

# COMMUNITY TRANSPORT CONSULTATION

## 1. Executive Summary

This executive summary presents a brief overview of the targeted public consultation on the use of Community Transport across South Yorkshire which was undertaken by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYLTE), on behalf of Sheffield City Region Combined Authority, from Saturday 14 July to Sunday 26 August 2018.

### 1.1 Context and Purpose of the Consultation

The consultation has been conducted to help SYLTE and the local Community Transport operators understand how customers use Community Transport and how and where future budget allocations should be for future service provision.

Community Transport services are subsidised by the local authority. In the coming years, as the local authority budgets continue to be reduced by central government, there is no guarantee that the current level of funding for Community Transport can be maintained. Rather than passing further charges on to the customer, through bigger fare rises, an option being considered is to reduce the level of services on offer.

The purpose of the consultation is to understand how customers use Community Transport, which services are the most important to them and to ensure that the service continues to meet the needs of its users within the resources available. The review will also allow us to understand if any users will be adversely affected by future policy decisions.

### 1.2 The Consultation

The consultation took place from Saturday 14 July to Sunday 26 August and was targeted at recent users of Community Transport. A recent user was defined as someone who had registered to use the service within the last 6 months (those who had registered between 1 January and 30 June 2018).

A total of 4,435 Community Transport customers were classified as recent users - 780 from Barnsley, 1,187 from Doncaster, 1,122 from Rotherham and 1,346 from Sheffield.

A consultation pack, including a personalised letter, a consultation questionnaire and a freepost envelope, was mailed to all the above users of Community Transport.

The letter explained that users could either complete the paper questionnaire and return it in the free post envelope or take part online. It also advised that the consultation was intended to provide an opportunity for users to tell us what they think of the service.

A letter was also sent to all Community Transport service providers, Stakeholders, and Community and disability groups advising them of the consultation and to ask for their help to encourage the completion of the consultation.

A copy of each letter is available as Appendix A.

### 1.3 The Respondents

2,240 (51%) of Community Transport users took part in the consultation – 2,097 of individuals (94%) and 128 groups (6%) with groups representing up to 3,474 individuals.

321 of individual responses arrived from Barnsley (15%), 523 from Doncaster (25%), 441 from Rotherham (21%) and 738 from Sheffield (35%). 4% of individuals did not state their authority.

For groups it was 15 responses from Barnsley (12%), 37 responses from Doncaster (29%), 15 responses from Rotherham (12%) and 59 responses from Sheffield (46%).

The number of members within Groups responding to the consultation varied significantly, however the biggest proportion of groups had a membership of 21 to 40 people (35%).

## **2. Summary of consultation responses**

We asked respondents to tell us about their use of Community Transport and also the impact that any changes to this service would have on them

### **2.1 Reasons for using Community Transport**

The most popular reason for using Community Transport by individuals is for shopping (53%). 41% of respondents stated they use community transport as they are unable to access local bus service and 30% use it for leisure purposes.

However, for groups the most popular reasons for using the Community Transport are for Leisure purposes, with the majority (71%) using it for this reason. 21% of groups use it as they are unable to access local bus service and 19% of groups use it for accessing social care.

### **2.2 How you use Community Transport**

To understand fully, how our customers use Community Transport, we asked them a variety of questions, including which form of Community Transport they use.

Both, Dial-a-Ride/CityRide and Shopper bus were nearly equally popular amongst individual respondents, with 43% saying that they use Dial-a-Ride/CityRide and 42% saying that they use Shopper bus the most often.

However, group Travel is the most used CT service by 77% of all responding groups, whilst only 13% of groups use Dial-a-ride/CityRide and 5% use the Shopper bus.

Responses vary greatly per district. Whilst Dial-a-ride/CityRide is dominant amongst individual respondents in Barnsley (63% usage) and Sheffield (52% usage), Shopper bus leads in usage in the Doncaster area (69% usage) and Rotherham area (52% usage). In groups, Group travel is the most used CT service in Doncaster (97%), Rotherham (80%) and Sheffield (71%). In Barnsley 47% use group travel but, a significant proportion of groups also use Dial-a-Ride/CityRide (33%) alongside group travel.

With regards to the frequency that people use Community Transport, the majority, of individual respondents (37%) stated that they use the service once a week.

### **2.3 If Community Transport wasn't available**

Community Transport has proven to be an asset to the majority, of individual respondents, with the highest proportion (38%) stating that they would no longer be able to go out if the service was no longer available. This was also mirrored in group responses, as over half of the groups (52%) told us that they would no longer be able to get out.

### **2.4 The cost of Community Transport**

The consultation needed to understand the impact on users if the cost of Community Transport increased. The largest percentage of individual respondents (82%) stated that they would be able to pay an increased cost for the service.

Whilst the majority (63%) of groups also felt they would be able to pay an increased fare, about a quarter (27%) of groups were unsure as to how the fare increase will affect them. According to the feedback, some of them would have to re-evaluate their finances and determine what the real impact would be.

### **2.5 The importance of Community Transport services**

Both, Shopper bus and Dial-a-Ride/CityRide services were equally important to the individual respondents with 43% choosing each as their most important service. Group travel was identified as the least important form of Community transport to the individual respondents, with only 10% of respondents choosing it.

However, Group travel is the most important to 75% of responding groups. Dial-a-Ride/CityRide was the most important to only 11% of group respondent and Shopper buses were only to 8% of group respondents.

In terms of the 4 districts, the importance of services mirrors their usage. Dial-a-Ride is the most important CT service to individual respondents in Barnsley (58%) and Sheffield (53%) whilst Shopper bus is the most important service to individual respondents in Doncaster (66%) and Rotherham (50%). Group travel is consistently most important service to responding groups across all districts. This is particularly interesting in Barnsley where Dial-a-Ride/City Ride usage by groups was very high (33%) but the Group travel leads in importance with 80% of responding groups stating that it's most important to them.

### **3. Next Steps**

The findings of the consultation above are just an overview of what people told us. The full analysis looks at each section in detail and looks at the impact on different age groups and disabilities. This analysis is being used by SYPTE to consider the impact of any changes and assist the writing of Equality Impact Assessments.

This executive summary is part of the report which informs the SCR Combined Authority of the findings of the consultation.

## 4. Consultation response

The consultation process was specifically targeted at recent users of Community Transport, and a variety of channels were used to reach these customers, including digital and paper based mailed questionnaires, and posters on Community Transport vehicles.

The consultation asked participants some questions relating to their usage of the service, and their opinions on the different types of Community Transport available. The consultation was primarily quantitative and sought responses to multiple choice questions, but there was a free text box for respondents to explain their answers at the end of the consultation.

### 4.1 About you

This section allowed us to understand the demographics of respondents answering the Community Transport consultation. Please note that for group responses, we cannot show representation of gender, age or proportion of disabled customers, type of disability and proportion of customers travelling with carer as these would not be representative of the whole group.

#### Are you answering on behalf of?

Are you answering on behalf of:	Overall
Yourself	82%
Another individual	12%
Group/Organisation	6%

#### Do you use Community Transport?

Do you use Community Transport?	Individuals	Groups
Yes	96%	94%
No	4%	5%
Not stated	0%	1%

#### Local authority area

District	Individuals	Groups
Barnsley	15%	12%
Doncaster	25%	29%
Rotherham	21%	12%
Sheffield	35%	46%
Not stated	4%	2%

#### How do you travel?

How do you travel?	Individuals
Alone	80%
With carer	18%
Not stated	2%

#### Gender

Gender	Individuals
Female	75%
Male	23%
Not stated	2%
Prefer not to say	0%

### Age categories

Age category	Individuals
75+	71%
65-74	15%
60-64	4%
45-54	3%
55-59	2%
25-34	2%
35-44	2%
16-24	1%
Not stated	2%

### Disability

Disability	Individuals
Yes	92%
No	6%
Not stated	2%

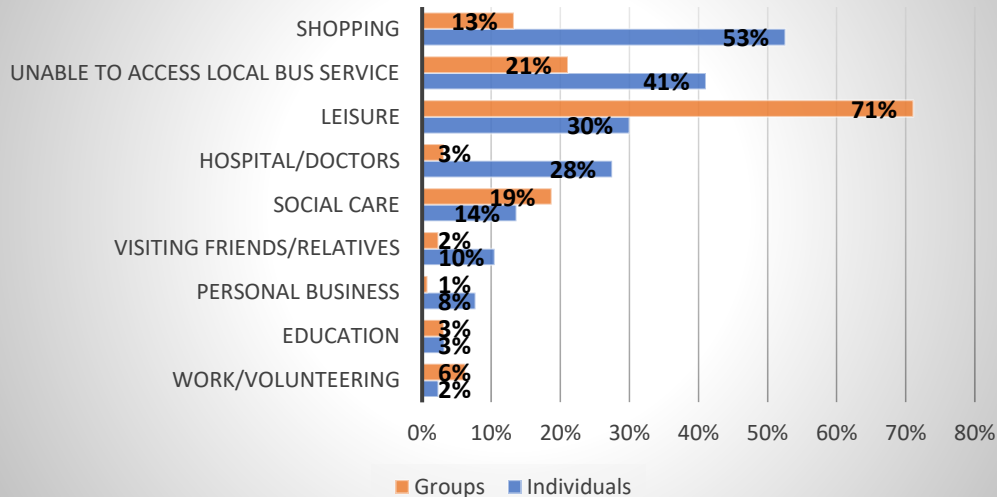
### Disability type

Disability type	Individuals
Mobility related	82%
Visual related	14%
Hearing related	21%
Hidden disability	16%
Learning disability	7%
Mental health condition	5%
Speech/Language impediment	4%
Prefer not to say	2%
Other	7%

## 4.2 Reasons for using Community Transport

This section was designed to understand people's reasons for using the Community Transport services which are available in South Yorkshire. They told us:

## Why do they use CT?

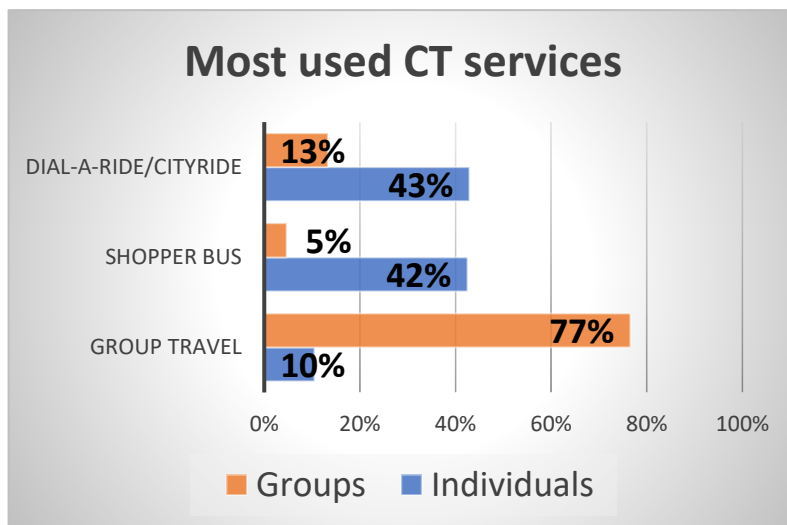


### How you use Community Transport

Respondents were asked to tell us about how they currently use Community Transport, including the main form of the service they use and how often they use it.

#### What is the main form of Community Transport you use?

Respondents were asked to identify the main form of the service they use. They told us:



Per district:

#### Barnsley

Which CT transport do you use most often?	Individuals	Groups
Dial-a-Ride/CityRide	63%	33%
Group travel	11%	47%
Shopper bus	23%	13%

#### Doncaster



Which CT transport do you use most often?	Individuals	Groups
Dial-a-Ride/CityRide	24%	0%
Group travel	4%	97%
Shopper bus	69%	0%

### Rotherham

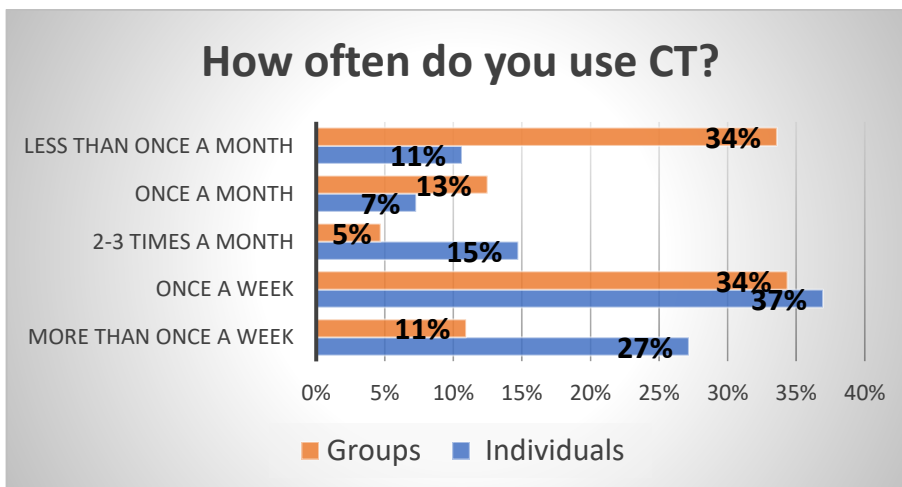
Which CT transport do you use most often?	Individuals	Groups
Dial-a-Ride/CityRide	37%	7%
Group travel	9%	80%
Shopper bus	49%	7%

### Sheffield

Which CT transport do you use most often?	Individuals	Groups
Dial-a-Ride/CityRide	52%	17%
Group travel	15%	71%
Shopper bus	27%	5%

### How often do you use Community Transport?

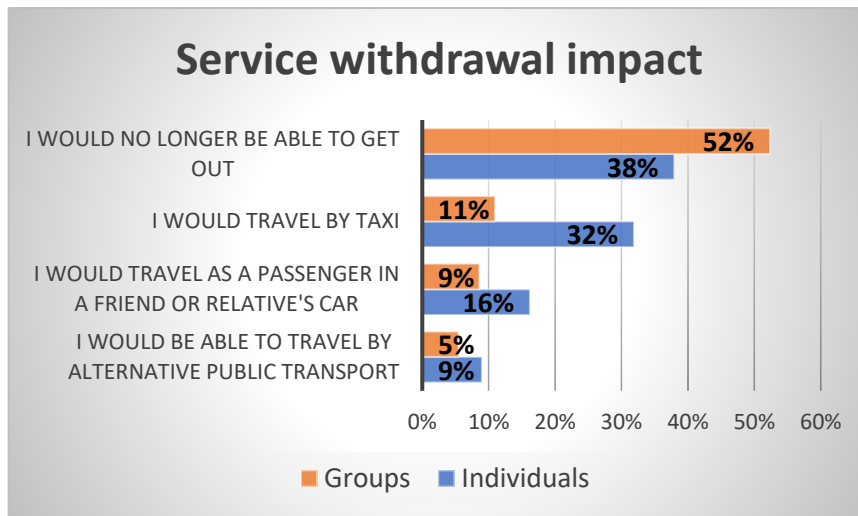
In this section, we also asked people to let us know how often they use Community Transport, they told us:



### 4.3 If Community Transport wasn't available

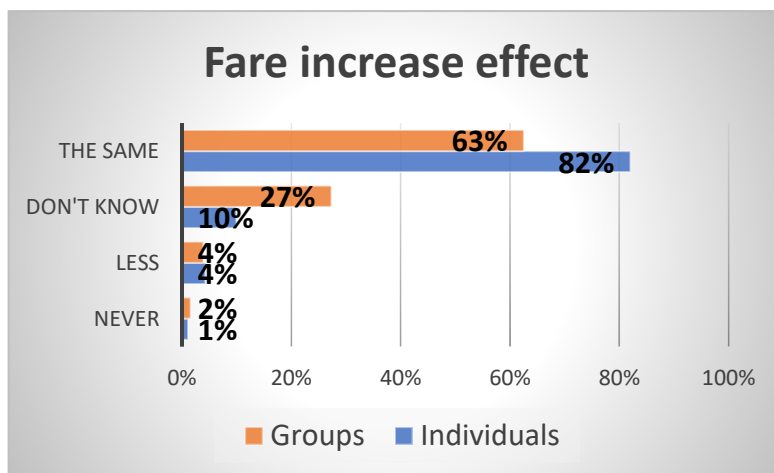
This section was designed to look at how users would be affected if Community Transport wasn't available.

We asked respondents what it would mean to them if the service wasn't available, they told us:



### 4.4 The cost of Community Transport

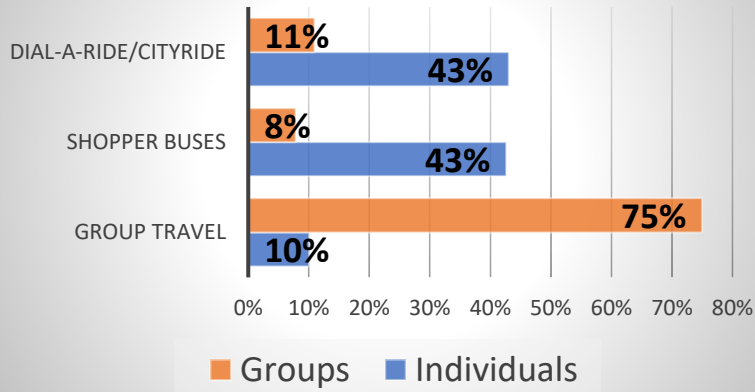
To understand the impact on users if the cost of Community Transport was to increase, we asked respondents if they would pay an increased price for the service. They told us:



### 4.5 The importance of Community Transport services

When asked to rate the importance of Community Transport services, respondents told us that they found the below the **MOST** important:

## Most important CT services



Per district:

### Barnsley

Most Important CT service	Individuals	Groups
Dial-a-Ride/CityRide	58%	13%
Group Travel	13%	80%
Shopper buses	27%	7%

### Doncaster

Most Important CT service	Individuals	Groups
Dial-a-Ride/CityRide	26%	5%
Group Travel	5%	81%
Shopper buses	66%	8%

### Rotherham

Most Important CT service	Individuals	Groups
Dial-a-Ride/CityRide	38%	13%
Group Travel	8%	53%
Shopper buses	50%	13%

### Sheffield

Most Important CT service	Individuals	Groups
Dial-a-Ride/CityRide	53%	14%
Group Travel	14%	76%
Shopper buses	28%	7%

## 5. Further Comments

A free text box was added at the end of the consultation inviting respondents to tell us more about how they use Community Transport, and to comment on how any of the questions included in the consultation would impact them.

1126 (50%) of respondents took an opportunity to leave a comment.

The biggest proportion of comments (40%) were stating that the Community Transport is essential to them and the loss of it would be **life changing**. They would no longer be able to get out, meet their basic needs or it would have detrimental effect on their health and/or wellbeing. 32% of comments were general positive comments about the service or the CT staff.

Based on 1126 responses

Type of comments	Count	%
Essential or life changing etc.	451	40%
Could use other means etc.	44	4%
Positive	357	32%
Negative	86	8%
Questions/requests	77	7%
Neutral	69	6%
No comment, None etc.	42	4%
Total Comments	1126	100%

## APPENDIX A

### Customer Letter

Dear Community Transport User

#### **Tell Us What You Think About Community Transport**

We are writing to you as a user of Community Transport to ask you to take part in our consultation on the service.

The consultation, which will be open from Saturday 14 July – Sunday 26 August, is designed to help South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTe) and the local Community Transport operators understand how you use Community Transport and how we should prioritise the budget allocated for future service provision.

Fares had to be increased in May this year in order to offset the rising operational costs (e.g. wages, insurance, fuel etc.) whilst maintaining the current service level provision. In future years fares will be reviewed annually to make sure they keep up with operating costs.

As you may also be aware, Community Transport services are subsidised by the local authority. In the coming years, as the local authority budgets continue to be reduced by central government, there is no guarantee that the current level of funding for Community Transport can be maintained.

Rather than passing further charges on to you, as a customer, through bigger fare rises an option being considered is to reduce the level of services on offer. Therefore, we would like to find out which services are most important to you.

We are sending this consultation to everyone who has travelled on or registered for Community Transport in the last six months. The enclosed questionnaire gives you the opportunity to tell us what you think.

You have until **Sunday 26 August** to complete this questionnaire and return it to us in the enclosed pre-paid envelope.

If you would prefer and are able to complete the consultation online you can do so at [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/CTconsultation18](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/CTconsultation18).

If you have any questions about this or would like to talk to someone about the consultation please call Traveline on 01709 51 51 51.

Kind regards

## **Community Transport Service Provider Letter**

Dear Colleague

### **Community Transport Consultation - Saturday 14 July - Sunday 26 August 2018**

As you will be aware, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE) is currently running a consultation which is aimed at those who use Community Transport.

The consultation runs from Saturday 14 July to Sunday 26 August.

#### **Why we are running the consultation**

SYPTTE is running the Community Transport Consultation to help us, you and other local Community Transport operators understand how our customers use Community Transport.

We want these customers to let us know what they consider to be the priorities for the Community Transport funding, to help us effectively plan future services.

#### **Please note:**

- This consultation is designed to be completed by current users of Community Transport.
- There are no correct answers to the consultation; it is just an opportunity to let users tell us what they think.

#### **How to complete the consultation**

##### **Paper copy**

We have sent a consultation pack to all recent users of Community Transport. Customers have until Sunday 26 August to complete the questionnaire (attached for your information) and send it back to us via the enclosed pre-paid envelope.

If you are approached by a Community Transport user who has not received a copy of the consultation and would like to take part, please take the customer's name and pass this to your line manager who should be able to help and ensure that they receive a copy.

##### **Online**

If customers would prefer and are able to, they can take part in the consultation online at [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/CTconsultation18](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/CTconsultation18)

#### **How you can help**

Please promote the consultation to all users of Community Transport. It is important that these customers understand how important their feedback is. To help you do this, we have sent you posters highlighting the consultation for you to place on all of your Community Transport vehicles.

If you are asked a question regarding the consultation which you are unable to answer, please contact your line manager who should be able to help.

Thank you for your support.

## Community and Disability Group Letter

Dear Colleague

### **Community Transport Consultation - Saturday 14 July - Sunday 26 August 2018**

I am writing to let you know that we have recently launched a consultation aimed at current active users of Community Transport.

The consultation is being undertaken by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTE) and is an opportunity for Community Transport users to tell us what they think of the service.

The purpose of this consultation is to help us and the local Community Transport operators understand how customers use Community Transport, to help us effectively plan future services.

The consultation officially launched on Saturday 14 July and we are writing to you today to ask that you help us promote the consultation to those who use Community Transport.

We have sent a consultation pack to all recent users of Community Transport, which includes a questionnaire (of which I have attached a copy) and a pre-paid envelope. Users have until Sunday 26 August to complete the consultation form and send it back to us via the pre-paid envelope.

Alternatively, if Community Transport users prefer and are able to, they can take part in the consultation online at [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/CTconsultation18](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/CTconsultation18).

If you are aware of any users of Community Transport who have not received a copy of the consultation and would like to take part, or would like to discuss this consultation with someone, please encourage them to call Traveline on 01709 515151.

Many thanks in advance for your help in ensuring that as many Community Transport users as possible get a chance to tell us what they think of the service.

Kind regards

## Stakeholder Letter

Dear Colleague

### **Community Transport Consultation - Saturday 14 July - Sunday 26 August 2018**

I am writing to let you know that we are launching a consultation aimed at current active users of Community Transport.

The consultation is being undertaken by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYLTE) and is an opportunity for Community Transport users to tell us what they think of the service.

The purpose of this consultation is to help us and the local Community Transport operators understand how customers use Community Transport, to help us effectively plan future services.

The consultation officially launches on Saturday 14 July and we are writing to you today to give you advance notice, and to ask that you help us promote the consultation to those who use Community Transport.

We will be sending a consultation pack to all recent users of Community Transport, which includes a questionnaire (of which I have attached a copy) and a pre-paid envelope. Users have until Sunday 26 August to complete the consultation form and send it back to us via the pre-paid envelope.

Alternatively, if Community Transport users prefer and are able to, they can take part in the consultation online at [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/CTconsultation18](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/CTconsultation18).

If you are aware of any users of Community Transport who have not received a copy of the consultation and would like to take part, or would like to discuss this consultation with someone, please encourage them to call Traveline on 01709 515151.

Many thanks in advance for your help in ensuring that as many Community Transport users as possible get a chance to tell us what they think of the service.

Kind regards