted proportionately to allow for this. An alternative would be to have excluded these respondents because they could not be given a weight, but this would have meant a reduction in the overall sample size and the loss of passenger feedback which was otherwise entirely valid.

For the full year 2025 data, the age and gender target weights were calculated as an average of the footfalls from shifts conducted in 2024 and 2025 combined⁶ for areas which had taken part in 2024 and 2025. For those that had just taken part in 2025 only 2025 data was used.

7.3.1.2 Day-part weights

The proportion of all journeys by day-part within each PSU had been estimated via Passenger Value models, during the sampling process. These proportions formed a further set of rim weights applied to each PSU.

As day-part weights and journey volume weights were based on all journeys within the area, using official data published by the DfT, these weights were based on the most recent data available, without the need to increase their robustness by taking an average across two years.

7.3.1.3 Shift type weights

There were some minor differences in survey question responses based on the type of shift - on bus or at stop - e.g. relating to ratings of the journey or driver (as outlined in Appendix 3). As the aim was to complete half of all shifts (and therefore half of responses) on bus and half at stop, weights were applied to correct for any differences in the number of completes to 50% on board and 50% at stop.

⁶ The exception to this was Hitrans age weights, where the not stated was adjusted to reflect the 2025 not stated figure, and the remaining weights were adjusted proportionally to this, as otherwise the not stated weight would have been prohibitively high.

The exception to this was the Reading Buses and Cambridge and Peterborough Busways routes PSUs, where all fieldwork was conducted on board buses. The weights in these two cases were for 100% on board. Although the majority of data for the West of England Bristol Boost was collected on board, some was at stop as some data was used from specific routes collected in the West of England main survey, so this boost sample was left unweighted by shift type.

7.3.1.4 Tables 7a and 7b

The following tables show the observed age and gender profile of passengers from the fieldworker observations (adjusted for non-response to age and gender questions in the questionnaire itself), and the estimated day-part profiles generated by the PV2 models (see appendix 2 for more details on these). These, along with the target of 50/50 for on bus and at stop data collection, were the target rim weights applied to each PSU at the end of the year. Table 7a shows the target weights – i.e. the proportion of each demographic that the data was weighted to – and so this reflects the proportions of these demographics within the final weighted data. Table 7b shows the weight applied to reach the proportions shown in table 7a - e.g. a weight of 0.93 was applied to females within Blackpool – meaning a slightly higher proportion of females responded to the survey when compared to the proportion of female passengers observed.

The average weights applied to respondents in each PSU, within each of the weight cells, are given in the tables below. Before settling on these final weights as shown (i.e. the degree to which the final weighted profile matched the target profiles in the tables above), average weights for each of these cells were observed. None of the weights at this stage were over 4, so no collapsing of cells was required.

Target rim weights

7a. Target rim weights applied

	Male	Female	No response	16-25	26-59	60+	No response	AM peak	Off-peak	Evening Peak	Weekend	Not stated
Blackpool	42%	53%	5%	25%	36%	36%	2%	12%	52%	17%	17%	3%
Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	45%	50%	4%	24%	45%	30%	2%	14%	52%	16%	17%	2%
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (MAIN)	42%	52%	6%	26%	51%	21%	2%	12%	52%	18%	17%	1%
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (Busways)	38%	55%	6%	25%	54%	18%	3%	13%	55%	16%	15%	1%
Cheshire East	44%	51%	6%	17%	43%	38%	2%	14%	55%	19%	10%	2%
Cheshire West & Chester	41%	55%	4%	16%	49%	33%	2%	14%	48%	17%	19%	2%
Cornwall	42%	53%	5%	29%	33%	36%	2%	16%	47%	20%	16%	2%
Derby City	46%	50%	4%	26%	40%	32%	2%	13%	51%	17%	16%	2%
Derbyshire	45%	51%	4%	20%	40%	38%	2%	12%	51%	16%	19%	2%
Durham	42%	53%	5%	27%	41%	29%	2%	13%	52%	17%	17%	1%
East Riding of Yorkshire	41%	55%	5%	15%	39%	44%	2%	11%	52%	17%	20%	1%

	Male	Female	No response	16-25	26-59	60+	No response	AM peak	Off-peak	Evening Peak	Weekend	Not stated
East Sussex	41%	55%	5%	27%	36%	34%	2%	11%	52%	17%	18%	3%
Greater Manchester	45%	50%	6%	35%	43%	19%	3%	13%	51%	15%	20%	1%
Greater Nottingham	49%	47%	4%	27%	51%	21%	2%	12%	52%	17%	19%	1%
Hampshire	42%	55%	4%	21%	41%	37%	2%	12%	50%	17%	19%	2%
Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwin	44%	51%	5%	30%	36%	33%	2%	12%	51%	16%	19%	2%
Leicester City	45%	51%	4%	23%	44%	31%	2%	13%	52%	18%	15%	2%
Liverpool	44%	53%	3%	22%	49%	27%	2%	13%	52%	17%	17%	2%
Luton	45%	51%	4%	32%	49%	17%	2%	13%	52%	17%	16%	2%
Norfolk	41%	55%	4%	27%	39%	32%	2%	14%	49%	17%	18%	1%
North East Lincolnshire	42%	54%	4%	30%	40%	28%	2%	13%	51%	18%	18%	2%
North Yorkshire	42%	54%	4%	20%	41%	37%	2%	12%	50%	18%	19%	2%
Northumberland	42%	53%	5%	18%	40%	40%	2%	11%	52%	17%	18%	2%
Nottinghamshire	44%	53%	4%	23%	42%	33%	2%	12%	50%	17%	19%	2%

	Male	Female	No response	16-25	26-59	60+	No response	AM peak	Off-peak	Evening Peak	Weekend	Not stated
Oxfordshire	41%	55%	4%	22%	59%	17%	2%	12%	52%	15%	20%	2%
Portsmouth	42%	53%	5%	24%	48%	26%	2%	12%	49%	16%	20%	2%
Plymouth	41%	56%	3%	23%	44%	32%	1%	13%	50%	18%	17%	1%
Reading Buses	41%	56%	4%	27%	49%	22%	2%	12%	51%	16%	19%	1%
South Yorkshire	48%	49%	4%	33%	50%	16%	1%	13%	53%	17%	16%	2%
Staffordshire	46%	50%	3%	35%	31%	33%	1%	13%	52%	18%	15%	1%
Stoke on Trent	43%	52%	5%	36%	37%	25%	2%	14%	54%	19%	13%	1%
Suffolk	40%	56%	4%	27%	39%	32%	2%	13%	51%	19%	14%	3%
Surrey	43%	53%	4%	25%	47%	27%	2%	12%	53%	16%	17%	2%
Tees Valley	46%	50%	4%	26%	43%	28%	2%	12%	51%	17%	18%	2%
Thurrock	41%	54%	5%	33%	47%	19%	1%	13%	51%	16%	15%	6%
Tyne & Wear	43%	53%	4%	25%	41%	32%	2%	12%	51%	16%	20%	1%
Warrington	42%	54%	4%	22%	42%	34%	2%	12%	52%	17%	18%	1%

	Male	Female	No response	16-25	26-59	60+	No response	AM peak	Off-peak	Evening Peak	Weekend	Not stated
Warwickshire	36%	61%	3%	19%	25%	55%	2%	13%	50%	18%	18%	1%
West Midlands	48%	48%	4%	35%	44%	19%	2%	13%	51%	15%	20%	1%
West of England CA and North Somerset	43%	51%	6%	39%	41%	18%	2%	11%	51%	15%	23%	0%
West of England boost	47%	49%	5%	41%	42%	17%	0%	11%	54%	16%	18%	0%
West Sussex	41%	55%	4%	20%	50%	28%	2%	12%	55%	15%	16%	2%
West Yorkshire	46%	49%	4%	36%	39%	23%	2%	11%	50%	16%	21%	1%
Worcestershire	42%	55%	3%	16%	36%	46%	2%	14%	50%	18%	16%	2%
York	37%	58%	5%	29%	43%	26%	2%	11%	52%	17%	19%	1%
HITRANS	43%	53%	4%	32%	36%	32%	0%	17%	49%	20%	12%	2%
NESTRANS	45%	51%	4%	30%	38%	30%	2%	12%	52%	16%	18%	2%
SESTRANS	45%	52%	3%	24%	54%	20%	2%	12%	52%	14%	21%	1%
SPT	47%	51%	2%	32%	41%	26%	1%	13%	51%	16%	19%	0%
SWESTRANS	44%	50%	6%	24%	42%	32%	2%	14%	50%	20%	15%	2%
TACTRANS	44%	50%	5%	30%	35%	32%	3%	12%	50%	15%	21%	2%

Actual weights applied

7b Actual (average) rim weights applied

	Female	Male	No response	16-25	26-59	60+	No response	AM peak	Off-peak	PM peak	Weekend	No response
Blackpool	0.93	1.06	1.50	0.92	0.87	1.21	2.06	1.09	0.92	1.01	1.24	1.00
Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	0.80	1.38	1.11	0.93	1.19	0.84	1.28	1.32	0.99	0.79	1.10	1.00
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (MAIN)	0.82	1.37	1.00	1.05	0.97	1.03	1.00	1.28	1.06	0.70	1.13	1.00
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (Busways)	0.95	1.09	1.00	0.88	1.08	0.96	1.00	0.71	1.18	0.70	1.34	1.00
Cheshire East	0.86	1.21	1.11	1.06	1.25	0.79	1.33	1.49	0.92	1.14	0.83	1.00
Cheshire West & Chester	0.87	1.21	1.32	0.86	1.19	0.84	1.57	0.79	1.03	1.25	0.95	1.00
Cornwall	0.89	1.19	1.00	1.09	0.87	1.05	1.93	1.11	0.92	1.10	1.04	1.00
Derby City	0.82	1.32	1.00	1.14	0.74	1.52	0.94	1.14	1.04	0.85	0.98	1.00
Derbyshire	0.92	1.11	0.92	0.97	0.75	1.58	1.36	0.78	1.00	0.82	1.55	1.00
Durham	0.84	1.26	1.33	0.89	0.89	1.34	1.93	1.14	1.13	0.77	0.87	1.00

	Female	Male	No response	16-25	26-59	60+	No response	AM peak	Off-peak	PM peak	Weekend	No response
East Riding of Yorkshire	0.85	1.26	1.47	0.89	0.94	1.08	1.50	0.90	1.01	0.95	1.09	1.00
East Sussex	0.82	1.34	1.40	1.25	0.92	0.92	1.61	1.39	0.97	0.81	1.18	1.00
Greater Manchester	1.00	0.98	1.25	1.19	0.82	1.17	1.31	0.80	0.95	1.06	1.33	1.00
Greater Nottingham	0.84	1.25	0.80	0.98	0.89	1.62	0.71	1.19	0.99	0.78	1.19	1.00
Hampshire	0.86	1.26	1.17	0.83	0.92	1.25	1.35	0.97	0.94	1.44	0.93	1.00
Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwin	0.85	1.27	1.00	0.94	0.93	1.14	1.28	1.06	0.94	0.92	1.28	1.00
Leicester City	0.82	1.34	0.98	0.67	1.05	1.39	1.71	1.79	0.92	0.93	1.00	1.00
Liverpool	0.81	1.35	1.40	0.99	1.00	0.98	1.83	1.36	0.99	0.92	0.92	1.00
Luton	0.93	1.12	0.80	0.94	0.99	1.13	1.47	1.43	0.84	0.95	1.78	1.00
Norfolk	0.88	1.22	1.05	1.15	0.91	1.01	1.37	0.97	0.90	1.14	1.25	1.00
North East Lincolnshire	0.85	1.28	1.25	1.45	0.90	0.83	1.77	1.08	0.93	1.16	1.03	1.00
North Yorkshire	0.79	1.52	0.95	0.82	0.90	1.31	1.14	0.81	1.12	1.00	0.89	1.00
Northumberland	0.84	1.29	1.10	0.96	0.91	1.11	1.26	0.66	1.16	1.12	0.85	1.00

	Female	Male	No response	16-25	26-59	60+	No response	AM peak	Off-peak	PM peak	Weekend	No response
Nottinghamshire	0.87	1.20	1.19	1.06	0.82	1.32	1.19	0.81	1.00	0.84	1.47	1.00
Oxfordshire	0.92	1.12	1.12	0.96	1.12	0.77	1.11	1.34	1.18	0.77	0.77	1.00
Portsmouth	0.84	1.30	1.06	1.15	0.95	0.95	2.06	1.12	0.97	0.72	1.48	1.00
Plymouth	0.87	1.26	1.00	0.97	0.93	1.14	1.00	0.74	1.12	0.87	1.13	1.00
Reading Buses	0.86	1.26	1.18	1.08	0.93	1.04	1.90	1.35	1.05	0.74	1.02	1.00
South Yorkshire	0.81	1.32	1.00	1.28	1.06	0.61	1.21	1.15	1.07	0.81	0.93	1.00
Staffordshire	0.80	1.39	1.00	0.85	0.91	1.40	1.00	1.51	0.83	1.24	1.22	1.00
Stoke on Trent	0.84	1.25	1.30	0.89	0.88	1.56	1.56	0.82	0.87	1.52	1.52	1.00
Suffolk	0.85	1.34	1.03	1.14	1.15	0.79	1.32	1.14	0.92	1.35	0.86	1.00
Surrey	0.86	1.23	1.29	0.89	1.13	0.90	1.69	0.76	1.00	1.04	1.24	1.00
Tees Valley	0.80	1.31	1.66	0.91	0.86	1.38	2.82	1.36	0.98	0.80	1.13	1.00
Thurrock	0.92	1.12	1.00	1.16	0.82	1.43	1.00	1.33	1.13	0.80	0.75	1.00
Tyne & Wear	0.82	1.34	1.31	0.89	0.81	1.63	1.75	0.91	1.11	0.83	0.98	1.00
Warrington	0.88	1.21	1.07	0.64	0.94	1.81	1.07	1.32	1.00	0.74	1.20	1.00

	Female	Male	No response	16-25	26-59	60+	No response	AM peak	Off-peak	PM peak	Weekend	No response
Warwickshire	0.90	1.23	1.00	1.01	0.56	1.53	1.00	1.38	0.79	1.03	1.99	1.00
West Midlands	0.75	1.49	1.16	0.96	0.98	1.10	1.46	2.26	0.86	1.09	1.01	1.00
West of England CA and North Somerset	0.86	1.22	1.09	1.55	0.85	0.72	1.26	1.08	1.10	0.56	1.36	1.00
West of England boost	0.77	1.43	1.00	1.18	0.87	1.01	1.00	0.69	1.02	0.91	1.42	1.00
West Sussex	0.86	1.22	1.55	0.72	1.05	1.21	2.44	0.92	1.02	0.75	1.44	1.00
West Yorkshire	0.85	1.22	1.18	1.26	0.80	1.08	1.62	0.99	0.94	0.83	1.44	1.00
Worcestershire	0.83	1.34	1.00	0.75	0.89	1.28	1.00	1.29	0.84	1.39	1.10	1.00
York	0.91	1.16	1.12	1.06	0.94	1.02	1.52	0.67	1.10	0.86	1.24	1.00

	Female	Male	No response	16-25	26-59	60+	No response	AM peak	Off-peak	PM peak	Weekend	No response
HITRANS	0.86	1.21	1.35	1.29	0.75	1.17	1.02	1.11	1.03	1.64	0.52	1.00
NESTRANS	0.85	1.24	1.11	1.12	0.83	1.17	1.43	1.16	0.97	0.84	1.23	1.00
SESTRANS	0.87	1.20	1.18	1.43	0.92	0.87	1.20	1.08	1.17	0.58	1.09	1.00
SPT	0.88	1.18	0.97	2.10	0.62	1.45	1.31	1.18	1.20	0.86	0.71	1.00
SWESTRANS	0.86	1.20	1.09	0.84	0.99	1.14	1.54	1.46	0.83	1.21	1.16	1.00
TACTRANS	0.88	1.13	1.44	1.07	0.73	1.44	1.68	1.02	0.90	0.84	1.63	1.00

7c Actual (average) rim weights applied – on board vs at stop

	On board	At stop
Blackpool	0.69	1.81
Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole	0.95	1.05
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	1.13	0.90
Cheshire East	1.05	0.95
Cheshire West and Chester	0.83	1.27
City of York	0.84	1.24
Cornwall	0.95	1.05
County Durham	0.99	1.01
Derby City	0.79	1.38
Derbyshire	0.86	1.20
East Riding of Yorkshire	0.76	1.46
East Sussex	1.00	1.00
Greater Manchester	0.78	1.38
Greater Nottingham	0.67	1.99
Hampshire	1.01	0.99

	On board	At stop
Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen	1.17	0.87
Leicester City	0.73	1.59
Liverpool City Region	0.88	1.17
Luton	0.78	1.38
Norfolk	0.99	1.01
Northumberland	1.17	0.87
North East Lincolnshire	0.67	1.97
North Yorkshire	0.73	1.60
Nottinghamshire	0.94	1.07
Oxfordshire	0.66	2.05
Plymouth	0.88	1.15
Portsmouth	0.83	1.27
South Yorkshire	0.85	1.22
Staffordshire	1.03	0.97
Stoke-on-Trent	0.88	1.16
Suffolk	1.15	0.88

	On board	At stop
Surrey	0.89	1.15
Tees Valley	0.88	1.16
Thurrock	0.94	1.07
Tyne & Wear	1.16	0.88
Warrington	0.73	1.58
Warwickshire	0.95	1.06
West Midlands	0.93	1.08
West of England and North Somerset	1.05	0.96
West Sussex	0.97	1.03
West Yorkshire	1.16	0.88
Worcestershire	0.82	1.29
HITRANS	1.30	0.81
Nestrans	0.89	1.14
Tactran	1.15	0.89
SPT	1.05	0.95
SEStran	0.71	1.70
Swestrans	1.00	1.00

The final Rim Weighting Efficiency was 82.9% with a Maximum Respondent Rim Weight of 6.07 and a Minimum Respondent Rim Weight of 0.179

7.3.2 Weighting to proportion Primary Sampling Units within total survey dataset

Weighting was also used to proportion each PSU to the number of passenger journeys it represented within the total set of areas surveyed by nation (England and Scotland). Journey numbers for each local authority were sourced from DfT Bus Statistics published in November 2025, and the unweighted sample size for each PSU was 'grossed up' to this number. This meant that, with any analysis where results were aggregated, e.g. for 'All England (outside London)', the component PSUs within that aggregate made the appropriate contribution relative to each other.

Journey numbers for local authority areas in England were available as published by the Department for Transport (DfT). For Scotland, journey numbers are published at the nation level, and so approximate journey volumes by area were provided by Transport Scotland.

For the Reading Buses network, as we did not have information on what proportion of journeys in Reading these represented, the decision was made to use Reading Council figures as a proxy and weight the Reading Buses results to this. This approach had also been used in previous years.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Busways and West of England Bristol Boost were excluded from the journey volumes weighting. This is because it would skew the overall results due to the majority of shifts taking part on bus, and also because we did not have accurate data for what proportion of journeys within the areas these represented.

The following tables show the journey volume weightings applied to the PSUs selected within the 2025 survey. Journey volumes are shown in millions. The tables show only the weights which were informed by the DfT's published statistics, and/or derived using the methods outlined above.

7c. Journey volumes and weights

	Journeys (Millions)*	Sample size (valid responses used in reported results)	Journey volume weight
Blackpool	6.69	1103	0.19
Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	24.77	1069	0.69
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (MAIN)	27.06	1475	0.50
Cheshire East	2.87	927	0.08
Cheshire West & Chester	7.12	1106	0.20
Cornwall	13.22	1541	0.25
Derby City	13.02	1172	0.36
Derbyshire	18.71	1109	0.52
Durham	17.61	815	0.49
East Riding of Yorkshire	5.28	1162	0.15
East Sussex	17.48	1156	0.49
Greater Manchester	170.96	1211	4.77
Greater Nottingham	42.88	1017	1.20
Hampshire	26.59	1021	0.74
Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwin	40.52	1095	1.13
Leicester City	24.73	1171	0.69
Liverpool	93.51	853	2.61
Luton	10.88	786	0.30
Norfolk	27.52	1176	0.77
North East Lincolnshire	4.89	393	0.27
North Yorkshire	11.01	1086	0.31
Northumberland	7.77	921	0.22
Nottinghamshire	23.67	1032	0.66
Oxfordshire	38.96	1162	1.09
Portsmouth	11.92	1076	0.33
Plymouth	15.86	1980	0.22
Reading Buses	20.04	1022	0.57

	Journeys (Millions)*	Sample size (valid responses used in reported results)	Journey volume weight
Staffordshire	10.62	1513	0.20
Stoke on Trent	8.43	1180	0.24
Suffolk	12.56	889	0.35
Surrey	26.90	992	0.75
Tees Valley	23.22	576	1.30
Thurrock	5.25	488	0.29
Tyne & Wear	90.45	1700	1.68
Warrington	5.27	1038	0.15
Warwickshire	10.14	1361	0.19
West Midlands	246.62	1092	6.88
West of England CA and North Somerset	67.35	1418	1.25
West Sussex	24.18	1079	0.67
West Yorkshire	116.55	1277	3.25
Worcestershire	8.22	1074	0.23
York	14.95	1745	0.28
HITRANS	See footnote	485	0.50
NESTRANS	See footnote	530	1.56
SESTRANS	See footnote	661	7.82
SPT	See footnote	622	7.15
SWESTRANS	See footnote	424	0.19
TACTRANS ⁷	See footnote	641	1.41

7.3.3 Weighting total

The final weight was the multiplication of the two component weights as shown below (in all areas bar Cambridge and Peterborough Busways and West of England Bristol Boost as previously stated):

⁷ Note that journey volumes in Scotland areas were shared with the team confidentially for weighting purposes, but are not to be shared publicly

Final weight = rim (age/gender/day-part/recruitment site) weight x journey volumes weight.

7.4 Survey accuracy

This research was designed to ensure robust sample sizes for analysis, at PSU level and in some cases among specific passenger groups within PSUs (e.g. disabled vs non disabled or peak vs off peak travellers). As the survey was conducted with a sample of bus journeys in each PSU (as opposed to all of them), there could be some differences in results compared to a census of the whole 'population' of bus journeys.

We can be 95% certain that the actual figure (in the universe of all bus journeys) falls within a certain range of the survey figure. The percentages within the tables below represent the typical error variance, for a result of around 80% (results nearer to 0% or 100% are statistically more accurate than results nearer to 50%) as that is a typical percentage for satisfaction. So for example, the total satisfied with the length of time they had to wait for the bus in Blackpool is 79% - so we can be 95% certain that if we spoke to the whole population who travel by bus within Blackpool, the score we would get for total satisfaction with the length of wait would be between 76.64% and 81.36% (79%+/- 2.36%).

7d. Typical error variances in 2025 survey results

	Typical error variance on a result of around 80%
Blackpool	2.36
Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	2.4
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (MAIN)	2.04
Cheshire East	2.57
Cheshire West & Chester	2.36
Cornwall	2
Derby City	2.29
Derbyshire	2.35
Durham	2.75
East Riding of Yorkshire	2.3
East Sussex	2.31
Greater Manchester	2.25
Greater Nottingham	2.46

	Typical error variance on a result of around 80%
Hampshire	2.45
Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwin	2.37
Leicester City	2.29
Liverpool	2.68
Luton	2.8
Norfolk	2.29
North East Lincolnshire	3.95
North Yorkshire	2.38
Northumberland	2.58
Nottinghamshire	2.44
Oxfordshire	2.3
Portsmouth	2.39
Plymouth	1.76
Reading Buses	2.45
South Yorkshire	2.11
Staffordshire	2.02
Stoke on Trent	2.28
Suffolk	2.63
Surrey	2.49
Tees Valley	3.27
Thurrock	3.55
Tyne & Wear	1.9
Warrington	2.43
Warwickshire	2.12
West Midlands	2.37

	Typical error variance on a result of around 80%
West of England CA and North Somerset	2.08
West Sussex	2.39
West Yorkshire	2.19
Worcestershire	2.39
York	1.88
HITRANS	3.56
NESTRANS	3.40
SESTRANS	3.05
SPT	3.14
SWESTRANS	3.14
TACTRANS	3.10

7.5 Key Driver Analysis

Key Driver Analysis was carried out to identify the key aspects of the bus journey experience (as captured in the survey) which were most associated with overall journey satisfaction.

Initial work - a factor analysis – was completed to create nine factors based on ratings of statements within the survey at questions 8, 10A, 17, 20 and 28 (see appendix for the questionnaire). Question 27 was excluded, as this related to facilities on the bus which not all had answered as some of these as facilities were not present, or not relevant to them. Question 33 was excluded as this was about bus services in general and was not considered a driver for satisfaction of that specific journey.

Factor analysis involved a regression to assess where responses to these questions were similar, and from this we were able to assign the factors into different groups. We analysed these to see which groupings made the most logical sense, and named the groups based on the types of statements that went into these. Factor analysis was previously run in 2024 and 2023 but run again using the 2025 data to derive new factors, to ensure any changes year on year were considered.

The final factors fell out as:

Bus comfort

- Temperature inside the bus
- Ventilation on board the bus
- Comfort of the seats
- Cleanliness and condition inside bus
- Availability of seating or space to stand on board

Punctuality

- Satisfaction with waiting time
- Satisfaction with punctuality

Bus driver

- Satisfaction with bus driver overall
- Bus driver: helpfulness/attitude
- Bus driver: time given to get to seat
- Bus driver: nearness to kerb/stop
- Bus driver: smoothness/freedom from jolting

Boarding the bus

- Ease of getting on bus
- Time taken to board bus

Bus stop

- Bus stop general condition/standard of maintenance
- Bus stop being clear of litter
- Information provided at the bus stop
- Satisfaction with boarding bus stop overall

Security

- Personal security at the bus stop
- Personal security on the bus

Value for money

- Satisfaction with value for money (fare -payers only)

Journey length

- Satisfaction with the length of time the journey takes

Once this was completed, each respondent was given a numeric score for each of these factors, based on the average of their answers for each of the rating questions within each factor.

7.5.1 Journey satisfaction

A standard logistic regression was then used to assess the relationship between these factors and ratings for overall satisfaction with the journey. A logistic regression assumes a linear relationship between scores on these factors and the odds of an outcome – and works with linearly separate data. This was then used to assess the proportion of the satisfaction score which was linked to each of these factors based on how frequently the scores align together and assign a percentage to each of them. The variance explained was then used to understand how much total variability in data can be attributed to each of the different factors – so a higher percentage of variance explained means that the factors are capturing more meaningful patterns among these variables. For example, there will be more respondents giving high ratings for both punctuality and satisfaction, so there is a higher proportion of variance explained by this.

Separate analysis was conducted for fare payers versus non fare payers (where the value for money factor was excluded, as non-fare payers were not asked to rate this).

Separate analysis was completed for the total who were satisfied with their journey (those rating themselves as 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied') as well as just for those rating themselves 'very satisfied'. This was used to distinguish between those who had a 'great' journey and those who had a 'good' journey.

The results for Total England and Total Scotland are shown in the tables below:

7e. Key Driver Analysis: Total England

	% of variance explained by factor			
	satisfied		very satisfied	
	free	fare payer	free	fare payer
Factor				
Bus comfort	1.72%	1.31%	4.93%	3.43%
Punctuality	56.30%	62.20%	48.26%	41.02%
Bus driver	10.05%	3.80%	12.55%	7.20%
Boarding the bus	3.65%	2.58%	1.08%	0.13%
Bus stop	0.61%	0.38%	3.21%	3.66%
Security	0.10%	0.69%	0.39%	0.38%
Value for money		2.42%		7.74%
Journey length	27.57%	26.61%	29.57%	36.44%
R squared	0.320	0.420	0.466	0.497

7f. Key Driver Analysis: Total Scotland

	% of variance explained by factor			
	satisfied		very satisfied	
	free	fare payer	free	fare payer
Factor				
Bus comfort	1.05%	5.61%	8.07%	0.30%
Punctuality	23.77%	68.57%	38.79%	13.23%
Bus driver	0.99%	0.42%	8.13%	1.38%
Boarding the bus	10.29%	3.50%	0.03%	0.00%
Bus stop	0.00%	1.60%	1.93%	1.62%
Security	3.11%	0.05%	0.11%	0.03%
Value for money		3.42%		19.55%
Journey length	60.79%	16.84%	42.94%	63.89%
R squared	0.378	0.406	0.438	0.339

R squared evaluates how well the key driver analysis model fits the data, where a 1 would be a perfect fit and 0 would mean that the model explains none of the variance. In this instance, the models explain between 32% to 50% of the variance.

Separate reports were produced showing the results for key driver analysis for each local authority area.

7.5.2 Journey dissatisfaction

There was also interest in what was driving dissatisfaction with the journey. A new model was created for understanding this.

In 2024, initially, a similar linear model was attempted to assess dissatisfaction, as had been used for identifying the drivers of satisfaction. However, in this instance, the R squared was only 0.02, so variance in dissatisfaction was not sufficiently explained by this method. The reason for this is that there were fewer people rating themselves as 'very dissatisfied' or 'dissatisfied', meaning base sizes were smaller. Instead, after some investigation, an XGBoost model was used. The same approach was used in 2025 to ensure results were comparable.

XGBoost works like a team of people playing a guessing game. First, the model 'guesses' that if a passenger gives a rating e.g. 'dissatisfied' they will also rate the bus driver as 'poor'.

This may be right for some passengers, but wrong for others – so the model learns from this and assigns values based on the number who rate bus driver as poor versus number rating bus driver as good, very good or very poor. The system can then build in a prediction based on these numbers and does the same for all other factors included in the analysis.

Once the model is built, XGBoost can then determine which factors were most useful in creating these predictions by looking at how often a factor is a good predictor of dissatisfaction.

As the XGBoost model focuses on errors to help predict answers, the model will focus on those dissatisfied and then use corrections to fix errors in how these dissatisfied people have rated their satisfaction with other factors – as this will likely be very different to how satisfied people have rated these. Therefore, because it actively seeks out and corrects its own blind spots, XGBoost is much better at identifying the drivers within a small but important subgroup, making it a more robust choice for understanding the drivers of dissatisfaction.

The results of this for Total England and Total Scotland are in the tables below.

7g. XGBoost Key Driver Analysis: Total England

	% of variance explained by factor	
	dissatisfied	
	free	fare payer
factor		
Bus comfort	13.3%	10.4%
Punctuality	38.9%	32.9%
Bus driver	9.8%	10.0%
Boarding the bus	5.3%	3.8%
Bus stop	7.6%	5.7%
Security	1.7%	1.7%
Value for money		13.6%
Journey length	23.4%	21.9%
Accuracy	87.16%	88.19%

7h. XGBoost Key Driver Analysis: Total Scotland

	% of variance explained by factor	
	dissatisfied	
	free	fare payer
factor		
Bus comfort	13.6%	12.9%
Punctuality	30.8%	31.1%
Bus driver	6.8%	6.0%
Boarding the bus	6.4%	3.0%
Bus stop	13.6%	19.5%
Security	4.3%	2.6%
Value for money		15.6%
Journey length	24.5%	9.2%
Accuracy	87.46%	87.40%

8 Appendix 1: Questionnaire used in YBJ 2025

Paper questionnaire:



Tell us about your bus journey

Thank you for taking part in our survey and adding your voice to those of thousands of bus passengers who do so each year.

When giving your feedback, please just think about **the bus journey you were making when given this questionnaire.**

All the information you give will be treated in the strictest confidence. Your answers are anonymous and will only be used for this survey.

Give us your views today to make sure your voice is heard.

Transport Focus is the official, independent consumer watchdog that promotes the interests of transport users.

How to complete the questionnaire

- Please fill in the questionnaire after you complete your journey (that's when you have arrived at your destination bus stop). If you were given it as you got off the bus, then you can fill it in now.
- Please cross ☒ only one box per question, unless there is an instruction that says 'cross all that apply'.
- Then return it to us in the reply paid envelope provided.

1 About your journey

1 First, can we just check where you spoke to our interviewer about this survey?

- ☐ On board a bus
- ☐ At the bus stop where you caught the bus
- ☐ At the bus stop where you got off the bus

2 What time did you board the bus for this journey?

Fill in the time you got on the bus in the boxes below. If you prefer to use the 12 hour clock format, please cross the box for am (morning) or pm (afternoon or evening), otherwise cross the box for 24 hour format.

Hours: Minutes:

☐ AM (morning)

☐ PM (afternoon or evening)

☐ 24 hour format

3 What was the number, letter, or name of the bus route you boarded for this bus journey?

Please wait to fill this in once you have boarded the bus, rather than while you are waiting. If you used more than one bus, please write in the one you were using, waiting to board, or had just used, when our interviewer saw you. Please just write in the route number or name.

4 And which bus company runs this route?

Please cross the box below if you don't know.

☐ Don't know

Office use: DATE (DD/MM/YY)



This survey is being undertaken for Transport Focus by BVA BDRC, an independent market research agency, which adheres to the Market Research Society's code of conduct. You were handed this questionnaire by an interviewer working for Perspective Research Services, a part of BVA BDRC.

Thanks. Please answer the remaining questions for the bus journey you have just described.

5 What was the main purpose of this bus journey?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Going to or from work | ☐ A shopping trip |
| ☐ Going to or from education (e.g. college, school) | ☐ Visiting friends or relatives |
| ☐ Going to or from a medical or other appointment | ☐ A leisure trip (e.g. a day out) |
| ☐ Travelling for business (excluding commuting) | ☐ Something else |

6 What type of ticket or pass did you use for this bus journey?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ A free pass or free journey/ticket, including older/younger/disabled person's passes and those that have a small yearly admin fee | ☐ A paid-for ticket or pass, such as single, return, daily or week tickets or passes (including using contactless payments or tickets on mobile phones) |
| ☐ Something else (please specify in the box below) | ☐ Don't know |

2 Your overall opinions of the journey

7 Please tell us in your own words what was good or bad about this journey. We're interested in anything that stood out about this journey.

8 How satisfied were you with each of the following during the journey?

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know/no opinion
The bus stop where you caught the bus	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The length of time you had to wait for the bus	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The punctuality of the bus at the stop where you caught the bus (arriving on time)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The bus driver	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The length of time your journey on the bus took	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Very satisfied | ☐ Fairly dissatisfied |
| ☐ Fairly satisfied | ☐ Very dissatisfied |
| ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | ☐ Don't know/no opinion |

10A How satisfied were you with the value for money of your journey?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Very satisfied | ☐ Fairly dissatisfied |
| ☐ Fairly satisfied | ☐ Very dissatisfied |
| ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | ☐ Don't know/no opinion |

10B What had the biggest influence on your rating of the value for money?

- ☐ The cost for the distance travelled
- ☐ The cost per journey for the number of journeys made with your ticket or pass
- ☐ The cost of the bus compared to other modes of transport
- ☐ The cost of bus fares here compared to those in other places
- ☐ The cost of bus fares now compared to what they were 12 months ago
- ☐ The fare compared to the cost of everyday items
- ☐ The quality of the service for the fare paid
- ☐ A reason not mentioned above (*please specify in the box below*)

To help us understand how different types of passengers' experiences vary, and to make sure we are gathering the opinions of a wide range of passengers, we would like to ask a few questions about you. Any information you give us will be used for research purposes only and not to identify any individual. You are free to decide whether you want to give us this information or not.

11 How would you describe yourself?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Female | ☐ Male |
| ☐ Prefer to self-describe (<i>please specify in the box below</i>) | ☐ Prefer not to say |

12 Which age group are you in?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| ☐ Under 16 | ☐ 35 – 44 years | ☐ 70 – 79 years |
| ☐ 16 – 18 years | ☐ 45 – 54 years | ☐ 80+ years |
| ☐ 19 – 21 years | ☐ 55 – 59 years | ☐ Prefer not to say |
| ☐ 22 – 25 years | ☐ 60 – 64 years | |
| ☐ 26 – 34 years | ☐ 65 – 69 years | |

3 Your detailed feedback about the journey

Thanks for sharing your overall impressions about the journey and for telling us a bit about yourself. Now we would like to hear more about your journey experience to build up a full picture. At the end of the survey, you can tell us how you rate local bus services more generally.

13 What was the main reason you chose to take the bus for that journey?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Cheaper than the car | ☐ Cheaper than other transport |
| ☐ More convenient than the car (e.g. parking) | ☐ Preferred bus to walking/wheeling/cycling |
| ☐ Better for the environment than the car | ☐ I didn't have the option of travelling by another means |
| ☐ Better for the environment than other transport | ☐ Other (<i>please specify in the box below</i>) |
| ☐ More convenient than other transport | |

14 Were you travelling with . . .

Please cross all that apply

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Heavy/bulky luggage | ☐ A folding bicycle or scooter |
| ☐ Shopping bags | ☐ A dog |
| ☐ A shopping trolley | ☐ A helper |
| ☐ A pushchair, buggy or pram | ☐ A mobility scooter or wheelchair |
| ☐ Young children | ☐ None of the above |

15A What type of area was the stop you caught the bus in?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ City or town centre | ☐ Countryside |
| ☐ City or town suburb | ☐ Somewhere else |
| ☐ Village | |

15B If you know the name of the bus stop you caught the bus from, please write it in

- ☐ Don't know the name of the bus stop

16 And which of these did the bus stop where you caught the bus have?

Please cross all that apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ A shelter | ☐ Information on types of tickets available |
| ☐ Seating | ☐ A route map |
| ☐ Electronic display showing bus arrival times | ☐ Lighting |
| ☐ A timetable | ☐ None of the above |
| ☐ Information on fares | |

17 Thinking about the bus stop itself, how would you rate the following . . . ?

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know/ no opinion
Its general condition/standard of maintenance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being clear of litter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The information provided	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your personal security when at the bus stop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18A How long did you wait for your bus?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Less than 5 minutes | ☐ 30 to 39 minutes |
| ☐ 5 to 9 minutes | ☐ 40 to 49 minutes |
| ☐ 10 to 14 minutes | ☐ 50 to 59 minutes |
| ☐ 15 to 19 minutes | ☐ 60 minutes or longer |
| ☐ 20 to 29 minutes | ☐ I can't remember |

18B Was this wait time . . .

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Much longer than you expected | ☐ A little less than you expected |
| ☐ A little longer than you expected | ☐ Much less than you expected |
| ☐ About the length of time you expected | |

19 Thinking about when the bus arrived, how would you rate the following . . . ?

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know/ no opinion
The ease of getting onto the bus	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The length of time it took to board	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20 Thinking about when you were on the bus, how would you rate the following . . . ?

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know/ no opinion
The cleanliness and condition of the inside of the bus	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The availability of seating or space to stand	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The comfort of the seats	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The temperature inside the bus	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ventilation on board	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your personal security	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21 How busy was the bus during most of your journey?

- ☐ Almost empty
☐ Several passengers, but plenty of seats
☐ All or most seats occupied, but passengers were able to sit if they wanted to
☐ Full, and some passengers had no choice about standing

22 Did you get a seat on the bus?

- ☐ Yes – for all of the journey
☐ Yes – for part of the journey
☐ No – there were **seats available**, but I chose to stand
☐ No – there were **no seats available**, but I was happy to stand
☐ No – there were **no seats available** and I would have liked a seat

23 If you had a seat, did anyone sit next to you?

- ☐ Yes – someone I knew sat next to me
☐ Yes – someone I didn't know sat next to me
☐ No – I was sat alone for the journey

24 Did other passengers' behaviour make you feel worried or uncomfortable during your journey at the bus stop or on the bus?

	At the bus stop	On the bus
Yes	☐	☐
No	☐	☐

25 If other passengers' behaviour made you feel worried or uncomfortable, which of the following were the reason(s) for this?

Please tick all that apply

	At the bus stop	On the bus
Passengers drinking/ under the influence of alcohol	☐	☐
Passengers taking/ under the influence of drugs	☐	☐
Abusive or threatening behaviour	☐	☐
Rowdy behaviour	☐	☐
Feet on seats	☐	☐
Music being played loudly	☐	☐
Smoking/vaping	☐	☐
Graffiti or vandalism	☐	☐
Saw an act of vandalism/ violence taking place	☐	☐

Other (please specify in the box below)

26 Was your journey delayed by . . . ?

Please cross all that apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Congestion/traffic jams | ☐ Poor weather conditions |
| ☐ Road works | ☐ The bus waiting too long at stops |
| ☐ The bus driver driving too slowly | ☐ A driver shift change |
| ☐ The time it took passengers to board/pay for tickets | ☐ No – none of these |

27 How would you rate the following facilities on the bus?

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not present on the bus	Don't know/ didn't use
Audio announcements e.g. saying the next bus stop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
An electronic display e.g. showing the next bus stop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Details of how to contact the bus company, e.g. to provide feedback or find out information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Free Wi-Fi	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
USB charging points	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
 Hearing/induction loop (to help those with hearing aids hear messages/announcements relayed on the bus loudspeakers/driver intercom)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

28 Thinking about the driver and the driving, how would you rate the following . . . ?

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know/ no opinion
How near to the kerb/stop the bus stopped	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The helpfulness and attitude of the driver	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The time the driver gave you to get to your seat	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The smoothness of the ride (no jolting) during the journey	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

29 Could you tell us a bit more about the pass or ticket you used for the journey? (This includes contactless, tickets on mobile phones etc.) Was it . . .

Paid for journey

- ☐ A single
- ☐ A return
- ☐ A ticket from a multi-ticket bundle or carnet
- ☐ A day pass or daily capped fare
- ☐ A pass, season ticket or capped fare for a longer period (e.g. weekly, monthly or yearly)
- ☐ A family or group ticket/pass
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Something else (please specify in the box below)

Free pass or free journey

- ☐ An older person's pass
- ☐ A student/young person's pass
- ☐ A disabled person's pass
- ☐ A work/staff pass
- ☐ A free bus journey offer

30 Who could you use your pass or ticket with?

- ☐ One bus company only
- ☐ Several bus companies
- ☐ Buses and other types of transport
- ☐ I don't know

31 On boarding the bus, did you?

- ☐ Use cash to buy a ticket or pass
- ☐ Use a contactless payment method (e.g. credit or debit card, Apple Pay or Android Pay) to buy a ticket or pass
- ☐ Show the driver a ticket, card or pass that you already had
- ☐ Tap/place your smartcard/pass onto the fare machine or scanner
- ☐ Show the driver or scan a ticket displayed on your smart phone
- ☐ Do something else (please specify in the box below)

32 If you bought your ticket or pass before getting on the bus, how did you do this?

- ☐ From a bus driver on a different day or earlier in the day
- ☐ Direct from the bus company using their app
- ☐ Direct from the bus company via website, or some other way
- ☐ From another website or app
- ☐ From a travel centre/bus station/booking office
- ☐ From a local shop or post office
- ☐ From a ticket machine
- ☐ Using an arrangement through work/college
- ☐ Another way (please specify in the box below)

4 Your opinion of bus services in the local area

33 Thinking more generally about the bus services where you were making this journey (so not just about this particular journey) how would you rate them for the following?

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know/ no opinion
Ease of getting to local amenities (e.g. shops, hospitals)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Connections with other forms of public transport (e.g. trains)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Taking me to the places that I want to go	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The frequency of services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The reliability of services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The range of different bus tickets and passes available	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The cost of bus fares	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The information provided about bus services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

34 How often do you typically travel by bus?

- ☐ 5 or more days a week
- ☐ 3 or 4 days a week
- ☐ Once or twice a week
- ☐ Once a fortnight
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ At least once every 3 months
- ☐ Less frequently
- ☐ This is the first time

35 And is this more often, the same, or less often than 12 months ago?

- ☐ More often
- ☐ The same
- ☐ Less often
- ☐ I can't remember

5 About you

In this final section we ask for some more information about you, including your health and ethnicity (which are considered to be sensitive information). Any information you give us here will be used for research purposes only and not to identify any individual. You are free to decide whether you want to give us this information or not.

We ask these questions so that we can understand how different passengers' experiences vary, so, for example, what do disabled passengers think compared to non-disabled passengers.

36 We would like to ask your ethnic background. If you do not consent to us collecting, storing and processing this information please cross the 'prefer not to say' box below.

- ☐ White
- ☐ Mixed/multiple ethnic groups
- ☐ Asian or Asian British
- ☐ Black, African/Caribbean or Black British
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Arab
- ☐ Other ethnic group
- ☐ Prefer not to say

- 37 We would like to ask if you have any disability. This is to help us better understand the needs you might have. If you do not consent to us collecting, storing and processing this information please cross the 'prefer not to say' box below.

Are you affected by any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

Please cross all that apply

- ☐ No: None
☐ Yes: Vision (e.g. blindness or partial sight)
☐ Yes: Hearing (e.g. deafness or partial hearing)
☐ Yes: Mobility (e.g. only able to walk short distances or difficulty climbing stairs)
☐ Yes: Dexterity (e.g. difficulty lifting or carrying objects or using a keyboard)
☐ Yes: Difficulty with learning or understanding or concentrating
☐ Yes: Memory
☐ Yes: Mental health
☐ Yes: Stamina or breathing or fatigue
☐ Yes: Socially or behaviourally (e.g. associated with autism, attention deficit disorder or Asperger's syndrome)
☐ Something else (please specify in the box below)

- ☐ Prefer not to say

- 38 In terms of having a car to drive, which of the following applies?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ I have a car available and don't mind driving | ☐ I don't have a car available |
| ☐ I have a car available but prefer not to drive | ☐ I don't drive |

- 39 How often are you able to ask someone else to drive you for local journeys?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ All or most of the time | ☐ I don't have anybody I can ask |
| ☐ Some of the time | ☐ Not relevant to me |

- 40 And finally, to help us get a better picture of bus services at a local level, it would be helpful if you could provide us with your home postcode. You do not have to provide this, but if you do, please provide at least the first half of your postcode.

If you provide it, this will be used to help understand bus usage and make improvements locally.

Your postcode will not be used to identify you personally and will only be used for research purposes.

Please write your home postcode here:

How the information you have provided will be used (General Data Protection Regulations)

Your responses to the questions in this survey will always be handled confidentially and used solely for the purposes of the research. We may share your responses with other organisations that have a legitimate interest in the survey data, such as, but not limited to, local transport authorities, local authorities, government departments, bus operating companies and academic institutions. Any organisations receiving the data will also be subject to the same restrictions and obligations under GDPR. We require your consent for the sensitive information we ask for in the 'about you' section to be stored and processed as described above, so please confirm whether or not you consent to this by crossing one of the boxes below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Yes, I consent | ☐ No, I do not consent |
|---|---|

You also have the right to access, withdraw your consent to use, and object to processing of your sensitive information.

For further information please see the Privacy Notice on our website: <https://www.bva-bdrc.com/bva-bdrc-privacy-notice>.

For any queries about this survey please contact Sally Mimnagh at BVA BDRC on 07759526577.

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY AND SHARING YOUR OPINIONS WITH US
SO YOUR VOICE IS HEARD**

9 Appendix 2: PV2 models

The following models were used to estimate the number of unique passengers on board each bus service, from one end of its route to another, to inform the 'on bus' shifts route selection.

Models were found to provide a better fit if the specific local authority area (or operator area) was used, than if the area type was used. Therefore, where the specific local authority (or operator) area was surveyed in the 2024 Your Bus Journey survey and thus had its own (robust) data, the specific PSU model was used. All areas surveyed in 2024 had a good amount of footfall data (at least 20 observations) so area specific models could be created for these. Where the PSU was not surveyed previously and there was no specific model available, the relevant area type model was used.

Similarly, if one of the 'big five' operators was present in the area, a better model fit was found when the operator was factored into the model; therefore, models were generated with and without this factor in order to provide the best estimates possible. Some other large or dominant operators in certain areas (other than the 'big five') were also factored in to create a better model fit for those PSUs. As such there were six possible models as shown in the table below.

The model for an area that had been surveyed before (in the 2024 survey) included a constant specific to that area, and then coefficients covering the time of day, duration of journey and operator. For an area that had not been surveyed before, the model was of the same structure but with coefficients depending upon the type of area.

For the 2025 survey, the decision was made to move away from the old area type definitions of PTE, Two Tier and Unitary and move to the new area type definitions of Rural, Semi Rural, Urban Metropolitan and Urban Other. This is because the old area type definitions were quite out dated and the areas falling within them were demographically quite different locations, while the newer area type definitions are better suited as comparators to other similar areas taking part in the survey. These definitions were only used when sampling new areas that had not previously been in the YBJ survey and so did not already have their own model.

9a: PV2 Model

	Model	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Basis	Area	Areatype	Area	Areatype	Area	Areatype
	big5	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
	Constant	10.576	10.576	10.576	10.576	10.576	10.576
Duration	30 minutes or less	-1.57	-1.86	-1.55	-1.88	-1.51	-1.57
	30 and up to 45 mins	-0.03	0.07	0.02	0.18	-0.01	-0.09
	45 mins and up to one hour	-0.01	-0.08	-0.05	-0.03	-0.19	-0.22
	over 1 hour	1.18	1.33	1.14	1.19	1.22	1.37
Day-part	Off peak	0.20	0.11	0.16	0.11	0.13	0.13
	Morning peak	-0.67	-0.86	-0.78	-0.93	-1.00	-0.93
	Evening peak	0.49	0.69	0.63	0.82	0.76	0.63

	Weekend	-0.45	-0.17	-0.36	-0.23	-0.16	-0.12
Operator (‘big 5’)	Arriva	1.23	-0.15				0.22
	First	1.55	0.72				0.59
	Go-Ahead	-2.02	-3.24				-2.52
	National Express	12.14	10.04				10.46
	Other	-0.90	0.07				-0.07
	Stagecoach	-0.54	-0.95				-0.92
Area type	PTE		0.23		0.99		
	Scottish RTP		0.13		-0.03		
	Two Tier		-1.61		-1.82		
	Wales		-2.13		-2.14		
	Unitary		0.69		0.59		
New Area type	Rural					-0.75	-0.42
	Scottish areas					0.23	0.46
	Semi-rural					-2.29	-1.94
	Urban metropolitan					1.06	-0.07
	Urban other					0.95	1.00
	Wales					-1.94	-1.92
Area	Blackpool	0.55		-0.33			
	Bournemouth	7.59		6.69			
	Brighton & Hove	7.77		6.86			
	Cheshire East	-1.82		-2.59			
	Cheshire West & Chester	-1.60		-1.60			
	Cornwall	-0.77		-1.38			
	Derby City	-3.66		-3.37			
	Derbyshire	-1.04		-1.83			
	Durham	-1.53		-2.13			
	East Riding of Yorkshire	1.30		0.48			
	East Sussex	-5.78		-6.46			
	Greater Manchester	1.64		1.11			
	Greater Nottingham	1.75		0.89			
	HITRANS	-2.48		-3.16			
	Hampshire	1.00		0.78			
	Lancashire & Blackburn with Darwen	-1.27		-2.05			
	Leicester City	-2.61		-1.69			
	Lincolnshire	-3.21		-3.87			
	Liverpool City	2.29		2.76			
	Luton	6.19		6.79			
	Mid Wales	-3.60		-4.34			
	NESTRANS	1.09		1.54			
	Norfolk	-0.23		0.30			
	North East Lincolnshire	-2.00		-2.52			
	North Wales	-1.10		-0.73			
	North Yorkshire	1.25		0.74			
	Northumberland	-2.61		-2.24			
	Nottinghamshire	-2.29		-3.01			
	Oxfordshire	3.31		2.61			
	Portsmouth	0.41		1.19			
	Reading Buses	6.40		5.49			
	SESTRANS	5.35		4.48			
	SPT	0.86		1.10			
	SWESTRANS	-5.03		-5.76			
	South East Wales	-0.98		-1.47			

	South West Wales	-1.71		-0.71			
	South Yorkshire	-0.81		-0.47			
	Stoke on Trent	-0.23		0.63			
	Suffolk	-3.70		-3.65			
	Surrey	-1.47		-2.21			
	TACTRANS	2.38		1.64			

Example, based on local authority area West Midlands:

This specific area was covered in the 2024 Your Bus Journey and therefore the specific area was able to be modelled. Some services in this area were run by 'big five' operators (National Express). Therefore, the West Midlands used model number 1.

For the example below, we will assume that this bus was a National Express bus in the West Midlands, on a 20 minute journey during the morning peak

- In this case we started with the base assumption that all buses had 10.576 people on board (this was the constant)
- Then this figure was decreased by 1.78 for all individual bus services for the fact that they were all in the West Midlands local authority area
- It was then increased or decreased depending on the other attributes of each bus; for instance:
 - If one whole journey for that bus service was less than 30 minutes in duration, it would be decreased by 1.57
 - If the bus service was also travelling in the morning peak it would be decreased by 0.67
 - If it was run by National Express, it would be increased by 12.14
- In this case then, the 'passenger value' (PV2) for this bus service (i.e. the estimated total number of unique passengers on board throughout its journey) would be 18.696. That is [constant 10.576] - [West Midlands 1.78] - [<30mins 1.57] - [morning peak 0.67] + [National Express 12.14].

A hypothetical, similar journey (less than 30 minutes long, in the morning peak, run by National Express) but in an Urban Other area not surveyed in the 2024 Your Bus Journey would have had a PV2 of 19.536. This is because it would have used model 6 (where the local authority area does not have its own specific data, but the area type is known), and the values would be: [constant 10.576] + [Urban Other 1.00] - [<30mins 1.57] - [morning peak 0.93] + [National Express 10.46].

10 Appendix 3: Two recruitment locations: On bus versus at stop

YBJ uses two types of recruitment location: on bus and at bus stops.

Small differences have been observed in satisfaction and opinion ratings, among respondents recruited in these two ways, examples are shown in the table below.

We have accounted for these differences by ensuring that all areas are weighted so that the proportion of on bus versus at stop shifts are 50/50⁸, but example data is given here since it is also useful to understand how results differ so that these differences can be considered when evaluating the data.

10a: Difference in results across on bus or at stop shifts (weighted data)

	On bus	At bus stop
Q8 How satisfied were you with each of the following during the journey? (Total satisfied)		
The bus stop where you caught the bus	83%	79%
The length of time you had to wait for the bus	80%	72%
The punctuality of the bus at the stop where you caught the bus (arriving on time)	82%	76%
The driver of the bus	89%	86%
The length of time your journey on the bus took	86%	83%
Q9. Overall, taking everything into account from the start to the end, how satisfied were you with your bus journey?	89%	84%
B5 Thinking about the bus stop itself, how would you rate the following...? (Total satisfied)		
Its general condition/standard of maintenance	70%	76%
Its freedom from litter	72%	75%
The information provided	75%	79%
Your personal safety whilst at the bus stop	69%	69%
B6A How long did you wait for your bus? (% 0-9 minutes)	75%	57%
B6B Was this wait time...(% longer than expected)	23%	29%
B16 Thinking about the driver, how would you rate the following...? (Total good)		
How near to the kerb/stop the bus stopped	93%	92%
The helpfulness and attitude of the driver	87%	85%
The time the driver gave you to get to your seat	87%	85%
The smoothness of the ride (no jolting) during the journey	83%	80%

From this, we can see that those who were recruited on bus give generally higher ratings across the majority of attributes and also report a lower wait for the bus that they say is more in line with their expectations. This may be a factor of already being on their journey when the interviewer approaches them, whereas those recruited at stop are still waiting for their bus

⁸ With the exception of Cambridge and Peterborough Busways and West of England Bristol Boost as previously mentioned

when approached, and so are more likely to remember the wait for completing the survey. It may also be an impact of those whose bus is delayed, or who are waiting for a longer time, are more available to be approached by interviewers at bus stops.

However, there is not such a difference in terms of bus driver ratings between those recruited on bus or at stop – perhaps as these factors are things that stay in the mind more rather than more subjective measures of the wait.