



Young People & Public Transport - On the Right Track?

David McGilp MSYP & Islay Jackson MSYP



A bit about SYP!

- SYP is the democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people.
- Our **vision** for Scotland is of a nation that actively listens to and values the meaningful participation of its young people.
- Our **goal** is to make this vision a reality, in order to ensure young people in Scotland grow up loved, safe and respected, and able to realise their full potential. We provide a national platform for young people to discuss the issues that are important to them, and campaign for changes to the nation that they live in.

Where are we now?

Free bus travel for under 22s!



“I live in a village and so [without the buses] I couldn't see my friends.”

“Public transport is a crucial lifeline for young people in my constituency, connecting them to opportunities across the Highlands and Scotland. Without it, young people in more remote parts are at risk of rural isolation and impacts on their mental health - highlighting that public transport is more than about getting from one place to another.”

Is everyone on board?

Not all young people are benefitting from this scheme.

SYP's original ask was for free travel for "*all young people across all public transport networks*" in order to:



Better support rural and island young people who may rely on trains or ferries to travel



Cover young people up until their 26th birthday



Ensure equal access to opportunities

What is the next stop?

Our Committee Priority for 2024/25:

“Improving transport infrastructure while ensuring it is affordable and accessible for young people.”

What does this look like?

- More reliable & regular services

“In a rural island community...reliable and frequent public bus services are absolutely vital throughout our community. So many people too young to have their own car live more than 20 miles away from...[the] main urban area. This makes them very far away from opportunities and amenities on offer and they are undeniably cut off from them without good quality access to public transport...The bus services...are currently far too insufficient.”

What is the next stop?

- Better route planning & transport connections

"The only bus service in my village is the school bus so when I leave school, I'm worried I won't be able to get to work or university [there is no train station]."

Young people in our area were "not impressed that buses only go to and from...the major town."

- Safer waiting spaces & shelters
- More accessible public transport for disabled young people, particularly in rural areas
- A change in attitudes surrounding young people using public transport from parents, drivers, conductors, fellow passengers, etc.

Who is driving this change?

- *“Every child has the right to express their views in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.”* Article 12 UNCRC.
- Following the passing of the *UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024*, decision-makers in Scotland must work towards embedding and respecting children and young people’s rights in every aspect of Scottish life.
- This includes ensuring that young people’s views are taken into consideration in public transport decision-making.



Thank you!

