

“What’s the fuss we want the bus!”

Research findings: reaching our destination



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The Peoples' Parliament

Experiential Landscape

UK Leverhulme trust funded research



Research findings: reaching our destination.

Contents:

1. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROJECT CONTEXT	4
2. IDENTIFYING PROJECT PARTNERS	7
3. REVEALING THE ISSUES	8
Initial facilitating sessions	8
Issues raised by the groups to be looked at:	9
4. BRINGING TOGETHER THE ISSUES	10
W.O.R.K Ltd.	10
At the bus stop	10
On the bus	10
Getting off the bus.....	11
SUFA	11
Existing bus travel experiences	11
Past issues for people who no longer travel by bus.....	12
Other issues.....	12
Voices and Choices.....	12
Existing travel experiences on public buses were limited	12
Summary	13
Social Issues.....	13
Safety.....	13
Customer Care.....	13
Information.....	13
Place and Object issues	14

5. PROJECT METHODS	15
W.O.R.K Ltd.	15
Travel NOW: The bus trip to town, talking about experiences	15
Drawing Workshop: NOW and WISH	18
Interview Workshops: Talking about NOW and WISHES in four separate interviews	20
SUFA	44
Travel NOW: The bus trip to town, talking about experiences	44
Drawing Workshop: NOW and WISH	50
Discussion workshops: Talking about the main issues NOW and WISH	52
Voices and Choices	54
Drawing Workshop: NOW and WISH	54
Travel NOW: The bus trip to town, talking about experiences	54
6. REPRESENTATION and EVALUATION	57
W.O.R.K Ltd.	58
Canvas Workshop: Painting NOW and WISH	58
SUFA	60
Travel NOW and WISH: Another bus trip to town, talking about my most important NOW and WISH experiences	60
Voices and Choices	63
Animation: Showing NOW and WISH experiences by making an animated film	63
7. FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS	65
Summary of Findings	65
Social Issues	65

Safety.....	65
Customer Care.....	66
Information.....	66
Place and Object issues	67
Recommendations.....	68
Social Issues.....	68
Safety.....	68
Customer Care.....	68
Information.....	69
Place and Object issues	69
Future	70
Acknowledgements	71

1. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROJECT CONTEXT



In 2008 funding was obtained from the Knowledge Transfer Opportunities Fund for a six month research collaboration between the **University of Sheffield** and **Sheffield Mencap** for the “Excuse me I want to get on!” project.

The project was run by the learning disability self advocacy group ‘**Voices and Choices**’ at Sheffield Mencap Day Services working in association with University of Sheffield (led by Alice Mathers) and supported by the Stagecoach Supertram, Sheffield Independent Film (SIF) and the Sheffield self advocacy group Speaking Up For Advocacy (SUFA).

Between January and June 2008 the ‘Voices and Choices’ group at Sheffield Mencap explored their experiences of using the **Stagecoach Supertram** to travel across Sheffield and South Yorkshire. The project explored ways in which to improve the accessibility of the Supertram with the following aims:

1. To **empower** people with learning disabilities to access the Supertram safely and with growing confidence.
2. To make explicit **good practice** for support staff and the families of people with learning disabilities, so that they are able to best support their family member or person with learning disabilities to gain greater independence when travelling across the city.
3. To **generate methods** by which local service providers and policy makers (Sheffield City Council) may make the city and its transport

links more **accessible** and **inclusive** for people with learning disabilities.

The project fieldwork commenced with an initial meeting in February 2008 held at Sheffield Mencap the group talked about the good and bad points of travelling by tram. We also discussed how as a group we wanted to communicate our ideas to others using writing, film, photography and drawings. Some people felt more comfortable using one communication method than another, we decided to use a range of communication methods so all group members could have their say.

In March we met with SUFA to find out what people from the wider local learning disability population thought about travelling by public transport. In our meeting with SUFA the group used drama to communicate their experiences of using the Supertram. After meeting with Speaking Up For Advocacy, the ‘Voices and Choices’ group decided to use drama as another communication method when telling others their stories of travelling by tram.

Four members of the ‘Voices and Choices’ group chose to tell their individual travel stories through the making of a documentary film. Each member had a different reason for wanting to use the Supertram to enable them to gain greater independence. In each journey the people face different issues and overcome these issues in different ways.

Throughout the project the group used drawing workshops to communicate, explore and develop their ideas. During the drawing workshops ‘Voices and Choices’ members highlighted current issues when travelling by the Supertram, but also ways in which their travel experience could be improved and how an ideal or perfect travel experience might be created.

Through the previously described project fieldwork, the evolved findings of “Excuse me I want to get on!” identified three important areas for consideration in the experience of people with learning disabilities travelling by the Supertram.

These were:

- **Current problems** experienced by passengers with learning disabilities.
- **Current successful Stagecoach Supertram features** which facilitate travel by passengers with learning disabilities.
- **Future developments** that would enhance the public transport experience of people with learning disabilities.

Detailed findings were published in “**Excuse me I want to get on!**” A Guide to Good Travel, and a DVD film was made of the four travel experiences of the Voices and Choices group who decided to tell people of their experiences in a documentary.

A presentation day was held at the Peoples’ Parliament, Sheffield Town Hall on the 17th July 2008, where the first public showing of the documentary took place as well as the presentation of the findings.

As well as the presentations, there were discussion workshops to find out about travelling by public transport, and the places people would like to go but currently cannot (due to a variety of reasons). There were also feedback forms for people to complete and short discussions about what the discussion workshop groups had talked about.

There was a strong opinion that bus travel in the City was of concern to a number of people, and this together with the findings of “Excuse me I want to get on!” would form the basis for the University of Sheffield, Experiential Landscape research. This is funded by the Leverhulme Trust and began in September 2008 looking into people responsive environmental design project.

2. IDENTIFYING PROJECT PARTNERS

A network of equal partnership created for the project includes Community, Service Providers, Policy Makers, and Practitioners:

- **Experiential Landscape, The University of Sheffield (coordinates)**
A Leverhulme funded research project, which aims to promote social capital through person-centred processes.
- **Sheffield Mencap, Voices and Choices group (participates)**
A Day Service self-advocacy group who meet weekly.
- **Speaking up for Advocacy (SUFA) (participates)**
An independent Sheffield self-advocacy group.
- **W.O.R.K. Ltd. (participates)**
Worthwhile Occupational and Recreational Krafts Ltd is a registered charity.
- **South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (facilitates fieldwork travel and participates)**
Oversees the development of public transport networks in South Yorkshire.
- **Sheffield City Council Mobility Strategy Team (participate and sponsor project)**
Looks at what Adult Community Care can do about older and disabled people getting around in Sheffield.
- **First South Yorkshire (participates)**
The largest bus operator in South Yorkshire.
- **Stagecoach Sheffield (participates)**
A bus operator based in Sheffield.
- **Sheffield Community Transport (participates)**
A non-governmental organisation with charitable status.

3. REVEALING THE ISSUES



Initial facilitating sessions

Issues of significance to participant partners were revealed at initial facilitating sessions within the project context.

Members from our groups said the following at the People’s Parliament on the 20th November 2008 and at other initial discussions:



“Buses, not always friendly with people with learning disabilities, bus drivers need training (to be more kind and considerate)” (Sheffield Mencap members, 2008)



“Fear of missing your stop due to lack of time to get down the bus – therefore people get up the stop before. Unwanted attention – due to visibility of disability. Disturbance and noise – made by other passengers throwing things and shouting at each other (vulnerable people feel more insecure).” (SUFA members, 2008)

“A number of us (trainees) use the bus to get to work. At the moment, travelling on the bus can be confusing and scary. We would really like to work with other organisations to make bus journeys easier, safer and a more enjoyable part of our day”. (W.O.R.K Ltd. trainees, 2008)

Issues raised by the groups to be looked at:

- Making journeys safer and easier.
- Improving health and safety on buses.
- Accessibility for all (physical, sensory and more).
- Awareness and equality training for bus drivers and staff.
- Important daily journeys (such as going home).
- Different types of buses.
- Information.
- Passenger behaviour (good and bad).
- Bus stops.

4. BRINGING TOGETHER THE ISSUES

Commonalities and differences are identified among arising issues. These were grouped to determine project focus as a result of initial discussion workshops that commenced in February 2009 and focused on four questions about present (NOW) bus travel experiences:

1. What’s it like getting to the bus stop?
2. What’s it like at the bus stop?
3. What’s it like on the bus?
4. What’s it like getting off?

The group’s issues regarding their experiences of NOW were as follows:

W.O.R.K Ltd.

At the bus stop

- Anti Social issues:
 - behaviour of school children.
 - the general public, pushing and being noisy.
- Information:
 - difficult to understand because of the language used.
 - small in print size.
 - bus stops which tell you when the bus is coming are good.
- Place and object issues:
 - felt fine at bus stops which were clean.
- Difficulties:
 - in how to stop the bus, as sometimes they drive past.

On the bus

- Anti Social issues:
 - when it’s crowded and people mess about it can be “Scary, sometimes hell.”
 - catch a later bus to avoid confrontation with children misbehaving.
 - try not to get involved with children misbehaving, who also may distract the driver.
- Good Relationships:
 - concern shown for other passengers, for example not sitting on fold up seats, as someone else may need them more.

- Place and object issues:
 - easier to be at the front of the bus, it’s quicker to get on and off.
 - need for longer seats.
 - difficult to get off due to overcrowding and passengers standing in the doorway.
 - shared concerns about the amount of litter on the bus.

Getting off the bus

- Anti Social issues:
 - violence is unacceptable: “Blood (cut) and brain (not using it)”.
- Safety:
 - driver should not be distracted.
 - additional jobs should be done by other staff.
- Place and object issues:
 - getting off the bus is no problem for some, depending on the route. Can be easier when the children get off the stop before you.
 - missing your stop can be stressful, avoid this by looking out of the windows for landmarks like shops. It feels like you need “two heads”.
 - pressing the bell is important, sometimes have to push past people to be able to get off.
 - a bus stop near home is important, one that is “not far to walk to”.

SUFA

Existing bus travel experiences

- Place and object issues:
 - sometimes access to buses for wheelchair users is difficult.
 - where should the wheelchair user sit?
 - wheelchairs are big and difficult to fold to be stored.
 - conflicts can arise with pram users using the same space.
 - prams are more easily stored than wheelchairs.
 - wheelchair users should be able to face the in the direction that the bus is travelling.
- Potential for conflict:
 - some people do not respect wheelchair designated spaces.

Past issues for people who no longer travel by bus

- Buses previously used to go shopping with family members.
- Now go shopping to supermarkets by car.
- Reasons for not travelling by bus:
 - difficulties in getting off at the right stop.
 - difficult to sit down before the bus sets off.
 - far too dangerous to get to the bus stop.
 - lack of crossings and busy roads make it dangerous to get to the bus stop.
- Not all bus stops have shelters, these are sometimes used as landmarks.

Other issues

- People liked the fact that some buses came often and they didn't have to wait long.
- Buses do provide opportunities for making friends, you can see others you may not know and of all different ages.

Voices and Choices

Existing travel experiences on public buses were limited

- Not many people use public buses.
- Most people travel by car or community transport.
- People like travelling by community transport because their friends use it.
- Some people also travel by tram.
- Only one person self travels.
- Most people who use the bus travel with family and friends.
- Most people choose how to travel because they want to be with people they know.

Summary

Social Issues

Anti social behavior was of particular concern to W.O.R.K. Ltd. This was as a result of bad experiences of children misbehaving at bus stops and on buses. As well as some attitudes of the general public. SUFA had concerns regarding potential issues between wheelchair users and people with prams which can arise from the same space on the bus being occupied.

Positive aspects were expressed by all groups, with W.O.R.K. Ltd. showing concern for other passengers. SUFA’s experiences of bus travel gave them the opportunity to meet people of different ages and make friends. Voices and Choices also valued travel with friends but saw this as a reason why they did not travel on public transport at present because their friends did not.

Safety

W.O.R.K. Ltd. voiced concerns that the driver’s job was to drive and that they should not be distracted or given other jobs to do. SUFA participants talked of difficulties in getting to the bus stop due to busy roads and the lack of crossings.

Customer Care

SUFA noted that it was good when buses turned up frequently and you didn’t have to wait long. They also said that it was often difficult to be seated before the bus set off from the bus stop.

Information

The travel information given was difficult to read because of the print size, and sometimes W.O.R.K. Ltd also said that it was not easy to understand because of the language used. W.O.R.K. Ltd also made a point about the need to look for information from the environment outside when on a journey such as landmarks so you knew when to get off. SUFA also shared concerns regarding getting off at the right stop, as well as the use of bus shelters as landmarks to identify your own stop from another one that did not have a shelter.

Place and Object issues

The condition and cleanliness of bus stops were important to W.O.R.K. Ltd., as well as concerns regarding the amount of litter on buses. Having a bus stop within walking distance was also considered good. Once on the bus the front was preferred in order that you could get off easily and did not miss your stop. This appeared to also present a problem as overcrowding and people standing in the doorway could mean that it was then difficult to get off.

SUFA shared experiences of difficulties in accessing buses, and where should the wheelchair be placed. The wheelchair was stated as big and difficult to store as opposed to prams which could be stored more easily when the same space was required for both users. The way the wheelchair faced, which sometimes was not in the direction the bus was travelling was seen as a concern.

5. PROJECT METHODS

Project methods were selected from a suite of methods through collaboration with project partners to suit the project focus and participant preferences.

W.O.R.K Ltd.



Travel NOW: The bus trip to town, talking about experiences

Getting to the bus stop

- Not an enjoyable experience because:
 - school children fighting, bullying and arguing.
 - crossing busy road is difficult, drop kerb is in an inappropriate place.
 - oncoming traffic difficult to see.
 - don't feel safe.
 - long way to the bus stop, gives good exercise but in bad weather is not enjoyable and can be tiring.
 - litter along the way.



At the bus stop

- Not good because:
 - bus timetable faces opposite direction to where the bus comes from, might miss bus if reading it.
 - bus stop is dirty, shelter windows unclean and difficult to see through.
 - some children behave badly by hanging off the roof of the shelter, this is dangerous.



“What’s the fuss we want the bus!”



On the bus

- It would be good to:
 - have voices to tell you when and where the bus is stopping.
 - sit down and safer. When the bus is not crowded or when children are not messing about you can find a seat.
- Bin is for tickets only and not general rubbish, rubbish is often on the floor.
- Can be bumpy on some journey’s.
- Best to sit at the front near the driver if school children are being rowdy.



Getting off the bus in town

- Bus stop at Arundel Gate, in town is better than the one near W.O.R.K. Ltd:
 - easier to get off, because the bus driver can pull right in.
 - bigger shelter, everyone can stand together with their friends.
 - less noisy because no school children, and the shelter faced away from the road.
- Information at the bus stop was confusing:
 - words like “High Frequency” are difficult to understand.
 - timetables are written in the 24 hour clock which is not easy for everyone to understand.





Around the bus stop in town

- Experiences change at different times of the day; it’s okay in the day, but very busy at tea time.
- Difficulties in finding and walking to the transport interchange.
- Lack of signs so people did not know which way to go.
- To reach the subway that takes you to the interchange, a busy road has to be crossed which is difficult.
- Subway is dark at night and “feels dangerous”.
- Most direct route:
 - has lots of steps.
 - was badly maintained
 - lots of litter and hazards on steps, like broken glass and cans.



At the transport interchange

- The journey planner machine was not easy to use because:
 - the information was confusing
 - print was very small making it difficult for people with visual impairments to use.
- travel guides were helpful, but were out of each for some of the group.



Drawing Workshop: NOW and WISH



NOW

- Vandalism on buses and bus stops.
- Damage, graffiti, it's dangerous and there's rubbish.

WISH

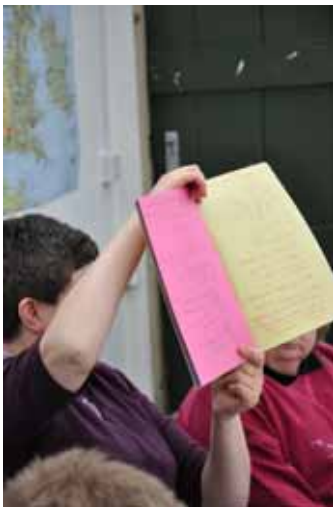
- People should tell the authorities and keep all buses clean and tidy.
- "We should have rubbish bins on all buses and at all bus stops, they should be emptied."



NOW

- School children behaving badly:
 - pushing, shoving, kicking the bus stop and swearing.
 - bad behaviour makes others feel "mad and angry" and older people may get hurt.
 - its "rowdy, noisy and there is no room on the bus".
- Broken glass at bus stops.
- Bus stops make me feel "disgusted".
- Problems with travel information:
 - on bus stops and bus timetables.
 - travel guides.
 - web sites.
 - "makes us feel annoyed and frustrated, and stops us getting up to date information and it is difficult to complain when things go wrong".
 - symbols not used very often.
 - writing is too small.
 - maps are difficult to read.
 - using lots of different colours is confusing when the buses are the same colour.





- Difficulties getting to the Interchange:
 - why use the word Interchange and what does it mean to people who catch the bus?
 - health and safety: litter and steps.
 - unpleasant journey: vandalism, graffiti, litter.
 - lack of signs.
 - road crossing in wrong place.

WISH

- Better experience with children:
 - school teachers, conductors or police at the bus stop.
 - police should visit schools to talk to the children and teachers.
 - CCTV to monitor behaviour.
 - W.O.R.K. Ltd to talk with the school, bus drivers, and main bus manager.
 - city council to pay for a double Decker bus, children on top and other people on bottom.
 - give those children who cause the problem longer school holidays.
- Clean and tidy bus stops.
- Improve getting to the interchange:
 - clean up the mess, involve young offenders.
 - make the steps wider.
 - raise the road/drop the kerb to make it easier for wheelchair users include more ramps.
 - make crossing the road easier: build more paths and include traffic lights.
 - more signs with bigger writing.
- Travel Information:
 - information available on mobile phone texts at cheap rates or for free.
 - simplify timetables, maps and leaflets, designed by “people with disabilities”.
 - information at a height everyone can reach.
 - include picture and sound format on website.

Interview Workshops: Talking about NOW and WISHES in four separate interviews

W.O.R.K. Ltd. trainees wanted to ask questions to various organisations about bus travel experiences, four interviews took place, these were with:



The Sheffield City Council Mobility Strategy Project Officer. [SCC]



Senior Network Accessibility Officer (Mobility) South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive. [SYLTE]



Customer Services Manager and Business Development Director/Deputy MD, First South Yorkshire Ltd. [FSY]



Head Teacher [HT] and Student Representatives [SR] of a local college.

The University of Sheffield, Experiential Landscape

"What's the fuss we want the bus!"

The W.O.R.K. Ltd. questions have been grouped into five themes that relate to:

- **Information**
- **Issues relating to places and objects**
- **Customer Care and Policies**
- **Safety and Anti Social issues**
- **School Children**

The following are the questions and responses at the interviews, not every question was asked at each interview. The questions are in 'bold type' and are numbered, the replies to the questions are in 'bullets'. The replies start with an abbreviation to show who was replying, for example [SCC] is a response from the Sheffield City Council Mobility Strategy Project Officer.

Information

1. We need to enlarge bus timetables for people who are short-sighted/partially sighted, would you agree?

[SCC]

- Very interested in the research to pass onto bus companies to see what can be done.

[SYPTTE]

- In certain instances people would appreciate a larger font, but we have constraint on space available.
- We have tried to incorporate best examples from around the country. All timetables incorporate a 12 point font.
- If people request we can send a large print version to people and with the spoken information and text information then this may not be such an issue for people, in particular with real time information at bus stops.

2. How can you improve on information?

[SCC]

- Signpost Sheffield website is being updated and will include information on what services people can use and what services the council can offer to help people use public transport.
- We offer travel training where a worker from our service will come and teach you how to use a bus, taxi, tram or walk somewhere. This is also used to help people feel safer, and we also offer travel buddies.

[SYPTTE]

- A number of different ways, there are a number of things we are trying to do already, which is about getting information in as many different formats so that as many people who are not comfortable with information being in a standard printed format can use them, such as the internet, the your next bus text system on mobile phones

and also a project around more spoken information as well. The connect project shelters in Sheffield will have real time information and spoken information.

- We are also looking at the possibility of spoken information on buses as well.
- For us to improve on that we should consult better and meet users such as yourselves so we can find out what we can do to improve and take that onboard and use them.

3. What are you doing to produce bus timetables in Braille?

[SCC]

- I don't know if PTE produce things in Braille but it is a good idea.

[SYPTTE]

- As a matter of course we don't produce them in Braille. If anyone requires information in an alternative format then if they phone the travel line or the general number for the transport executive then we can provide in that format.

4. Could you tell us please how long it will take to change the travel line website?

[SCC]

- It does seem to be taking a while, we have looked at this and we have reported what you initially said to them. They have said that they want to see what these research findings say.

5. What is being done to make the maps easier for people to understand?

[SCC]

- Other examples are being looked at, for example those on the London Underground system.

[SYPTTE]

- Most people generally find maps fairly difficult to work their way around and understand the information.
- What we are trying to do is find a format for maps that is easy to understand but gives enough information that tells you where you need to go.
- We are looking at location specific maps, a map that shows you a basic area of Sheffield from that point showing what services you may need. There are simplified stylised maps with colour coded lines that we are looking at.

6. What is being done to train staff in bus stations in communication such as Makaton and BSL?

[SCC]

- Community care does not have a great deal of say in driver training, but we would like more say. There should be more training for drivers as well as training staff at the stations.

7. I noticed the bus timetable was at the wrong side of the bus shelter, what can you do about this?

[SCC]

- There are groups (transport for all) that meet in Howden House, disabled people meet with bus companies and tram companies and these issues are brought up. These findings could be brought by you to one of these meetings.

[SYPTTE]

- Raising the issue through this project is good, and raising it in general with the travel line for a particular stop. If our staff know we can do something about it, and the staff responsible for a particular shelter may not go to the shelter and be unaware of the issue. If it is brought

to our attention then we can make the suggestion that it can be moved to the other side of the stop where appropriate.

8. We need more timetable information and more signs, what can you do about this?

[SCC]

- You can text to find out when the bus comes, but there are all sorts of other ways where timetables can be made easier and there are probably good examples around the world that can be brought to the bus company’s attention.

[SYPTTE]

- At the Interchange we have a good number, but if there was anything in particular that people wanted and if there was enough demand we would consider that. But with the limited space we mentioned there would need to be demand for it.

9. Could “speak easy” be introduced at bus stops so that a voice could be heard that can give you information about bus timetables?

[SCC]

- That’s a good idea and should go in your findings.

10. We are doing an exhibition on buses at the Town Hall and we wonder if it would be possible to do this at the Interchange?

[STPTE]

- Yes if we can find appropriate space and it would not cause an obstruction then we can ask if we could be allowed to do that.

11. Are there maps showing bus stops for people to know where to catch their bus from?

[SYPTTE]

- Not a printed map to show location of bus stops, but on the internet and the “your next bus system” for texting the number of your bus stop is available on the internet as well. This will show you the location of the bus stops in your area.

Issues relating to places and objects

1. What can you do about the litter I see when I’m walking to the bus stop?

[SCC]

- As a City we need to encourage those few people who do drop litter not to do it, through the police and bus companies.

2. Litter bins are sometimes overflowing, what can you do about this?

[SCC]

- This needs to be brought to the attention of the Council service who deals with this, and we should let them know if there are particular ones where this happens regularly.
- Perhaps more staff should be brought into a particular area, and there is a one-stop shop at Howden house where people can report these things. I can also put this on the Signpost website so people know what to do if this happens.
- There should also be a way of letting you know what is being done about it, so you know that there is a point to you ringing in and it will be on the Sheffield Sign Post website what is being done about it.

[SYPTTE]

- If it is one of our sites and our responsibility then it is up to us to empty them. If it is a particularly busy time then there can be occasions when they get full.

3. I noticed there was a lot of vandalism, rubbish and graffiti on walls, bus shelters and buses, what can you do to reduce this?

[SCC]

- The bus companies do go out regularly to clean graffiti up. The thing is to catch them, if they know that it happens regularly at a particular shelter then they can put a camera up to catch them and do something about it.

[FSY]

- Drivers have to fill in report forms if significant vandalism and the engineers have to fix if it's a safety hazard, and remove obscene graffiti.

[SYPTTE]

- We do have a program to clean shelters on a rolling basis, the graffiti scratches the glass and we replace glass and eventually use more vandal resistant materials as well as working with the police and communities.

4. What do you think about letting the police know about the problems we see at the bus stop, and we need to know what it means to the general public? How can you help with this?

[SYPTTE]

- Depending upon the nature of the problem, some things will need to be reported to the Transport executive.
- If there are ongoing issues at a particular stop, this should be reported to the police or ourselves, and we can do some of the things mentioned.
- If glass is smashed, for example then we replace it within 48 hours, and if it continues to get smashed then we replace it with a new product which is metal, but looks like glass.

5. On the bus shelter there are dots and when you sit down the dots stop you seeing the bus coming. What is the solution?

[SYPTTE]

- This is something else that has been raised before. Ideally there should be two rows, one just at eye level when standing up, and the other a bit lower down so people at different heights and who have visual impairments know that there is glass there and don't walk into it. Then this would give you a clear view when you are sitting down.

- The problem we have is we have a contract for the glass to be replaced, and we need to look at the impact of the situation when the contract comes up for renewal, so we can take account of the impact of what we are purchasing.

6. I think having ashtrays on top of litter bins is dangerous because it could cause a fire, what can be done about this?

[SYPTTE]

- Most like that would be outside, and not our responsibility. It seems standard practice to do this.

7. Litter is not cleaned on the walkway from town to Pond Street, what can you do about this?

[SYPTTE]

- Unsure about remit of SYPTTE is regarding this, it is probably a City council issue, and it may be difficult to keep everywhere clean.

8. Can no smoking signs be put on this walkway from town to Pond Street?

[SYPTTE]

- Probably not, because if it is outside then it couldn’t be enforced. But there are signs at the bus stops to stop smoking in these places.

Customer Care and Policies

1. How would you improve on our bus service?

[SCC]

- Local authority has an influence through a bus agreement.
- Working with departments in the Council who have a say in the bus service, can inform them of the research that you have done and ask what they are doing about it.
- We can also work with the bus companies and inform them of what you have done. “Because the work that you have done will make it

easier for us to do our jobs because we want the buses to be safer and better as well.”

2. Could you please tell us about the mobility strategy day that recently took place?

[SCC]

- 67 people came to the Town Hall and could choose a type of transport, and write down what they felt was good and difficult and suggest solutions.
- People then voted in what they felt was important, this is then included in a document that we are preparing. We will consult on this to see if we have these priorities correct.
- An action plan will be developed that will say who is going to do what and by when.

3. Why isn’t it possible for drivers to wait until passengers sit down in their seats before moving off?

[FSY]

- This was taken on board when it was raised by the groups at the People’s Parliament in April.
- We have addressed this now so if you want to sit down then please ask the driver and they will wait until you sit down before driving off.
- The driver will often take a view depending on the impression of the individual when they get on the bus, but if a customer has specific requirements that may not be obvious to the driver then we would encourage the customer to let the driver know.

4. Could you tell me please why there aren’t bells on all the handrails?

[FSY]

- There should be a handrail with a bell on it in reach of anyone sat down.

5. Can you tell me please if the scanners that are on the 52 and the 120 will be on every bus eventually?

[FSY]

- The 52 is operated by First, but the 120 is operated by another operator. The 52 is a trial on smart cards on routes that pass the Hallamshire hospital and if that trial is successful then this will be used on the other routes. We need to find out that it is successful first and we need to be sure of this.

6. Could you tell me when the scanners do eventually come into force how they will all work?

[FSY]

- Some of the scanners haven't worked very well, but the software is changing and the technology is getting better, and unless they all work properly we will not put them out over the fleet, and that is why we are testing it now.

7. Could you tell me what is being done to make the Mobility National passes more country wide as you can only go to Leeds on them at the moment?

[FSY]

- We work to the schemes put in place by the Passenger Transport Executive, and they would need to answer that, or we could speak to them on your behalf and get back to you.

[SYPTTE]

- It's not strictly in our control; it's a central government initiative that we have to implement. We have been able to make a pretty good deal for people in South Yorkshire, and there is talk of advancing it and we are awaiting the government to see if this goes further. We have done as much as we can in South Yorkshire.

8. The bins on the bus are too small and are only big enough for tickets not litter, what can you do about this?

[FSY]

- We do ask people with litter remove it as they leave the bus, people with food and drink should not bring it on in the first place.
- There are stickers on the bus windows for all passengers to see to stop them eating and drinking.
- In response to customers who tell us that there is litter on the bus, we have these vinyl’s that we have brought out this week to put up, this one is about playing music and there is one about litter, dirty seats and encouraging people to take the metro newspaper away with them and use the handrails.
- Every night the buses are cleaned thoroughly, it’s what happens during the day that is the problem.

9. Can drivers help passengers use the new scanner machines?

[FSY]

- This should be reported to the driver, although he cannot fix it, it can be done when the bus is brought into the garage, so please report it to the driver.

10. Could conductors come back on buses?

[FSY]

- We looked at conductors on a trial basis elsewhere in Yorkshire and this was not successful in generating any extra customers to pay for the cost of employing additional staff.
- Investment through CCTV is an effective deterrent and we feel that when this has increased across all vehicles in the coming years we think this will be sufficient to manage behaviour effectively.

11. What can you do about the buses breaking down?

[FSY]

- They are mechanical and they can breakdown. It does not happen very often but we do try and replace the journey as quickly as we can.
- The buses are inspected every 28 days with a full check for safety and maintenance, but they are mechanical vehicles and can be prone to breaking down.

12. At the interchange, the timetables and leaflets are too high. What are you doing for people who can’t reach?

[SYPTTE]

- It is a good point, and it is something that I have mentioned to my team down there as a result of accessibility audits.
- We have got limited space there, so if we want to put leaflets lower then it will have to be wider and have more racks. We will look at this in response to the concerns raised as a result of this project. If we can do it and we have the space, then I will push to get something done.

13. What are you doing to train staff in the interchange in communication such as Makaton and BSL?

[SYPTTE]

- There aren’t any plans at the present time, and it is something we probably need to look at the next time the contract is renewed with the company who provide the staff for us in order that the staff could have a basic level.
- If any of our staff come and ask for personal development training then we would help with that, and BSL is probably the most widely used form of sign language.

Safety and Anti Social issues

1. We need to bring the police into it and we need to know what it means to the general public, how can you help with this?

[SCC]

- Police should be brought into it, there is a 101 number that can be called, and the police will come around.
- Anti-social behaviour upsets everybody, perhaps posters can be put up on the bus that can give information on how to contact the police.

2. Could police travel on buses?

[SYPTTE]

- The police could travel on buses between their beat, and that presence may help, but they can’t be there all the time, but it would be a good idea to get them to use the buses more regularly.
- We do consult with the police as part of the schools and communities project we have.

3. How can you make it safer on buses?

[SCC]

- Reporting what you say in the research that you have done to the bus companies and try and get them to do something about it. The more people that travel on the buses, you feel safer rather than travelling by yourself.

4. How can we stop violence at the bus stop?

[SYPTTE]

- A presence of authority and in certain bus shelters we put in CCTV to monitor them. We actively engage through the safe shelter project with neighbourhood watch and local residents to try and get them to be the eyes and ears to report to us.

- We have the Trojan bus project where undercover police travel on a bus service and pull up to bus stops and people causing an anti social behaviour will be arrested.

5. How can you stop violence on the bus?

[SCC]

- By teaching the young people what is acceptable on the bus, and getting people to report it as well as putting pressure on the service providers.

[FSY]

- Violence incidents are limited and CCTV will help with this. Always report anything you see to the driver.

6. Mobile phones playing loud music are very annoying, how can you stop this?

[SCC]

- Another aspect of anti-social behaviour that could be reported to the bus driver, or ringing 101 rather than confronting the individuals.

7. How can we stop people dropping their litter on the ground?

[SCC]

- It is illegal to drop litter, so if people do it and get found out they will get fined.
- We can also make sure that there are also bins close to bus stops.
- Signs on buses should also be included.

[SYPTTE]

- It is difficult, an issue wider than public transport, by information provision and a positive campaign about the effects of it could hopefully improve the education of those that do it.
- Perhaps the re-introduction on some services of conductors or inspectors, that presence may help people to think about what they

are doing. Also the bus companies could instruct drivers to pick up litter so it doesn't build up over the course of the day. But it is the responsibility of the individuals.

8. What can you do about the litter I see when I'm walking to the bus stop?

[SYPTTE]

- The litter on the buses themselves we have talked about, the same type of work needs to be done with the council regarding litter around them. We could also look at broadening to include some of the area around the shelter when we clean the shelters.

9. What can you do about people bringing hot food and alcohol onto the bus?

[SCC]

- Food and drink are not allowed on the bus, and I would think that the driver would deal with this. On the tram the conductors sort this out, it should be brought to the bus driver's attention.

10. I think we need more cameras on the buses, what do you think?

[FSY]

- I agree we have about 60% now, and we are improving this each year.

11. Have you thought about having more CCTV cameras at bus stops to prevent illegal behaviour?

[SYPTTE]

- It is a good idea, but it probably needs to be focused on particular areas known to have issues. Shelters are difficult because recurring vandalism could cost a lot to keep replacing. It may be better to use existing CCTV and the other measures about working with neighbourhood watch, communities and the Trojan bus.

School Children

1. The children are making the most noise on the bus, how can you change it?

[SCC]

- An issue in children's services as well as in my own personal experiences. There are projects in schools teaching them how to use the buses properly. A 23% reduction in children being anti-social as a result.
- SYPT also take a bus round to schools and teach how to use the bus properly.

2. Normally I sit at the back of the bus but when there are school children on the bus I sit near the front. They distract the driver and mess about. What can you do about this?

[FSY]

- Report incidents to drivers
- We can use CCTV
- We can go into schools, but incidents are limited.
- You can also contact the customer services team and we can go to the schools.
- We can get the police involved.

[SCC]

- Continued pressure should be maintained to try and stop this, it is a really important thing brought up by a lot of people.

3. What can you do about children messing about on the bus?

[FSY]

- If there is a problem at certain schools then we have a team of customer service staff who can go out if passengers bring it to our attention.
- We can also go and speak to the school.

- We also have CCTV on half of our fleet now, and if there is a problem we can show this to the schools or even parents in some instances.
 - We also have dedicated drivers who know the school children on certain trips and they know them, and this seems to improve behaviour.
- 4. Could you put more buses on at the end of the school day as the buses get full of school kids and they are sometimes badly behaved?**

[FSY]

- We don't have any spare buses, so if there are kids misbehaving then mention it to the driver.
- 5. Would it be possible to have a separate bus for school children, could that be paid for?**

[SYPTTE]

- It is not directly within our control. The local authority pays for school children to travel to and from their school. Where the Local Authority feels that is appropriate then it is our responsibility to make that happen. But the decision in the first place is up to the council and the Local Authority.
- The difficulty is where there is a mainstream service for the children to use, this reduces the cost for the Local Authority and it integrates the children within the mainstream provision. This can present potential problems of trouble or anti-social behaviour. If this happens we need to work with schools, parents and police to overcome this to ensure that the children know that this is not acceptable. If there are issues, please report them to ourselves and if there is a particular school please report it to the school.

Interview Workshop 4: Talking about NOW and WISHES with the Head Teacher [HT] and Student Representatives [SR] of a local college.

1. I would like to invite the children from the school to come to WORK Ltd to see what we do. We would like to visit the school again to see what projects you are doing. Would it be possible to work together on a project you are doing?

- [HT] I am sure it would be, I know you are thinking about setting up a council, and that might be a project we could work with you on as we have a council here.

2. When I'm on the bus, kids throw sweets, bottles and newspapers and sometimes these things hit me. This makes me feel angry and upset. Why are you messing around?

- [SR] They try and show off to their friends and be silly, they don't really think about how you feel about it when they do it.
- [SR] If they knew you were angry and upset then they would think about the way they are behaving.
- [HT] Often they are in a big group, and they behave badly in a big group, they wouldn't if they were by themselves.

3. Can I ask you please why when other adults on the bus ask you to behave are you so rude and cheeky to them?

- [SR] I guess people do it when they are tired and board after school, and when they see adults they feel the need to mess around, even when they know it's wrong.
- [SR] They also try and show off to friends as well and make them laugh.
- [SR] Because they think that they are not going to see you again and you hold no authority over them, then they feel they don't need to listen to you at all, even though it's wrong and they should. They think that you're not a teacher that will see their parents, so nothing will happen to them. They try and have a laugh.

4. Could you tell me please if it would be possible for teachers to travel on the buses to see what is happening?

- [HT] Sometimes we do travel on the buses, and sometimes we go to the bus stops, but we have 1250 students at the school so we can't always be on all the buses, it is not possible to be there every night, but we do try and be there if we can.
- [HT] I hope our students can travel safely and behave well on their own.
- [SR] It would be a good idea for teachers to travel on the bus to see which kids are messing about and tell them off then they usually get scared and perhaps won't do it next time.
- [SR] But if we did that the kids won't take any notice because they would not be in school.
- [SR] Or they would not mess about in the first place with the teacher on the bus.

5. Can I say that it is not just WORK Ltd that it is happening to, it is other people too?

- [HT] Yes I agree, and sometimes other people complain to the school as well.

6. How do you feel about that?

- [SR] I think it's very upsetting and they shouldn't be doing that, I think they are trying to show off and impress each other, because I go on the bus and see them trying to impress each other.
- [SR] I have no personal experience, but I can see it happening and I think it's a power show and just trying to show off to them.

7. We are going to set up a student council at WORK Ltd, would it be possible for you to come to WORK Ltd and give us your advice?

- [SR] Yes, we could take time out of school and come up – that would be good.

8. When some students get on the bus, they drop their pass so that their friends behind them can use it. Why are they doing this?

- [SR] I think some of them don’t get a free pass, or forget their passes then they think they don’t have to pay if they do it. They do it different ways, sometimes they sneak the pass out of the window, it’s pretty stupid as they only have to pay 40p to get on the bus.

9. Mobile phones are really loud and annoying on the bus. Can they turn them down or use headphones?

- [SR] I think they can – yes.
- [SR] Sometimes when I’m on the bus I find it really annoying when someone at the back puts their phone up really loud to listen to music when they obviously have headphones and they want to show their music to their friends and be annoying.
- [SR] Even though there are signs saying – you shouldn’t.
- [HT] It’s just about being considerate to others really.
- [SR] There was someone who used to come on the bus with us every day, and he made sure everyone behaved. But he doesn’t come on anymore.
- [SR] I think he does but he gets an earlier bus.
- [HT] It is difficult to have someone on all buses, one bus may be good and another bad.
- [HT] The buses come every five minutes and it’s difficult to keep track of them all.

10. Would it be possible to have a separate bus, like a school bus?

- [HT] We have asked the bus company if we can have a separate bus, and they have said no we can’t because it is too expensive. But we have asked that as we think it would be better for everyone, not only for the reasons you have mentioned but also because there are so

many students and it makes it difficult for all of the passengers just because there are so many people.

- [HT] Also if we had a bus from school to the bottom of Eccleshall Road that really would relieve a lot of pressure on all the buses, but unfortunately the bus company have said no.

11. Would it be possible if the students could go down a few at a time?

- [SR] You sometimes get huge groups going down together and messing around to show off to each other, and usually it’s the same group of people.
- [SR] Large groups are not scared to do it – they think they have their friends as backups.
- [HT] It’s hard, people travel with who they want to. We try and make sure that student’s don’t all leave at the same time. But sometimes they arrange to travel together or meet up at the shops.
- [SR] I think it’s good that we finish at a different time to other local schools, because it would be worse.

12. I have seen children throw rubbish and cigarette ends on the ground, what can be done about this?

- [SR] We could get more bins, and have like more police patrolling.
- [SR] I think it’s a lack of bins by the shops and bus stop.
- [HT] We could possibly talk to the shop and try to get more bins up there.

13. I have seen children being impatient by pushing both on and off the bus, what can be done about this?

- [SR] It is difficult, because they will still do it, it is a hard one.
- [SR] It’s not just students’ when people get impatient they puss each other.

- [SR] If there were less people on the bus then they would be less likely to push and shove.

14. Some children press the bell all the time, what can be done about this?

- [SR] I don’t think anything could be done.
- [SR] We could talk to the bus companies, and they could do something where if you press it once, it doesn’t go off again on a timer until it stops.
- [SR] Could put signs up.

15. Here’s our newsletter for you to read.

- [HT] Thank you, we will put one in the library, and can we go on your mailing list.

16. We would like to invite a small group of students to come to People’s Parliament and see what we have been doing on the bus project. This is on the 16th July.

- [HT] That would be great, and if we could come we would like to.

Student questions and conversations:

[SR] What will happen on the day (16th July)?

- Presentations, films, animations and group workshops and feedback forms for other ideas, and if there were things the school wanted to look at, then to bring those ideas as well.

[HT] I would like to think that our students had positive relationships with people travelling on the bus, but at the moment it is an issue, and it is something we need to tackle, and we have talked about a lot in school.

[SR] Other students do get hurt and abuse other students on the buses as well, so it’s amongst the students as well.

- **Do you think the students who do this understand the full impact of what they are doing?**

[SR] I think they understand some of the impact, but I don't think they understand the full impact.

[SR] If we invited someone who did this they might see what the impact is and stop it.

- **Would they come?**

[SR] Probably not.

- **Is there another way?**

[SR] We could do a newsletter.

[SR] If we get a copy of the DVD we could show it in assembly and write a letter about it.

- **The comment regarding bad behaviour because not seeing someone again – is there a familiarity and relationship aspect?**

[HT] Most students look out for people they know, like their younger brother or sister on the bus, or friends. What we want is for our students to look out for each other and the people in their community which is you.

[HT] The council idea could develop a joint activity, because we are all in the same community.

[HT] It would be nice for you to come again and have a guided tour and find out about us. We could come up to W.O.R.K. Ltd and do the same.

[SR] Could we do something joint and come up to your cafe, when we play team competitions up by W.O.R.K. Ltd on the field? You could come and watch us.

SUFA

Travel NOW: The bus trip to town, talking about experiences

Getting to the bus stop



- Not good because:
 - road was busy.
 - no crossing near the bus stop.
 - sometimes traffic comes fast and they don't give you chance to cross over.



At the bus stop

- Not good because:
 - water was dripping off the bus stop.
 - not allowed to smoke, but people still do and can be quite rude about it.
 - bus stop was crowded.
 - if on your own waiting for a long time it's lonely and you can get mad.
 - seats could be made better by putting metal on top.
 - seats not very comfortable, they wobble like a roller coaster.



Getting on the bus

- okay, but a bit crowded.



On the bus to town

- It was good because:
 - a lady held one of the seats down, so I could sit down, that was helpful.
 - at the front is nearer when the bus stops, so you have time to get up and get off.
 - more space at the back, you can get nudged at the front.
 - rail is helpful, especially when you go over ramps.
- Sometimes it's not good because:
 - bad behaviour – being pushed on the bus and people not saying sorry.
 - too many buses, especially in town come at the same stop.
 - you have to flag them down, if you don't they think you don't want that one.





Getting off the bus in town

- Was okay because:
 - the bus pulled in and getting off is not a problem.
- Sometimes it's not good because:
 - often the bus pulls miles away from the kerb. So there is a big gap, it makes it awkward getting off.



The bus stop in town

- Not good because:
 - it was not very clean.
 - Graffiti on walls and on the bus stop.
 - litter around.
 - cigarettes on the floor.
 - electric wire sticking.



Around the bus stop in town

- Wasn't good because:
 - empty bottles on the floor that people could trip on, and nowhere close to the bus stop to put them.
 - bins were further up the road.
 - seats at the bus stop were too low down.



The University of Sheffield, Experiential Landscape

“What’s the fuss we want the bus!”



- What was good, was the map:
 - the map of Sheffield, if you don't know where you are going to; you can have a look at it.
 - helpful and easy to understand.
 - tells you where everything was, for people who haven't been to Sheffield before.
 - tells you that you are at Castle market.
 - a good thing.

Getting around the bus stop in town

- Wasn't good because:
 - footpaths are not wide enough and there was nothing to hold onto.
 - lots of buses, it was very busy.
 - where would you cross the road?

Around town

- There were interesting sounds to record:
 - at a busy road, you can hear a bus and a tram.
 - you can hear a bus going up and down, but nothing else.
 - hear a recorder playing and Cathedral bells chime.
- You can also make friends.

On the bus to Eccleshall Road



- Tickets:
 - signs tell you the bus conductor needs to see your ticket to see where you are going.
 - there was litter on the bus, and this was bus tickets. Even though there is a bin for them at the front.



In Eccleshall Road



- They should have more traffic lights for people to cross near the bus stop.
- The seat at this bus stop:
 - was dirty.
 - not very strong either.
 - cigarettes around on the floor.



- Dirty at the bus stop and scruffy
- This timetable is not good:
 - doesn't give you actual times.
 - if you want to know when the bus is coming you have to text a number.
 - what happens if you have no phone credit or phone?
 - it says time and every 25 minutes, what if you are not good at arithmetic?



The bus stop in town

- It was good because:
 - there was good room on the pavement.
- It was not good because:
 - it was mucky.
 - there was a lot of rubbish.
- The bus stop itself was not that bad.
- Other concerns:
 - the drainage in the pavement was pretty dangerous.
 - one was broken.



Getting off the bus, back to SUFA

- Problems getting off the bus:
 - cars parked so the bus could not pull into the kerb.
- What could they do about it?
 - lower the bus down.
 - yellow lines so cars can't park on it.



Drawing Workshop:

NOW and WISH

NOW



- Access to buses for wheelchair users:
 - where does the wheelchair sit?
 - unable to store wheelchairs on the bus.
 - some people don't take notice of wheelchair designated space.
 - prams can be moved and stored more easily than wheelchairs.

WISH



- Wheelchair users should have priority with pram users.
- The way the wheelchair faces should be in the direction the bus is going.

NOW



- Used to go to town with my mom on the bus shopping; now go shopping in Morrison's by car.
- Not keen on travelling on the buses because:
 - concerns about not being able to get off at the next stop.
 - not being able to sit down before the bus sets off.

NOW



- It's too far and dangerous to get to the bus stop.
- There's a busy road in the middle that you have to cross to get to it.

WISH

- Zebra crossing goes through the middle of the road now to help cross it.

NOW



- A big tree at the bus stop, that's how know it's the bus stop.
- Sit at the front of the bus with key worker, so can see where going.
- Not many people get my bus.

NOW



- Waited for the bus; don't have to wait for long.
- At the bus stop there is no shelter.
- When I get on the buses, I see other people I don't know, all different ages.
- Once when I went to Parsons Cross on the bus we became really good friends.

Discussion workshops:

Talking about the main issues NOW and WISH

- Condition of bus stops:
 - Some bus stops are clean and some are not.
 - The seats are mucky and you don't sit on them.
 - Never seen a bus stop cleaned.
- Want to go to town on a bus but:
 - The bus stop near to home is too far.
 - Have to cross a big busy road and can't cross roads alone.
 - The traffic lights that are there do not bleep, can't tell when safe to cross.
 - The bus stop signs should be on top of the bus shelter. If they are on a pole, you could bang into it.
 - Bullies around, so I have to wait until they have gone before I go out.

Four main issues concerned the group most:

1. Need Safer Crossings

- You might get knocked down.
- More talking crossings.
- Crossings don't match up with bus stops.

2. Difficulties stopping the bus

- If one has already stopped, how do you stop the one behind?
- Too many stop at one stop.
- How do you tell people or the driver it's your bus?

3. Bus shelters and bus stops

- Vandalism, graffiti, litter, broken glass.
- Clean them.
- Electric wires poking out of the ground.
- Information through voice announcements.

4. Attitudes

- Bullying.
- How to speak to people politely.
- People at the bus stop smoking.
- Shoving, pushing and swearing.

Voices and Choices



Drawing Workshop: NOW and WISH

- Not many people use public buses.
 - most go by car or community transport.
- People like travelling by community transport because their friends also use it.
- Some people travel by tram as well.
- People who do use the bus travel with family or friends.
- Most people choose travel because of people they know.



Travel NOW: The bus trip to town, talking about experiences

What it was like at the bus stop

- Not good because:
 - felt not very safe because the bus shelter faces onto the very busy road.
 - timetables were too high up.
 - seats were uncomfortable.
 - yellow dots tell you it's a bus stop?



What it was like getting on the bus

- Good because:
 - the ramp was easy to use and the bus driver was very helpful.
 - easy to get on because the bus stopped close to the kerb.





- It wasn’t good because:
 - ramp was dirty when it was opened.

What it was like on the bus



- It was good:
 - to sit by the driver, feel safe and can get off easily.
 - for wheelchair users to face forward so you can see where you are, and when to get off.
 - because the bar gives you something to hang onto and gives you comfort.
 - being on the bus with your friends.



What it was like around the bus stop in town

- Around this bus stop in town was great:
 - it was clean, and the bus shelter was also good.
- Some things were a bit confusing:
 - the blue dots on the bus stop, why is it different to the yellow ones at Park Grange. Is this something to do with the colour of the bus that stops here?



What it was like at the Arundel Gate interchange

- Do you know what Arundel Gate Interchange is for? – We thought it was to do with the Crucible.





What it was like inside the Arundel Gate interchange

- It wasn't easy to use the machine that plans your journey.
- It wasn't well lit, and it timed-out so we had to start again.
- We thought this was about buses.



Looking for the Sheffield Interchange

- Does anyone know where the Sheffield Interchange is? We didn't, and there were no signs.
- There was one when you were closer, but would you notice the sign?



We got the tram back

- The bus back was too many changes for the time we had left, so we took the tram back.



Back to the yellow spots, even on the tram shelter.

6. REPRESENTATION and EVALUATION

The methods of representation and evaluation identify and reveal project outputs that have come to light through the project.

Review and feedback sessions with the groups refined what they thought were the main issues coming from out of the project. This provided a particular focus for the groups to represent using a method that they preferred which includes the following:

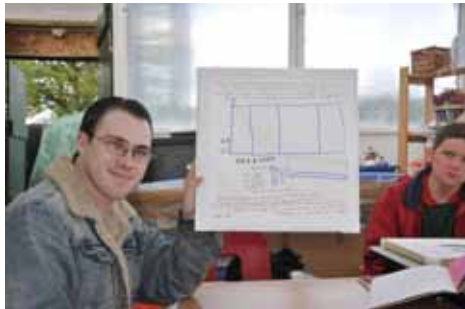
- Canvas displays made by W.O.R.K. Ltd.
- Another bus journey to town to record important issues and a drama by SUFA.
- An animated film made by the Voices and Choices group, and facilitated by Paul Brown of flycheese.
- Each group also produced a presentation to follow a film of their journey through the project at the final presentation day on the 16th July 2009.

W.O.R.K Ltd.



Canvas Workshop: Painting NOW and WISH

The group chose the main issues from the project that they felt were important to them. These were then painted on canvases to represent their main NOW and WISH experiences.



- School children
 - Anti-social behaviour:
 - at the bus stop
 - in the bus queue
 - on the bus
 - Presence of:
 - police at the bus stops
 - police visiting schools to talk with children
 - teachers at bus stops
 - CCTV at bus stops.
 - bus Conductors
 - Talking together with:
 - children at W.O.R.K. Ltd.
 - bus companies
 - drivers
 - city council



- Information
 - Improve:
 - timetables
 - guides
 - travel websites
 - Use:
 - 12 hour clock not 24 hour
 - british sign language
 - makaton
 - clearer maps
- Feeling disgusted about:
 - Vandalism on buses and at bus stops
- Would be happy if:
 - Buses and bus stops were clean and tidy.
- Access to the bus station
 - More:
 - pathways
 - signs with bigger writing
 - ramps for wheelchair users
 - safe crossings
 - Improve:
 - lighting
 - steps
 - conditions:
 - clean up litter
 - remove graffiti

SUFA

Travel NOW and WISH: Another bus trip to town, talking about my most important NOW and WISH experiences



- **Roads and safety:**

- Unable to cross the road.
- Lack of crossings to get to the bus stop.
- Road is too noisy.
- Crossings are a good thing – give access to the University.
- More traffic lights would help people cross the road.
- Traffic lights without a sound are difficult to use. Sounds let you know when to cross safely.

- **Attitudes:**

- Lack of understanding that people need time to sit down.
- People need personal space.
- Lack of respect, “grunting and growling.”
- Solution – keep things simple:
 - train bus drivers and passengers to:
 - be respectful.
 - have understanding.



- Bullying is bad:
 - people shouldn't push and swear when walking past.
- **Bus stops and the places around them:**
 - Clean streets and bus stops are good.
 - Broken glass and graffiti are not.
 - New bus shelter – could make glass safer by using ones that are shatterproof.
 - Hand rails along the path would help people.
 - Cobbles are difficult to walk on, a flat surface would be better.
 - Bus stop seat was good, at the right height.
 - Put more bins out.
 - Council need to take responsibility for these issues.
 - Bus stops are good if they are clean and nice.
 - Good shelters are clean but they also need more bins for litter.
 - Broken glass makes them into bad bus shelters.



- **Stopping and getting on and off the bus safely is important:**

- It can be a problem stopping the bus when more than one bus is coming to a stop and you want the one at the rear.
 - this issue needs to be addressed to bus drivers.
- Drivers letting down the ramp is important.
- Pulling in close to the kerb is important.
- Wheelchair users having priority.

- **Information:**

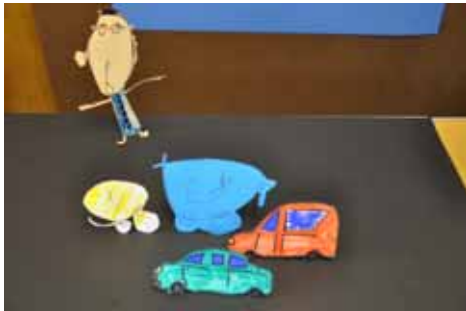
- When travelling alone, partially sighted people may have issues with the different coloured destination boards on the buses.



- **Benefits of travelling by bus:**

- Made friends with other passengers.
- Get to travel independently.
- Self travelling is something that everyone should learn.

Voices and Choices



Animation: Showing NOW and WISH experiences by making an animated film

- Don't use public transport because:
 - Friends travel on community transport.
 - Travel by car with parents.
 - Never self travelled before.
 - Distance to bus stop.
- Concerns about:
 - Safety:
 - busy road with no crossing.
 - bus shelter facing road.
 - traffic speeding.
 - Information:
 - timetables too high for wheelchair users.
 - writing too small.
 - lack of signs and some are confusing.
 - use of different coloured dots on bus shelters is confusing.
 - Interchange:
 - identity unclear.
 - journey planner not user friendly.



- Condition of:
 - bus ramps.
 - some seats.
- Happy about:
 - Help from bus drivers.
 - Ramp present on buses.
 - Comfortable seats.
 - Having wheelchair seat facing forwards.
 - Bars to hold onto.
 - Clean and large bus shelters facing away from roads.
 - Travelling with friends.
 - Sitting at the front of the bus next to the driver.

7. FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

Social Issues

Anti-social behaviour was of concern to both W.O.R.K. Ltd. and SUFA. W.O.R.K. Ltd. had specific issues relating to their experiences with some children behaving badly at bus stops and on buses. This affected their travel and they sought to avoid this by catching later buses where possible. The need for personal space was raised by SUFA, as well as a lack of respect by others in the way they respond to you. This was also seen as bullying by being pushed or sworn at.

Bus travel was seen as a positive experience, one that had potential for making new friends on journey's as well as being a way of independent travel. Travelling with friends was important to the Voices and Choices group, and a reason why most currently didn't travel on public transport at present as their friends didn't.

Social issues in the context of travelling with or seeing people who are familiar also has a potential impact upon behaviour. One College student suggested that some other students misbehave because they assume that they will never see the other passengers again. If they saw people regularly they might not act in the same way. This was because they would feel that they would be recognised and there may be potential for them to get into trouble. This is an interesting aspect as the travel operators have also recognised this by assigning a particular driver to a particular route in order that there is this feeling of recognition.

Safety

All groups expressed concerns regarding being able to safely get to bus stops. The absence of crossings and speeding traffic were seen as a reason why people could not safely self travel. The current condition of some crossings was also highlighted. Those that did not sound when it is safe to cross were seen as potentially dangerous.

The distance people needed to travel to bus stops was seen as both an issue of safety, convenience and accessibility.

The bars on buses were seen as a sign of safety and used by some as comfortable support for bumpy journeys.

Customer Care

Being able to sit down before the bus sets off was raised as an issue by SUFA. This was a question W.O.R.K. Ltd. asked and was informed had been addressed since the interim presentation of the project by the travel operator informing drivers to respond to passenger requests.

Stopping buses was seen as a problem when more than one uses the same bus stop. This led to frustration as well as missing the bus.

Wheelchair users appreciated the driver letting down the ramp for their access. Having a priority designated space on the bus is important, yet can lead to conflict with pram users.

Information

The way information was presented to the public was often confusing or difficult to read. This was brought up as an issue by W.O.R.K. Ltd. with the use of 24 hour clocks on timetables as well as words seen as jargon to bus users. Both W.O.R.K. Ltd and the Voices and Choices group said that the size of fonts used made information difficult to read, and concerns were expressed with regard to the travel guides and website.

The use of appropriate language also extended to questions by the Voices and Choices group as to what exactly the word Interchange meant, and what relationship this had to bus travel. The Arundel Gate Interchange did not appear to display externally any relationship to buses.

The journey planner was experienced by both the Voices and Choices group and W.O.R.K. Ltd as not user friendly.

The use of colours was seen as confusing in terms of the timetable routes not corresponding to the colour of the bus. This was also an issue regarding destination boards on buses not matching the bus colours.

The position of timetables was raised by W.O.R.K. Ltd in respect to shelters where they were located in the opposite direction to where the bus

came from. The Voices and Choices group also expressed the difficulty for wheelchair users to see the timetables as they were too high.

Signs were viewed as confusing or not present at all in places where they were needed to find places like the Interchange.

Place and Object issues

The condition of bus stops, shelters and buses was seen as significant by WO.R.K. Ltd and SUFA, not only in the effect it had on how they felt about a place but also on whether they would chose to use it or not. Clean streets and bus stops were regarded as good. As well as maintenance the provision of comfortable objects such as seats and surroundings like the pathways was viewed as significant.

Getting to the bus station was not a good experience, with confusion as to where it was, as well as the condition of pathways, number of steps and the amount of litter and graffiti.

The apparent colour coding of shelters was seen as confusing, the difference between yellow dots and blue and grey ones was not clear as to whether it was a corporate image, indication of a different place or other. Their positioning was also raised as an issue for people sat down at bus shelters who found it could obscure their view.

Bus ramps were seen as important for access. However their condition was seen as disappointing when they were opened as they appeared unclean.

Wheelchair users appreciated being able to face the direction that the bus was travelling in, so they could see when their stop was approaching. The choice of seating place varied. Some people preferred to be at the front so they did not miss their stop and also took comfort from being close to the driver. Others saw this as potential for crowding and preferred to be at the rear, although getting off was seen as challenging.

Recommendations

Social Issues

W.O.R.K. Ltd. felt that the presence of authority would help with anti-social behaviour and this could take the form of the Police or teachers at bus stops. It was also felt that the Police should visit schools and talk to the children. In addition more CCTV cameras at bus stops and on buses were seen as a way of deterring such behaviour as well as bringing conductors back onto the buses as the drivers role was seen as to drive the bus.

W.O.R.K. Ltd. also saw the benefits of trying to build relationships with the community by inviting student’s from the local college to talk and visit them. It was also viewed that more conversations about the issue should be held with the bus companies, drivers and the City Council.

The travel operators should provide information to ‘train’ drivers and passengers to be respectful and understanding of other passengers. Maintaining familiarity by using the same driver for a journey appears a positive step to creating a sense of cohesion and respect.

Training everyone in self travel was seen as an important part of self esteem building and empowerment. The Travel Operators and City Council should continue to see this as an opportunity to achieve this by listening to the people who presently use and avoid/don’t use the services.

Safety

The City Council should examine the relationship between road crossings and the position of bus stops and consider more crossing points. The inclusion of signals that make a sound seems important to all and particularly to partially sighted people. It would appear that this should be considered as a standard specification for crossings.

Customer Care

The travel operators consideration of comments from the interim findings was very encouraging. In particular the issue of drivers now waiting for passengers who ask them to wait before setting off until they are seated. Perhaps communicating this to a wider passenger audience would help by

stickers or signs on the buses positioned so they can be seen when you get on.

Travel operators should consider the issue of stopping buses when more than one is at a stop, driver training should include being aware that passengers find this difficult.

Training of drivers to pull in close to kerbs is important. The City Council should also consider no parking zones around bus stops in order that this can be done at every stop.

Information

The use of a 12 hour clock on bus timetables was seen as a way to make them understandable for the people who use them by W.O.R.K. Ltd. Training staff at travel centres such as the Interchange in different ways of communication such as British Sign language and Makaton was seen as a positive step of inclusion. Confusion could be minimized by removing jargon, producing clearer maps as well as considering the effect of using colours on timetables that do not relate to the colour of a bus on a route.

The use of colour coding by travel operators was seen as confusing, this would appear to be a potentially useful way to determine which bus to catch if there was consistency in timetables, buses, and the design of the ‘dots’ on shelters.

Signs should be in a clearer language and positioned at appropriate places in order that people can find their way to where they want to go to easily.

Consider the naming of the Interchange in terms of its meaning to the general public regarding its association with bus travel, as well as improving signs for people to find it.

The journey planner should be improved to make it more user friendly and relevant to bus travel.

Place and Object issues

Travel operators should maintain buses, bus stops and shelters to be clean and tidy and free from vandalism and the City Council should do the same for the areas around bus stops.

When designing the bus shelters the travel operators should include shatterproof glass. Seats should be at an appropriate height in order that people can easily use them. The City Council should consider the surfaces it uses for footpaths as well as considering hand rails where there are slopes. The position and number of litter bins should be reviewed. As should their location in relation to the bus stops.

The travel operators should work in conjunction with the City Council to improve access to the bus station. Routes should be cleaned and maintained with litter being removed and graffiti. Lighting should be improved as well as the steps and pathways. Signs should include larger writing and be more obvious, ramps for wheelchair users should be included.

Future

Affecting change in the following ways:

1. Sheffield City Council (policy recommendations – Mobility Strategy)
2. South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, First South Yorkshire and Stagecoach Sheffield (practitioner training, further transport projects/issues).
3. Community empowerment and cohesion through participation and sharing experiences.
4. Looking at opportunities for shared projects such as working with the college and travel operators.

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The Service Providers:

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