



# YOUNG PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATIVES, CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

FINAL REPORT

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACCESS TO TRANSPORT

April 2012

## **Scrutiny Investigation into Young People’s Access to Transport, April 2012**

### **Background**

As part of the Children’s Service Scrutiny Forum we were given the opportunity to pick a topic that we were interested in and lead on our own investigation. After some discussion we picked the topic of young people’s access to transport. This was because we felt it was very relevant to a large majority of young people across the town. We decided to focus our investigation on what transport is available across the town that young people can access at night and to examine the transport times, areas, and costs covering all positive and negative aspects.

### **Process**

We looked at bus timetables and bus routes and found that bus services stopped at 6.30pm.

We then developed a questionnaire using survey monkey which was circulated across the town through schools and youth organisations. The questionnaire helped us gather information on;

- Which transport services young people use and how often?
- Where young people go on transport services?
- Which youth organisations young people attend and if they use transport services to get to them?
- Popular areas in the town for young people?
- If the cuts to services have stopped young people from visiting friends, family, etc?
- When young people used transport services?
- If the cuts had affected their attendance? (school, college, work, etc).
- If they would use other forms of transport if they were available (minibuses, etc)?
- What they thought about current bus fares?
- If young people feel safe when using transport services?
- Suggestions on changes to transport services to make them safer?
- Safety issues?
- Suggestions on how to overcome cuts to services?
- Any other comments?
- Age
- Sex
- Which areas they live in?

The questionnaire was completed by 200 young people over a two month period.

## **Findings**

We attended the Transport Champions Group and found that they are working with local communities to establish community travel clubs across the town. They had also ran a survey with residents but had received a limited response. The Champions group asked if they could look at the information gathered from our survey to assist them in this project. If the community travel clubs are established they will be fully funded by the users.

We were informed in the meeting that transport services had recently commenced for Hartlepool College of Further Education to provide twilight services to those accessing evening courses, and council services representatives suggested that there may be an opportunity for these services to be extended to provide service to young people.

At the 11 million Take Over event for young people in November 2011, discussion arose amongst young people about transport cuts and the safety issues that may affect young people as a result. The point was made that many young people are walking long distances across the town late in the evening as not all young people have access to other means of transport. Results from the young people's survey also appear to confirm that young people are concerned about safety issues since public bus services have been cut, and this has restricted their access to leisure opportunities; *“Don't feel safe getting in taxis (and they cost a lot) and don't feel safe walking alone when trying to go places”*.

One young person seemed to sum up in one response a lot of concerns young people share;

*“Because there is no busses on a night I have to be in at an earlier time because most of the time I have to walk from where ever I am, Also I manage to spend most of my pocket money on a taxi home just so I know I'm going to get home safe. when the busses were on I could get the bus into the town where it was busy and I would only have to walk up 2 roads before I was home which is not that bad than walking home from the other*

*side of town. Taxis cost a bomb these days and they are making more money and making new taxi firms because they have the money. I think stagecoach should bring the busses back even if its just 1 bus an hour on a night. A number of my friends have been involved in different things since the busses have stopped e.g.: getting jumped by a bunch of boys walking home. I personally think the busses should come back in order to keep us safe and this also effects older people who can't get out and about to their local pub/club because they have no family or friends and not enough money for taxis”*

It is clear that the young people access transport to visit friends and family but the cuts have affected young peoples attendance at school, college, training and work; Of the 137 responses (to the specific question), 19 said their attendance at school had been affected, 40 said their attendance at college had been affected, 18 said their attendance at training had been affected, 24 said there attendance at work had been affected, 47 said their attendance at sports and recreation facilities had been affected and 40 young people said their attendance at youth organisations and youth clubs had been affected;

*“I have to take the last weekday evening bus, ten past six from Owton Manor to Mill House to get to work, I normally get there for around half-past but I don't start work until half-past seven so I'm always extremely early, there isn't any other bus. Also after my shift is finished I have to go to the town centre to get the Stagecoach 36 on an evening to take me to Catcote Road I live near Dyke House School but I go to Seaton youth centre because that's where all my friends go so this mean that at 9 o'clock at night I have to walk home because there is no more buses after 6, which is still a twenty minute walk from my house at night in an area known for being rough”.*

We had very surprising results to the question of how the restrictions on attending places had affected young people; Of the 137 responses (to that specific question); 54 said the changes were making them late for school/college, 46 were getting into trouble because of the changes, 25 of them said the changes were affecting their results, 92 said the changes were costing them more money, 17 were asked to leave their training scheme, 5 of them have been asked to leave their job, 104 of them said that the changes were restricting them meeting their friends, and 66 of

them said that the changes were restricting them from taking part or joining in recreational activities.

*“The recent changes that have been made to the bus time table mean that I have basically have a curfew and this is affecting my social life and also my college work because when I need to stay behind I cannot get the bus back home and also when there is the holidays like the Christmas holiday I have to make sure that on week days I am on the bus home before seven when normally I would be able to stay at a friends house or with my friends until later on”.*

We have also discovered that the young people’s sexual health clinic drop in service at the One Life Centre is held between 6.30pm and 8pm. This means that young people would not be able to access the clinic if they lived at the other side of town and did not have their own means of transport.

Taxis are mentioned numerous times in the comments that young people gave within the survey. Young people recognised them as one of the only ways to access services in the evening but many stated that they were too expensive and worryingly a few said that they felt unsafe using them. 53.7% of the young people who took part in the survey said that they would be interested in utilising other forms of transport if it was low cost. Some of the suggestions young people suggested as a solution included;

- *Cheaper taxis*
- *Keep buses on until 10pm*
- *Buses once an hour*
- *Make grants available for community places to have their own minibuses*
- *Local council taxis transport coming together and using each others vehicles*
- *Make buses slightly more expensive during the evenings*
- *Youth Buses*
- *Have some reasonably priced transport that stops at popular destinations for young people*

The Transport Champions Group working alongside groups of young people who are keen to resolve this could be a way of moving this forward.

*(Full findings of the survey can be found in Appendix 1)*

## **Conclusion**

Young people have clearly been affected by the public bus services cuts and solutions must be found to overcome the issues we have discovered. Bus companies should be thinking about reinstating night time services and be made aware of the issues that young people are facing and the risk that they may be taking as a result; or at least investigate other options for young people across Hartlepool.

We feel that one of the most important points to highlight is that young people don't feel safe in taxis or walking alone when going places / going home.

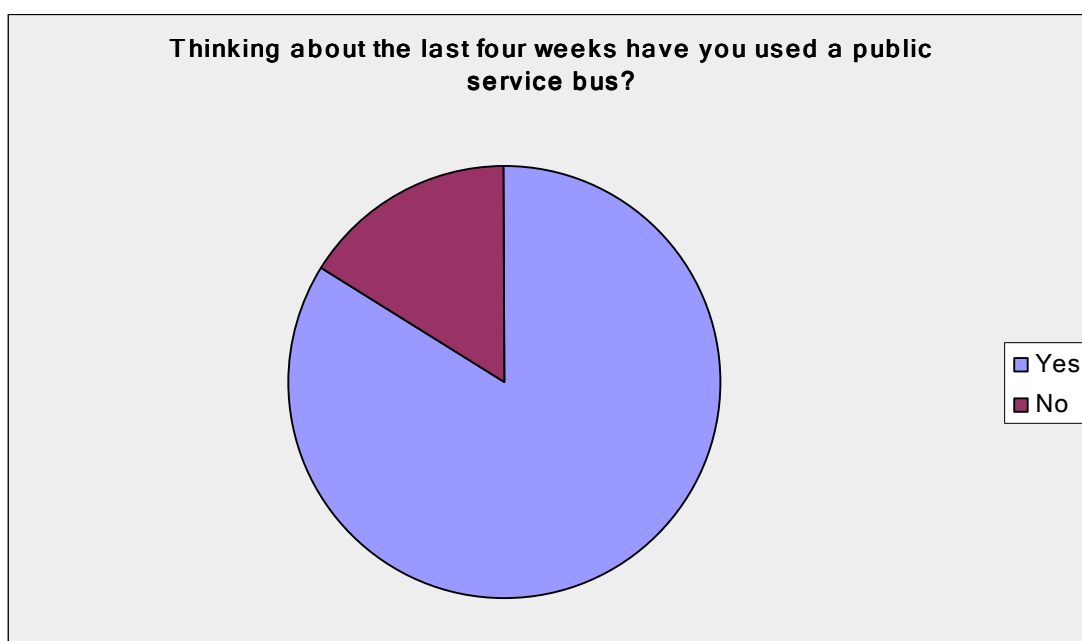
## **Recommendations**

We recommend to Cabinet that:-

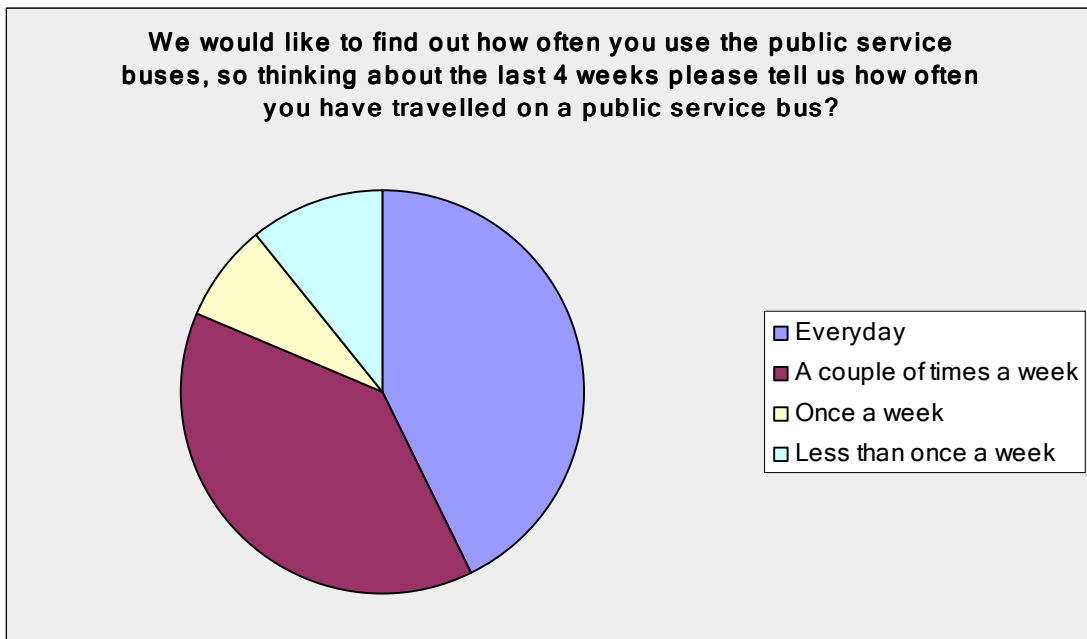
- (1) Following consideration of the recommendations at Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, Cabinet is asked to express a clear view in relation to the continuation of work relating to the reinstatement / redevelopment of bus services and/or alternative travel arrangements, where the implementation of recommendations require additional resources;
- (2) Subject to recommendation 1, the Council explores options to improve young people's access to transport through the transport group, local transport companies and organisations across the town who work with young people and that an update report be brought back to the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum detailing all the work that has been carried out in all areas; and
- (3) This report is presented (by the young people's representatives) to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum when the Forum further explores 'low cost travel to young people through concessionary fare schemes'

## Appendix 1

### Results and Findings of Transport Survey

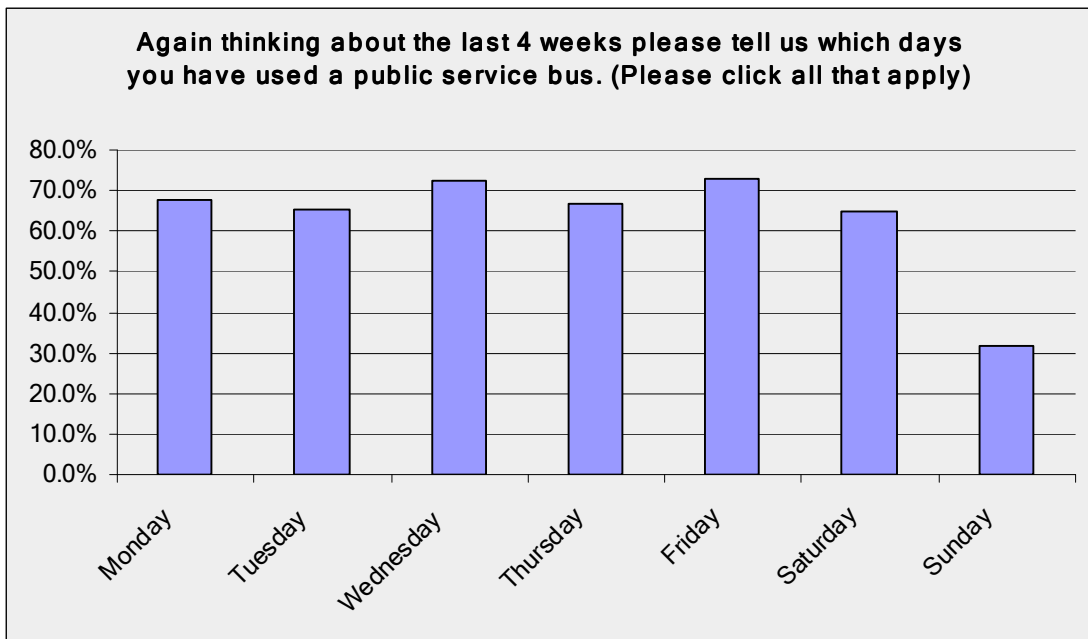


84% (168) of the young people questioned had used a public service bus in the last four weeks and 16% (32) had not used a public service bus in the last four weeks.

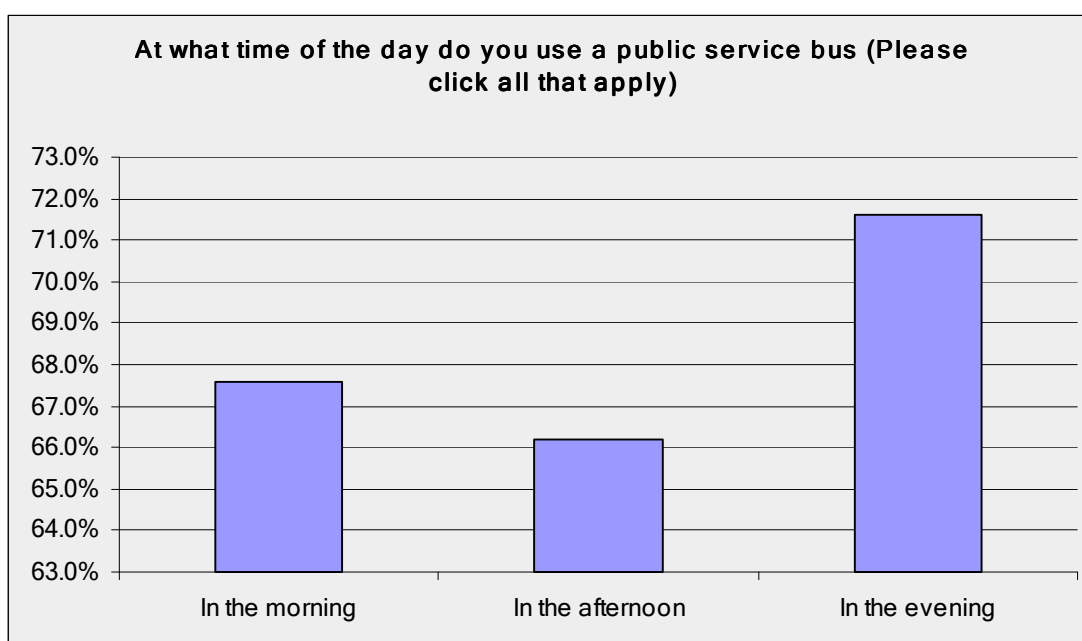


42.9% (67) of young people questioned used a public service bus everyday, 38.5% (60) used a public service bus a couple of times a week, 7.7% (12) used a public service bus once a week and 10.9% (17) used a public service bus less than once a week.

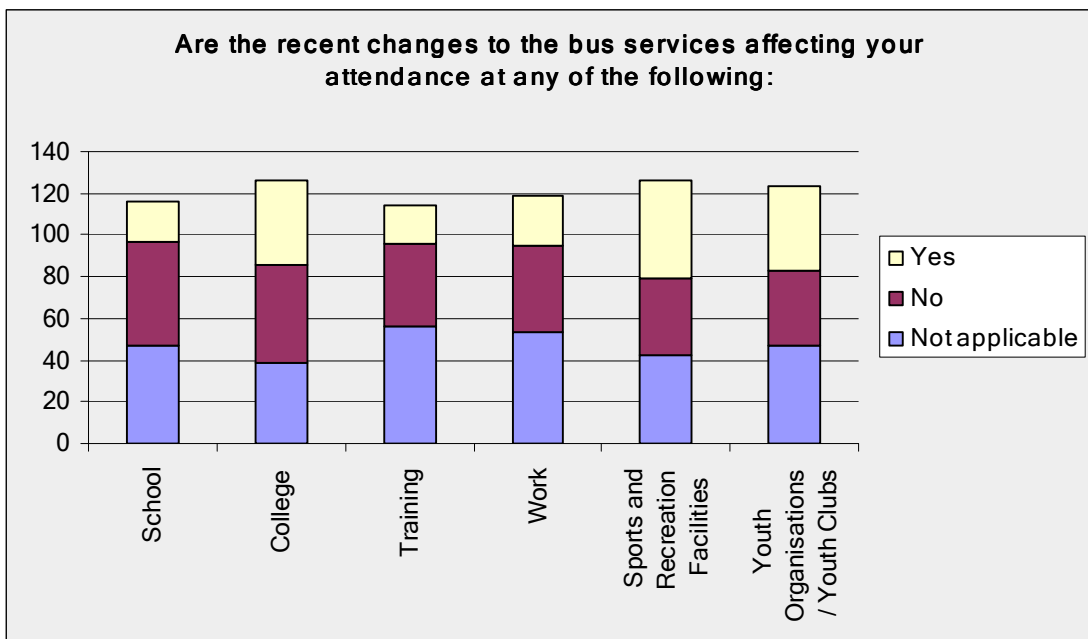




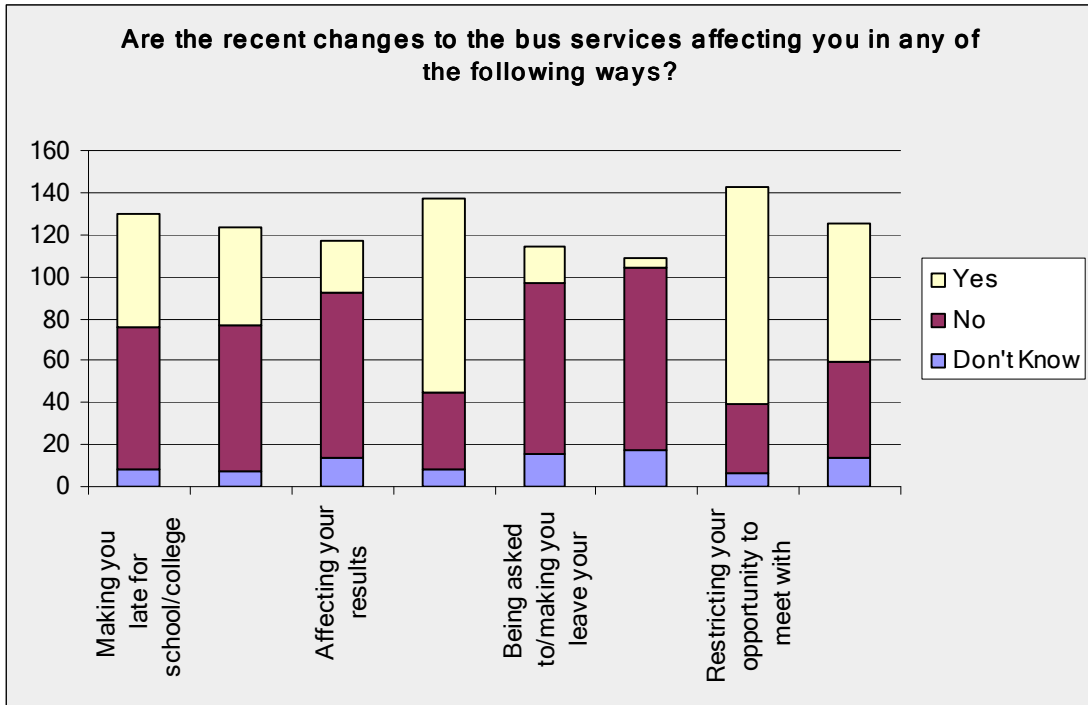
67.6% (100) used a public service bus on a Monday, 65.5% (97) on a Tuesday, 72.3% (107) on a Wednesday, 66.9% (99) on a Thursday, 73% (108) on a Friday, 64.9% (96) on a Saturday and 31.8% (47) on a Sunday.



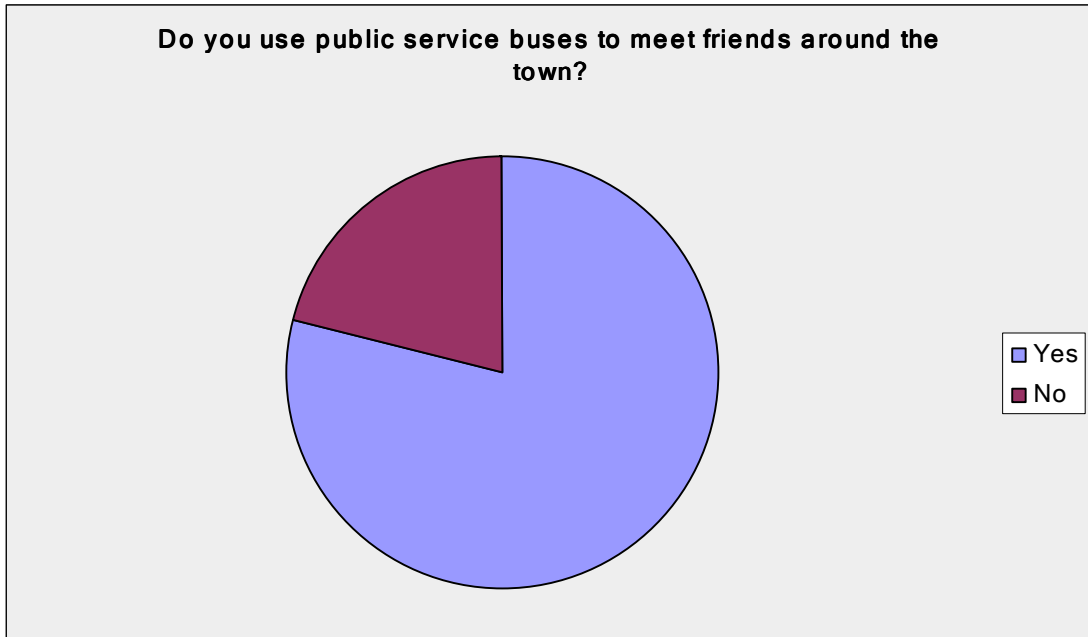
67.6% (100) used a public service bus in the morning, 66.2% (98) in the afternoon, 71.6% (106) in the evening.



The young people questioned said that many of the recent bus service changes had affected their attendance. Of the 137 responses 19 said their attendance at school had been affected, 40 said their attendance at college had been affected, 18 said their attendance at training had been affected, 24 said their attendance at work had been affected, 47 said their attendance at sports and recreation facilities had been affected and 40 young people said their attendance at youth organisations and youth clubs had been affected.

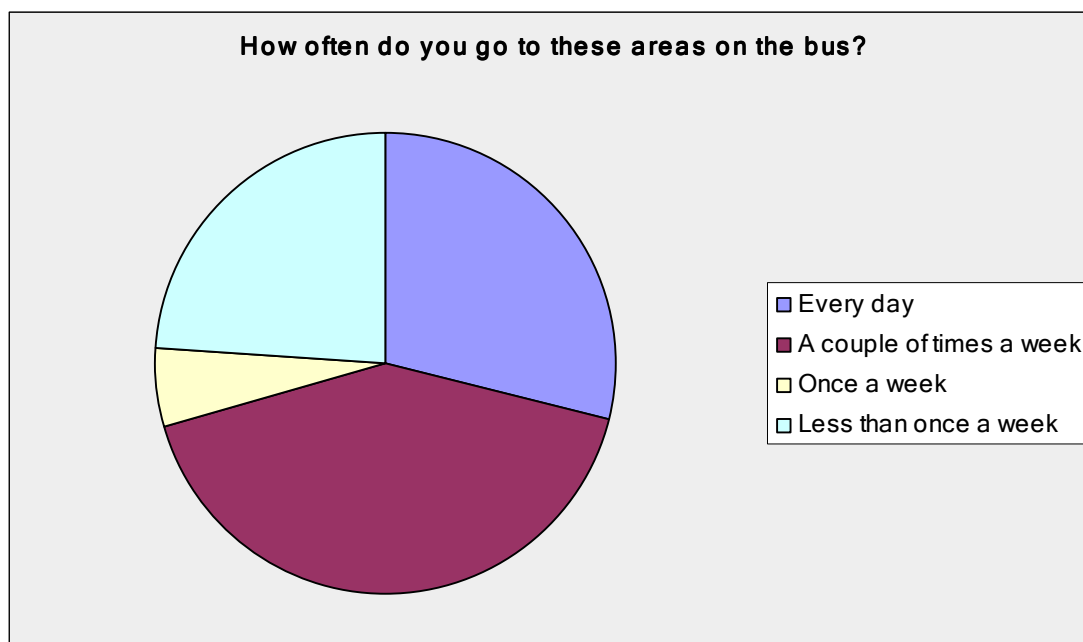


The young people questioned said that many of the changes to bus services had affected them. Of the 137 responses to the above questions 54 said the changes were making them late for school/college, 46 were getting into trouble because of the changes, 25 of them said the changes were affecting their results, 92 said the changes were costing them more money, 17 were asked to leave their training scheme, 5 of them have been asked to leave their job, 104 of them said that the changes were restricting them meeting their friends, and 66 of them said that the changes were restricting them from taking part or joining in recreational activities



79% (124) used public service buses to meet friends around the town, while 21% (33) did not use public services to meet friends.

The most popular area young people met up with friends using public service buses was the town centre followed by the Headland, Seaton, Rossmere, Dyke House, Owton Manor, West View, Throston, Greatham, The Marina, Clavering, Rift House and the Fens.



28.8% (42) visited these areas on the bus everyday, 41.8% (61) visited these areas on the bus a couple of times a week, 5.5% (8) visited these areas once a week, 24% (35) visited these areas less than once a week.

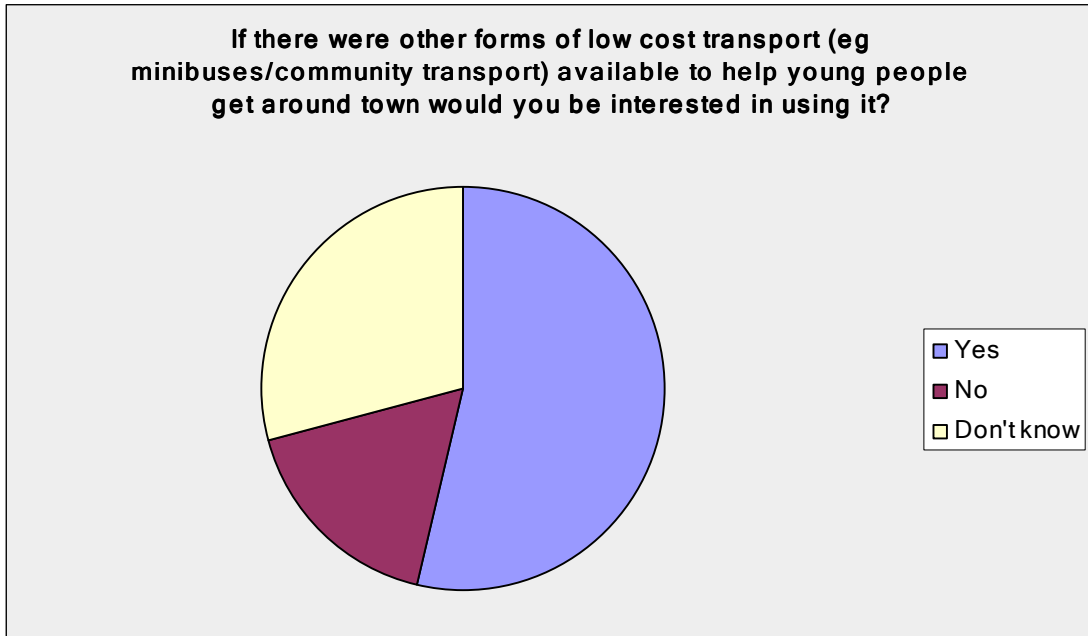
The young people told us that they visit many youth organisations across the town these included;

- Rossmere Youth Centre
- Seaton Youth Centre
- Greatham Youth Centre
- Belle Vue Youth Centre
- Throston Youth Centre
- Burbank Youth Centre
- Brinkburn Youth Centre
- Red Dreams
- Wharton Trust
- Sea Cadets
- Youth Bus
- Kick Boxing Clubs
- Swimming
- Rossmere Skate park
- One Stop Shop
- Barnardos
- Café 177
- Dance Academies
- Air Cadets

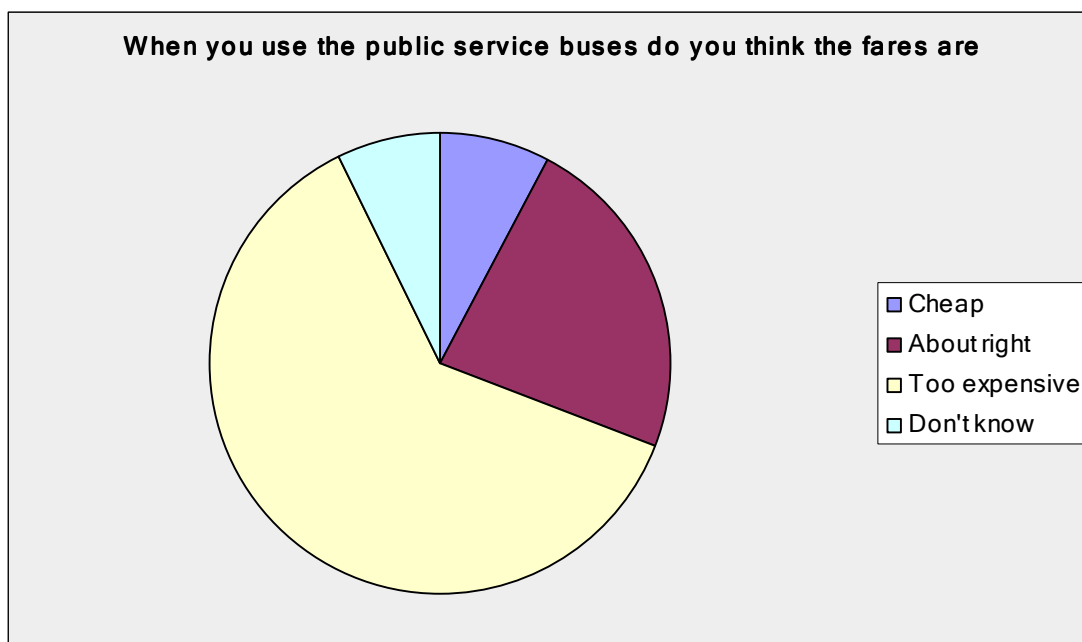


14% (20) of the young people got the bus to the youth centres/organisations regularly, 14.7% (21) of the young people got the bus occasionally, 32.2% (46) didn't get the bus to the youth centres/organisations and 42% (60) didn't go to any of the youth centres/organisations.

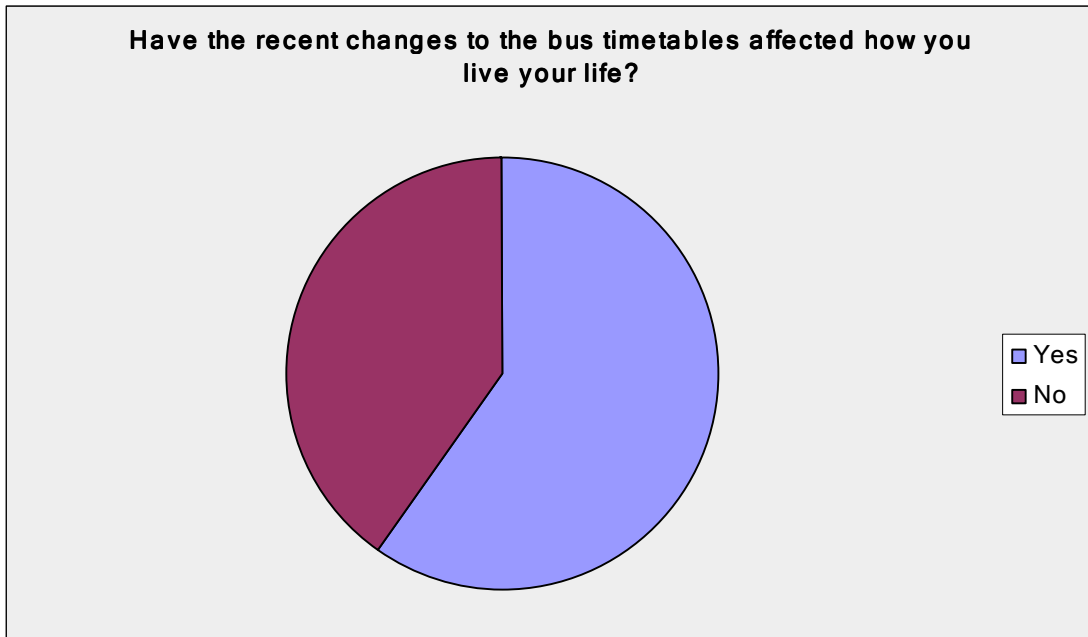




53.7% (79) said that they would be interested in using other forms of low cost transport (e.g. minibuses/community transport) to get around town, 17% (25) said they wouldn't be interested in using other forms of low cost transport and 29.3% (43) said they didn't know if they would use other forms of low cost transport.



7.8% (12) young people thought that public service buses fares were cheap, 22.9% (35) thought that the fares were about right, 62.1% (95) thought that the public services buses were too expensive and 7.2% (11) didn't know.



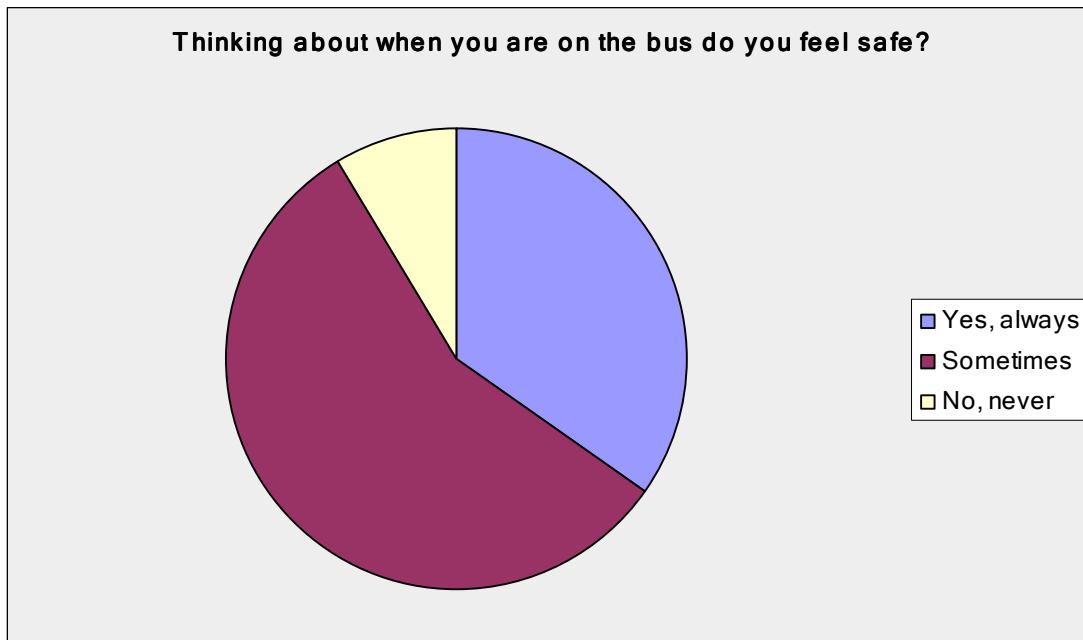
59.6% (87) of the young people felt that the recent changes to the bus timetables had affected how they live there life, while 40.4% (59) felt there life had not been affected by the recent changes to the bus timetables.

These affects include;

- I have to leave the house a lot earlier than before and be back home earlier
- I used to use the buses on a night but because of the cuts to late buses I have to walk everywhere.
- Cant travel after 7pm
- Difficult to see people after school.
- Can't socialise properly.  
Only use services once a week because wouldn't be able to get home later.
- Home late
- Not being able to go places  
Cost more
- I don't use buses anymore because of the changes and cost.
- When I need to go to kick boxing my mam has to take me and she cant always do this

- Because there is no buses on a night I have to be in at an earlier time because most of the time I have to walk from where ever I am, Also I manage to spend most of my pocket money on a taxi home just so I know I'm going to get home safe. when the buses were on I could get the bus into the town where it was busy and I would only have to walk up 2 roads before I was home which is not that bad than walking home from the other side of town. Taxis cost a bomb these days and they are making more money and making new taxi firms because they have the money. I think stagecoach should bring the buses back even if its just 1 bus an hour on a night. A number of my friends have been involved in different things since the busses have stopped e.g.: getting jumped by a bunch of boys walking home. I personally think the buses should come back in order to keep us safe and this also effects older people who can't get out and about to their local pub/club because they have no family or friends and not enough money for taxis
- Getting home from afterschool clubs is hard when parents are at work
- Late home
- I now either have to make sure there's spare money for taxis home, walk or not go out in the first place
- Yes because I have to walk to headland and back
- Don't get to see my friends and family across town as much. I have to walk home and its not nice weather this time of year. Can't do as many activities. Harder to get transport to were I want to go. Don't feel safe getting in taxis (and they cost a lot) and don't feel safe walking alone when trying to go places.
- I'm getting told off by my parents for asking for a lift on Sundays so I can go and see my friends, as the Stagecoach 1 route that I live near to doesn't run on Saturdays. Also I have to rush because busses are stopping way too early; I can't do anything on an evening. I have to walk to get anywhere after 6 which adds another 1-2 hours to going to see my mates
- Not being able to go out as much to meet with friends, not being able to do course work (go to locations for photography) and restricting times so I may have to leave somewhere early
- I don't get out much in fear of not being able to get home on time ... Or having to walk home late at night

- As I have a part time job when I work till late at work the last 36 bus from my job is 23:19 and sometimes it doesn't show up so I have to get a taxi which means spending unnecessary money! I'm only a student and have very little money to start off with
- Cannot get the bus home from swimming training due to the buses not running that late
- When going out with friends on a weekend I usually have to walk home even on dark nights, or get a taxi which costs quite a lot as I have to get it from Seaton to Throston.
- I have to take the last weekday evening bus, ten past six from Owton Manor to Mill House to get to work, I normally get there for around half-past but I don't start work until half-past seven so I'm always extremely early, there isn't any other bus. Also after my shift is finished I have to go to the town centre to get the Stagecoach 36 on an evening to take me to Catcote Road I live near dyke house school but I go to Seaton youth centre because that's where all my friends go so this means that at 9 o'clock at night I have to walk home because there is no more buses after 6., which is still a twenty minute walk from my house at night in an area known for being rough.
- The recent changes that have been made to the bus time table mean that I have basically have a curfew and this is affecting my social life and also my collage work because when I need to stay behind I cannot get the bus back home and also when there is the holidays like the Christmas holiday I have to make sure that on week days I am on the bus home before seven when normally I would be able to stay at a friends house or with my friends until later on.
- Am sometimes unable to go out or do sport hobbies at clubs due to there being no means of later time transport from certain parts of town to the other. Also I can't go see my gran as often as I used to due to the new timetable for buses into Seaton Carew and the bus being the only way I can transport around since I'm too young to drive and taxis are too expensive, which is not what I had ever wanted.
- Don't attend air cadets hardly , as petrol prices are high so can't get lifts of parents and now the buses have stopped early which I need one for 9 30
- Walking home from night games from watching Pools play, I feel unsafe.



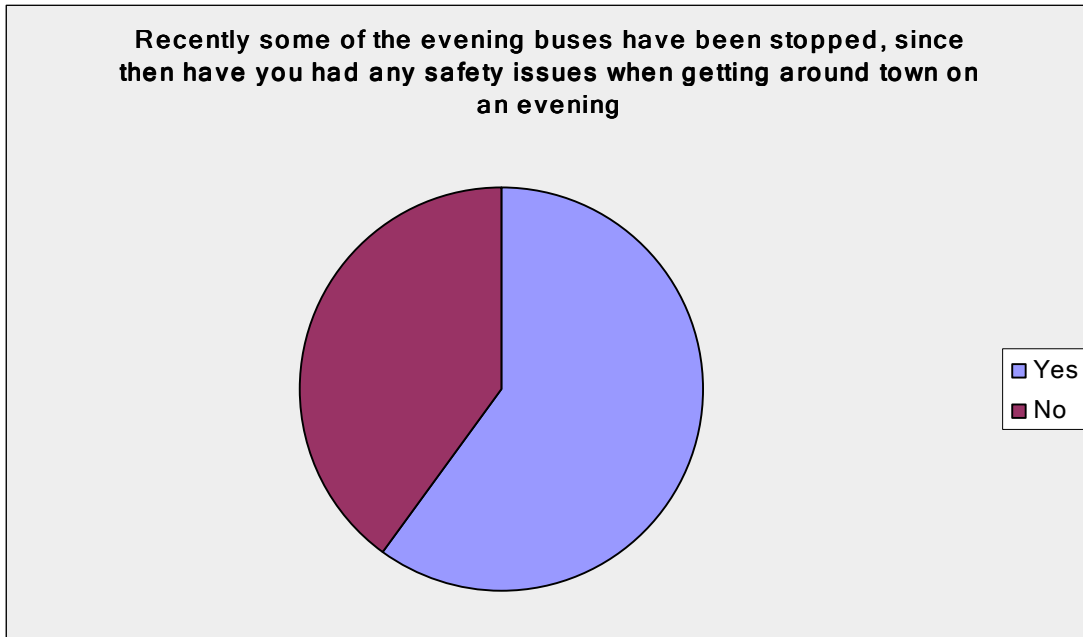
34.6% (53) young people said that they felt safe when they travelled on the bus, 56.9% (87) young people said that they sometimes felt safe while 8.5% (13) said they never felt safe while travelling on buses.

The young people questioned told us how they felt unsafe this included;

- Some bus drivers like to go really fast
- People with hoods up and older teenagers.
- No Seatbelts
- People shouting and swearing on buses
- When intoxicated people enter the bus and behave inappropriate

The young people questioned were asked what changes do you feel would make you feel safer when using public service buses? Below are some of the responses;

- More Cameras
- Drive slower
- Seatbelts
- Seatbelts, more strict on anti social behaviour
- Don't let drunk people on the bus
- Control people more
- No loud music can be played out loud
- Having a bus security guard and every bus, like a ticket inspector
- Having the driver keep to the limit on remote country roads.
- Lights
- Bus driver have more involvement to calm shouting people



60% (84) young people said that they have had safety issues around the town on an evening since some of the evening buses had been stopped, while 40% (56) have not had any safety issues.

These safety issues included;

- Walking home in the dark
- Being attacked
- Being scared
- Getting home late
- Walking long distances
- Waiting for taxis in the dark
- Riding my bike home in the dark
- Being stranded in locations
- Walking through badly lit areas
- When walking home I often get approached by people asking for money and wanting to lend my phone.
- I have been threatened by people when walking home
- Walking home with my newborn son I have been threatened

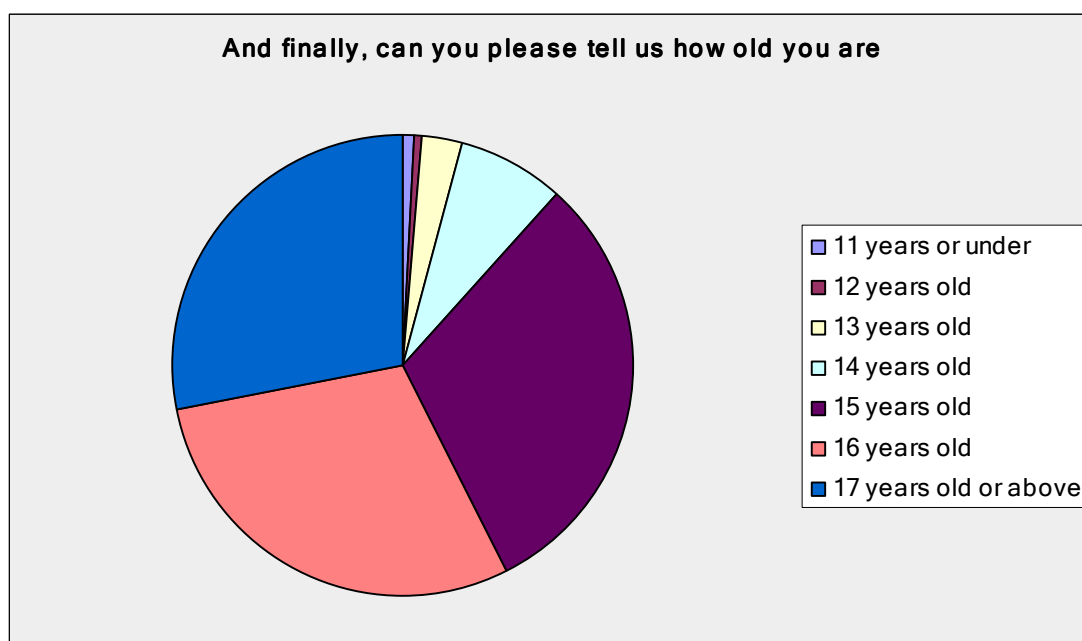
The young people suggested that ways to overcome these issues could include;

- More buses
- Use minibuses
- Bikes
- Cheaper transport that runs later
- Cheaper taxis
- Keep buses on until 10pm
- Buses once an hour
- Make grants available for community places to have their own minibuses
- Local council taxis transport coming together and using each others vehicles
- Trams
- Get your mam and dad to drive you
- Bring back normal bus timetables
- Put the buses back on with lower fares
- Run buses every 15 minutes instead of every 10 minutes
- Make buses slightly more expensive during the evenings
- Youth Buses
- Have some reasonably priced transport that stops at popular destinations for young people

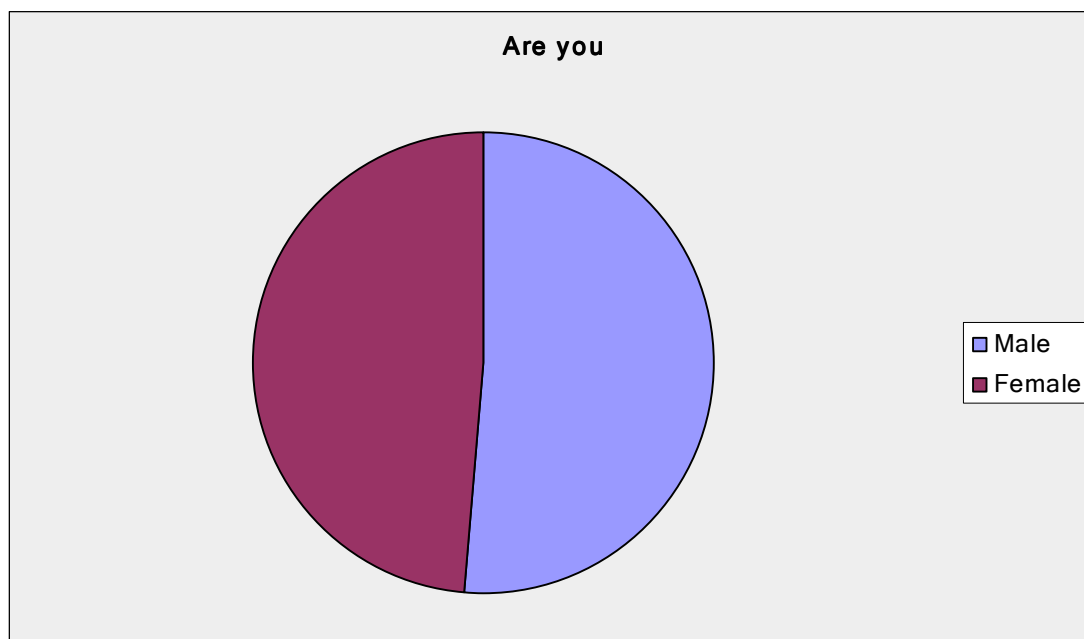


The young people were asked if they had any more comments on the public bus service in Hartlepool. These include;

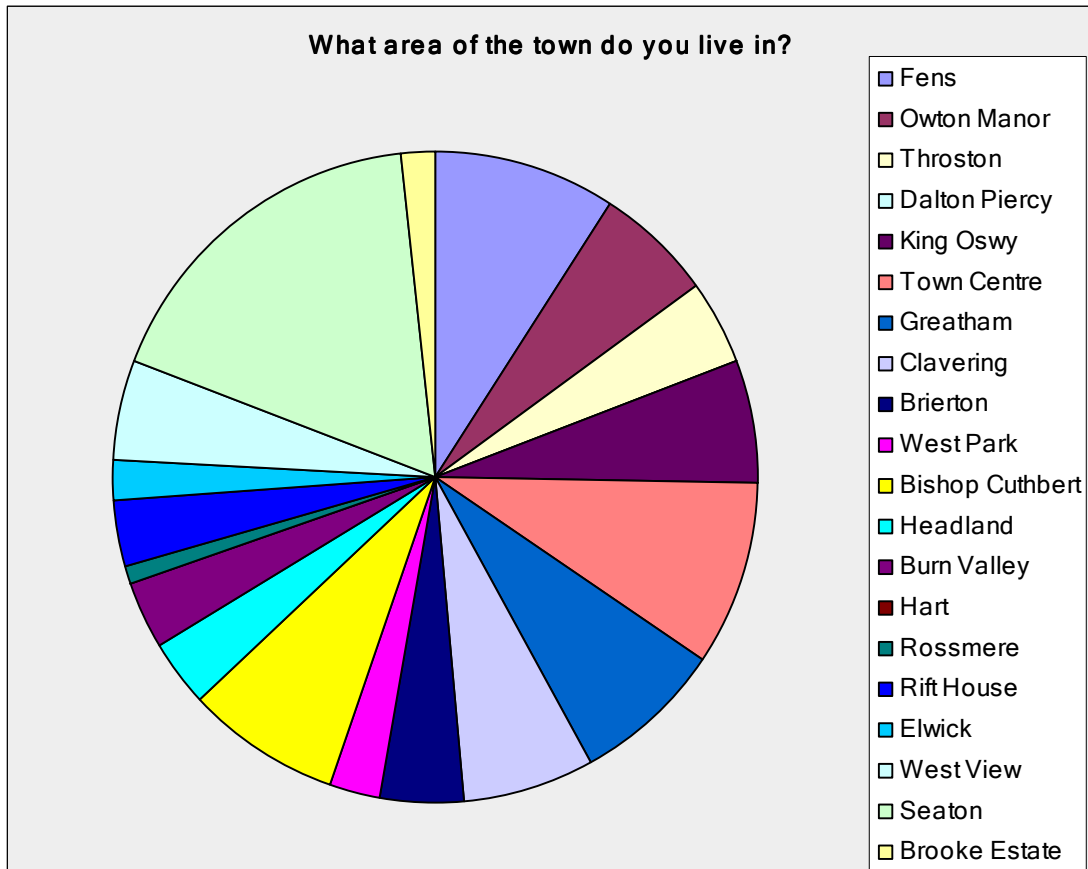
- Everyone has been left without a mode of transport on a night because of cuts.
- Affected me seeing friends like I used to.
- Limits were people can go
- More buses
- They should put them back on till 10.30pm
- Keep buses after 6.30pm
- There are no buses to the headland which affects me meeting up with my friends
- There are no buses to the Headland from King Oswey and it is hard to get home
- Very confusing to follow the timetables
  
- Cheaper
- Free bus service for students
- Yes, it really is terrible. All buses should run all week, and until late.
- 
- Give more opportunities to local businesses like Pauls Travel
  
- Bring back later busses! Even if it's just once an hour up until 11 but 6 is too early!!
  
- They should be cheaper and put all the busses back on.
  
- They are too expensive and they need to make them cheaper
- Cutting the services and raising the prices at the same time doesn't seem right.
- Bring them back on for evenings and lower prices!
- Bus services are otherwise good but I think they need to continue running later.
- Stop being late all the time
- The recent evening bus changes have heavily affected my social life.



0.7% (1) of the young people questioned were 11 years old, 0.7% (1) were 12 years old, 12.7% (4) were 13 years old, 7.5% (11) were 14 years old, 30.8% (45) were 15 years old, 29.5% (43) were 16 years old and 28.1% (41) were 17 years old or above.



51.4% (74) of the young people questioned were male and 48.6% (70) of the young people questioned were female.



9.2% (11) of the young people questioned lived in the fens area of the town, 5.9% (7) lived in Owton Manor area, 4.2% (5) lived in the Throston area, 0% (0) lived in the Dalton Piercy area, 5.9% (7) lived in the King Oswey area, 9.2% (11) lived in the Town Centre area, 7.6% (9) lived in the Greatham area, 6.7% (8) lived in the Clavering area, 4.2% (5) lived in the Brierton area, 2.5% (3) lived in the West Park area, 7.6% (9) lived in the Bishop Cuthbert area, 3.4% (4) lived in the Headland area, 3.4% (4) lived in the Burn Valley area, 0% (0) lived in the Hart area, .8% (1) lived in the Rossmere area, 3.4% (4) lived in the Rift House area, 1.7% (2) lived in the Elwick area, 5% (6) lived in the West View area, 17.6% (21) lived in the Seaton area and 1.7% (2) lived in the Brooke Estate area.

