

Returning to transport

There's no doubt the way people travel has been changed massively as a result of Covid-19 and the lockdown. Transport Focus wanted to find out what passengers and road users think about the current situation and what it would take for them to go back to some form of 'normal'. This research is taken from a small sample of people and isn't intended to be statistical research. The aim is to gain a better understanding of how people feel and how this relates to their travel behaviour.

Main points are described in the foreword and summaries, but some key findings are:

- One of the principal emotions expressed was uncertainty, but there was a real sense of these needing to be underpinned by clear procedures, communication and potentially, enforcement
- Avoiding a return to the crowding typical of their previous commute is passengers' biggest concern. Most are avoiding public transport now out of concern for their own and others' safety
- Communication of rules and procedures through many different channels will help people understand their personal responsibility and be a reminder to others
- Cleanliness is a factor in terms of reassurance. A touch-free travel experience is something that passengers would welcome and there may be operational changes that would more easily enable this (such as opening doors automatically at stations)
- While transport must adapt quickly to the challenge of Covid-19 it remains vital to test ideas, proposals and reactions with transport users to ensure they will work for them.

Travel during Covid-19 survey

Week six of our survey series has found still very low and very flat public transport use – people are slowly going out more though.

- We've had small and incremental decreases in people using no modes of transport (including walking) at all
- Perceived traffic volume still moving slowly from 'light' to 'moderate'
- Small and incremental falls in people saying that they won't use public transport for any reason until they feel safe

In Wales:

- The proportion of people who will be happy to travel by public transport again as soon as restrictions are relaxed is the lowest, at 15 per cent
- Those who won't use public transport unless social distancing is in place is one of the highest, at 78 per cent
- Those wanting hand sanitiser to be available on public transport, on vehicles, at stations, and at stops is the highest at 91 per cent.

Face coverings analysis

Particularly following the announcement that face coverings are to be mandatory in England and recommended in Wales and Scotland, this new Transport Focus analysis shows the proportion of people who think face coverings should be a requirement on public transport has been consistently above 50 per cent since week one of our Covid-19 travel survey and increased to 67 per cent in the latest week six results. Clearly face coverings make people feel safer, but they remain an emotive and divisive issue.