



HeadsUp Forum

[www.HeadsUp.org.uk](http://www.HeadsUp.org.uk)

## **'Green for Go? Is public transport up to 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges?'**

**(April 24<sup>th</sup> – May 12<sup>th</sup> 2006)**

**An online platform providing young people with a secure and structured space to discuss their perspectives on public transport**

**Public transport is an integral part of everyday life for people across the UK**, whether that is via the school run, commuting to work, or travelling across the country. It was therefore no surprise that this Forum was much-anticipated by a range of interested parties, key decision-makers, young people, teachers and parliamentarians.

**As is the case with all HeadsUp debates**, young people taking part showcased their enthusiasm for the topical issue of public transport and demonstrated clarity of thought and argument when debating a host of complex issues. This debate gained public transport expertise from a range of well qualified parliamentarians and decision-makers, taking part online. These included:

- **Dr Stephen Ladyman MP** - Minister of State for Transport
- **Gwyneth Dunwoody MP\*** - Chairman of the Transport Select Committee
- **Chris Grayling MP\*** - Shadow Secretary of State for Transport
- **Andy Slaughter MP** - PPS to Stephen Ladyman as Minister of State for Transport
- **John Leech MP\*** - Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Transport
- **Sir George Young MP** - Former Secretary of State for Transport and member of the All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group
- **Stephen Joseph\*** - Executive Director of Transport 2000
- **David Kidney MP** - Member of the All-Party Parliamentary Environment Group
- **Lee Scott MP\*** - Member of the Transport Select Committee

\* These decision-makers provided a statement of support before the debate began and will be asked to respond to this report.

**Over the course of the last four Forums**, the HeadsUp team have offered short, one-to-one online training sessions to all participating decision-makers. This training has paid dividends as all HeadsUp participants are reaping the benefits of the continued involvement of expert decision-makers in all our Forums. These sessions, often conducted in the office of the participating decision-maker, help familiarise them with

HeadsUp.org.uk and encourage their participation in the debates once they can see for themselves how simple and straightforward the website is to use.

**Anyone interested in HeadsUp who visits the website will now benefit** as detailed instructions explaining how to post a message have been put up in several places on the site, as a result of a request from one young participant. The main beneficiaries of this improvement are all HeadsUp core user groups, namely young people, teachers and parliamentarians.

**From an academic perspective**, the timing of this debate came at a very busy time of year, despite our advanced planning. Schools and students were busy preparing for SAT and GCSE examinations at this time of year – hopefully the next debate will attract more class involvement from schools.

**Both HeadsUp and young people**, who participate in the debates, continue to benefit from the involvement of such an impressive list of parliamentarians who have taken part in the last few Forums.

**Senior Ministers and MPs from all political parties** continue to see HeadsUp as a must. This development was highlighted after the HeadsUp team invited the Minister of State for Transport, Dr Stephen Ladyman MP, and Chairman of the Transport Select Committee, Gwyneth Dunwoody MP. Both parliamentarians accepted this invitation.

**Privatisation and deregulation have dominated transport for the last 20 years.** Some commentators have suggested this has led to declining bus and rail services and over reliance on the car. Noise and pollution are damaging people's health around the country. The countryside is being eroded and we are damaging the wider environment, even changing our planet's climate. As a result it is acknowledged that a radical, yet sustainable transport policy is needed to fight congestion and pollution.

**In light of this information**, HeadsUp held a timely Forum to establish young people's perceptions of public transport and conducted an analysis of where the services are good and where they could be better.

**Students could visit the Forum** as often as they liked during the three weeks that the public transport debate ran, with 36% of posts made out of school hours. Young people were given the opportunity to find out more about the issues and to discuss the impact that public transport was having on society and their peers. They contributed an evaluation of their local transport, and discussed the impact of public transport on the environment. These young people were also best placed to assess the cost-effectiveness and safety of using public transport.

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**The main goal of HeadsUp** is not only to enable peer-to-peer deliberation on hot political issues, policies or events but also to provide students with a means of informing themselves about the topic. In keeping with the youth participation agenda, a summary report outlining key findings and quotes is disseminated to interested parties, particularly parliamentarians and government, enabling young people's voices to be heard by key decision-makers.

**This public transport Forum, like all previous HeadsUp debates,** was supported by structured, student-centred background notes that included an explanation of the key areas surrounding the current public transport legalisation, an overview of the key issues around public transport, a comprehensive glossary and summaries of arguments for and against the use of public transport. These and other relevant facts and figures were presented in a student-centred tone, with a deliberate effort to keep jargon to a minimum.

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**Students aged between 11 and 17 from secondary schools right across the UK** took part in this public transport debate. Recent HeadsUp debates on gritty issues have led to a core group of students participating regularly in the Forums. Even more impressive is that HeadsUp still manages to attract new schools, teachers, and young people to register to take part in the debates. The participants made multiple visits over the three-week duration of the debate and there were **166 posts in total**.

**This summary report gives an account of the debate** that took place and includes key posts from students. Conclusions from the debate are to be found at the end of the report. Special care has been taken to ensure that the report is non-partisan and representative of the views expressed by the participants.

**Making a candid account of all HeadsUp debates** is a particularly difficult process, especially to summarise accurately the deliberations without taking young people's opinions out of context. We address this issue by attaching all the transcripts from the debate at the end of the longer version of the summary report.

**Both the young people who took part in this public transport debate and the Hansard Society** would like once again to voice their thanks and appreciation to the decision-makers who took part in this hotly-debated Forum. We would also like to extend an invitation to interested parties, particularly parliamentarians and government, and interested NGOs to respond to the findings.

**Responses and requests** for further information should be directed to:

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**'Green for Go? Is public transport up to 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges?'**

*Forum Summary*

## **How good is the local transport near you?**

The HeadsUp team decided that as public transport is such a large and complex area, the debate should be broken down into four more manageable sections; on how good the participant's local transport actually is, on whether they feel worried about the impact on the environment, on the cost-effectiveness of using it and if they feel safe and welcome when travelling on it.

HeadsUp participants were asked to evaluate the local transport that they use, assessing its reliability and cost-effectiveness. This particular discussion space proved to be the most popular in the whole Forum. These young people were quick to criticise their local bus services in particular, for lateness and its attitude towards younger passengers:

**"my local public transport is shocking. the buses are always late and always dirty.the bus drivers try to over charge you and they are very rude. the fare is very expensive, and should be cheaper."**

**"it is ok apart from buses always come late and are never on time, and also bus drivers are rude to teenagers, and only respect elderly people."**

However, in contrast to these critical comments, others were full of praise for the local services. In particular, local transport available in Hartlepool, and Burnley received special recognition from some of the participants. Others highlighted the very real problem of anti-social behaviour which stops one young person's local buses from running, though the trains are reliable:

**"In Hartlepool, the buses are quite good, depending on where you want to go. They're a decent price (£1 to the town centre, about 15 minutes on the bus..."**

**"The buses in Burnley seem to be great. They run often even late at night, and the bus station has buses to loads of other towns. They're quite expensive though (Probably because some teenagers just walk on for free and no one stops them, something that annoys me a lot.) "**

**"the place round me is ok. it has a clean enviroment. the transport is also well developed. we have been given a rail line and a bus station. the station is very modern and we can get anywhere we want by bus or train. which is useful."**

**"The public transport in my area is quite good and isn't expensive. The buses hardly ever run and always get vandalised and graffitied, so the only reliable transpourt is trains. They do run pretty often (especially at the weekend) so thats quite good!"**

The involvement of parliamentarians in all HeadsUp debates is crucial and Andy Slaughter MP tried to offer encouragement to the students through his comment, where he underlined the importance of sorting out London's transport:

**"In a big city such as London, where cars can just clog things up, a good public transport system is vital – especially to young people who often don't have the means to run cars anyway. It is so easy for politicians to lose touch with what people think..."**

Sir George Young MP offered his perspective on public transport in rural communities for young people to digest and respond to. The former Secretary of State for Transport used his experience to highlight the difficulties posed by using rural transport where he lives:

**"I live in a village that has an infrequent bus service. Recently the County Council introduced two morning buses to get commuters to the station and children to school. To begin with, I was the only person on it and I was worried that it would be taken off. Now there are usually half a dozen (it is a small bus) and, in a small way, it has kept cars off the road (otherwise my wife would have to drive me to the station). This means that it takes time for people to adjust and change the habits; and you should not expect an instant response to new services."**

Several participants, like Sir George, used the Forum to raise their concerns that bus routes connecting villages near where they live were not sufficiently populated. These young people felt passionately that more could be done to advertise these bus services and highlighted that the buses are rarely heading where the customers want them to:

**"I live in rural Derbyshire, and use buses and trains very regularly for a variety of journeys. There is a very good bus network where I live, connecting small villages with towns like the one I live in. There are some journeys which are very well used by people of all ages, but many bus routes are hardly used. While it is brilliant that these buses are available, I think that more needs to be done to alert people to the fact that these buses are available, and the benefits associated with choosing to use them rather than cars."**

**"The public transport in my villiage is really bad there are never any buses and it is a rarity to see one around and if there ever is one it is never going where you want it to."**

Inevitably, even though this discussion space was focused on young people's satisfaction with their local transport, young people also gave due consideration to the considerable costs associated with using it. Participants felt strongly that young people, under the age of 16, should not be charged adult prices by train and bus companies. One participant noted that they wanted to find part-time employment as a 16 year old, but found it difficult due to the cost of travelling to the nearest shopping centre:

**"As a 16 sixteen year old yet to take my exams I have found it is hard to get a job as most employers are not interested in people with those who are in the middle of their GCSE's. This makes it hard for me to afford bus fares at high prices. It costs me £1.70 (no return ticket) to get to my nearest shopping centre. I therefore think that young adults should not be charged adult prices until they are at least 17"**

**when they would have already past their exams and have more chance of getting a job."**

**"There's no reason why someone who's in compulsory school and is 16 should be different to someone the same who is 15. Both of them are unable to get a proper job. It does kinda annoy me that sometimes students and college students get money off the buses, and then school children get paid full fare. The college people could get jobs if they wanted to, school people have a better case really. Bus drivers do seem to think all teenagers are out to get them half the time."**

Continuing on the contentious issue of cost, more participants voiced their support for the widely held view that public transport is too expensive for young people to use, one pointed out they have to rely upon parents for lifts, another said expensive travel limits the enjoyment they get out of life:

**"the public transport where i live might be okay but i never have the money to use so i only go totown when mum takes me"**

**"i live in frimley in england, i feel that the prices of the transport in my local area are of a ridiculous price. at the moment as i do not have job, i find it quite hard to find money to pay for the transport. therefore i feel that they should lower the prices for the youths of the area, and this would help them to go out more and enjoy our lives."**

**"At the age of 15 years old the price for a single ticket into the local town of Camberley is 85p from where i live but, as soon as i turn 16 then the price of the ticket will rise rapidly to around £1.60. There is no other way to get into town except walking because people at the age of 16 can only ride a moped which many people are against and you can learn drive at 17 years old, no younger"**

David Kidney MP intervened in the debate to add his support to the participants in this public transport debate, where he argued that everyone should pay the appropriate fare. This would encourage more new passengers to use public transport and stop the frustration caused by seeing people 'fare-dodge':

**"I agree with Levitica that everyone should pay their fare (this is only fair on those of us who do pay) and that bus privatisation does not mean there is fair competition."**

Furthermore, the pettiness of some local transport services was criticised by participants who implied that more common sense could be used when it came to setting prices and fare types, to encourage use of public transport:

**"when i was getting a train with some friends, the ticket man asked us for the money to pay for the tickets. it was £1 for a single and £1.15 for a return.what was the point of this?"**

**"why is it that there is apparently five hundred fare types? can it not be simple to use and cheep?"**

Others were clear that their main message for decision-makers was that the safety, appearance and capacity of trains and buses should not be comprised in the quest for cheap services – there has to be a middle-ground which suits all passengers:

**"transport near me is good cheap and reliable but not safe because a couple of time's the driver has not given the correct change and i saw this person who got flirted with by one of the driver's and some of me friend's have stuck there thumb out but there bus has never STOPPED."**

**"Our public transport is good and cheap but is quite old and tatty"**

**"The government is asking people to go green, but then the trains are not keeping up with the growing train riders. I have to take the train to school and it is always sooo crowded and you can never sit down. I never take buses anywhere because so often there are rude, disrespectful people on them and to be honest I'm fairly scared!"**

**"transport is not very good in my aria ...busses are uncomfortable and most of the drivers cant even talk the same language as everyone else. "**

Moderators posed a hypothetical scenario, asking participants what they thought of the idea of making some of the busiest parts of London transport-free on specific days. This young person gave a ringing endorsement of this idea and used a previous car-free holiday experience to support this position:

**"Having car free areas would be nice. When I was about nine I went to Oasis holiday camp place (I think it's centre parks now) and cars weren't allowed in apart from when people were leaving or coming in. It was really nice, especially for a nine year old as I was allowed to wander about and whatever and no one was worried about getting run over. It made it nice and quiet, anyway. I know it's not possible to turn the whole world into a holiday camp, but it would be kind of nice to have a no cars estate (there'd be garages on the edge, if people still had cars.)"**

Young people were not afraid to tackle the more complex parts of the Government's public transport policy, with some tackling the issue of privatisation. One felt that privatisation does not work in Britain as the process is being undermined because only one train company controls each route:

**"I think privatisation doesn't work, especially with all the safety concerns that need to be taken place. Competition doesn't work when only one train company can operate each reute, as no one has a choice of which train to use when that is the case. I think this is something that needs to be nationalised so that it can be properly controlled to make the best service."**

During the debate, moderators highlighted a news story after staff at the American embassy in London refused to pay the congestion charge for the past six months, running up a bill of £270,000. Given all the background information, we asked the students who they thought was in wrong in this situation. It was a straight-forward decision for this young person:

**"I think that the american ambassador who did not pay his congestion charge should have his car towed away....."**

Participants made pleas to the Government in this public transport debate to ensure the infrastructure can cope with huge numbers of people wanting to use it by the 2012 Olympics. In contrast someone else wanted them to remember rural transport:

**"If the government wishes public transport to be up to the job of moving vast numbers of people by 2012, they have to throw a serious amount of money into the system to make it suitable for mass transport."**

**"I think the government should concentrate on small vilages, and not only on big places like london."**

As the deliberations approached their climax Stephen Ladyman MP, the Minister of State for Transport, hopped onto the debate and explained the Government's position, regarding local transport, urging young people to complain if they are unsatisfied with any aspect of the service:

**"at central government level we deal with national networks and strategic issues and we try to devolve local planning to local areas and local companies. Outside London for example, buses are deregulated (which means private companies can run services they think will make money) but the local council can 'buy' additional services that would otherwise not be run. So if you are looking for a service change (a new route or buses that run at different times) you should put your ideas to the local council. Most councils have websites you can contact them through but you should also get the name of your local councillor and talk to him or her. And if its poor service from staff or cleanliness or security that worries you, contact the bus company and tell them. Likewise, on local trains, contact the train company and make your concerns known."**



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*Forum Summary*

## **Do you worry about the impact of public transport upon the environment?**

We know from previous HeadsUp debates, that young people are especially outspoken when it comes to protecting the environment. The public transport Forum substantiated this claim further. Participants were asked whether public transport was the best solution so far to the environmental threat posed by congestion and pollution.

The discussion began with young people positioning themselves in two opposing camps, those who felt public transport made an impact on the environment and those who did not. In the first instance most participants indicated an awareness and concern for the environmental impact of using public transport. These students summed up the diverse opinions on the issue for their peers to read and react to:

**"there is to many cars on the road and the enviromnent is being damaged something has to be done! What can the average jo do?"**

**"i do care about the enviroment and i think it would be better to scrap car's and use buses train's and couche's. but i think they should make them more efishont and more friendly to the enviroment."**

**"we should try to persuade people to use public transport to get to place if they can on that service. The thing is if more people do use the public transport carbon emmisions will be far less than if eveyone use a car to travel everywhere."**

**"I think that if using the public transport was seen as more advantageous, more people would use it instead of cars, but it needs to improve the service to improve its reputation."**

Some students criticised the powers that be for not doing more to find car alternatives, and even went so far as to call for some kind of control on the pollutants released by cows:

**"Reducing emissions is one thing but there's other things that can be done too, such as finding an alternative to cars themselves. I think more moeny should be put into designing new forms of transport that don't involve releaseng harmful gases."**

**"i feel that transport contributes to a large amount of greenhouses gases which can cause global warming and have a bad effect on the earths atmosphere. i feel that to get around this problem, we need to combat the problem from the source. at first we need to cut down on the use of cars, we should introduce things such as trams, and use more public transport such as buses and trains, however these services should be made cheaper, and have much easier access, as this would encourage more people to use them, and therefore cut down on the pollutants released in to**

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**the atmosphere. there are also other things that contribute to global warming such as COWS."**

Another participant used the Forum to express the belief that too much is made of the whole environmental impact issue. They elaborated by saying that people should be free to travel as they wish, putting the environmental concerns to one side:

**"i think that people make to much of a big deal about the environmental impact of cars/busses on the environment. we should do what we want to do, and go on any bus or drive any car that we wish to. by the time that othe buses and cars take its toll on the world we wilkl all be too far gone to see it. i think that we shold carry on how we want to"**

These passionate views helped kick off the debate, which were followed by several parliamentarians commenting to help enrich the discussions further. Interestingly, David Kidney MP was quick to point out that Parliament is working on finding new ways of travelling via environmentally-friendly means:

**"Work is ongoing to develop even more environmentally-friendly fuels for all forms of transport including bio fuels and hydrogen fuel cells. There are more hybrid cars now as well, running part on electricity and part on petrol/diesel."**

The focus of MPs according to Sir George Young MP was to try and lead by example, especially encouraging people across the country to go green. He refers to his own personal situation when he informs the HeadsUp participants that he has just changed his car to a hybrid, environmentally-friendly model:

**"MPs can - if they try hard - change the laws and 'make' people go green, for example by stopping leaded petrol and banning smoking in public places. Or they can 'encourage' people to go green through the tax system. I have just changed cars because the Vehicle Excise Duty on a hybrid car is £30, instead of the £165 I paid last year on a conventional one. If the duty had been the same, the choice might have been more difficult - or more likely, made later."**

The Minister of State, Stephen Ladyman MP, noted that the Government have set several targets for the country to meet, but he stressed that it will be a difficult and sometimes unpopular journey for people to take:

**"The level of emissions from each car are going down but because there are more cars overall levels are going up. That's one of the reasons we have said there will be a Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation of 5% by 2010 - and 5% of all road fuel will have to have been made from renewable sources such as biomass. Also we are trying to get aviation included in an emissions trading scheme to drive down emissions from planes. We mustn't kid ourselves though that this is easy or that the things we do to deal with the problem will be popular - as we saw when we put up fuel taxes, people get very upset if they are charged more to travel."**

Elsewhere, this participant voiced criticism of the car and even went so far as to call for it to be banned. The participant claimed the car took up large amounts of energy and space and that if everyone was as serious about the environment as they say they are, then they should ban private cars:

**"ban cars - Cars are silly. There're so inefficient, people driving around alone in a big car. It takes up a ridiculous amount of energy, and space. I think we should work towards having no private cars, and if people were serious about the environment, they would to."**

However, according to this HeadsUp commentator, cars are a means to an end and therefore a necessary evil. The participant helped to contextualise the idea of banning the use of private cars by asking their peers to imagine the scenario where Hollywood celebrities instead turn to public transport. On a more serious note, they highlighted that if there is an increase in passengers on public transport there will be insufficient room for wheelchair users:

**"i understand that cars are worse for the enviroment than public transport- but can you imagine 'celebrities' like Mariah Carey (drama queen of the world) or Paris Hilton actually taking public transport? And if there was a huge amount more people going on trains ect. then there will never be any room for things such as wheelchairs! Granted some people could easily take the train or bus, but there are some people who physically HAVE to take a car- or private transport. Also, in some places there are no trains for miles and miles- it would be totally illogical for people to walk for 10 miles to get onto a train for a few stops and then have to walk another 6 miles to get somewhere else! (yes healthy excersize for some- but what if you want to reach you destination looking nice?)"**

As an alterative to cars, students scrutinised transport solutions that are environmentally-sound and sometimes highly innovative. Electric cars, scooters, trams and the much-loved bicycle were all championed by participants:

**"I think we should make electric cars and if people aren't prepared to use them they can use public transport and that will save the envirement a bit. Talk about electric cars and advertise them and people might think about them a bit more."**

**"I think we should introduce more electric trams and make them cheap to use. This way we would not damage the enviroment so much and more people can fit on one tram than on one car"**

**"bikes are the best . everyone rides in holland and they r not obbese and they pollute less. its is best to be in a 12 man biker gang going down to co op to pick up supplies. bikes are fun and healthy and non polluting"**

**"Surely convincing more people to ride bikes or peddle/ electric scooters would be far cheaper than seriously trying to imprve public transport. It would be cleaner to the environment too."**

Again on the topic of bikes, this young person called for more cycling lanes to encourage safer cycling:

**"i agree and i think that there should be more cycling lanes because they take up too much room on the pavement"**

Topically, this young person wanted to turn the attention of fellow HeadsUp participants to the worrying but necessary threat posed by airport expansion. They went on to explain that the proposed Stansted Airport expansion will destroy not only part of a 1000 year-old forest but also historical houses:

**"I am worrying about this (stansted) expansion, as it looks like it is definately going to happen. And to clear room for the expansion, not only will they be demolishing part of the enviroment (even parts of hatfield forest which is 1000 years old!) they will also be destroying very old houses, which is destroying histroy. Theres not much left of history left so we need to save it."**

During the debate, the HeadsUp Moderators moved the discussion on by asking the participants whether they knew that in America, 50% of children go to school on a school bus. In this country, it's just 6%. An £18.7m scheme in West Yorkshire has meant that one school bus has cut the amount of car jorneys made per year by 25,000.

There was a mixed reaction to this question and the statistics in general, with this individual claiming that the geography of America needs to be remembered, plus the Government should be making this appeal to parents:

**"I think a statistic saying how many people get the bus compared to how many get cars would be more appropriate, as the reason less will get the bus here is that most people walk to school. Everything is more spread out in America so people will need to travel longer distances. It's parents the government need to appeal to over this. If they're not offering lifts, people will have to take the bus. I have a friend whose parents see it as ridiculously important that they drive him to school when he'd be fine with just walking."**

The increased power required to run a batch of new trains was a concern for some in this HeadsUp Forum. After researching the issue, this young person told other participants that the new trains required not only more power but are also not as reliable as the old models:

**"As I understand the new trains that have been phased in over the network require more power to run than the older, more reliable ones. If they do require more power and we are trying to conserve power why have we not kept the old ones? They got people from a to b, we could have kept then for at least another 5 years until we have found a way of generating renewable energy. "**



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*Forum Summary*

## **What is the financial impact and implications for you of using public transport?**

Young people commenting in this discussion space consistently underlined their collective belief that public transport options must be cost-effective for all passengers, in particular for under-18s as they do not yet work full-time. Several noted the worrying trend that bus drivers possess powerful roles, including that they decide arbitrarily whether young people are under 16:

**"from the age of about 13 it had been difficult to get a child's ticket as bus drivers don't believe that you're under 16. The price of transport is often offputting and so encourages traveling by car."**

**"On public transport...i expect to be treated like a queen, not bunged in the back of a bus with an unlikable driver and a foul smell!! MONEY is so important to us as young people and it feels like a waste to get ripped off on a short journey!"**

Furthermore, some confusion existed amongst participants over the different costs of similar journeys across the country, with several participants complimenting the affordability of their local transport networks:

**"in my area we're quite lucky. We have safe, cheap buses. The other day it only cost me about 30p for a 20 minute journey. I don't really understand why there are so many different prices for the similar journeys all over the country."**

**"i think that it isn't too expensive yet, i am happy to pay it, although the price is rising to rapidly for comfort. Whilst i can still get by on a child's ticket, for adults it can prove a lot more expensive."**

**"the price to use the bus isn't bad considering that that the price of fuel is going up all the time and if everyone used public transport it would be very good "**

The Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, has invested money in a striking and colourful advertising campaign across London offering free travel for under 11s. The main stipulation on this offer is that under 11s must be travelling with an adult with a valid ticket at weekends, public holidays and after 9:30am on weekdays. Moderators asked participants if this offer went far enough and if they were aware of similar offers available in other parts of country. Interestingly, students were encouraged to put themselves in the shoes of the Mayor, which seemed to stimulate a lot of interest where these comments were typical:

**"FIRSTY MAY I SAY THAT WOULD BE SOOO COOL! secondly, and more seriously.... i think they should raise it to free for under 15s.... If i was mayor i would also try to provide more seating on tubes as well- they get so crowded so quickly! I would maybe do something like a free travel rota- so during summer**

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months it is free to 15s and under. Autumn it can be free to students. Winter it can be reduced prices for adults and then Spring it can be free for pensioners!"

**"I think it should be free for under 17s as they're forbidden from taking full time jobs and earning their own money, I don't think we should make them pay for essential stuff as we've removed their right to earn the full amount of money. It does bother me that pensioners get half price and free in some areas, as this seems unfair when 16 year old school children who get no money have to pay the full fare. Free tube for under 11s who're travelling with an adult seems pretty pointless to me. All it encourages is for people to not be put off taking their children out because of the cost, it's no big deal."**

In towns and cities across Britain one of the key issues of contention within transport policy is provided by road charging. The real life contention over this issue was also mirrored in this topic space amongst participants. Both David Kidney MP and Sir George Young MP agreed, even though they are from opposing parties, that road pricing helps influence people's road use:

**"The point about road user charging is that the cost could be more directly linked to the congestion caused - by reference to specific roads and specific times of the day...for younger people, public transport needs to be more sensitive to their financial situation."** David Kidney MP

**"I was interested to read David Kidney's comments. Although we sit on opposite sides in the House of Commons, I agree that road pricing offers an opportunity - which we don't have at the moment - to influence how people use our roads. While they are congested in the rush hours, they are often pretty empty for much of the time. Road pricing can help shift some journeys from the rush hours by charging; road pricing could also move some journeys - which have to be made during the rush hour - from roads to public transport."** Sir George Young MP

However, the priority for one teacher was simply a matter of making public transport affordable. This teacher felt passionately about making public transport safe and affordable for all, and they even used their own first-hand experience of living in France to highlight just how efficient and cheap a transport system could be:

**"I cannot see how the government can be effective in encouraging us to use public transport when they seem to use the stick to do it, rather than the carrot. It makes no one feel good about travel. If people made public transport safe and cheap, this would really make a difference and they could make people choose public transport over their cars. When I lived in a city in France the transport system was quick, safe and most of all cheap, so everyone used it."**

Finally, the Minister of State for Transport, Stephen Ladyman MP, highlighted his own thoughts on the issue of people's freedom to travel. He mentioned that for young people bikes can be a transport option, but not always as the roads are unsafe. He finished by inviting young people to tell him about local schemes that give them cheap access to transport:

**"The ability to travel freely is a freedom that most people treasure. The cost of that freedom will be climate change if we are not careful so the comments from people who have called on us to use more sustainable forms of transport are right. For young people the bike is an option sometimes but not always. The roads aren't as**

**safe as they were for cyclists and I'm keen to hear ideas about what we can do about that. Cheap access to public transport is important too and I'd like to hear about local schemes where young people have reasonably priced access to trains and buses."**

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'Green for Go? Is public transport up to 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges?'

*Forum Summary*

## **Do you feel safe and welcome on local public transport that you use?**

We decided to ask the HeadsUp participants to tell us how safe and welcome they felt when using their local transport. It stands to reason that if they do not feel safe when using the train or bus, they will no longer want to use them and will seek alternatives. Throughout this discussion topic participants were not afraid to have their say on a range of important safety issues. David Kidney MP asked participating young people which solutions they would like to see, whether it was more staff or CCTV:

**"This is a very important debate because I wouldn't want to encourage people to use buses and trains only for them to be assaulted and suffer for doing so. I would love to hear more suggestions for making buses and trains safer. More staff? Better trained obviously, given the several comments about rudeness. CCTV? I agree that we are safer in numbers and indeed one of the beauties of strong public transport is that there should be lots of decent, well-behaved people on hand to keep us company and offer reassurance. Let's have more ideas for improving personal safety for everyone who uses public transport."**

According to Sir George Young MP, one of the key solutions to improving safety for all passengers using public transport was implementing more CCTV cameras across the networks:

**"one of the best ways to make public transport safer is to have CCTV on the buses and trains. If people know they are likely to be caught, they will be less likely to misbehave."**

A worrying trend began to manifest itself in this part of the debate, as the majority of young people commented that they did not feel safe when using public transport. However, it was not clear whether trains or buses were any safer than each other, depending on what part of the country each participant was from. For these young people, they detailed their poor experiences of using both trains and buses and their overall feeling of being too exposed:

**"there is far too much anti-social behaviour on trains, and that is from the drivers! The two types of people who make trains uncomfortable are the chavs at the back and the drivers who tend to be impatient and give dirty looks to any young person stepping on the train. also with buses, they are always crowded at the front when people are trying to pay, but getting shoved by other people getting on and it doesn't help when the driver closes the door on you when you're trying to get on."**

**"i don't feel that safe because anyone could kidnapped me any time"**

In contrast, these participants used the debate to voice their support for trains and their staff, who are described as helpful and cordial, but one went on to criticise bus drivers:

**"I have always been treated well by the train people, but on what someone said about being kidnapped, I regularly travel on a certain longish train service where no ticket man tends to come along. Not only does that mean loads of people get on for free (something that bothers me with public transport) but, like someone said about kidnapping, someone could be a victim of serious crime at any time."**

**"I usually feel welcome on trains, train people seem to be really jolly most of the time. Buses are another matter. There's a lot of anti social behavior on buses, and bus drivers do tend to be prejudiced against young people."**

The bad press for buses continued with young people detailing their own experiences of journeys which have resulted in them not feeling safe or welcome. One pointed out the issue of rudeness amongst staff, and another participant informed their peers that a 7 year old student was thrown off a bus for not having a pass. The main problem for another young person was not just posed by the unwelcoming staff, but by the anti-social minority of bus passengers:

**"bus drivers are always really rude and so are train ticket people. they are rude to teenagers because some teenagers are rude so they are rude to all teenagers assuming they are going to be rude. But if they are rude to us then it makes us want to be rude to them, and the problem continues in a circle."**

**"I know a young boy who couldn't find his bus pass so the driver told him to get off and he was only 7. This was on the way to school."**

**"I get the bus twice every day (to school and back) and I don't think it's just the drivers who make it uncomfortable, it's the other people travelling with you. No-one sits at the back except the 'CHAVS' and most people don't go near them. This is because they throw things at us such as chocolate and ice lolly - which really hurts!!! Only the other day my friend got covered in water because they decided to target her and poured a bottle of water on her hair. So it's not really fair to say the drivers are making it a bad atmosphere. I think it would make the people on the journey feel much more relaxed if there was always someone there supervising the kids on the bus. The drivers never do anything but I guess that's understandable as they are driving!!"**

According to this young person, they reported that they did feel safe when using public transport. They went on to underline the importance of travelling with friends whenever possible, remembering manners, and safety tips given to them at school:

**"Whenever I use public transport, I am usually with friends so I feel a lot safer. A good thing is in school we were taught some manners and safety tips when using buses etc. About the argument with rudeness, it works both ways. If we want to be treated nicely we have to treat them nicely. If they are rude just grin and bear it."**

Participants used the Forum to report incidents of anti-social behaviour against them or which they have witnessed on public transport. This young person is typical as they note that their local transport is good except for one incident which taints their memory and opinion of public transport in general:

**“when i use very local public transport from my village to the local towns the service is usually good apart from one time, this bus driver charged me £2.00 for a single when i was only 12, then when my parent tried to complain as they had been given the same treatment they were extremely rude and when i tried to get off, they shut the doors on my arm, causing bruising etc, and then they tried to drive off with my parent as well!”**

Several participants expressed their shock after they read about incidents of anti-social behaviour committed against their HeadsUp peers. One young person described how there were always a lot of people travelling on their local trains, hence reducing the chance of crimes taking place:

**"I can't believe it is possible for people on a regularly basis to be assaulted on trains! I always thought that if there are people around on trains (which there nearly always are in my area) then somebody would notice some young girl get kidnapped or something! Woah! Also, about the whole 'safety issue thing' when using public transport, unless your destination is the train station, you are always going to have to walk to get to your destination from the station... and i'm not sure (so do correct me if I'm wrong) but don't people get assaulted/ kidnapped/ murdered/ stabbed ect. in the streets than they do actually on public transport?"**

Finally, Stephen Ladyman MP, stressed just how important the concept of feeling safe was for all passengers – particularly for young people. He explained how he has to protect his daughter by preventing her from travelling on certain routes at certain times, which is unacceptable. He made a plea for all participants to tell transport companies if the service is unacceptable, or failing that police, local council or even their MP:

**“This is a key issue and I'm pleased some of you feel safe - but no-one should feel threatened on the transport network ever. I know I wouldn't let my daughter travel on certain routes at certain times of night and that's just not acceptable. That is why you MUST tell bus and train companies, the local police and the local council if you feel uncomfortable on particular services or at bus stops and stations. And if its serious and nothing is being done about it, tell your MP too”**

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**'Green for Go? Is public transport up to 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges?'**

## **Conclusions**

- \* Room for improvement on local transport**
- \* Protection of the environment is paramount**
- \* Made a plea for 'free public transport for under 17s'**
- \* Majority did not feel safe or welcome on public transport**

**Interaction and debate between all participants was of a very high standard**, and was particularly notable, given that this debate ran at the beginning of a busy exam timetable for schools across the country. Those participants who did have their say during the Forum ranged from young people aged 11-18 to a range of relevant decision-makers in the UK Parliament.

**At the end of the debate, four key conclusions were made by young people...**

**When analysing the standard of local transport**, participants reported a very mixed picture right across the UK. For every good, affordable service there seemed to be a competing story detailing a negative or poor service which young people had to endure. MPs involved in the debate called on all young people to report all instances of poor service to the bus or train company, in the first instance.

**Once more, when looking at the environmental perspective** young people thought more could be done to ensure the long term protection of such an important resource. They did however applaud the introduction of hybrid or electric cars as an environmentally-friendly alternative to the traditional car. In addition, they felt that cycle lanes and trams could be introduced in more cities to give passengers a safer and 'greener' alternative.

**Participants made a direct plea to decision-makers** to introduce free public transport for under 17s. After much consultation amongst themselves they believed that under 17s are being unfairly persecuted and have to pay an adult fare even though they are not in full-time employment. Whilst the Forum was running, the Mayor of London confirmed that under-18s in full time education will get free bus and tram travel from the start of the next academic year. Participants from outside London felt this decision was long overdue but questioned why a similar offer was not available to them.

**The majority of students did not feel safe and welcome on public transport** - arguably, this was the most worrying conclusion made by young people. Understandably, this issue was a major sticking point for several participants who felt motivated enough to visit the Forum and detail their own personal experiences of anti-social behaviour committed against them or in their presence. The Minister of State sympathised with the plight of participants who suffer this criminal activity but called on them to complain about it to the appropriate authorities until action is taken.

**The public transport debate contained some extremely well-argued views** on all sides of the public transport debate. The fact that there is still such negative coverage

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in the media relating to all aspects of public transport only highlights the dilemma that a lot of questions still remain unanswered.

**The range of enthusiastic and high profile decision-makers** taking part online during the second and third weeks, gave the debate added clarity, impetus and parliamentary approval from the young people's collective viewpoint. The interaction between young people and decision-makers from all parties (in particular Ministers) was a significant moment as it was more than likely one of their first ever interactions with a parliamentarian. It is also a significant step for HeadsUp, that so many relevant parliamentarians were active in the public transport Forum space. We are extremely grateful to all the decision-makers who dedicated their time to respond to young people's opinions in this public transport debate.

**'Green for Go? Is public transport up to 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges?'** was another contentious issue for a HeadsUp Forum and therefore one that was welcomed by young people who participated, other NGOs and MPs from across the political spectrum. It provided a secure, structured but non-sanitised platform for young people to voice their perspectives on the public transport debate.

**HeadsUp tackles complex political problems** but is not designed to make set recommendations. Like adults, young people have a range of perspectives on political events, issues and policies, and often favour different solutions. This resource was established not to give the 'definitive line'; rather it is about providing a space for people to share their views, challenge those of others and, in turn, be challenged.

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## Forum Topic Transcript

### Green for Go? In your area...

24/04/2006 09:00:00

**justice**

Welcome to the public transport debate

It is widely acknowledged that a radical, yet sustainable transport policy is needed to fight congestion and pollution. Now, you will get the opportunity to make your voice heard in this HeadsUp Forum. A range of parliamentarians want to hear your views on all aspects of public transport - see Who's Listening ([http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108\\_1](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108_1)) As much as possible, try to BackUp ([http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=home\\_Transport%20BackUp](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=home_Transport%20BackUp)) your opinions with facts, where you will find loads of info on public transport. How good is the local transport near you? Is it reliable and cheap to use? Do you think more could be done to improve your local transport? What are the reasons behind your choice?

24/04/2006 11:01:00

**Tomo**

comments

My local transport is fairly cheap but does not run often enough so i have to depend on my mum for a lift. It is improving though...

24/04/2006 11:08:00

**samc**

my local transport

my local public transport is shocking. the buses are always late and always dirty.the bus drivers try to over charge you and they are very rude. the fare is very expensive, and should be cheaper.

24/04/2006 11:09:00

**pbtom**

coast and reliability of buses

hi everyone buses near me need to be more reliable,often their late by at least 10 mins. bus fair I fell have raised in the past few mouths its silly.

24/04/2006 11:12:00

**octom**

public transport in my area.

The transport system in my area is ok for the load that it has to deal with at this time. However, the bus service in particular is seriously ran-down with old and dodgy buses The conditions on the inside of those things is like public toilet. the train service would the same if it was not for that terrible accident many years ago when the old wooden "slam door" train crashed and killed a number of people. It is apparent that the public transport system is seriously underfunded. If the government wishes public transport to be up to the job of moving vast numbers of people by 2012, they have to throw a serious amount of money into the system to make it suitable for mass transport.

24/04/2006 11:14:00

**jdTom**

how good is the transport in your

it is ok apart from buses always come late and are never on time, and also bus drivers are rude to teenagers, and only respect elderly people.

24/04/2006 11:14:00

**wftom**

transport

i think sam is wrong the buses are tidy and are on time and is people like him who make them messy

24/04/2006 11:15:00

**joma**

Local Bus Fares

As a 16 sixteen year old yet to take my exams I have found it is hard to get a job as most employers are not interested in people with those who are in the middle of their GCSE's. This makes it hard for me to afford bus fares at high prices. It costs me £1.70 (no return ticket) to get to my nearest shopping centre. I therefore think that young adults should not be charged adult prices until they are at least 17 when they would have already past their exams and have more chance of getting a job.

24/04/2006 11:16:00

**pbtom**

feeling on buses

hi everyone i think more drivers neede to be helpfull u do get some drivers that are extremelly rude and think they own the road. mad men! drivers need serours help

**24/04/2006 11:18:00**

**altom**

bus and train fares

when i was getting a train with some friends, the ticket man asked us for the money to pay for the tickets. it was £1 for a single and £1.15 for a return.what was the point of this?

**24/04/2006 16:22:00**

**Levitica**

Local Transport

In Hartlepool, the buses are quite good, depending on where you want to go. They're a decent price (£1 to the town centre, about 15 minutes on the bus.) There are good, frequent links to the town centre, but there are no buses to the area of the town where they are some shops, the sea side and bowling. There are few buses a day, and only from the town centre, to nearby towns such as Durham. Trains in Hartlepool suck. We're apparently getting a London train next year, but it would be a lot easier to get a nice little linky train to Darlington so we can link up with all the main services there. That would do me. The trains we have at the moment only go to Middlesbrough or Newcastle, really.

The buses in Burnley seem to be great. They run often even late at night, and the bus station has buses to loads of other towns. They're quite expensive though (Probably because some teenagers just walk on for free and no one stops them, something that annoys me a lot.) A similar journey to what would cost £1 at home costs £1.60 there, but it's worth it for the service. The trains links there seem good too, but it would be better if there were interconnected, they've two main stations and some little stations, it would be easier if the main trains just went from one station.

**24/04/2006 16:33:00**

**Levitica**

Replies

I totally agree with what someone said about prices and what someone said about drivers being mean to teenagers.

There's no reason why someone who's in compulsory school and is 16 should be different to someone the same who is 15. Both of them are unable to get a proper job. It does kinda annoy me that sometimes students and college students get money off the buses, and then school children get paid full fare. The college people could get jobs if they wanted to, school people have a better case really.

Bus drivers do seem to think all teenagers are out to get them half the time. A kinda random anecdote, but the other week, I was in Middlesbrough bus station. I'd been waiting for the bus home, I was the first person waiting. The bus I wanted goes through lots of towns and eventually to my town, and there're lots of other buses that go to the other towns, but it's the only bus to mine, if you see. Lots of old ladies came along and started a queue for the bus. I'd been there before them, and was sat down on the bench. There's no official queue or anything. They started talking, and made it clear they were going to the near towns, where there's a lot of buses to. By the time the bus came, there were loads of people behind these old ladies in the queue. I got up to get on the bus, and the old ladies tried to stop me, saying I should let them on first (there wasn't enough room for everyone waiting on this bus, I wouldn't have gotten on.) The driver sided with them - I got really angry, as it just seems ridiculous to me that people who could get another bus in five minutes time insist they have more right than people who can't do that can get on the bus...

**24/04/2006 18:19:00**

**st10**

transport in my area

the place round me is ok. it has a clean enviroment. the transport is also well developed. we have been given a rail line and a bus station. the station is very modern and we can get anywhere we want by bus or train. which is useful.

**24/04/2006 18:26:00**

**st10**

public transport in my area.

were charged £1.50 even if were not an adult. the drivers are always on time but the buses get cramped and we dont have much space.

**24/04/2006 18:30:00**

**st10**

public transport in my area.

bus drivers in my area charge teenagers 1.50. its too expensive. but they do come on time, and we can go anywere we want in our area.

**24/04/2006 21:39:00**

**dc16**

Derbyshire

I live in rural Derbyshire, and use buses and trains very regularly for a variety of journeys. There is a very good bus network where I live, connecting small villages with towns like the one I live in. There are some journeys which are very well used by people of all ages, but many bus routes are hardly used. While it is brilliant that these buses are available, I think that more needs to be done to alert people to the fact that these buses are available, and the benefits associated with choosing to use them rather than cars. It seems that many people are in favour of rural bus routes, while still choosing to use a car. In my opinion, there is no sense in subsidising rural bus routes that are hardly

used, when the money could be spent on more popular journeys. People need to take responsibility for their local public transport.

**25/04/2006 13:15:00**

**Levitica**

Privatisation

I don't think privatising the public transport has really worked. I see the argument for competition, but there doesn't seem to be competition - every company seems to have a monopoly on its own little section. There seems to be so many regulations need to be put in place that companies can't compete (read this link for an idea of what I mean <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/4837050.stm>). I think privatisation doesn't work, especially with all the safety concerns that need to be taken place. Competition doesn't work when only one train company can operate each route, as no one has a choice of which train to use when that is the case. I think this is something that needs to be nationalised so that it can be properly controlled to make the best service.

**25/04/2006 17:41:00**

**bluebell**

debate forum on how good is the

i think the transport near me is good cheap and reliable but not safe because a couple of time's the driver has not given the correct change and i saw this person who got flirted with by one of the driver's and some of me friend's have stuck there thumb out but there bus has never STOPPED and they are stranded at school. also there are CHAV'S and HOODY'S around and it doesn't feel safe anyone could ABDUCT you.

**25/04/2006 18:04:00**

**bluebell**

talking

i now what you think tilton thingy it is so wierd that they charge you different fee's going there and coming back it happened to me.

**25/04/2006 21:23:00**

**matt**

Our transport in our area?

Our public transport is good and cheap but is quite old and tatty.

**27/04/2006 10:05:00**

**biged**

Future HeadsUp Forums...

Once you are logged in, make sure you visit the Polling

Station [http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s3\\_4](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s3_4) and have your say on what topics you would like as future HeadsUp Forums...

**Environmental** - e.g. Do you think its important for people to save energy by turning their TV off standby?

**Law and Order** - e.g. Do you think there are enough police on the streets?

**Defence** - e.g. Is the continued British military presence in Iraq a good idea?

**World** - e.g. How do you think poverty around the world could be solved?

**Health** - e.g. Are you worried about the spread of the bird flu virus to the UK?

**Education** - e.g. Do you think that you want to go to University with all the added costs associated with this decision?

**Sport** - e.g. Will we be ready to host such an important world event as the 2012 London Olympics?

**Family Breakdown** - e.g. Parental separation/divorce, Government involvement and support, and You.

**The constitution** e.g. Does the UK need a written constitution?

**Young people and formal politics** e.g. What needs to change to encourage you to get more involved in the formal political process?

**Young people's awareness of elections** e.g. What would encourage you to get on the electoral register?

**Party funding** e.g. What should be done to address the controversy currently surrounding the issue of party funding?

**Alternative voting methods** e.g. As well as using polling stations and postal voting, is using the internet, SMS or telephone to vote in elections a good idea?

Or is there another topic not on this list that you would like to discuss/debate? Let us know!

**27/04/2006 15:54:00**

**boffinbabe12**

trains in my area

I'm not to big on the transport in my area... the prices are always rising and i think that would push people away because for a lot of people (especially adults) it can be cheaper to drive somewhere instead of taking the public transport- and i am aware that it is th enviromental cost that are persuading morepeople to go public. The government is asking people to go green, but then the trains are not keeping up with the growing train riders. I have to take the train to school and it is always sooo crowded and you can never sit down. I never take buses anywhere because so often there are rude, disrespectful people on them and to be honest I'm fairly scared!

**01/05/2006 12:19:00**

**danzo**

comments

the public transport where i live might be okay but i never have the money to use so i only go totown when mum takes me

**01/05/2006 18:14:00**

**dipsy**

yes

the transport in my area is mainly trainins and buses, although i never use the buses, friends that go to mu school that do use them are never late! The trainin is also usually around 3 minutes early but ive never used it so i do not no the cost.

**02/05/2006 16:17:00**

**chilli**

Questions, Questions, Questions.

Have you guys got any burning questions which you would like answered by the parliamentarians taking part in this debate? If so now's the time to ask whatever you like... Don't forget that their is a huge amount of expert knowledge about public transport shared amongst these parliamentarians, so if you have something you would like to ask make sure you don't miss this opportunity. It's your forum!

**02/05/2006 17:01:00**

**masterzen**

the story so far...

Here is a selection of some of the interesting comments posted in this section (on your local transport) during Week 1 of the debate:

\* "young adults should not be charged adult prices until they are at least 17 when they would have already past their exams and have more chance of getting a job."

\* "In Hartlepool, the buses are quite good, depending on where you want to go. They're a decent price - £1 to the town centre, about 15 minutes on the bus."

\* "The buses in Burnley seem to be great. They run often even late at night, and the bus station has buses to loads of other towns. ."

\* "I live in rural Derbyshire, and use buses and trains very regularly for a variety of journeys. There is a very good bus network where I live, connecting small villages with towns like the one I live in..."

\* "the public transport where i live might be okay but i never have the money to use so i only go totown when mum takes me"

What issues have not yet been covered - there's still plenty of time to have your say on public transport in this debate!

**03/05/2006 09:35:00**

**DavidKidneyMP**

transport fairness

Comments so far remind me strongly that public tranport has to be safe, reliable and an attractive alternative to private motoring. Buses and trains should turn up on time, be clean and have efficient, respectful staff. Fares should be affordable, and there should eb special consideration for the finances of young people. I agree with Levitica that everyone should pay their fare (this is only fair on those of us who do pay) and that bus privatisation does not mean there is fair competition. Personally, my experience of buses in Stafford is that the good routes are O.K. but the lesser-used buses perform less well and are liable to be withdrawn by the Bus Company. The trains to London are now very fast and reliable, but the fares at peak times are high.

**03/05/2006 10:31:00**

**GeorgeYoungMP**

Buses in Rural Areas

I live in a village that has an infrequent bus service. Recently the County Council introduced two morning buses to get commuters to the station and children to school. To begin with, I was the only person on it and I was worried that it would be taken off. Now there are usually half a dozen (it is a small bus) and, in a small way, it has kept cars off the road (otherwise my wife would have to drive me to the station) This means that it takes time for people to adjust and change the habits; and you should not expect an instance response to new services.

**03/05/2006 11:41:00**

**Levitica**

An idea...

Do you think advice from really good business men could be lent to public transport companies? It seems that people are drawn away from the public transport decision as some of the companies' decisions aren't too bright. For instance, in Burnley tonnes of teenagers frequently ride the bus for free if they walk on while looking intimidating. The "express" bus from Hartlepool to Middlesbrough started taking a longer ruete, so it wasn't very express anymore. Less people started getting it once the ruete changed (it now took nearly as long as the non-express bus) and in reaction to this the bus company scrapped the service completely. Surely they should have realised it was because the old reute was more popular. I also think it would make sense to try increasing fares before getting rid of a service.

**04/05/2006 16:08:00**

st10

question for parliamentary people

why is it that there is apparently five hundred fare types? can it not be simple to use and cheap?

**04/05/2006 16:18:00**

**03elangler**

Transport in my area

The public transport in my area is quite good and isn't expensive. The buses hardly ever run and always get vandalised and graffitied, so the only reliable transport is trains. They do run pretty often (especially at the weekend) so that's quite good!

**05/05/2006 11:02:00**

**adam91**

Transportation

The public transport in my village is really bad there are never any buses and it is a rarity to see one around and if there ever is one it is never going where you want it to. I think that if public transport was more reliable, the trains/buses cleaner, cheaper and there were more it would be great

**05/05/2006 13:31:00**

**chilli**

Congestion charge expansion?

Should we expand/adopt the congestion charge to other parts of the UK or more areas of London?

What do you think of the idea to make some of the busiest parts of London free from all types of transport at certain times - like Oxford Street on a Saturday for example? (Bicycles would not be included in this ban)

**06/05/2006 00:46:00**

**Levitica**

Congestion Charges

I guess congestion charges will improve the situation, but I'm not sure it's the right way to go about it. I would prefer increases in the cost of fuel to private cars.

Having car free areas would be nice. When I was about nine I went to Oasis holiday camp place (I think it's centre parks now) and cars weren't allowed in apart from when people were leaving or coming in. It was really nice, especially for a nine year old as I was allowed to wander about and whatever and no one was worried about getting run over. It made it nice and quiet, anyway. I know it's not possible to turn the whole world into a holiday camp, but it would be kind of nice to have a no cars estate (there'd be garages on the edge, if people still had cars.)

**08/05/2006 09:37:00**

**chilli**

Congestion charge in the news

Did you hear the commotion recently after staff at the American embassy in London refused to pay the congestion charge for the past six months? They have managed to run up a bill of £270,000 to date.

Peter Hendy, London transport commissioner, criticised the embassy's continued non-payment when he said:

"There's a direct benefit from paying the charge which is that if you drive into the congestion zone, you get a faster, less congested journey. You don't have to pay it. You can walk, you can cycle, you can travel by public transport."

David Johnson, from the US embassy, responded by saying:

"We have agreed for a long time that it is inappropriate for one government to pay taxes to another"

Who do you think is in the wrong here - should the US embassy pay the congestion charge, if not, why not?

**08/05/2006 11:08:00**

**chhu**

TRANSPORT IN MY AREA

TRAINS ARE USUALLY QUITE RELIABLE. THE LOCAL TRAINS TAKE YOU TO ALL DESTINATIONS AND ARE REALLY CHEAP AT JUST £1.85 FOR A RETURN TICKET TO WOKING. CONDITIONS OF TRAINS HAVE IMPROVED IN RECENT YEARS. BUSES AREN'T AS RELIABLE. THEY ARE USUALLY SLIGHTLY LATE AND ARE IN POOR CONDITION. THEY ARE ALSO A BIT TOO EXPENSIVE.

**09/05/2006 09:23:00**

**AndySlaughterMP**

My thoughts

In a big city such as London, where cars can just clog things up, a good public transport system is vital – especially to young people who often don't have the means to run cars anyway. It is so easy for politicians to lose touch with what people think: I look forward to this chance to hear your views and ideas for improving the transport system we all depend on.

**09/05/2006 12:06:00**

**Maisie**

transport

The transport near my home is very reliable and cheap. It hardly ever late and when the bus or anyother kind of transport is late they always apologise. The cost of Busses and anyother kind of transport is cheap, so even younger people can jump on the bus without having to spend all their money on a simple journey.

**09/05/2006 12:09:00**

**Maisie**

transport

Transport is needed alot in cities more than anywhere. But transport is still needed in other small towns and villages. For people who have no cars or anyother kind of transport available and for teenagers who want to go out aswell. Transport is a vital part of cities and towns.

**09/05/2006 12:10:00**

**aragorn111**

financial savings

One bus say carrying 30 people will have one engine polluting the area. Around 20 CARS WILL HAVE 20 ENGINES POLLUTING THE area. Therefore I say we should lower bus prices and do other things to encourage public transport and discourage private transport.

**09/05/2006 12:16:00**

**olivera**

unfairnessness

BUSES ARE NOT MORMALY ON TIME, WHERE I The public transport could definately be improved. I think the government should concentrate on small vilages, and not only on big places like london.

**09/05/2006 12:18:00**

**poshwolf4**

frances

no the transport is not very good in my aria and when we go to dunmow we have to walk about half a mile to actualy get to the sports centre. busses are uncomfortable and most of the drivers cant even talk the same language as everyone else.

**09/05/2006 12:21:00**

**dipsy**

i agree.

I agree with aragorn 111 because 20 engines are alot more polluting than 1. Could public transport be the answer to our problems with global warming? What do you guys think.!

**10/05/2006 10:16:00**

**biged**

Transport Secretary outlines vision

What is your reaction to this news...hot off the press! New Transport Secretary Douglas Alexander is to demonstrate the Government's commitment to a scheme for road pricing by announcing that £10m will be made available to work on the necessary technology. Mr Alexander is keen to continue work on road pricing, which is seen as a key part of the battle with congestion on Britain's roads.

**10/05/2006 19:36:00**

**Maisie**

transport

I agree with aragorn111 he has a very good idea and something should happen about it.

**11/05/2006 10:19:00**

**StephenLadymanMP**

Public transport near you

The messages so far show how mixed services can be. I get the impression that in some areas local services have been designed well and the needs of young people taken into account. For example, some of you refer to buses as clean and tidy and prices as reasonable. On the other hand, unhelpful staff, high prices, lack of security, lack of respect for young people and services not designed with young people are the experiences that some of you have reported. This is why at central government level we deal with national networks and strategic issues and we try to devolve local planning to local areas and local companies. Outside London for example, buses are deregulated (wich means private companies can run services they think will make money) but the local council can 'buy' additional services that would otherwise not be run. So if you are looking for a service change (a new route or buses that run at different times) you should put your ideas to the local council. Most councils have websites you can contact them through but you should also get the name of your local councillor and talk to him or her. And if its poor service from staff or cleanliness or security that worries you, contact the bus company and tell them. Likewise, on local trains, contact the train company and make your concerns known.

Government is providing lots of money for better services - £87m a week for trains and big grants for new urban and rural bus services - but ministers like me can't be everywhere and we rely on people like you on the ground to tell local service managers what they are doing wrong - and also what they are doing right.

**11/05/2006 11:45:00**

**limc**

buses are great

buses are great and they take you places quick i love the number 2 bus

**11/05/2006 11:47:00**

**rdtom**

transport

there is to many cars on the road and the enviroment is being damaged something has to be done! What can the average jo do?

**11/05/2006 11:49:00**

**brtom**

price of transport

hi i live in frimley in england, i feel that the prices of the transport in my local area are of a ridiculous price. at the moment as i do not have job, i find it quite hard to find money to pay for the transport. therefore i feel that they should lower the prices for the youths of the area, and this would help them to go out more and enjoy our lives. xx

**11/05/2006 11:49:00**

**hmtom**

EVIL BUS GUYS

got attacked by unfriendly bus official because lost ticket.....

**11/05/2006 11:50:00**

**bltom**

buses always running late!

me and my friend was waiting for a local bus for over 40mins!!! they are supposed to run every 10mins. what a let down!!!! tut tut

**11/05/2006 11:51:00**

**mipo**

local transport

the local transport in my area is relatively cheap, but they're not always on time

**11/05/2006 11:54:00**

**batom**

Local transport and its effect on t

Our local transport is good as most of the buses are on time however they are not all big enough so many a time we are unable to catch the bus and must wait half an hour for the next one. It does help the environment if more people use public transport however more people should be able to use it!

**11/05/2006 11:55:00**

**entom**

buses

in my area the bus drivers are really rude to us and they overcharge you just cause you look older than you actually are...and there all really horrible and mean :(

**11/05/2006 11:57:00**

**entom**

bus drivers

bus drivers are REALLY horrible and they are always men and some of the time they dont even speak english!!

**11/05/2006 11:58:00**

**alsy**

Local Transport Prices.

At the age of 15 years old the price for a single ticket into the local town of Camberley it 85p from where i live but, as soon as i turn 16 then the price of the ticket will rise rapidly to around £1.60. There is no other way to get into town accept walking because people at the age of 16 can only ride a moped which many people are against and you can learn drive at 17 years old, no younger. And the prices the prices are continuing to rise, before Christmas the prices of a child to get into town was 80p abd now its risen to 85p. I know that an extra 5p is not much but over time it will increase and many people such as myself do use buses regually and it will have an impact. I do understand that they need money for improving the transport, but the prices for bus tickets are over the top!

**11/05/2006 11:59:00**

**amtom**

transport

its reli rubbish were i live

**11/05/2006 11:59:00**

**metom**

Local Transport

the transport in my area is appalling!! not only have prices increasingly risen over the last 2 years but the service has decreased with buses being dirty and often have broken seats. also i often used to be charged full fair when i was still eligible for a child fair, even when i was in school uniform! also as im still at school i cant have a student card which means i cant even get discount as a student, so i have to pay the full fare of £1.60 into my local town! why should i have to pay adult fare when i cant do adult things like vote or have a drink down th pub! i believe that the adult age for transport fares should be raised to the age of 18 instead of 16

**11/05/2006 12:00:00****limc**

alsy

you are too lazy if you put as much effort into walking as your typing then you cud walk everywhere for free and get healthy and stop pollution

**11/05/2006 12:01:00****cotom**

in Camberely

the public transport in Camberely is alright i suppose. there are alot of buses and bus lanes so that the buses arent late all the time, but these bus lanes reduce the number of lanes that normal cars can use and this increases teh traffic and do still slow buses down. also, there are a number of bus stops that are in the road on a busy one lane road, so that when the bus stops, a traffic jam builds up behind it and this slows everyone down. also, buses come at really random time, and not continuous r at relevant times. for example, when we finish school a bus doesnt come but one comes 5mins before we finish and then 30mins after we finish. also, there is alot of time in between trains and this needs to be shorter.

**11/05/2006 12:02:00****jabr**

the bus driverman

the bus driverman he fat hes old he looks kinda weird with his strategicly placed mirrors to look around if u get me ewrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr

**11/05/2006 12:03:00****mism**

global warming

i beleive that we should get rid of as many cows in the world because they contribute to a large % of the worlds destroying gases. They also make people fat as all the milk is fattening and yogurt is not good for you, unless it is a probiotic yogurt as they are very delicious and good for you

**11/05/2006 12:03:00****hmtom**

TRAMS

WE SHOULD GET TRAMS WOULD BE AWSOME AND EASY.....

**11/05/2006 12:04:00****mipo**

response to alsy

i totally agree with you. I mean i got a bus to town which cost me £2. 40 and when i took it to go home it cost 10p more. it's not that fair and what's worse if you want a student pass you have to pay ridiculous prices to buy them, after all we will be using them to go to college so we need it for education. this should definitely be improved on.

**11/05/2006 12:06:00****mdtom**

transport

the trains to guildford are very inefficient

**11/05/2006 12:06:00****antom**

transport

i think that the american ambassador who did not pay his congestion charge should have his car towed away.....

**11/05/2006 12:06:00****batom**

Prices of bus tickets

It is unfair that when you turn 16 you have to pay twice the price as when you are 15. It is actually cheaper for me to take the train however this is more inconvenient for me. I've been taking the bus for the past 6 years and it really irritates me that every year the price rises or the bus routes change. Buses should be easy and convenient to use but every year they just get more complicated.

**11/05/2006 12:09:00**

**hdtom**

Bus passes are way too expensive

I think that bus passes should be cheaper. I know they save you a lot of money but they're still too expensive. £300+ is not the sort of money that i want to be spending just to get the bus to and from school. If the buses were always on time and they were in good condition then £300 may be worth the money, but at the mo it's too expensive. -dev

**11/05/2006 12:09:00**

**amtom**

agreeing with cotom

i agree and i think that there should be more bus lanes per road, as well as cycling lanes because they take up too much room on the pavement

**11/05/2006 12:10:00**

**limc**

transport

if everyone got a bus they could lower the price instead of having buses driving round with no-one in

**11/05/2006 12:11:00**

**mipo**

bus routes

i think that the buses take an awfully long time to get to your destination. i remember i was trying to get to town which is 15 minutes away by car from my house and it took the us 45 minutes to get there. if i was to have a job interview i would have been late. I propose to make a bus lane which only buses can use so that people can get to their destination more quickly

**11/05/2006 12:12:00**

**brtom**

transport and global warming

i feel that transport contributes to a large amount of greenhouse gases which can cause global warming and have a bad effect on the earth's atmosphere. i feel that to get around this problem, we need to combat the problem from the source. at first we need to cut down on the use of cars, we should introduce things such as trams, and use more public transport such as buses and trains, however these services should be made cheaper, and have much easier access, as this would encourage more people to use them, and therefore cut down on the pollutants released into the atmosphere. there are also other things that contribute to global warming such as COWS. We should get rid of many cows as this would help to cut down a lot on the release of bad gases into the atmosphere.

**11/05/2006 12:12:00**

**mdtom**

trains

the new ones are so annoying because all the seats are near the loos.who wants to sit next to the toilet for the whole trip??

**11/05/2006 12:13:00**

**alsy**

Free for under 16s.... but not for f

Children under 16 can travel free at any time on trams and buses across the entire London bus network, including sections outside Greater London. However, children who are 14 or 15, or look it, must get a Child Oyster photocard in order to travel free. Why couldn't this take place in outer London areas as well?

**11/05/2006 12:13:00**

**amtom**

bus passes

i think that the bus passes should be cheaper because it is really hard to afford them

**11/05/2006 12:13:00**

**brtom**

bus lanes

GET RID OF BUS LANES THEY ARE A HUGE WASTE OF SPACE, AND ARE HARDLY EVER USED BY BUSES!!!! THEY WOULD BE MUCH BETTER AS A NEW ROAD FOR CARS!!

**12/05/2006 08:39:00**

**aragorn111**

my opinion

public transport is usually late and I have had to wait. It's usually quite clean and cheap though.

**12/05/2006 08:42:00**

**aragorn111**

introducing trams

I think we should introduce more electric trams and make them cheap to use. This way we would not damage the environment so much and more people can fit on one tram than on one car

**12/05/2006 08:55:00**

**chilli**

One plea to decision-makers?

The end of this public transport debate is almost upon us...

If you had one wish or plea you like to make to the decision-makers about any aspect of public transport, what would it be?

**12/05/2006 12:44:00**

**Levitica**

One Wish

Review the privatisation system. Nationalised transport would be run with the aim of providing the best service in mind. A full competition system would mean companies are competing to run the best service. Either are fine by me, but at the moment the companies fight each other by going to court for the right to run a train on this route or that route, not by running a better service. Every company just has a monopoly on the service they provide, there's no choice, so no incentive to provide a good service. Something needs to be done.

**12/05/2006 16:58:00**

**justice**

Thanks...

...and well done!

You all argued your opinions and points really well, asking questions, and came up with some excellent solutions - all around a set of very difficult and controversial issues. Those parliamentarians who agreed to provide feedback afterwards have certainly got a lot to digest. The next Forum is called 'Whistle while you work? How do you rate your job prospects? The debate begins on Monday June 12th. Hope to see you there.

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## **Forum Topic Transcript**

### **Green for Go? Environmental impact...**

**24/04/2006 09:00:00**

**justice**

Welcome to the public transport debate

It is widely acknowledged that a radical, yet sustainable transport policy is needed to fight congestion and pollution. Now, you will get the opportunity to make your voice heard in this HeadsUp Forum.

A range of parliamentarians want to hear your views on all aspects of public transport - see Who's listening?

([http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108\\_1](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108_1))

As much as possible, try to BackUp

([http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=home\\_Transport%20BackUp](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=home_Transport%20BackUp)) your opinions with facts, where you will find loads of info on public transport. Do you worry about the impact of public transport upon the environment? Or is it the best solution so far to a bigger problem of congestion and pollution? Explain your response...

**24/04/2006 11:10:00**

**saru**

New Trains Are More Power Hungry

As I understand the new trains that have been phased in over the network require more power to run than the older, more reliable ones. If they do require more power and we are trying to conserve power why have we not kept the old ones? They got people from a to b, we could have kept them for at least another 5 years until we have found a way of generating renewable energy. Does anyone agree or disagree?

**24/04/2006 11:16:00**

**samc**

environmental impact

i think that people make too much of a big deal about the environmental impact of cars/busses on the environment. we should do what we want to do, and go on any bus or drive any car that we wish to. by the time that other buses and cars take its toll on the world we will all be too far gone to see it. i think that we should carry on how we want to

**24/04/2006 11:20:00**

**masterzen**

David Cameron to target car emissions

Did any of you see on the news this morning that David Cameron has committed his party (the Conservatives) to reduce carbon emissions from cars by nearly a third? You can read about it more here

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/4937380.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4937380.stm) He has even changed his car for a more environmentally-friendly model...Should he be applauded for this move or is there still more parliamentarians could do?

**24/04/2006 16:47:00**

**Levitica**

Ban Cars!

Cars are silly. There're so inefficient, people driving around alone in a big car. It takes up a ridiculous amount of energy, and space. I think we should work towards having no private cars, and if people were serious about the environment, they would to. Obviously one country would suffer if it suddenly overnight banned cars, but I think that should be the end goal.

**24/04/2006 16:55:00**

**Levitica**

Samc

"i think that people make too much of a big deal about the environmental impact of cars/buses on the environment. we should do what we want to do, and go on any bus or drive any car that we wish to. by the time that other buses and cars take its toll on the world we will all be too far gone to see it. i think that we should carry on how we want to" It's so close that this will be hitting us in our life time. Oil will only last another 40 or so years.

**25/04/2006 15:16:00**

**gruff**

What is possible...

Bah humbug - I think we should all follow the example of a project for Darlington residents to stop them using cars. The 'Town On The Move' project was launched last March to increase the number of people walking, cycling and using public transport. An annual census of pupils' travel behaviour showed a 120% increase in numbers cycling to and from school in the year from January 2005. And there was a 14% increase in public transport use in target areas. Darlington was chosen as one of only three sustainable towns and the council received £3.24m from the Department for Transport for the initiative.

Why can't all our local councils follow the same environmentally friendly path?

**25/04/2006 17:56:00**

**bluebell**

forum

i do care about the environment and i think it would be better to scrap cars and use buses, trains and coaches. but i think they should make them more efficient and more friendly to the environment.

**25/04/2006 21:32:00**

**matt**

The environmental impact.

I think we should try to persuade people to use public transport to get to places if they can on that service. The thing is if more people do use the public transport carbon emissions will be far less than if everyone uses a car to travel everywhere. If you think about it if 54 people can sit on a bus to get somewhere than them all going in their cars that means that there will be 54 times less carbon emissions being released into the atmosphere!!!

**27/04/2006 11:18:00**

**biged**

Future HeadsUp Forums...

Once you are logged in, make sure you visit the Polling Station

[http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=3\\_4](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=3_4) and have your say on what topics you would like as future HeadsUp Forums...

**Environmental** - e.g. Do you think it's important for people to save energy by turning their TV off standby?

**Law and Order** - e.g. Do you think there are enough police on the streets?

**Defence** - e.g. Is the continued British military presence in Iraq a good idea?

**World** - e.g. How do you think poverty around the world could be solved?

**Health** - e.g. Are you worried about the spread of the bird flu virus to the UK?

**Education** - e.g. Do you think that you want to go to University with all the added costs associated with this decision?

**Sport** - e.g. Will we be ready to host such an important world event as the 2012 London Olympics?

**Family Breakdown** - e.g. Parental separation/divorce, Government involvement and support, and You.

**The constitution** e.g. Does the UK need a written constitution?

**Young people and formal politics** e.g. What needs to change to encourage you to get more involved in the formal political process?

**Young people's awareness of elections** e.g. What would encourage you to get on the electoral register?

**Party funding** e.g. What should be done to address the controversy currently surrounding the issue of party funding?

**Alternative voting methods** e.g. As well as using polling stations and postal voting, is using the internet, SMS or telephone to vote in elections a good idea?

Or is there another topic not on this list that you would like to discuss/debate? Let us know!

**27/04/2006 16:01:00**

**boffinbabe12**

Ban cars?

Ok.. i understand that cars are worse for the enviroment than public transport- but can you imagine 'celebrities' like Mariah Carey (drama queen of the world) or Paris Hilton actually taking public transport? And if there was a huge amount more people going on trains ect. then there will never be any room for things such as wheelchairs! Granted some people could easily take the train or bus, but there are some people who physically HAVE to take a car- or private transport. Also, in some places there are no trains for miles and miles- it would be totally illogical for people to walk for 10 miles to get onto a train for a few stops and then have to walk another 6 miles to get somewhere else! (yes healthy excersize for some- but what if you want to reach you destination looking nice?)

**27/04/2006 16:04:00**

**boffinbabe12**

do not forget

and do not forget that although trains, buses, ect. do not create as much dangerous gases ( idont know their names) as all the cars on the road, they still do create a fair amount of it and if they increase the number of buses and trains by too much to provide the service for more people, you are just going to end up withthe same problem happening again.

**27/04/2006 22:14:00**

**Levitica**

Reply to Boffinbabe

If less people used their cars, they'd put more trains and buses on. I really don't believe space for wheelchairs would be an issue. If the people who live in remote areas want to stop using their cars, the bus companies would realise money was available there and start a service. But we all know, if there was a bus, they'd all drive around in their cars anyhow. The people who live in a house with no one around all on their own... Well, they should move anyway, it's not a very social way to live, is it? This wouldn't be an overnight thing, so good public transport would come into effect before cars were completely banned. I'd just increase the price of fuel and cars to the private buyers every year, meaning people tried not to use their cars. People just don't care about the environment - they'd only stop using their cars if it was costing them too much.

**27/04/2006 22:17:00**

**Levitica**

Dangerous Gases

The dangerous gasses are Carbon Dioxide and Methane. Obviously a bus is bigger and makes more than a car, so a bus for every car would be worse than cars, but a bus for the people who are in cars would mean less. (Oh, by the way - this should be on the last post - I'd keep taxis.)

**28/04/2006 17:05:00**

**ellies**

Public Transport is a good idea

If everyone understood the impact cars have on the environment, then I'm sure more poeple would use the bus and train service. However, I think that to encourage people to use the services they must become:

- more reliable
- cheaper
- easier to access

Some argue that buses create more pollution than cars, but if you think about it, 50 people on 1 bus makes less pollution than 50 people in 50 cars. I think that if using the public transport was seen as more advantageous, more people would use it instead of cars, but it needs to improve the service to improve its reputation.

**28/04/2006 18:09:00**

**boffinbabe12**

levitica

i don't think that just because somebody chooses to live in a secluded area means that they are antisocial- they just don't like the hustle and bustle of towns

**01/05/2006 18:17:00**

**dipsy**

Stansted airport

I am worrying about this expansion, as it looks like it is definately going to happen. And to clear room for the expansion, not only will they be demolishing part of the enviroment (even parts of hatfield forest which is 1000 years old!) they will also be destroying very old houses, which is destroying histroy. Theres not much left of history left so we need to save it.

**02/05/2006 17:27:00**

**masterzen**

the story so far...

Here is a selection of some of the interesting comments posted relating to the environmental impact of public transport during Week 1 of the debate:

\* "people make to much of a big deal about the environmental impact of cars/busses on the environment."

\* "ban cars - Cars are silly. There're so inefficient, people driving around alone in a big car. It takes up a ridiculous amount of energy, and space..."

\* "i understand that cars are worse for the enviroment than public transport- but can you imagine 'celebrities' like Mariah Carey (drama queen of the world) or Paris Hilton actually taking public transport?"

<b>What issues have not yet been covered - there's still plenty of time to have your say on public transport in this debate!</b>

**03/05/2006 09:41:00**

**DavidKidneyMP**

environmental impact of transport

Climate Change is becoming such a serious challenge (see [www.climatechallenge.gov.uk](http://www.climatechallenge.gov.uk)) that we must make a reality of public transport as a genuine alternative to private motoring. It is better for the environment if we leave cars at home more often and share buses and trains. Obviously, walking and cycling is even healthier for both the environment and for individuals. Air travel is particularly harmful because of the harmful emissions. Work is ongoing to develop even more environmentally-friendly fuels for all forms of transport including bio fuels and hydrogen fuel cells. There are more hybrid cars now as well, running part on electricity and part on petrol/diesel.

**03/05/2006 10:26:00**

**GeorgeYoungMP**

Environmental impact

MP's can - if they try hard - change the laws and "make" people go green, for example by stopping leaded petrol and banning smoking in public places. Or they can "encourage" people to go green through the tax system. I have just changed cars because the Vehicle Excise Duty on a hybrid car is £30, instead of the £165 I paid last year on a conventional one. If the duty had been the same, the choice might have been more difficult - or more likely, made later.

**03/05/2006 17:10:00**

**biged**

Leo and the Mayor

Do you know what Leonardo DiCaprio and Ken Livingstone have in common? The answer is that they both own a Toyota Prius, a "hybrid" car that runs on both petrol and electricity. Until now, however, the electric power has only worked when the car has been running long enough in petrol mode to create sufficient charge. But from next month, these £20,000 cars can be converted so you can plug them into the mains when you're not using them. The result is more motoring in electric mode, even less petrol consumption and fewer emissions. There's a catch, however, and that's the £15,000 conversion costs. Check out <http://www.Goinggreen.co.uk> for more information. Does this revelation surprise you? What about your reaction to the conversion costs - are they as you expected?

**08/05/2006 09:57:00**

**gruff**

US-style school buses successful

The Conservative Party have called for the school bus system to be expanded to cut down on traffic on the roads. Did you know that in America, 50% of children go to school on a school bus. In this country, it's just 6%...Yellow buses are being used in various parts of the UK, including an £18.7m scheme in West Yorkshire. There, one bus cut 25,000 car journeys a year in the Hebden Bridge area. Do you think more could be done to provide free school buses for all children? Would you mind getting school buses every day, to and from school, if it meant you were doing your bit to help save the environment?</b>

**08/05/2006 13:18:00**

**Levitica**

Kind of dodgy statistic...

"Did you know that in America, 50% of children go to school on a school bus. In this country, it's just 6%..." I think a statistic saying how many people get the bus compared to how many get cars would be more appropriate, as the reason less will get the bus here is that most people walk to school. Everything is more spread out in America so people will need to travel longer distances. It's parents the government need to appeal to over this. If they're not offering lifts, people will have to take the bus. I have a friend whose parents see it as ridiculously important that they drive him to school when he'd be fine with just walking.

**09/05/2006 12:12:00**

**HotSoupMerangue**

buses are better

public transport is a lot better for effective fuel use and to not damage the environment with different cars each only carrying 5 people max, rather than a bus making the same fumes carrying 32 instead!

**09/05/2006 12:13:00**

**bluebell**

frances

i dont think there is to much we can do about the problem apart from discouraging people not to use there cars, and make public trasport easyer to get to and more comfortable to use. we dont have a car at the moment and life is next to impossible. as david cannot take his entire rollerhock kit on the bus.

**09/05/2006 12:19:00**

**danzo**

a

i think that if you can walk people should walk but if you can't walk to school you should take the school bus as it will probably be cheaper and if it isn't soon will be because the price of fuel is going up plus if you do take the car you'll be following the bus to school so parents should think logically and save themselves the time and trouble of carting their children to school as for public transport like buses if everyone used it the government would realize it was starting to work they would buy more buses on the road and there wouldn't be as many traffic jams.

**09/05/2006 12:23:00**

**aragorn111**

electric cars

I think we should make electric cars and if people aren't prepared to use them they can use public transport and that will save the environment a bit. Talk about electric cars and advertise them and people might think about them a bit more.

**09/05/2006 12:23:00**

**biged**

What about Trams?

Have any of you guys been on a tram in the UK, perhaps in Sheffield, Croydon or Manchester?

Environmental groups continue to ask the government to implement more tram systems in other cities across the country as another environmentally-friendly option for commuters and public transport users. The main reason more tram systems have not been approved is the high costs involved. What do you think of the idea of adding the tram to a range of public transport options?

**09/05/2006 17:12:00**

**masterzen**

Mayor gives go-ahead to teenage

The mayor of London has confirmed that under-18s in full time education will get free bus and tram travel from the start of the next academic year.

Under-16s are already benefiting from the policy but the mayor wants to use the initiative to encourage more young people from the capital's boroughs to continue their studies. He commented:

"It will give a huge boost to families where children are striving to attain their full potential through continued studies. Nearly 130,000 16 and 17-year-olds in London can benefit from this policy. It not only tackles issues of cost, which is a big factor when deciding to stay in education after 16, but also maintains our agenda of promoting public transport in order to protect the environment." Do you think the Mayor has made the right move here or does it not go far enough?

**09/05/2006 20:19:00**

**poshwolf4**

frances says

i dont think we can do anything about this problem apart from discouraging people from using their cars and making public transport more comfortable. we dont have a car at the moment and life is in possible david cannot fit his entire hockey kit onto the bus and when you get to the other end of the bus journey there is usually a long walk afterwards.

**10/05/2006 12:23:00**

**Levitica**

Trams and Free transport

I've not been on a tram. Why are they better than buses? Because they don't use up the road? I think it's right to make public transport free for the unwaged, including people in education. I don't understand why it's only people under 18 though (apart from to save money), that seems kind of like cheating. How many one year FE courses are they?

**11/05/2006 10:31:00**

**StephenLadymanMP**

Transport and the environment

This is not an easy issue to grapple with but those who have pointed out the need to get to grips with this are right. It's true that greenhouse emissions from transport are rising but that is because we have had a good economy in recent years and when people have more money they like to use it to travel and when the more people there are in work the more people have to travel to work and the more people who travel for work. The level of emissions from each car are going down but because there are more cars overall levels are going up. That's one of the reasons we have said there will be a Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation of 5% by 2010 - and 5% of all road fuel will have to have been made from renewable sources such as biomass. Also we are trying to get aviation included in an emissions trading scheme to drive down emissions from planes. We mustn't kid ourselves though that this is easy or that the things we do to deal with the problem will be popular - as we saw when we put up fuel taxes, people get very upset if they are charged more to travel. You might want to look at a site that will tell you what the world will look like in 50 years depending on how we tackle these issues look at the Foresight Project that I sponsor:

<http://www.foresight.gov.uk/Intelligent%20Infrastructure%20Systems/Index.htm>

Scary stuff but exciting too. Its worth checking out.

**11/05/2006 11:49:00**

**limc**

bikes rule

bikes are the best . everyone rides in holland and they r not obese and they pollute less. its best to be in a 12 man biker gang going down to co op to pick up supplies. bikes are fun and healthy and non polluting

**11/05/2006 12:05:00**

**jama**

prices of bus

i am 16 years old and it costs me over a £1 to travel on the bus to my local town the price is very high for a person who is in fulltime education trying to travel to his local library abd these price keep rising i will not be able to afford to go the bus and i will have to wait at a train station 20 mins to get to the place i want to go but some times i would like to got farnborough in hampshire but the train doesn't travell to farnborough so i have only one option and i would prefer to have a chocie where I go but the prices are to high to travel by bus Thankyou for reading my problem with public bus prices

**11/05/2006 12:08:00**

**dltom**

We are not trying hard enough...

Without a doubt, it's obvious that is we continue to live our lives as we are doing now then our children, grandchildren and maybe even their children will suffer as a result of our selfish behaviour. Things are being done, such as the UK trying to reduce its overall emissions of Crabon Dioxide by 20% by 2010 but apparently it's 'set to fail'. What is the point in saying that? It just disheartens people. Even if we are not sticking to our side of the bargain, people should be made aware of how the UK is doing as a whole but more encouragement should be given. I think that weekly updates on the morning news should be given as many people watch programs such as BBC News or GMTV in the morning. This would make more people understand the consequences and also what they need to do and what they are able to do in order to play a small part in helping the UK meet it's 20% bid. However, I don't feel that this is enough. Reducing emissions is one thing but there's other things that can be done too, such as finding an alternative to cars themselves. I think more moeny should be put into designing new forms of transport that don't involve releasing harmful gases at all. Public transport is ok as it does mean that more people are travelling together so less fumes are being released but out of the millions of people that live within the UK it is only a small percentage. I recon if we tried harder as a nation to pull together (and actually mean it!!) Then I am sure we could reach our target. We have to think positively and get people more involved. I think a vast majority of people don't care beacsue they know no different. If people understood the consequences and we given a small task such as to use public transport at least twice a week then I am sure more people would try and get involved and we would be that bit closer to helping the environment. After all, if nothing or very little is done, although the effects will be small to begin with, the world is in danger and the only thing that can save it is us. Lets do something now before it really is too late!

**11/05/2006 12:13:00**

**metom**

more public transport!

although public transport is sometimes late, dirty and overpriced in some areas, i belive that it's the way to stop global warming. if people started using public transport instead of using their cars pollution would be greatly reduced. also people have become insociable due to the increase of people using their own vehicles and there's no longer a sense of community. another point to consider is that maybe road accidents will decrease and pedestrians would be safer on the streets

**12/05/2006 09:07:00**

**chilli**

One plea to decision-makers?

The end of this public transport debate is almost upon us...If you had one wish or plea you like to make to the decision-makers about any aspect of public transport, what would it be?

**12/05/2006 17:03:00**

**justice**

Thanks...

...and well done!

You all argued your opinions and points really well, asking questions, and came up with some excellent solutions - all around a set of very difficult and controversial issues. Those parliamentarians who agreed to provide feedback afterwards have certainly got a lot to digest. The next Forum is called 'Whistle while you work? How do you rate your job prospects? The debate begins on Monday June 12th. Hope to see you there.

## Forum Topic Transcript

### Green for Go? Show me the money...

24/04/2006 09:00:00

justice

Welcome to the public transport debate

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A range of parliamentarians want to hear your views on all aspects of public transport - see Who's listening?

[http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108\\_1](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108_1) As much as possible, try to BackUp

[http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=home\\_Transport%20BackUp](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=home_Transport%20BackUp) your opinions with facts, where you will find loads of info on public transport. From your perspective, what is the financial impact and implications of young people using public transport? Are there any alternative, more cost-effective methods that you know of? Any other points you would like to raise - now's the time!

24/04/2006 13:36:00

chilli

Gwyneth Dunwoody MP

What do you think of what Gwyneth Dunwoody MP had to say about the importance of young people having their say on public transport and the work of the Transport Select Committee...

"Young people are often dependent on public transport, not just for travelling to school or college, but for their social lives, so we want the system to be reliable and safe. By looking in detail at particular areas of transport and questioning the Government, the Transport Select Committee <http://www.parliament.uk/transcom/> seeks to contribute towards the development of better and safer transport. We challenge the Government on its proposals and demand answers to the questions which people ask daily about their own experiences of transport; we aim to reflect the dissatisfaction which many have about those systems; and we demand full answers and solutions from those responsible for those systems..." Do you share her concerns? (You might want to read her statement in full here [http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108\\_1](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108_1))

24/04/2006 15:20:00

octom

transport

Surely convincing more people to ride bikes or peddle/ electric scooters would be far cheaper than seriously trying to improve public transport. It would be cleaner to the environment too.

Rank: Key?:

25/04/2006 10:18:00

biged

Stephen Joseph's thoughts

What is your reaction to the thoughts of Stephen Joseph (Executive Director of Transport 2000) who criticised the cost and reliability of our public transport, and suggests some cheaper alternatives...

[http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108\\_1](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s108_1)

"Young people need to be independent, but in too many places the public transport isn't good enough; it's too expensive, too infrequent or in some places not there at all, especially evenings and Sundays...It doesn't have to be like this: there are places in the UK and abroad where public transport is OK and reasonably priced. Examples include youth travel schemes which make public transport cheaper (50p a trip on the Isle of Wight for instance); taxibuses that drop you off and pick you up from your door and real time and text information that tells you when buses and trains are actually running."

26/04/2006 16:41:00

ssyp

??

Im not sure what is classed as expensive or cheap but i think in my area we're quite lucky. We have safe, cheap buses. The other day it only cost me about 30p for a 20 minute journey. I don't really understand why there are so many different prices for the similar journeys all over the country.

27/04/2006 10:11:00

chilli

Free Tube travel for under 11s

Have you seen the eye-catching colourful adverts from the Mayor of London offering 'Free Tube travel for under 11s'? The main stipulation on this offer is that under 11s must be travelling with an adult with a valid ticket at weekends, public holidays and after 9:30am on weekdays. What do you think of this type of promotional offer? Does it go far enough - should it be extended to all young people under 18? For those of you in other parts of the country, does your local transport offer similar incentives/promotions to get you to use it more often? If you were in charge what offers would you introduce? For more information on a range of free travel options for young people in London, check out the Transport for London website <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/fares-tickets/2006/freetravel.shtml>

27/04/2006 11:19:00

**biged**

Future HeadsUp Forums...

Once you are logged in, make sure you visit the Polling Station

[http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s3\\_4](http://www.headsup.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s3_4) and have your say on what topics you would like as future HeadsUp Forums...

**Environmental**- e.g. Do you think its important for people to save energy by turning their TV off standby?

**Law and Order** - e.g. Do you think there are enough police on the streets?

**Defence** - e.g. Is the continued British military presence in Iraq a good idea?

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**The constitution** e.g. Does the UK need a written constitution?

**Young people and formal politics** e.g. What needs to change to encourage you to get more involved in the formal political process?

**Young people's awareness of elections** e.g. What would encourage you to get on the electoral register?

**Party funding** e.g. What should be done to address the controversy currently surrounding the issue of party funding?

**Alternative voting methods** e.g. As well as using polling stations and postal voting, is using the internet, SMS or telephone to vote in elections a good idea?

Or is there another topic not on this list that you would like to discuss/debate? Let us know!

27/04/2006 16:13:00

**boffinbabe12**

rising rising

i think that it isn't too expensive yet, i am happy to pay it, although the price is rising to rapidly for comfort. Whilst i can still get by on a child's ticket, for adults it can prove a lot more expensive. Sometimes the cost can be almost as much as the cost of petrol- which kind of destroys the whole idea of safe for the enviroment and cheap to use.... I understand that they are only raising costs so they can have enough money to imprrove their service to provide for their growing number of riders, but it will just unpersuade people!

27/04/2006 16:20:00

**boffinbabe12**

IF I was mayor

FIRSTY MAY I SAY THAT WOULD BE SOOO COOL!

secondly, and more seriously.... i think they should raise it to free for under 15s.... If i was mayor I would also try to provide more seating on tubes as well- they get so crowded so quickly! I would maybe do something like a free travel rota- so during summer months it is free to 15s and under. Autumn it can be free to students. Winter it can be reduced prices for adults and then Spring it can be free for pensioners! (I have reasons to why i allocated each season, but i cannot be bothered to go into detail!)

27/04/2006 22:22:00

**Levitica**

Pricing

I think it should be free for under 17s as they're forbidden from taking full time jobs and earning their own money, I don't think we should make them pay for essential stuff as we've removed their right to earn the full amount of money. It does bother me that pensioners get half price and free in some areas, as this seems unfair when 16 year old school children who get no money have to pay the full fare. Free tube for under 11s who're travelling with an adult seems pretty pointless to me. All it encourages is for people to not be put off tkaing their children out because of the cost, it's no big deal.

28/04/2006 18:11:00

**boffinbabe12**

hmmm

good point- i agree with you! Scrap what i said previously- if I was mayor I would hire you to be my public transport advisor and you could make up the prices! LOL!

02/05/2006 11:08:00

**gruff**

Road pricing - not the answer say

A recent report by the Independent Transport Commission, concluded that road pricing proposals will not keep motorists off the roads but will change where and when they drive. Are you surprised or worried by this conclusion?

02/05/2006 11:57:00

**Levitica**

Road charges

I think road charges would have to be very high for them to stop people using their cars. Cars offer greater individual comfort, and doing some things is very difficult without a car, so people would want to own a car anyway for these things, even if they make one or two journeys more expensive for cars. I think the costs should be as high as it takes to stop people, which would be quite high in most cases.

**02/05/2006 17:27:00**

**masterzen**

the story so far...

Here is a selection of some of the interesting comments related to the cost of public transport posted during Week 1 of the debate:

\* "Surely convincing more people to ride bikes or peddle/ electric scooters would be far cheaper than seriously trying to improve public transport."

\* "in my area we're quite lucky. We have safe, cheap buses. The other day it only cost me about 30p for a 20 minute journey."

\* (re: if I was Mayor) "I would maybe do something like a free travel rota- so during summer months it is free to 15s and under. Autumn it can be free to students. Winter it can be reduced prices for adults and then Spring it can be free for pensioners!"

\* "Free tube for under 11s who're travelling with an adult seems pretty pointless to me. All it encourages is for people to not be put off taking their children out because of the cost, it's no big deal."

What issues have not yet been covered - there's still plenty of time to have your say on public transport in this debate!

**03/05/2006 09:44:00**

**DavidKidneyMP**

transport costs

The point about road user charging is that the cost could be more directly linked to the congestion caused - by reference to specific roads and specific times of the day. I agree with the comment that where we can walk or cycle we avoid travel costs altogether. For younger people, public transport needs to be more sensitive to their financial situation.

**03/05/2006 10:13:00**

**GeorgeYoungMP**

Road pricing

I was interested to read David Kidney's comments. Although we sit on opposite sides in the House of Commons, I agree that road pricing offers an opportunity - which we don't have at the moment - to influence how people use our roads. While they are congested in the rush hours, they are often pretty empty for much of the time. Road pricing can help shift some journeys from the rush hours by charging; road pricing could also move some journeys - which have to be made during the rush hour - from roads to public transport.

**08/05/2006 19:17:00**

**chrstakeley**

making public transport affordable

I cannot see how the government can be effective in encouraging us to use public transport when they seem to use the stick to do it, rather than the carrot. It makes no one feel good about travel. If people made public transport safe and cheap, this would really make a difference and they could make people choose public transport over their cars. When I lived in a city in France the transport system was quick, safe and most of all cheap, so everyone used it.

**09/05/2006 08:31:00**

**danzo**

price

the price to use the bus isn't bad considering that the price of fuel is going up all the time and if everyone used public transport it would be very good

**09/05/2006 12:08:00**

**HotSoupMerangue**

in agreement

i agree with danzo, the price of petrol is soon going to be £1.00 a litre, and if more people can fit onto a bus than a car and then spend less per head, then it is better for the whole general economy to use public transport and save money

**09/05/2006 12:08:00**

**bluebell**

forum

i think that danzo has an unusual opinion and i would disagree the transport may be good but it is over priced and it changes the price every time practically you go on them. but he is right about one thing it would save the environment

**09/05/2006 12:08:00**

**dipsy**

ouch!

The financial impact for public transport (if we banned it because we were using solar cars, if the worst came to the worst in global warming) would be devastating. Many people who work on trains, buses etc all over Britain would be put out of job. This could leave many people homeless, and on the streets.

**10/05/2006 12:26:00**

**Levitica**

Uhh..

"The financial impact for public transport (if we banned it because we were using solar cars, if the worst came to the worst in global warming) would be devastating." I don't know where this idea came from, but I don't think it would be just the transport workers to worry about, as anyone without a car would be unable to travel and would not be able to continue their job... But why would anyone ban public transport?

**11/05/2006 10:36:00**

**StephenLadymanMP**

The cost of travel

The ability to travel freely is a freedom that most people treasure. The cost of that freedom will be climate change if we are not careful so the comments from people who have called on us to use more sustainable forms of transport are right. For young people the bike is an option sometimes but not always. The roads aren't as safe as they were for cyclists and I'm keen to hear ideas about what we can do about that. Cheap access to public transport is important too and I'd like to hear about local schemes where young people have reasonably priced access to trains and buses.

**11/05/2006 11:49:00**

**subu**

pricing

i live in frimley and rarely travel on public transport due to the fact that not only is it stinky and dirty, but mainly because it costs so much and you dont feel that you are getting your moneys worth. For ABOUT £2.50 for a 5 minute journey, i expect to be treated like a queen, not bunged in the back of a bus with an unlikable driver and a foul smell!! MONEY is so important to us as young people and it feels like a waste to get ripped of on a short journey!

**11/05/2006 12:12:00**

**jama**

prices

i am 16 and going into full time education at a sixth college in hampshire but the price of a train pass is very expensive but i need to travel to college everyday to improve my education i feel that I will not be able to pay for a train pass as i wont be working for the first couple of months then i will try and find a job but i would stress that even with a job i might not be able to pay for the pass because they are very expensive

**11/05/2006 12:13:00**

**liwh**

Price

I live in Camberley and to travel by bus into the town centre costs almost double the price of traveling to Guildford by train. Also, from the age of about 13 it had been difficult to get a child's ticket as bus drivers don't believe that you're under 16. The price of transport is often offputting and so encourages traveling by car.

**12/05/2006 09:07:00**

**chilli**

One plea to decision-makers?

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**12/05/2006 17:03:00**

**justice**

Thanks...

...and well done!

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## Forum Topic Transcript

### Green for Go?

#### Safe delivery...

24/04/2006 09:00:00

**justice**

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24/04/2006 11:18:00

**agtom**

how welcome teenagers are on p

bus drivers are always really rude and so are train ticket people. the are rude to teenagers because some teenagers are rude so they are rude to all teenagers assuming they are goin to be rude. But if they are rude to us then it makes us want to be rude to them, aand the problem continues in a circle.

24/04/2006 16:59:00

**Levitica**

Welcomeness

I usually feel welcome on trains, train people seem to be really jolly most of the time. Buses are another matter. There's a lot of anti social behavior on buses, and bus drivers do tend to be prejudiced against young people.

25/04/2006 15:45:00

**chilli**

Crime cutting ideas

A conference was held recently in Manchester to find out new ways of tackling crime on public transport in the area. Police, council officers, transport bosses and transport users attended the event. Earlier this year, transport bosses in Salford were able to reinstate a popular bus service following the success of an initiative aimed at tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. The '36' evening bus service stopped running along one particular road in December 2002 after buses were persistently vandalised. The bus company worked closely with Salford City Council and Greater Manchester Police to the tackle problem early so that the service could go back on the road. Is there an example of your local bus or train service being stopped temporarily in an attempt to cut crime, like the bus in Salford?

25/04/2006 17:59:00

**bluebell**

forum

i don't feel that safe because anyone could kidnapped me any time

26/04/2006 14:33:00

**masterzen**

Interesting debate so far...

But what do you see as the most convincing arguments in support/against the use of public transport?

26/04/2006 16:33:00

**ssyp**

Safety

Whenever I use public transport, I am usually with friends so i feel alot safer. A good thing is in school we were taught some manners and safety tips when using buses etc. About the argument with rudeness, it works both ways. If we want to be treated nicely we have to treat them nicely. If they are rude just grin a bear it :). If your rude back there more likely to be more rude you next time. Dont let teenage vandals ruin it for the rest of us.

26/04/2006 19:33:00

**Dan12**

Boy

I know a young boy who couldnt find his bus pass so the driver told him to get off and he was only 7. This was on the way to school.

27/04/2006 11:16:00

**biged**

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**27/04/2006 16:25:00**

**boffinbabe12**

Trains- ok Buses- no

I agree with what levitica said earlier- there is far too much anti-social behaviour on trains, and that is from the drivers! The two types of people who make trains uncomfortable are the chavs at the back and the drivers who tend to be impatient and give dirty looks to any young person stepping on the train. also with buses, they are always crowded at the front when people are trying to pay, but getting shoved by other people getting on and it doesnt help when the driver closes the door on you when you're trying to get on. And about being kidnapped on public transport- i feel like you can get kidnapped anywhere you are, if you are on your own or not.... at least when you are on public transport there is nearly always witnesses about.

**27/04/2006 22:30:00**

**Levitica**

Safeness and manners and the a

I have always been treated well by the train people, but on what someone said about being kidnapped, I regularly travel on a certain longish train service where no ticket man tends to come along. Not only does that mean loads of people get on for free (something that bothers me with public transport) but, like someone said about kidnapping, someone could be a victim of serious crime at any time. I'd sat on the train one night feeling very uneasy and alone. I saw a notice a week or so later saying that the night after the one I was on the train a young girl was sexually assaulted. A lot of parents are scared of their children using public transport for this reason. Someone asked for the arguments for and against public transport. Apart from very long journeys (train far more comfortable than a car in my opinion) I don't think there's a positive side to using public transport at all. I'll be getting a car the moment I'm able, I'm sick of not being able to go where I want. So many people have cars it makes it really difficult for the people who don't.

**28/04/2006 18:21:00**

**boffinbabe12**

Possible?

I can't believe it is possible for people on a regularly basis to be assaulted on trains! I always thought that if there are people around on trains (which there nearly always are in my area) then somebody would notice some young girl get kidnapped or something! Woah! Also, about the whole 'safety issue thing' when using public transport, unless your destination is the train station, you are always going to have to walk to get to your destination from the station... and i'm not sure (so do correct me if I'm wrong) but don't people get assaulted/ kidnapped/ murdered/ stabbed ect. in the streets than they do actually on public transport? And Levitica- I thought you were anti-car! Or would you not get a car if public transport was better and more regular and gets you everywhere? (By the way, I'm gettin a car the second I'm 17- got a few years to wait though!)

**02/05/2006 11:11:00**

**chilli**

What makes you feel safer?

What more could be done to make you feel safe when using public transport - more CCTV, better lighting, more transport staff working?? Other reasons different to these?

**02/05/2006 12:02:00**

**Levitica**

Boffin Babe and Safety

"And Levitica- I thought you were anti-car! Or would you not get a car if public transport was better and more regular and gets you everywhere? (By the way, I'm gettin a car the second I'm 17- got a few years to wait

though!) I am, everyone having cars is a silly system, but unfortunately it's the system we have. Me not having a car isn't going to make any difference, I'm just one person. I'd not want a car if public transport would get me everywhere I want to go at a reasonable price, but it just doesn't - Durham is a 20 minute car journey away, it takes one hour and a half on the bus, and the bus only comes every couple of hours! I don't live in a remote area or anything. The way things are, life would be better with a car. I think a staff presence at all times, like the ticket man walking up and down, would make things feel safer, and CCTV would be good as well. I don't know how regularly people are assaulted on trains, just that it happens.

**02/05/2006 17:28:00**

**masterzen**

the story so far...

Here is a selection of some of the interesting comments posted relating to your safety on public transport during Week 1 of the debate:

\* "I usually feel welcome on trains, train people seem to be really jolly most of the time. Buses are another matter. There's a lot of anti social behavior on buses, and bus drivers do tend to be prejudiced against young people."

\* "Apart from very long journeys (train far more comfortable than a car in my opinion) I don't think there's a positive side to using public transport at all."

\* "I know a young boy who couldn't find his bus pass so the driver told him to get off and he was only 7. This was on the way to school."

What issues have not yet been covered - there's still plenty of time to have your say on public transport in this debate!

**03/05/2006 09:48:00**

**DavidKidneyMP**

safety

This is a very important debate because I wouldn't want to encourage people to use buses and trains only for them to be assaulted and suffer for doing so. I would love to hear more suggestions for making buses and trains safer. More staff? Better trained obviously, given the several comments about rudeness. CCTV? I agree that we are safer in numbers and indeed one of the beauties of strong public transport is that there should be lots of decent, well-behaved people on hand to keep us company and offer reassurance. Let's have more ideas for improving personal safety for everyone who uses public transport.

**03/05/2006 10:35:00**

**GeorgeYoungMP**

CCTV

I think one of the best ways to make public transport safer is to have CCTV on the buses and trains. If people know they are likely to be caught, they will be less likely to misbehave.

**08/05/2006 20:03:00**

**03cmglennon**

Public Transport

I get the bus twice every day (to school and back) and I don't think it's just the drivers who make it uncomfortable, it's the other people travelling with you. No-one sits at the back except the 'CHAVs' and most people don't go near them. This is because they throw things at us such as chocolate and ice lolly - which really hurts!!! Only the other day my friend got covered in water because they decided to target her and poured a bottle of water on her hair. So it's not really fair to say the drivers are making it a bad atmosphere. I think it would make the people on the journey feel much more relaxed if there was always someone there supervising the kids on the bus. The drivers never do anything but I guess that's understandable as they are driving!!

**09/05/2006 08:30:00**

**HotSoupMerangue**

rudeness

when i use very local public transport from my village to the local towns the service is usually good apart from one time, this bus driver charged me £2.00 for a single when i was only 12, then when my parent tried to complain as they had been given the same treatment they were extremely rude and when i tried to get off, they shut the doors on my arm, causing bruising etc, and then they tried to drive off with my parent as well!

**11/05/2006 10:40:00**

**StephenLadymanMP**

Safety

This is a key issue and I'm pleased some of you feel safe - but no-one should feel threatened on the transport network ever. I know I wouldn't let my daughter travel on certain routes at certain times of night and that's just not acceptable. That is why you MUST tell bus and train companies, the local police and the local council if you feel uncomfortable on particular services or at bus stops and stations. And if it's serious and nothing is being done about it, tell your MP too.

**11/05/2006 11:55:00**

**bltom**

rude drivers!!!!

bus drivers always seem to look down on you. Bus fares are always expensive aswell.they aren't quick and reliable. trains are always on time they are comfortable and clean.

**11/05/2006 17:03:00**

**dipsy**

i agree!

Bus drivers are always using their 'power' to look down on people. They also charge extremely high prices because they no everyone is desperate to get to their destination. I also think buses security isnt very secure as anyone could just kidnap you, especialy at a young age.

**12/05/2006 09:08:00**

**chilli**

One plea to decision-makers?

The end of this public transport debate is almost upon us...If you had one wish or plea you like to make to the decision-makers about any aspect of public transport, what would it be?

**12/05/2006 17:03:00**

**justice**

Thanks...

...and well done!

You all argued your opinions and points really well, asking questions, and came up with some excellent solutions - all around a set of very difficult and controversial issues. Those parliamentarians who agreed to provide feedback afterwards have certainly got a lot to digest. The next Forum is called 'Whistle while you work? How do you rate your job prospects? The debate begins on Monday June 12th. Hope to see you there.

