

# Delivering Better Bus Services

## – Scotland summary

Bus priority measures (BPMs) are methods used to improve journey times and connectivity for bus passengers. BPMs include methods such as changes to road layout, Park & Rides, bus only roads and smart traffic lights.

### Support for BPMs:

**59%** 

- In Scotland, 59% of people support the idea of bus priority schemes.

**45%** 

- 45% support the idea of them in their local area. These figures are higher than those of the UK overall.

**45%** 

- We also found that people in Scotland found the experience of travelling by bus in their local area generally good (45% compared to just 18% who said it was bad).

**Bus travel is vital for our economy, communities, and wellbeing and provides benefits for:**

#### THE ENVIRONMENT:



- Everyone switching just one car journey a month to bus could result in one billion fewer car journeys, saving 2 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from being emitted a year.<sup>1</sup>
- A double decker bus has the potential to take 75 cars off the road.<sup>2</sup>

#### THE ECONOMY:



- Annually, bus commuters contribute £64 billion to the UK economy.<sup>3</sup>
- Research shows that every £1 of investment in BPMs can return up to £5 to the economy.<sup>4</sup>
- 26% of people in Scotland use the bus or coach to get to work.



#### SOCIETY:

- In Scotland 21% of people access essential services by Bus or Coach, the highest percentage in comparison to Wales and the rest of the UK.
- Research by the University of Leeds showed that improving local bus connectivity by 10% was associated with a 3.6% reduction in social deprivation.<sup>5</sup>
- Bus travel benefits public health. Every bus journey will start and end with a walk or cycle, with bus passengers exercising an average of 20 minutes a day as part of their journey.<sup>6</sup>

## Concerns about BPMs:

Although most people support BPMs, there is still some opposition and therefore it's important to make sure any concerns are appropriately addressed. Our research showed that some of the key objections surrounding the implementation of BPMs are:

**42%** 

### • Fears of congestion

42% of Scottish people opposed to BPMs gave this as their reason, with 46% stating that they felt it was unfair on other road vehicles to make things easier for buses.

**26%** 

### • Disruption during the installation period

26% of those opposed to BPMs listed this as their reason.

**26%** 

### • Perceptions of low bus usage levels

26% of Scottish people don't think people would use buses even with BPMs in place.

**24%** 

### • Not feeling heard by local authorities

24% of Scottish people would prefer if the money was spent on other priorities instead.

## Messaging:

Different messages should be communicated to local communities to both retain and strengthen support for BPMs, as well as addressing the concerns of those who oppose. For example:

- Communicate the environmental benefits of bus travel through quantifying the carbon savings in everyday terms.
- Provide residents with clear plans on the timings and mitigations being put in place during the period of installation to limit concerns around disruption caused by the installation of BPMs
- Highlight other positive outcomes of BPMs such as improved journey times and reliability, and the potential to improve the bus network, or reduce fares.

**There are different channels and types of communication to help provide compelling arguments in favour of BPMs, for example:**

### • Word of Mouth

People want to hear from others like them rather than from MPs, MSPs, or councillors, therefore testimonials and case studies from members of the public and business owners are helpful.

### • Evidence

Using data to illustrate the positive impact of BPMs on congestion, parking, air quality, local businesses and bus journey times is useful in reassuring residents of what BPMs in their area will look like.

For more information on messaging and ways to help maximise support for BPMs, please refer to the full CPT document ***Delivering Better Bus Services – A Toolkit for Engaging with Local Communities.***

### Contact us:

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