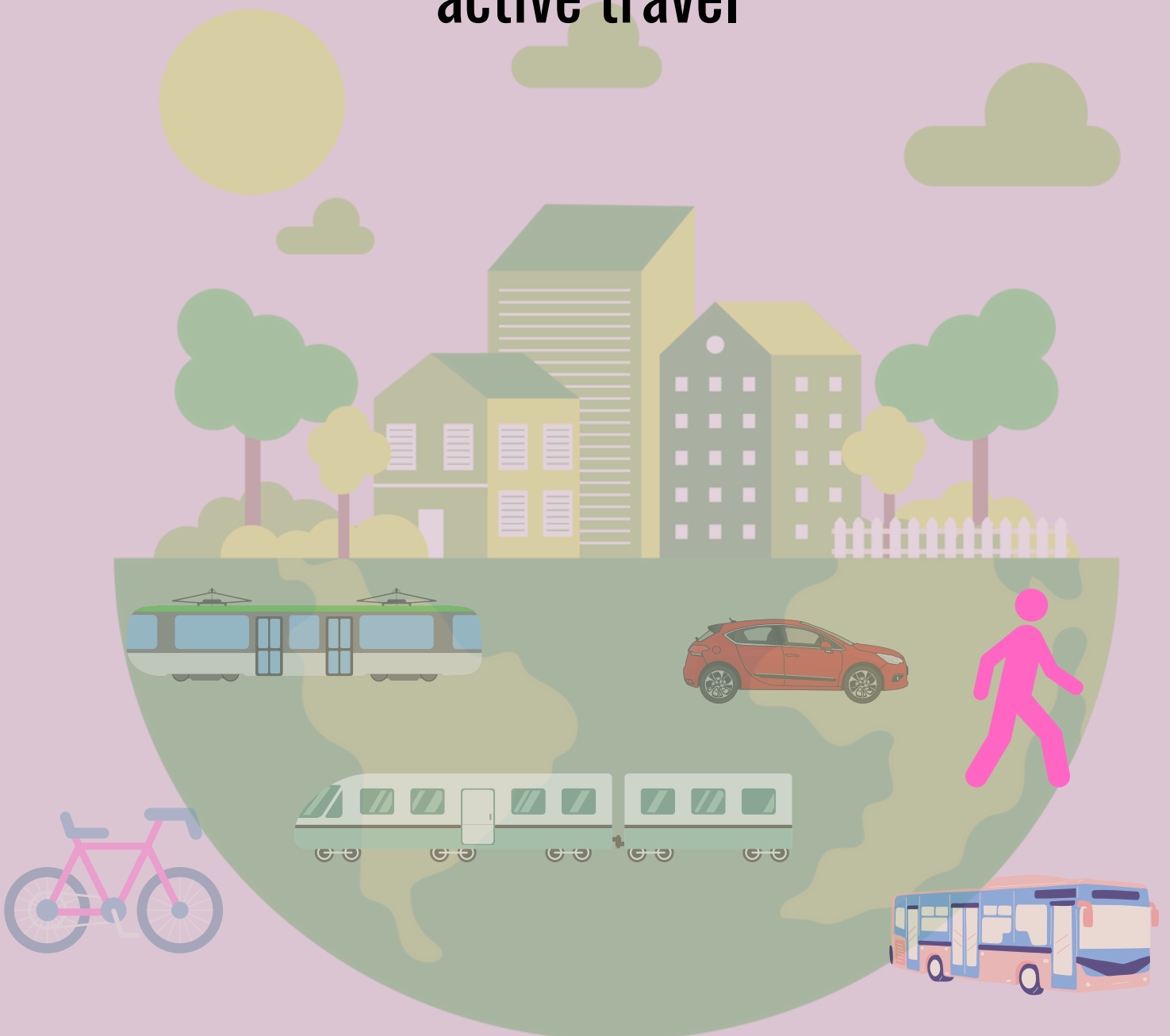


NATIONAL YCA X

A short Study into Young People's attitudes towards public transport & active travel



Executive Summary

In Autumn 2022, a partnership of Youth Combined Authority forums designed and implemented a survey to better understand participation in active transport and perceptions of safety on public transport

Young people have limited influence or choice over their travel options. Decisions are made by parents / carers, and influenced by where they live and the services they receive.

Key area identified for improvements.

- Infrastructure & Accessibility
- Safety
- Understanding and knowledge

When not using public transport, young people use a combination of other options, mostly walking or sharing a car.

The cost of public transport was considered a barrier to more frequent use, and 7 in 10 said cheaper public transport would encourage them to use it more.

Over half of young people said they often or always use active transport, but there were noticeable difference in the uptake of active transport by disabled residents and non-white residents.

Safety was one of the most pressing concerns about using active travel options, in addition to concerns about cost, or challenges around commuting distances.

Additional police presence, improved streetlights and addressing antisocial behaviour were considered important in making young people more safe in their local areas.

Many people commented on the need to improve infrastructure, further research is needed to understand what this term means, does it solely relate to 'road / traffic' infrastructure, or does it also relate to access to showers, safe and secure storage and training.

INTRODUCTION

The Metro Mayors from the 10* Devolved Areas meet and work together on policy areas that they all have responsibility for; Net Zero, Levelling Up (with a particular focus on skills and training, social mobility), Global Britain and Transport.

Young people in the 5 existing Youth Combined Assemblies (YCA), established by their local Metro Mayor, wanted to reflect this good practice and work together.

The National Youth Combined Authority consists of 5 YCA's from across England:

- Greater Manchester
- Liverpool City Region
- London
- South Yorkshire
- West Midlands
- West Yorkshire is also working with us, although is not officially a YCA.
- North of Tyne are also represented.
- Each YCA operates slightly differently, reflecting their local circumstances .



The main purpose is to broaden the depth of national youth collaborations and actions, sharing good practice and ideas.

in 2022 there were 10 Devolved areas across England, with applications for other combined authorities to join them. [Devolution Map](#)



OUR MISSION

The mission of the joint National Youth Combined Assemblies (NYCA) is to collaborate with young people from city regions across England to amplify youth voice in the policy and decision making process.

The NYCA aims to work on transregional issues to bring our devolved regions closer together through the integration of young people throughout.

It is essential for participation in the joint youth panel to be an enriching experience for young people, giving them an opportunity to meet others with whom they share common interests and develop skills and confidence.

The NYCA hopes to provide greater opportunities for young people to represent their generation into the mayoral pool of regional decision making and actions so that there can be a consistent youth voice across the country.



BACKGROUND

In 2022 members of the NYCA met with representatives of the National Metro Mayors Group (aka M10).

At the first meeting in March 2022, the we / the NYCA shared our work demonstrating how young people contribute to policy and improve local decision making, when given the opportunity.

At the July 2020 meeting with the M10 and their representatives, young people shared their research into the Metro Mayor's Net Zero policies, highlighting similarities and differences and recommendations for development.

This led to a conversation regarding public transport and the needs (post pandemic) to encourage young people to use both public transport and active travel as a positive means of achieving Net Zero locally and nationally.

The Metro Mayors challenged the NYCA to find out the barriers to young people using public transport following the pandemic and how to encourage more active travel,

METHODOLOGY

This report is based on the findings of a short survey distributed online shared nationally by members of the NYCA and some Combined Authorities.

The Survey was open to young people aged 25 and under. In total, there were over 1,500 responses to the survey across England, including non devolved areas and not all from young people aged 11 - 25

However, comments from those outside our age group should still be considered relevant as this reflects a wider lived experience and informs attitudes passed on to children and young people.

The report is laid out with the recommendations, national data, to give context, followed by each YCA results to highlight local responses.

The National Youth Combined Authority (made up of young people from Greater London, Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, South Yorkshire, West Midlands and West Yorkshire) are working alongside the metro mayors to understand young peoples' experiences of getting around.

We want to use your views and experiences to support the mayors in developing policies to improve the lives of young people, and contribute to battling climate change.

key findings and recommendations

1. Promotion of the benefits to using public transport - inc:

- cost comparison with total car (fuel, parking, insurance)
- health
- environment
- Use social media tools accessible to young people
- have maps of routes so people know where to go
- create one app that shares information on services (combining different companies (similar to - National Rail or Trainline)
 - have Wi-Fi hot spots at bus stops - so people can access information and their ticket
- (don't assume all young people have access to smart phones or the internet or contactless payment)
- Target parent's as they make the choice for young people via schools publications and national press
- Use incentives to encourage take up such as Zoom Beyond or Our Pass or Zip Cards
- Work with Central Government - Department for Transport to create a national youth card, that can be allow transregional travel (Young Scott Card or Older Passengers Free Pass)

2. Promotion of active travel - both the definition & what

- not everyone was aware of this term
- not everyone is aware of why they should
 - health
 - environment
 - cost
 - or how they can
- Use social media tools accessible to young people
- Target parent's as they make the choice for young people via schools publications and national press

3. Increase opportunities and access to active travel

- have more opportunities to Learn how to ride a bike including for adults
- increase access to bikes, such as bike libraries (Welcome To Yorkshire Model) , hire bikes - with safety equipment

4. Improve services -

- frequency and reliability -
 - expand the bus companies tracking service -
 - ideally have one app not one per company.
- Identify gaps in services.

5 improve sense of safety when using public transport

- improve / increased Street Lighting
- Myth bust the perception that public transport is unsafe, share national / local figures through a media campaign to educate the public. (Leeds Sexual Health Campaign)
- On demand bus services at night for people who are worried about their immediate safety (Rotherham Scheme)
- Fund the national safety line, that Young people can call and talk with whilst they get home if they feel vulnerable (Strut Safe)
- add to the app a link to call for help or report an incident.

(take learning from the GM Travel Safe Partnership <https://tfgm.com/travelsafe>)

• sense of safety when cycling or walking -

- create **designated** areas for each activity - eg bike lanes, and walking lanes - not shared pavement

6. Which policy has priority?

- **Compatibility** of all policies related to Transport and Active Travel.
- compatibility of policies between Areas

7 There needs to do more research to understand barriers more fully

- eg what does **insufficient infrastructure** mean?
- does this only apply to transport or should it be expanded to include **School infrastructure** - eg access to showers, school lockers, storage for bikes.

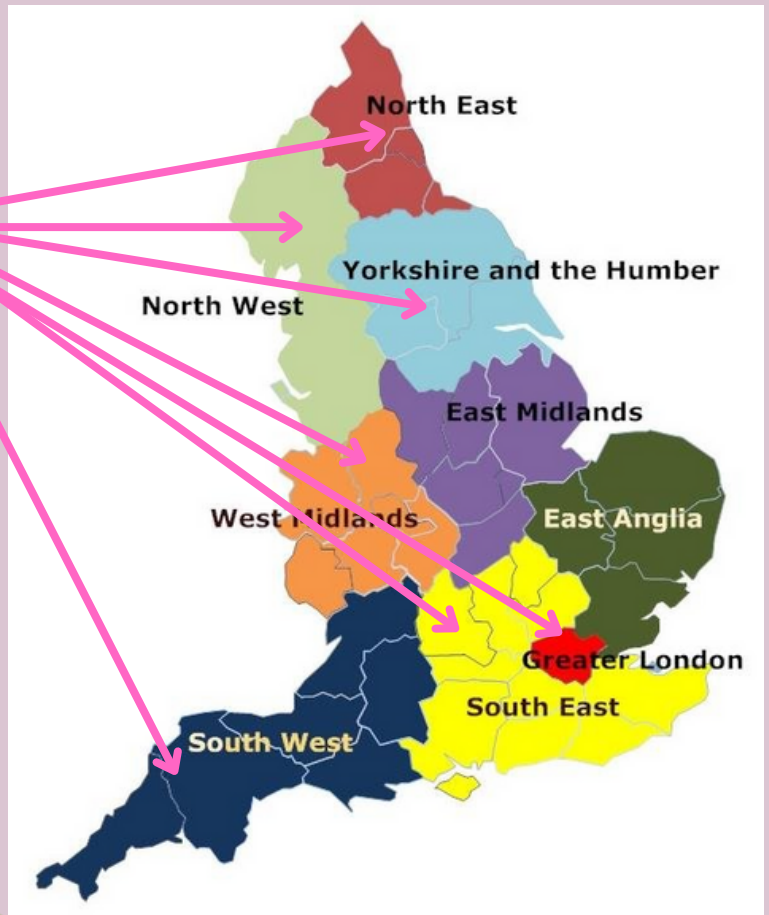
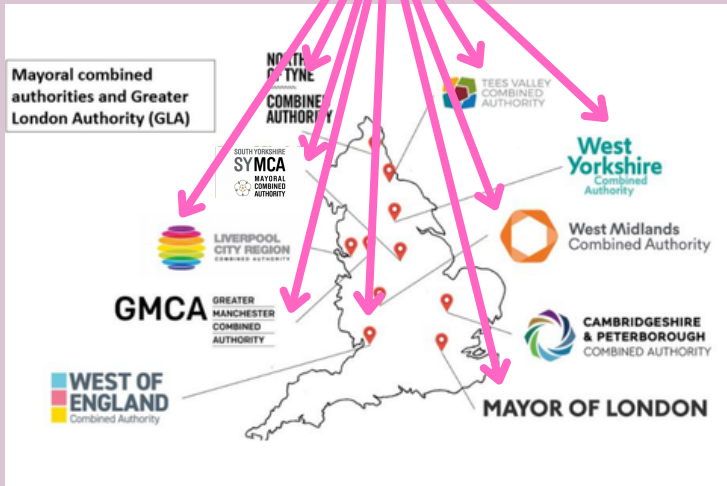
comment:

if you have a private car you are unlikely to use either public transport or active travel - need to 'prevent' people purchasing a car

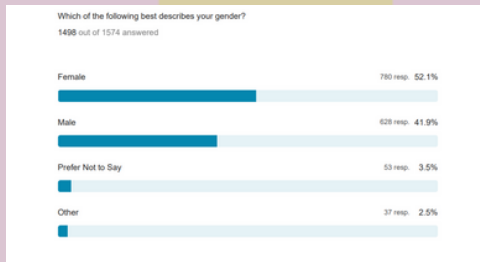
Create a Youth Transport Advisory Board -

National Results

responses from 7 regions
& 9 Devolved Areas



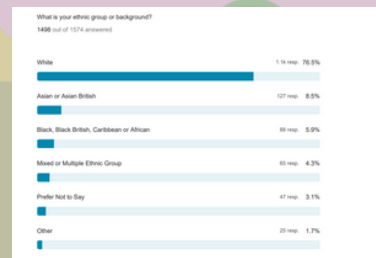
Who responded



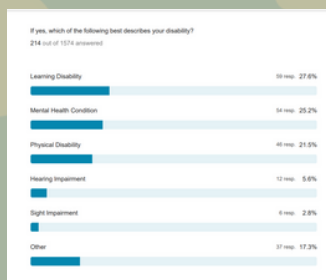
53% Female
42% Male



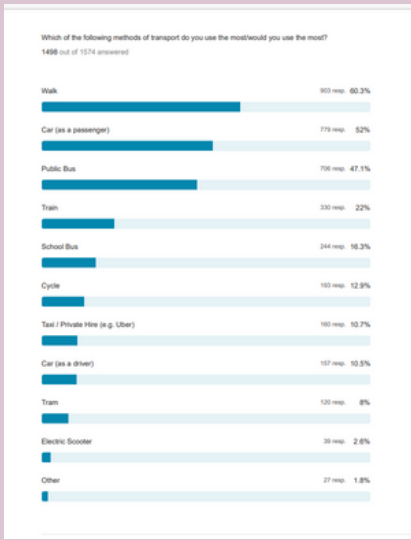
77% White
9% Asian
6% Black
4% Mixed
2% Other
3% Prefer not to say



14% identify as living with a disability
of which



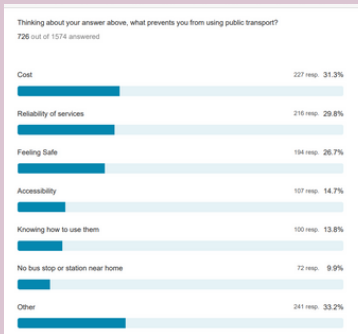
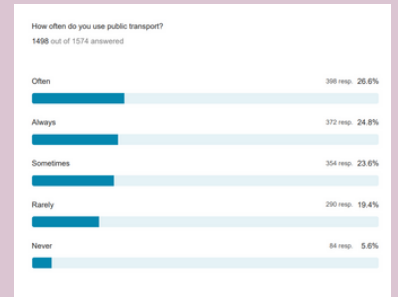
28% learning disability
25% mental health condition
22% physical disability
8% hearing or sight impairment
17% other



These series of questions ask people what methods of transport they use most, how often they use public transport, and what prevents them from using it more. Only people who did not answer always or often to using public transport were invited to answer the question about other uses of transport.

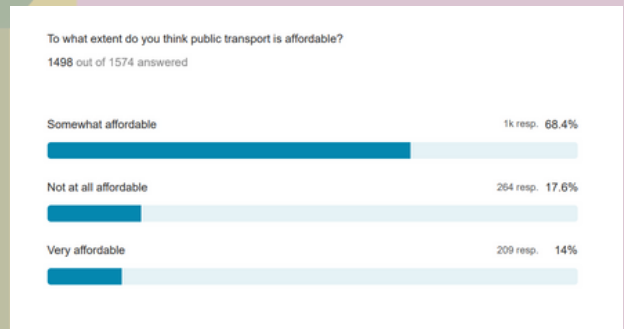
The majority of respondents use a mix of transport, with most using a combination of walking (63%), being a passenger in a car (52%) and public transport (bus 47%) (train 22%). It tended to be older respondents who used trains or trams. Only 16% used a school bus, and 12% cycle reflecting access to these forms of transport.

51% of respondents said they always or often use public transport, compared to 25% who rarely or never use public transport. A similar proportion of disabled respondents and non-disabled respondents say they use public transport often or always (approx. 50%), and this also applies to gender and banded age.



When asked what the barriers to using public transport are, 31% of people referenced cost while 30% cited reliability of service, 29% cited feeling safe, 14% knowing how to use them. Accessibility was cited by 15% - and this increased for those with disabilities.

When specifically asked about cost of public transport, 7 in 10 people think it is 'somewhat affordable' with more of the remaining respondents reporting it was not affordable. 69% of all respondents said they would use public transport more if it was cheaper.

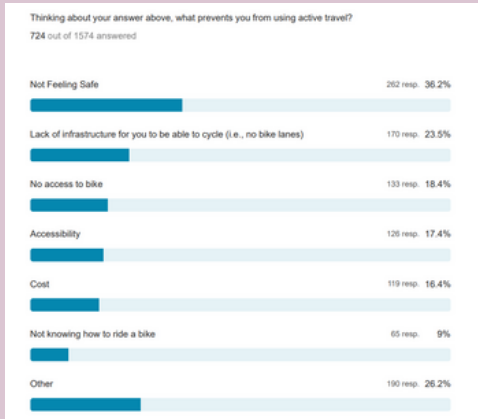
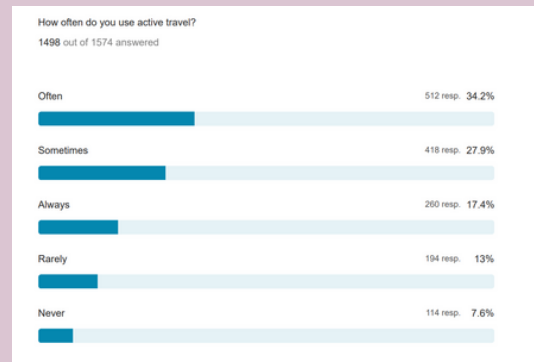


This changed for disabled respondents at 61% think transport is somewhat affordable, and 15% reporting they think its very affordable, reflecting concessions and geography.

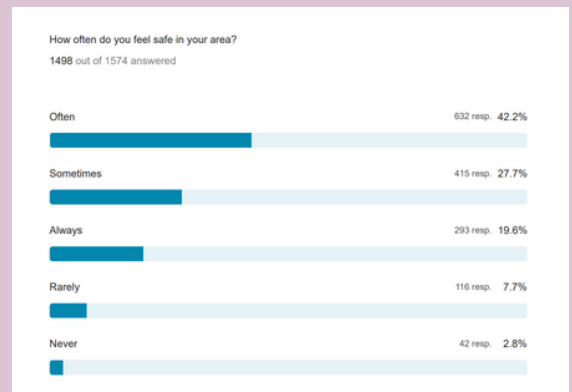


The final set of questions follow a similar pattern to those on transport, asking about frequency of active travel and barriers that prevent more frequent travel. The section then focuses specifically on safety and solutions to make young people feel safer when participating in active travel.

Of all respondents, 51% reported to always or often using active transport. This was similar regardless of disability or gender. Although 26% of disabled respondents rarely or never use active transport



The largest reason why people do not use active transport was a fear for safety 36%, but reasons also given by respondents include lack of infrastructure 24%, it takes too long, no access to a bike or not knowing how to ride one.



When asked about their feelings of safety in their area, 61% of young people said they feel safe always or often

Finally, when asked what would make them feel safer, young people highlighted a range of solutions, expressed in their own words.

When grouping answers by themes, common suggestions include

- more visible police presence,
- better streetlighting
- personal measures to improve safety - being with another person for example.
- improved safety around public transport
- better crime prevention and a reduction in antisocial behaviour.

