Delivering Better Bus Services
– Wales summary

cpt Driving Wales forward

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:

61%

- In Wales, 61% of people support the idea of BPMs (this is higher than the proportion in Scotland and the UK as a whole).

46%

- 46% of people in Wales support the idea of them in their local area too, which is more than Scotland and the UK overall.

41%

- We also found that 41% of our Welsh respondents described the experience of using buses in their local area as generally good.

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

THE ENVIRONMENT:

- Across the UK, everyone switching just one car journey a month to bus could result in one billion fewer car journeys, saving 2 million tonnes of CO_2 from being emitted a year.[1]
- A double decker bus has the potential to take 75 cars off the road.[2]

THE ECONOMY:

- Annually bus commuters contribute £64 billion to the UK economy.[3]
- Research shows that every £1 of investment in BPMs can return up to £5 to the economy.[4]

SOCIETY:

- Research by the University of Leeds showed that improving local bus connectivity by 10% was associated with a 3.6% reduction in social deprivation.[5]
- 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.[6]

1. Greener Journeys (2013) greenerjourneys.com/blog/help-us-takeone-billion-car-journeys-off-the-road/ 2. Greener Journeys (July 2017) greenerjourneys.com/news/leave-cars-home-catch-bus-week/
3. Mackie, P. Laird, J. and Johnson, D. (2012) Buses and the Economy, Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds 4. KPMG (June 2017) The 'true value' of local bus services: A report to Greener Journeys 2017
5. Greener Journeys (2016) The Value of the Bus to Society 6. https://newsroom.go-ahead.com/news/go-ahead-urges-passengers-to-getactive-for-the-first-and-last-mile-of-their-journeys

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:

58%

• **Fears of congestion**

58% of those who oppose BPMs in Wales gave their reasoning as the congestion caused for other vehicles.

22%

• **Disruption during the installation period**

22% of those opposed to BPMs listed this as their reason.

39%

• **Perceptions of low bus usage levels**

39% of our Welsh respondents believed that nobody would use buses even with the schemes.

27%

• **Not feeling heard by local authorities**

27% of people in Wales 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 MSs, MPs and 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.*

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