


# Transport, Young People and Rural Areas





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# Transport, Young People and Rural Areas

## Contents

	Page
Foreword	iii
Transport, Young People and Rural Areas – An Introduction by the Countryside Agency	iv
Why produce this booklet	v
Chichester Youth Cabinet	1
County Durham Proposes An Integrated Transport Policy	3
Doncaster Youth Service – Mobile Youth Service Provision	5
Essex Members Of The Youth Parliament (MYPs) Changing Transport For Young People	7
Leighton Linlade Youth Forum Youth Bus	11
North Devon – Life In The Bus Lane	15
Ribble Valley – Youthlink Bus	17
Rural Solihull Finds Hope In A Tin Can	19
South Doncaster Community Development Unit	21
South Lakeland Youth Council – Increasing Participation	23
Staffordshire Moorlands – Youth Forums	25
Taxi Token Transport Scheme	27
Young People B_Line Their Views	29
Gloucestershire – Survey Of Young People’s Bus Use	31
Annex 1 – Examples of Countryside Agency Work Relating to Young People	32
Annex 2 – Children and Young People: What the Department for Transport is doing	34
Annex 3 – Children and Young People: What the Department of Food and Rural Affairs is doing	37

**Department for Environment,  
Food and Rural Affairs**

**Department for Transport**

We are pleased to endorse this good practice guidance written by members of the United Kingdom Youth Parliament. We hope that young people will find it useful, and that the experiences of others will encourage them to feel that they can get involved in influencing decisions on rural transport provision.

The report highlights how effective integrating public and local transport services can be in order to help everyone access essential services. This is particularly important in rural areas where public transport services are less frequent. Government is taking integration seriously and we are tackling it in the implementation of the recommendations of the Social Exclusion Unit's report "Making the Connections".

We also hope that transport operators, providers and local authorities will build on the good examples in the majority of the case studies and use this guidance to improve the services they provide for young people.

It is important that we show that we value what young people have to say and listen to their views at all levels of Government. Young people in rural areas can benefit from greater access to transport services which are designed to suit their needs and we hope this guidance will encourage young people to get involved.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony McNulty".

Foreword by  
**Tony McNulty**,  
Parliamentary Under Secretary  
of State for Transport



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alun Michael".

Rt Hon Alun Michael MP,  
Department for Environment,  
Food and Rural Affairs

## Transport, Young People and Rural Areas – An Introduction by the Countryside Agency

This report describes several examples of good practice where young people, local authorities, bus companies and others have worked together to improve transport for young people in rural areas. It has been compiled by the UK Youth Parliament as part of a project funded by the Countryside Agency, Defra and DfT in order to raise awareness about the transport needs of rural young people and the types of actions they have taken themselves to meet those needs.

Young people are a priority group for the Countryside Agency. They make up a significant proportion of the rural population – 30% is aged under 25 and more than 18%, approximately 1.7 million, are under 15. Research for the Countryside Agency has shown that transport is a key concern for people who live in rural areas, especially for young people who can face difficulties in accessing key services such as education, training and healthcare. They may be dependent on other family members to give them a lift to the places they want to go and thus have more limited opportunities for independent travel than their urban counterparts. Their choice of leisure and social activities is likely to be influenced by the places their parents are willing and able to take them and access to confidential personal advice (on drugs, contraception etc.) may be difficult. Some young people may also feel guilty about having to ask for lifts from parents with limited time or financial resources.

Young people in households without cars may have even fewer opportunities. Where public transport is available it is often not at the times that young people wish to travel, for example, there are few evening services. Cost may also be a problem as there is no requirement for operators to offer young people concessionary fares even if they are still in full-time education.

These are just some of the issues raised by young people at a transport debate organised by the UK Youth Parliament in November 2002. It was largely as a result of this debate, that the UK Youth Parliament approached the Countryside Agency for funding to take forward its work on transport. This report is one of the outcomes of that work.

The Countryside Agency welcomed the opportunity to support the UK Youth Parliament's work on transport. It has long recognised the transport difficulties faced by rural young people and funds a number of projects for young people through its Rural Transport Partnership scheme, some of which are featured in this report. As these and the other case studies show, it is possible to design and implement transport initiatives that allow young people to access facilities and leisure activities conveniently and affordably. What is particularly important about many of the examples described is that it is young people themselves who have identified the need for change and who have taken action to improve transport provision in their local area. However, it is also clear that many other organisations have an important role to play and most of the successful examples are ones where young people have been able to work in partnership with other organisations such as Rural Transport Partnerships, Connexions, Youth Services, Local Authorities and bus operators.

The Countryside Agency hopes that this report will inspire action by all those who have an interest in ensuring that transport services in rural areas meet the needs of young people including young people themselves, service providers, local youth services and local and national decision makers.

## Why produce this booklet?

At the 2nd Annual Sitting of the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP), transport was the key issue for young people. For many it determined which school or college they attended, how and where they accessed health care, and whether or not they were able to see their friends out of school hours in places of their choosing.

For many young people today, the provision of public transport and whether they can access it can pose problems. For those that can use public transport they often find that it doesn't run at a time suitable to them, or go where they want it to go. Some also think that it costs too much. Whilst for many there is just no service.

Following the 2002 UKYP Sitting, MYPs began lobbying on these issues across the UK, and in November 2002 the UKYP organised a Transport Debate in the House of Commons. This debate helped to highlight the specific issues that young people faced, but also galvanised MYPs and young people in general into action!

The case studies in this booklet are important because not only do they identify the areas in which young people have taken ownership of their transport problems, but that they highlight how young people can resolve these issues themselves and create transport solutions for their local areas, and local people in general. It is mine, and the hope of my colleagues, that this booklet will be used as a tool by young people to negotiate with their local authorities and service providers to improve local transport provision across the country and not just in the few areas that we have identified here today. It proves that young people are not a segment of the population to be afraid of and that service providers can benefit from working with their customer base to provide services that are wanted and therefore respected.

Kieran Hutchinson Dean – MYP Leeds  
& Member of the Department for Transport Young People Advisory Group







There are 40 young people who are members of the Youth Cabinet, which has James Lamming as its Vice Chair.

As a frequent user of public transport James recognised the services provided could be improved. He, and his peers, needed to use local bus services to access school, Youth Cabinet meetings and other interests and activities. The one off tickets, from the variety of local operators, were very expensive and discount or season tickets were only good value if using the same operator each day. James was over 16 and could no longer access the half fare system although still at school and needing to make numerous journeys. He felt very strongly about the unfair situation concerning local public transport so decided to take the cause further and meet with people who could influence provision of services.

A meeting was arranged with the Mark Miller the head of services for Passenger Transport for West Sussex County Council. Pandora Ellis, the local Youth Cabinet co-ordinator, supported young people at this initial meeting. James' concerns were taken very seriously at this meeting and a subsequent meeting was then arranged with the West Sussex Bus Operators.

The Youth Cabinet set the agenda for the meeting with the bus operators. This was extremely important, as it was the first time there had been any conversation between the companies and young people as service users. One of the items discussed was the fact that all the different companies required different cards to be produced for proof of age. As a result of this meeting it was agreed that all the bus companies would accept the local 'Citizen Card' as proof the young people were under 16 and entitled to discounted fares. James initiated this by showing the group his 'Citizen's Card' and explaining its merits. This was a great success and well received by local young people. As a result of this initial meeting the companies felt the issues raised were valuable to customer relations and meetings with young people were subsequently organised every six months.

James with the Youth Cabinet were also successful in arranging the Zone 241 card, which entitled young people to travel in the area for £2 per day and included a two for one deal at the local cinema and swimming pool. This was organised in July and August 2002 and the feedback was positive from both the companies and the young people; all parties were happy when the scheme was replicated in the summer holiday of 2003. James found out about similar cards in other areas, and wanted to take these ideas to Stagecoach, his local bus provider. James produced a marketing plan for Chichester District Council and Stagecoach to show 'that increased sales would help them and also ensure good value for young people'. He took on other tasks including press relations, marketing and visiting local schools and youth council events.

The Youth Cabinet negotiated a 'Young Persons Bus Card' for all those aged 16 and over to act as an ID and Proof of Age Card. This will not offer discounted fares like the 'Young Persons Rail Card', but will enable young people to prove their age and prevent them from being over charged with an adult fare.

The Youth Cabinet has done much work on the idea of providing discounts, already gaining agreement from the County Council that in principle the idea is sound and nobody will lose out. As a result of James' lobbying to local government the local

## Chichester Youth Cabinet

transport review questionnaire now includes a section on student travel. Due to the decision of the bus companies not to provide discounted fares, James has led a letter writing campaign to get West Sussex County Council to provide the subsidy for young people still in school. The Leader of the County Council has agreed to the proposal but has said the council cannot currently meet the spending due to local government finance changes.

James feels his confidence has grown gradually by taking 'the common sense approach' and being honest about who will benefit from changes in local services. The biggest boost for him was when the local bus operators accepted the use of the Citizen Card. He believes adults have listened to the youth cabinet's concern on the transport issue and the county council has put structures in place to listen to young people.

Bob Jackson, Operations Manager at Stagecoach Coastline said:

*"I have met with the Youth Cabinet on a number of occasions. James has shown himself to have a genuine interest in passenger transport being adequately provided for young people. James is well read and researched, easy to communicate with and not frightened to say his bit."*

*"His involvement has been very valuable to us. He has been acting as a spokesman for young people and other young people look up to him. It is good for us to deal with James rather than lots of different young people. James brings the issues together and other young people can be assured they are getting a fair deal when he is dealing with their point."*

## County Durham Proposes An Integrated Transport Policy

County Durham is a largely rural county, and its young people have, for many years, had an issue with local transport provision. Through their own elected representatives (MYPs and Stakeholders) they have put transport and travel as a key priority for action and improvement. This view is supported by the current Youth Service Plan, which has identified that young people need better access to transport so that they can meet other young people and just get out and about!

To address these issues and identify solutions the MYPs and Stakeholders established a Transport Task Group, which has been undertaking detailed research across the North of England in order to present a report and make recommendations to Durham County Council's Cabinet.

To inform the research the Transport Task Group has:

- Met with eight focus groups from across County Durham, consisting of an average of eight young people aged between 13 and 19;
- Held lengthy forums on their web site **www.youthaloud.net**;
- Carried out a questionnaire in the digital media suite in Durham City;
- Investigated the County Council's current strategy, research and policies; and
- Visited the Ribble Valley, Huddersfield and the Community Transport Exhibition and Seminar in Manchester, to learn from existing transport schemes that may provide a model for County Durham. It was for this part of the research that the UK Youth Parliament was pleased to be able to provide £620.00 towards the costs of transporting the young people.

The meeting with County Officers proved useful and highlighted a clear lack of co-ordination between services which possess in-house transport such as Social Services, Education and Community Transport Providers. The visits to other Authorities and organisations also produced recommendations about the types of vehicles that could be used as well as timetabling, and capacity issues for front-line youth work.

The work of the Transport Task Group is now moving into the "writing up" stage and a meeting is scheduled for the 19 February 2004. The final report will be presented to Durham County Council's Cabinet on the 16 April 2004, and copies can be ordered from Chris Milner at Durham Youth Service – **youthservice@durhamlea.org.uk**. However, at this stage the key recommendations appear to be that the County Council develop an integrated transport policy, eg – at times when the Youth Service is most active, County Council owned buses (social services, schools, etc) are lying idle. There is a need to share transport provision and different departments need to talk to one-another, with this work possibly being facilitated by a full-time transport officer for the County.





## Doncaster Youth Service – Mobile Youth Service Provision

Young people couldn't travel to their nearest youth centre, so now the youth centre comes to them! The identification by young people that they could not access youth service provision in their local areas, has led to three mobile youth centres being introduced to the Doncaster area. Doncaster Youth Service, in partnership with Connexions South Yorkshire, the Area Health Authority and other appropriate agencies, run a regular programme for the centres, which sees them travel across Doncaster, with particular attention paid to those rural villages where there is no fixed youth service provision. Young people are consulted throughout to identify the areas of most need, and the structured programme means young people are kept well informed of the location and times that the centres are open.

Young people have been involved throughout this process, from identifying the need through to the current running of the centres. At the East2 Community Forum, young people spoke about the lack of facilities for them in their area, something that had been identified by other young people at the 7 Community Forums across Doncaster. Working with Roger Hobson and Steve Wilson at the Youth Service, they identified having mobile youth centres as a possible solution to the problem; and looked at other projects nationally that were already using these centres. They visited a mobile festival in Swindon to look at types of unit they could use, and hear experiences from young people and youth workers using mobile centres.

Durham Youth Service has a similar provision, and some young people and youth workers from Durham came to Doncaster to speak with young people and elected members about the benefits of such schemes. The young people and Youth Service decided that they wanted to run a pilot scheme in the area, but did not have the funding to get a mobile centre of their own at this stage of the project. Liaising with the Nottinghamshire Youth Service, they rented a mobile centre from Nottinghamshire for 6 months, and took the centre to a number of locations that young people had identified.

Having seen the benefits of the mobile centre for themselves, young people across Doncaster approached the 7 Community Forums in the area, asking for funding for the scheme. They raised approximately £14,000, and this was combined with Area Health Authority funding, Youth Service core budget and Connexions funding to purchase the first mobile youth centre for Doncaster. Young people had a strong involvement in the design of the unit, visiting the company building the centre and speaking with their CAD designers so that the centre would best meet the needs of the young people in communities.

Communities saw the benefits of the mobile centre for young people, and offers of funding came in to develop the scheme further, leading to 2 more mobile units being bought. There are plans to purchase a 4th unit, which will be slightly different from the other three. The current vehicles are very large, weighing approximately 5 tonnes, and still cannot get to certain areas, so young people, mainly from Doncaster Youth Council, are putting together designs for an arts based centre, which will be smaller than the units currently operating.

Mobile youth centres have had a huge impact in the Doncaster area, and Roger Hobson at Doncaster Youth Service has seen other Local Authorities become interested in the scheme. To meet the demand for advice about the scheme he commissioned a consultancy report on behalf of Connexions, which identified the successes of the

## Doncaster Youth Service – Mobile Youth Service Provision

project, as well as gaps in the provision that he can now look to address. An external consultant has worked on the report, and now Local Authorities and other agencies can benefit from the success that Doncaster has enjoyed.

Doncaster's Head of Youth Service, Dee Hammerson said about the project:

*"As far as we are concerned it is essential to get services to isolated young people living in rural areas. This project means we can contact young people with the services they need on their door step."*

Doncaster Youth Service offers youth work provision across the Doncaster area. The Doncaster Youth Council comprises representatives elected from different school catchment areas across Doncaster, and meets to provide a voice for young people and address their issues. The Youth Service works closely with the Council, providing training for young people and supporting representatives on different decision-making boards.

## Essex Members Of The Youth Parliament (MYPs) Changing Transport For Young People

Essex's MYPs started the process of being heard when they sat down and mapped out the important issues for the young people they represent. They needed to look at what their different priorities were. Transport was highlighted as an integral issue across the board in their county. Yantra Scott, Martin Kent and Lizzie Kent (not related) took the lead on seeing this idea through.

The young people wanted to know what their constituents felt about this issue, so a questionnaire was sent out. Yantra, Martin and Lizzie used personal and professional contacts to see the questionnaire had a diverse and wide distribution. Over 750 were returned, which gave them a good opinion base to work from.

Lizzie said:

*"I think the number responses we received are brilliant. It shows that young people are interested in the issue and that they really support our efforts. I just hope it continues and we get a better transport system for everyone in Essex."*

After collating the data, the group proposed three recommendations for improvement to the service. These were – to increase the young people's subsidy to all those aged 16 and under; to have a proof of age card for young people so they could prove that they were entitled to a subsidy and finally, that there should be a cheap rate for those aged 16–18 who are still in full time education.

The MYPs used an opportunity at their Annual Business Breakfast with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet to voice the outcomes of the research and how they intended to move forward. The three were really keen get the bus companies in Essex together with the council and make their case.

The Chairman of Essex County Council, Cllr Anthony Peel, hosted the event for them to attract all the different company representatives. At the County Conference, all of the bus companies but one attended, and the young people were well received. Taking an issue each, they lobbied for their ideas to be listened to. This was an important time for getting the different parties together.

Yantra took up the issue of a universal subsidy at 16 and under. Most bus companies accepted the study and have agreed to only charge adult fares to 16 years olds and over. This guaranteed fare reduction for young people was a milestone in their campaign.

Lizzie was keen that the local authority made available proof of age cards. It was debated as to whether it should be central or local government who implemented them. After an hour's debate, Essex County Council committed to providing proof of age cards for all eleven year olds and over. This would entitle them to child fares up to the age of 16. It has been confirmed that the cards will be rolled out across the county by September 2004 to start with the new Year 7s. This will mean that every child between 12–18 will have an ID card, and shop keepers will also be able to ask for the card as proof of age when buying other products.

## Essex Members Of The Youth Parliament (MYPs) Changing Transport For Young People

Fran Garthwaite, Passenger Transport manager, Essex County Council told us:

*"We are at the stage where we are commissioning a company to role out the scheme in the direction the young people set for us. We are using their ideas for the mechanism of delivery and aim to have it rolled out to those as young as eleven by September 2004. The young people's involvement in transport has been invaluable – this is not cheesy it's true. We need to be able to talk to them in a structured way, have points of contact and the UK Youth Parliament provides that. We can use their ideas and contacts with other young people. If we can get young people using transport they may continue to be public transport users in later life."*

Martin, who has been relentless in his campaigning, took up the issue of reduced fares for 16–18 years olds in full time education. The bus companies agreed with the sentiment of what was being said. Sadly they refused to accept it as their responsibility and said it was the responsibility of the local authorities to provide the subsidy for these groups. The young people have now brought up this issue with the local Learning and Skills Council which is moving slowly.

Martin enlisted Bob Russell, MP for Colchester who supports the campaign and commented:

*"I admire the enthusiasm of the group in seeking to improve travel arrangements, not only for young people but also for the wider community. I think it is great that these young people are putting themselves out to help others."*

Yantra said:

*"It was really frustrating that no one was willing to take responsibility. The companies didn't take young people seriously until now. Knowing this was the first of its kind and that we were making positive changes for young people, made it well worth doing."*

The young people wanted to see that things went forward and to make sure the groups kept to their promises – "you can never trust those 'old' people"! One of the outcomes has been the establishment of a Transport Sub Committee, which is meeting regularly and has representatives from all of the bus companies, young people and Essex County Council.



## Essex Members Of The Youth Parliament (MYPs) Changing Transport For Young People

Martin said:

*“Public transport is an important issue for young people in Essex, the campaign has been a great success but we are still to realise the full results of the campaign as the bus companies implement the changes. It proves that if young people put their minds to something, it certainly can be done!”*

Brian Fordham, Area Operations Manager for Arriva said:

*“I was very impressed at the standard of debate from the young delegates, obviously we are very interested in our customers of today and the future. Debate centre around cost as seen through the eyes of the younger generation. After the conference we invited the young people to visit the company and take the discussion forward. We are keen for it to carry on.”*



Members of Leighton Linslade Youth Forum held a Snap Dance in Leighton Buzzard for under 18s. It was a great event, but very few young people from the surrounding villages were able to get there. It was also clear that of the handful of young people from rural areas participating in the forum, most had to rely on their parents to attend, as there was no adequate public transport available in the evenings when the forum met.

Forum members wanted to ensure that young people from all areas were represented, identifying the need for safe and adequate public transport provision for young people from rural areas. They recognised that this was not just about improving their membership, but found that young people wanted to access services and facilities in urban areas which were not available to them in their local communities. While public transport was available in the day, the evenings were a particular issue, and the forum set about addressing this. The idea was to provide a bus service, which would travel around rural areas to pick young people up and take them to one of the urban centres in the area.

The Chair of the Youth Forum, who was also the Member of the Youth Parliament (MYP) for the area, attended a conference where they met a representative of the Bedfordshire Rural Transport Partnership, an organisation which works to identify rural transport needs and to develop and implement innovative projects to meet those needs. Through discussions with Mel Parr, the Youth Worker supporting the forum, funding was secured for the project.

The forum established a consultation with young people throughout the area, focusing on the villages surrounding Leighton Buzzard. A questionnaire was sent to young people, through schools, the youth café, and directly to young people through members of the forum. The questionnaire asked where young people lived, where they wanted to get to, and why they wanted to get there?

Young people from the forum visited summer fetes in villages to speak directly with young residents, and held assemblies at schools, asking teachers to identify those young people from rural areas to speak with them.

The results from these different consultation methods showed that young people generally wanted to go to Milton Keynes, mainly to use leisure facilities and access youth projects. However, problems were encountered in identifying funding to take young people there, as Milton Keynes is in Buckinghamshire, and therefore outside the area covered by the Bedfordshire funders. The forum turned their attention to Leighton Buzzard.

Having identified leisure as the main reason young people wanted to travel; the forum approached local leisure facilities to gain their support for the project. The local cinema and the Leighton Buzzard Theatre, offered a discount to young people using a special bus service – tickets to members were £2 each, the local leisure centre agreed a 50p discount on membership, and youth centres supported the venture.

Young people from the forum, alongside the Youth Worker, examined different bus operators that could be used for the project, including 'The Buzzer' bus, which was popular for community transport. Young people were involved in planning the route

## Leighton Linslade Youth Forum Youth Bus

and timetable for the bus, and have subsequently designed the logo. They were also pivotal in promoting the project to their peers, keeping them informed, and giving viewpoints at meetings about the project.

The Youth Bus was launched, and travelled along a set route, collecting young people to take to Leighton Buzzard, and returning them home, providing safe, reliable public transport for young people in the evenings. A small charge was made to young people to ensure the bus could continue running.

On evaluation, it was found that this was not the most effective method, and the way that the Youth Bus works has now changed. Organisations, particularly youth groups, in local villages now pay £20 annual membership of the Youth Bus scheme, and can book the bus for an evening, at a charge of £1.50 per person.

This successful project has ensured that young people from organisations, and for a time individual young people, are able to travel to access facilities safely, with little financial cost, therefore opening up more opportunities for young people in rural areas. Under the new system youth groups in the Leighton Buzzard area can book journeys on any weekday evening to a destination of their choice. So far they've been to Leighton Buzzard, Milton Keynes, Dunstable, Hemel Hempstead and Phasels Wood. There is no need to come into the town first. The bus has recently done some multi village trips, picking up at several places en route. Some Buckinghamshire groups have joined, so it could soon be going to Aylesbury and beyond.

Rachel Hughes the current young people's support worker's advice to other young people undertaking transport projects is to:

*"keep going, don't give up. If you think you have a good idea then keep going with it, don't be put off, and really importantly, gain local support for what you're doing".*

The funding for this project now comes from South Bedfordshire District Council, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Rural Transport Partnership, Leighton-Linslade Area Committee, Bedfordshire County Council and Bedfordshire Police Partnership Trust.

This project has now been replicated within the county in Mid Bedfordshire learning from the experiences in Leighton-Linslade and the surrounding area. Their project is called, 'Escape to Xscape' and will service Ampthill, Flitwick and Maulden. Young people have a set bus that takes them over the county border to Milton Keynes gives them enough time to go bowling, the cinema or late night shopping. Young people are then returned home and dropped off at appropriate points through a series of stops near where the young people live. The project was designed to work in this way through a survey of 800 young people and a reference group who helped inspire the project. The project is currently awaiting for a approval for continuation funding.

There is a membership fee for young people who want to use the bus of £1 a year; they then pay £2 per journey.



## Leighton Linlade Youth Forum Youth Bus

Stephen Sleight, Field Worker, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity said:

*"I am delighted that the Youth Bus has gone from strength to strength after a slow start, as transport is such an important issue for young people in rural areas. There is often little to do in their villages and no evening bus services, leaving them trapped upon their return from school. I would recommend that anybody thinking of embarking upon a similar project involves young people from the outset. It is only by listening to young people that we can even attempt to meet their transport needs."*

Leighton Linlade Youth Forum was established in 1997 by young people to give other young people a voice for change. Particular successes apart from the Youth Bus have been the building of a skate park, and the establishment of a teenage advice centre, both of which were campaigned on for about four years.



*Bus Operator of the Year*

**Villager**

www.frenibuses.co.uk

R276 RAU

Concern arose in North Devon that a lack of affordable, accessible transport for young people might be a barrier to their continued participation in education post-16. A survey was undertaken to determine if this was an issue, and to find proposed solutions to the problem.

Rachel Smith, an ex-student of North Devon College and researcher, was responsible for the survey. She devised a questionnaire, which was targeted at a number of groups; current students at North Devon College, past students, and young people in year 10 at feeder schools thinking about post-16 education. The questionnaire was also sent to local employers to contact people interested in adult and community education, groups with specific access and sensory needs, and the survey was advertised in the local media. The questionnaires produced a 60% response rate, and focus groups were held with respondents drawn from each group. The results of the survey showed that young people wanted an easy, accessible and affordable transport system to attend college, with flexibility over times that discounts were available. They also wanted value for money, with discounts on other travel fares.

North Devon College is situated in Barnstaple, the biggest town in the North Devon area, and although the college site is in an urban area, students at the college travel from up to 50 miles away, from surrounding villages and often extremely rural areas. Bus travel is the main form of transport used, although before the Life in the Bus Lane project was launched, the college found problems with over-use of parking spaces, leaving no room for visitors to park at the college. From the results of the survey, it was evident that cheaper transport was needed for students, and an increase in the number of bus routes and services.

A smartcard system was one solution proposed in the questionnaire to solve the transport issue, and encourage more young people to remain in education by being able to affordably attend college. This was given general approval in the survey, and as a result Devon County Council, together with North Devon College and First Red Buses, applied to the Government Office of the South West Rural Bus Challenge fund, to get a scheme up and running. The initial grant of £640,000 enabled bus travel to be subsidised for students, four new bus routes to be supported, and helped in the purchase of 7 new buses, all with disability access. A second grant of £300,000 has enabled the project to continue. The establishment of new bus routes and the purchase of new buses has been of benefit not only to young people attending the college, but to adult learners, and the wider community, in providing more routes into Barnstaple.

Students pay £100 a year for a smartcard, which entitles them to travel to and from college free of charge daily, and half price travel after 6pm on weekdays, and any time at weekends. The cost without a smartcard is approximately £225 a year, and fee waivers for the smartcard are available for students living more than 3 miles from the college. Maria Clayton, Travel Co-ordinator at North Devon College, secured the support of over 80 local businesses for the project, where students with a smartcard enjoy discounts in local shops. The smartcard scheme has been so successful that it was part of the national pilot for the Connexions Card, and from September 2003 all new cards issued are connexions cards, so students gain reward points for attendance as well as the discounts already available through the smartcard scheme.

## North Devon – Life In The Bus Lane

Young people have been involved in the establishment of the scheme, and are particularly involved in its continued monitoring and development. Two graphics students at the college designed the marketing material, and students at the college came up with the 'Life in the Bus Lane' title.

A transport group has been established, with student representatives from each of the 20 bus routes into the college. Volunteers for the group have been recruited through advertisements in the college travel newsletter produced once a term, which informs students of the latest developments in the scheme. The transport group monitors the service, identifying where improvements need to be made with how the smartcard operates and ensuring all drivers know to give half-fares to card holders. The group meets with representatives from the operating bus company, First Red Buses, to discuss issues about the scheme, and give guidance to the bus company in developing it further. The group has also completed further travel audits in monitoring the project, which have been used in securing further funding from the project.

"Life in the Bus Lane" is part of a broader approach to student travel being undertaken by staff at North Devon College, which works to encourage more environmental thinking about travel, and brings students and staff together to address transport issues. A 'green travel' group has been established, which has previously had students on it and is currently advertising for student representatives, and has had some impact in changing attitudes towards travel in the college. No parking is now available to those under 19, as the improved bus system is felt to be sufficient in addressing student travel needs. This has alleviated the previous parking issue, and means the college is more accessible for visitors travelling by car. Staff at the college have details on the North Devon car share database, which links people working in Barnstaple at the hospital, North Devon Council, Devon County Council and the college. Students are able to sign up to a more open car share database to share lifts into Barnstaple. 40 bike-locking areas have been made available through the work of the green travel group.

A travel centre has now been established at the college, which was previously housed in the college Guidance Centre. Marcia Clayton sees the benefits of having a separate centre, and handles queries from a number of students in her work. Her current role in the college and the travel centre were established as a result of the Life in the Bus Lane project, and Marcia now advises students on problems they are experiencing with the scheme.

All the information about the Life in the Bus Lane project and associated activities have been made available on the North Devon Council website, providing information for students about applying for their smartcard and how to address problems with it, joining the focus group, results of the surveys and copies of the student newsletters. This accessibility has been extremely important in ensuring students are fully informed about the scheme, and has encouraged many students to use it. The project has been so successful that it has been nominated at the Bus Industry Awards, and was runner-up in the Buses in the Countryside category at the 2002 awards.

Check out their fun and informative website, [www.devon.gov.uk/buslane](http://www.devon.gov.uk/buslane).



Young people in the Ribble Valley area of Lancashire now have better youth service provision and better access to it. In one of the larger villages of the Ribble Valley, young people using the small youth centre identified with youth workers that the only people using the centre were young people from that village, and wanted to make it more accessible to other young people in the surrounding rural areas. Coupled with this was the identification by young people and the Ribble Valley Youth and Community Service, that the resources available at the centre were inadequate, and there was a need to move the youth service provision to a larger and more accessible area.

In March 2000, John Kirkham, from Ribble Valley Youth and Community Service attended a meeting at Ribble Valley Borough Council's Public Transport Forum, where he spoke with Kay Farrell, the Rural Transport Partnership Officer for the area, setting in motion the events leading to the relocation of the youth centre and the transport links provided to it. At a subsequent meeting they explored the option of having a bus service to provide transport from surrounding villages to the new centre, and identified this as the best solution in attracting more young people to the centre.

Following the meeting, the Youth and Community Service, together with young people, consulted residents in a number of rural villages across the Ribble Valley about the relocation of the youth centre and the proposed bus service. Young people from the youth centre devised presentations for a roadshow, which they took to surrounding villages, to consult young people in a creative way while promoting the youth centre to them. Questionnaires were also sent to residents. A comprehensive needs analysis was undertaken, enabling the Youth and Community Service to identify exactly where young people who wanted to use the centre were based.

From the results of the consultation, Bowland High School was identified as the best site for a new youth centre, with the greatest resources available. The Headmaster at the school has been extremely supportive of the project, and has made a number of facilities available to the youth centre. The only outstanding concern was that it is situated away from the main village, and is extremely isolated; therefore getting the transport issue right would be key in ensuring its success. Bus transport links from surrounding areas were infrequent, meaning that young people were often isolated in their villages or reliant on families for lifts.

With funding from the Rural Transport Partnership Scheme and working from the needs analysis undertaken by the Youth and Community Service, a Youthlink bus service has been established, providing transport to the youth centre at Bowland High School. A small charge is made for the service, with a discounted rate for young people. Although predominantly used by young people who can now have greater independence from their families and travel in more environmentally friendly ways, the resource is open to anyone within the community, adding a wider community benefit. Young people using the Youthlink bus enjoy discounts at the youth centre, a further incentive to encourage more young people to attend, and participate more fully with other young people. Four bus services originally ran to make up the Youthlink scheme, although one of those is not currently running. There are plans to try and re-establish this service, with better promotion to the areas it covered.

## Ribble Valley – Youthlink Bus

Young people have been involved throughout the project, from its establishment, through to preparing and delivering information at the roadshows, and now in monitoring the success of the project. They have formed a members committee at the youth centre, which discusses all aspects of the centre, and 4 young people are members of the management group responsible for the running of the centre. This group, which meets quarterly, brings together representatives from the school, the local Council, Youth and Community Service, Community Transport and the Rural Transport Partnership, as well as young people; this group monitors the effectiveness of the project as a whole and seeks to develop it further. Young people from these groups have recently made a presentation to the Rural Transport Partnership, explaining that without the Youthlink service, they would be unable to access the projects and resources they need.

Phil Evans, from Ribble Valley Youth and Community Service, explained the difficulty still faced in reaching young people in some of the very rural and isolated villages and hamlets in the area, recognising that while young people from the larger villages were being reached, it was a challenge to reach the more remote areas. He would like to see the fourth bus route re-established, in an attempt to encourage this hard to reach group. Accompanying this is the development of a new sports project, aimed at encouraging a different group of young people, and providing a much needed resource.

Kay Farrell, Rural Transport Partnership Officer, indicated that the scheme has been a success and is currently working with Lancashire Youth and Community Service to establish a similar project in the Longridge area.



## Rural Solihull Finds Hope In A Tin Can

Young people in the often forgotten rural areas of the Solihull Borough feel excluded from the social life their friends enjoy and marginalised when it comes to accessing services. These young people voiced their opinions to the detached youth workers that they came across working in their local area.

The young people told them that bus provision was seriously lacking, in some areas the buses finish at 6 o'clock and in others where it is as late as 10pm, this is only an hourly service that doesn't make all young people feel safe.

The young people of rural Solihull wanted to get their voices heard and ensure that someone was listening. The young people wanted a lasting and clear statement about the issues they face – they said:

*"it's not that we don't want to go bowling or to the cinema, its that we just can't."*

From this the young people, with support from their youth worker, got in touch with the Borough Council's Arts Development Officer who signposted them to some funding for a film project they could undertake. The young people found 'First Light' on the internet, [www.firstlightmovies.com](http://www.firstlightmovies.com). First light runs for the UK Film Council, lottery funded projects that are about young people making their own films, and the young people were quick to secure this funding.

From here the young people found themselves a film professional who would support them through the project, and the youth workers set up a series of workshops about actions, script writing and the technical process. This built-up the young people's confidence to appear in their own film, and whilst it was a comparatively lengthy process, enabled the young people to take manageable steps to achieve their goal.

The young people developed a film about what they would do if they had transport in their areas and how it would affect their lives. The film called, 'The Tin,' showed young people in their local area and how bored they were, they stumbled across a tin can that was a portal to all they wanted to do. It transported them to rock climbing and the bowling ring. It showed all the 'if onlies' they felt about living in their local area – what their friends took for granted, but they could not have because of the distance.

The young people did most of the filming themselves, being over-seen by the professional. The final outcome was a five minute film that formed the basis of bid to Community Transport, a national charity working in the Solihull area. The bid was considered by Centro, the passenger transport executive for the West Midlands under their Rural Bus Challenge Scheme. The bid was to provide a minibus that would provide a transport network to the young people in the isolated rural parts of Solihull to be able to access Solihull town, Coventry and Birmingham. Sadly the bid was unsuccessful due to a change in policy over the grant awards – they had started to be given on the basis of deprivation indices.

## Rural Solihull Finds Hope In A Tin Can

Maria McKee, Community Transport Officer of the local Rural Transport Project said:

*“In rural areas like these you will never be able to show deprivation indices because of the value of the houses, but it is not reflective of the disposable income, particularly, the amount young people have available. Here the issue is about exclusion and we need provision for these young people too.”*



© Countryside Agency Photo: Simon Warner

This case study shows that rural areas often lose out when funding is allocated on the basis of area-based indices of deprivation as social exclusion is much more dispersed in rural areas and is not concentrated in particular areas as it is in urban areas.

Even though the young people were not successful in their bid for funding, they were not deterred and have shown their video to councillors from neighbouring areas and have become a focus for various groups in the locality. From this the Rural Transport Project met with local MP, Caroline Spelman, to raise this as an issue and support these initiatives.

Caroline Spelman MP said:

*“This project has unearthed a hidden problem of the relative deprivation of young people in rural areas. The inadequacies of public transport in rural areas confines youth to communities with few amenities which leads to a concentrated problem; when they congregate other member of the community object. There are real opportunities for creative solutions using existing facilities such as, pooling the resources of minibuses owned by other schools and voluntary orgs and better out of hours’ use of schools.”*



Community residents, including young people, across South Doncaster were responsible for the establishment of a minibus service, which travels around villages in the area to take people into Doncaster town in the day, and young people to leisure facilities in the evening.

All the parish councils in South Doncaster worked together to produce a joint funding bid, resulting in £10,000 being awarded to each parish council for the project from the Countryside Agency's, Parish Transport Grant scheme. Following this, consultants were brought in to undertake a transport study, and consulted young people about their transport needs as part of this. The study targeted young people in rural areas, through youth groups, youth workers and outreach. It was felt that the needs of rural young people would not be best identified by going through schools, as local schools were in more urban areas, and had young people in attendance from a number of different rural and urban areas. Young people identified transport to leisure facilities at appropriate times as a priority.

Initially, a service was established that ran twice a day at peak times into the centre of Doncaster, and was used by residents from across the communities. Following the consultation with young people, an evening service has been established specifically targeted at young people, which takes young people from villages to a local indoor skatepark, and on to the Dome leisure centre in Doncaster, before returning later in the evening and visiting each village.

There are plans to extend the service to cover the whole Doncaster area, and support those rural villages currently with very limited transport options. Consultation continues, with young people involved in evaluating, monitoring and developing the service more fully. Young people have reported that they have really benefited from the service, and the level of use the minibus gets means the parish councils are in a strong position to access more funding, in order to develop the service more fully.







## South Lakeland Youth Council – Increasing Participation

Young people from South Lakeland Youth Council have had their share of challenge and success when addressing transport issues. When they saw that bus fares in the locality were approximately twice as much as in urban areas, due in part to the tourist trade in the Lake District, they organised a petition to present to the County Council transport steering group. The Youth Council gained support from others in schools and youth groups, targeting their peers but also gaining support from the wider community. Having gained 3500 signatures, they met with the group, which comprised County Council and bus company representatives. Their request fell on deaf ears, and they were unsuccessful with their campaign. Although no further progress has been made on this so far, Richard Franks, the Connexions Youth Participation Worker attached to the Youth Council, will be taking 50 young people to London for Westminster Day 2004, where the young people plan to question MPs about the issue and seek a resolution to the problem.

However, other campaigns have achieved more success. In looking at their own membership, the youth panel in South Lakeland, which comprises young people from the Youth Council, Connexions, voluntary organisations and young people involved with the County Council, identified that they did not have representation from each area that they cover, and wanted to address this so more young people could participate in the panel, from a widely diverse area. The panel sought funding to start a transport fund, to enable young people who couldn't attend the panel because of transport costs to participate. Connexions Cumbria gave £1000 to start up an account, and this was match funded by the County Council.

The youth panel opened an account, and established an account with a local taxi company. Young people manage the fund entirely. Having an account with a taxi company means young people can get to panel meetings easily and safely, and do not have to pay for transport to get there; taxis often pick up a number of young people from each area, therefore saving costs and travelling by more efficient means. Funding is also made available to young people who drive to meetings, and to parents. Car sharing is encouraged, and both young people and parents driving to meetings often take other young people from the same locality.

The panel has seen a huge increase in participation rates by young people, and Richard Franks has noticed that in a lot of cases, those young people from the most rural areas who haven't previously been able to attend often have the most to say, as they have the most issues to deal with in their local areas. The youth panel now has a better geographical spread, and is no longer dominated by young people from urban areas, but more reflective of the diverse and rural areas across the South Lakes.

Now success has been achieved in one area, the next stage planned is to spread this out to the 4 other youth panel areas across Cumbria, and to make the scheme County-wide. Members of the youth panel in South Lakeland have been busy showing the benefits of the scheme to potential funders, and hope the scheme will be active in other areas soon.

YOMAC – the Youth of the Moorlands Action Committee, is a district area youth forum bringing together young people from across the Staffordshire Moorlands. Meeting every two weeks, the forum was spending up to £150 for each meeting on travel expenses for young people participating, meaning that less money was available for other projects they wanted to run.

Young people from YOMAC recognised that they wanted to use their Local Authority funding to run projects but that without the appropriate transport service no-one would be able to attend, so they decided to apply to the local Rural Transport Partnership for funding to go towards their transport costs. Using the small grant they received of £2000 in the first year, they have changed the way they organise their travel to meetings, thereby reducing their costs to around £80 per meeting. Now, instead of reimbursing travel expenses, the young people from the forum hire a minibus from a local bus company, which picks young people up along a route they devised. This route changes according to the young people participating in the forum, although with the bus stopping in each village other young people are able to attend. When the forum holds events, they hire larger buses so that young people from across the area are able to attend. This has implications in terms of safety for young people; the provision of transportation to forum events means young people are not having to make their own way to events, and are therefore travelling to events in a safer way.

The forum feeds into the County Youth Forum, bringing together young people from across Staffordshire. Representatives from the County Transport Panel regularly meet with young people from the county youth forum, to identify and solve transport issues across the county. Issues currently being examined are safety on school buses and lighting at bus shelters, as well as college students paying full fare on public buses. These meetings have brought changes; one bus route served the rural village of Cheddleton, home to a number of young people, with a route only on the outskirts of the village, which the young people in the village did not feel was very safe. Through discussions with the County Transport Panel this has now changed, with a route directly through the heart of the village now in place.

YOMAC recognises that even with the support of the Rural Transport Partnership and the new approach to travel to the forum, not all young people across the Staffordshire moorlands are able to attend. Geographically the area is large, with a number of villages and hamlets spread across it. Of the 40 young people who attend YOMAC, 16 are from the most rural places in the area, and are not able to regularly attend. The contracted bus does not visit these areas, and Youth Participation worker Kate Martin, who supports the forum, does not see a way of bringing these young people to the twice-weekly forum meetings.

Some ways to combat this issue have, however, been found. Every few months the forum meeting moves to one of the more rural areas, with a minibus transporting young people as a group, enabling young people from the more rural areas in Staffordshire to participate. The young people in these areas have other opportunities to get their voices heard, primarily through a scheme that has established smaller forums in more rural villages.



## Staffordshire Moorlands – Youth Forums

A detached youth work project, with youth participation workers on foot visiting different villages, has benefitted from the introduction of a mobile youth centre provided by Staffordshire Youth and Community Service. When the youth workers arrived on foot, they could not always meet with young people, as with limited facilities in villages, young people were not hanging out in the village, in the way that young people in urban areas might. The detached work could therefore not take place in the same way, and the visibility the mobile centre brought has been important in attracting young people to the centre, and in having a presence in the community. Young people use the centre to meet as forums, and in some villages this has become so popular that the mobile centre is too small, with meetings moved to village halls. Previously to this, in some areas young people have had no place to meet communally other than in each others houses; in this way the mobile centre has provided a much needed space for young people.

There are plans to increase the number of villages visited by the mobile centre, and therefore the number of forums. A local village has recently expressed an interest in the centre, and the participation team are in the process of establishing work there. They plan to work quite intensively initially and raise the profile of the centre in the village, before establishing regular times to visit. The project remains positive, with good word of mouth and many rural areas making contact with the participation team, ensuring young people in the most remote areas are able to have their say and help change their communities.



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## Taxi Token Transport Scheme

A youth group in Mid Bedfordshire, called Sandy Action Youth, decided it was time for young people to be able to travel more easily around their area.

Mid Beds is primarily a rural area with three larger towns. The bus services are inadequate and transport costs are expensive. Young people were therefore prevented from participating in their communities and taking full advantage of the services on offer in the surrounding areas. Along with their local Youth Participation Officer they set out to create a scheme whereby young people could claim tokens from their local youth worker or community leader in order to access taxis so they could travel to activities and events.

They got together, designed posters and leaflets, promoted the scheme to local youth clubs, delivered the tokens to the youth workers, recruited the taxi companies who agreed to accept the tokens and began the scheme.

The scheme initially ran for three months and over 60 young people were carried and over 40 journeys took place. The scheme went well for all parties; the young people were able to participate in more events, the taxi companies found the redemption of the tokens simple and quick, finding that they had a whole new client base and an increase in profits, the youth workers had more time to do youth work and parents spent less time being taxis!

The scheme has now been expanded and will continue into the future. More taxi companies are now accepting tokens and more youth organisations are being given the chance to use them. The monitoring system used in the pilot scheme (a series of logs completed by the young people, the taxi drivers and the youth workers) is still in place, although only the youth workers and taxi drivers are being asked to complete them now. This is to monitor the type of journeys taking place and to see whether they are encouraging young people to participate more readily.

The tokens can now also be obtained by cashing in Connexions reward points on the Connexions Card website. This means that young people from Learning Centres in Mid Beds can also use the tokens to travel independently and without the constraints of going to youth events. By using the reward scheme young people are given a means of travelling independently as well without it breaking the bank!

Tokens can also be obtained by answering the monthly surveys on the Mid Beds District Council youth website, [www.thisisyouth.co.uk](http://www.thisisyouth.co.uk). One person's name is pulled out a hat each month and they receive £10 of tokens for taking part.

The project has been funded by Mid Beds District Council, which created the 'Youth Initiative Fund' that has £30,000 a year for three years to support this project, which is widening and extending the access of facilities for young people locally. Mervyn Bell, Connexions worker said:

*"The Taxi Token Scheme is a good example of multi agency working, it has kept young people at the heart of the initiative and is combating rural isolation, enabling young people to access a very wide range of opportunities and experiences.*

*"Young people having been making the links between services, it was their idea to be able to use Connexions Card points within this scheme and we were able to take that on board. Alongside this work young people will be working to develop a Rural Access Strategy for the Bedfordshire & Luton Connexions Services."*







## Derbyshire – Young People B\_Line Their Views

Derbyshire County Council is proud of the responsibility it has taken to facilitate young people's travel within the county and beyond. For many years Derbyshire CC has provided a voluntary scheme for young people where 14 to 18 year olds (inclusive) receive half fares on all buses if they carry the appropriate card.

In 2000, the transport department running the programme wanted to re-examine the scheme and make it more young people friendly and this time involve young people in its development. A co-ordinator was appointed, and most of this action happened with the youth forum, with which the relationship still exists with the county council still meeting with the forum on a regular basis.

At this point the scheme was extended to all young people under 19 (and still in full time education). The first change was to have two cards, an orange one for under 14 year olds who currently get the discount from the bus companies and a blue one for those 14–18 who are still in full time education. For those under 14, the card acts as a proof of under age card whereas the blue card entitles its holder the concession, which Derbyshire County Council pays to the bus companies. Currently over 90% of young people applicable for the card, carry and use them in Derbyshire. The card is known as the B\_Line Card.

A consistent benefit for the card holders, regardless of age is the discounts they can now get in shops. All the way through the co-ordinator has asked young people where they want the discounts – to date 500 places in Derbyshire provide some kind of discount or promotion to the young person carrying the card. There is opportunity through the website to tell the co-ordinator where else you want discounts and give feedback about how you use your discount card.

The B\_line card also provides the forum and council with a means of consulting young people; young people can email the office (which happens very regularly), feed in through the website or the B\_line magazine.

Developing the website is a team of ten young people known as the 'web panel'. These young people have recently redesigned the whole site so it is more applicable to young people and really engaged them to have their say more often.

One real issue that young people had with the scheme, which was raised through emails, the website, the magazine and the youth forum, was that there was a 9pm curfew. The young people found this unacceptable and pushed the county council to raise this issue with the bus companies. Within a short time scale the issue was addressed and young people can travel twenty four-seven (as long as there is a bus running).

Over the half term the young people wanted to use the buses more but money, as always was an issue, so the county council funded a free week. Where young people could travel within Derbyshire for free! This was too successful, the buses were packed, so subsequent holiday times have had a small fixed fee of 30p per journey.

## Young People B\_Line Their Views

Through the B\_line scheme the youth forum runs its own elections and those for their members of the UK Youth Parliament. The scheme has also seen young people consulted on other transport issues. Firstly on school buses which has started a dialogue on the website with the bus operators. Recently the young people have had their say on re-establishing the old train line taken up by Dr. Beeching which travels from Matlock to Buxton. The young people came back with a clear view that they needed more sustainable transport and a system that connected better, this train line was one of their solutions.

Find out more about b\_line by checking out their website, **[www.derbyshire.gov.uk/b\\_line](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/b_line)**.

## Gloucestershire – Survey Of Young People’s Bus Use

Among a number of the various Youth Councils and Youth Forums in the Gloucestershire area, transport has been identified as a major issue for young people. Young people across Gloucestershire, aged 14 and over, at present have to pay an adult fare for the buses. There are issues about the attitudes of bus staff towards young people, with cases reported about drivers not stopping to pick young people up from bus stops. In rural areas particularly, young people have been reporting that the bus service is infrequent, and that buses are not available at times when young people want to travel.

These reports have led to a county-wide survey being undertaken, led by young people who were MYPs at the time. Courtney Daley, Ted Walsh and Valerie Dickerson, with the support of Lyn Oatey – the local youth participation worker, sent a survey to 8000 young people across Gloucestershire. They received 1400 responses, a 16% response rate. Dave Hodgetts, a former MYP in Gloucestershire from 2000–2002, has worked with Lyn as a young researcher, to collate and analyse the survey responses.

With the surveys analysed the young people are scheduled to meet to decide on a campaign strategy on the issues identified strongly in the findings. They have already had interest from a number of key players in their work; Connexions, the County Council, the Post 16 Education Transport Partnership, and the Director of the major transport company in Gloucestershire. The young people are also to produce their findings as a report which will be available by the end of March 2004 – and can be ordered via Lyn Oatey (lyn.oatey@virgin.net). The UK Youth Parliament was pleased to be able to support the work of the young people in Gloucestershire with a grant of £200.00 which will be put towards the cost of transporting the young people to meetings with the interested parties, particularly the bus companies to find direct solutions – these meetings are due to take place at the beginning of March 2004.

It is hoped that in conjunction with forming a campaign on a county-wide basis, young people from local Youth Councils and Youth Forums will campaign on the issues at a local level too, particularly where a specific need has been identified. In rural areas such as the Cotswolds and the Forest of Dean, frequency of service has been highlighted as a major issue, while in Tewkesbury there are plans to meet with the local bus company to address the particular needs of young people there. This collective and co-ordinated approach is a deliberate attempt by young people to work together to address their common issues.

Lyn Oatey explained:

*“Young people in Gloucestershire are really going for it. They’re getting the evidence they need, and arranging meetings with adults in positions of power to really influence their thinking”.*

Whilst still in the initial stages of the campaign, the young people in the area are demonstrating clear ways in which they will take their campaign forward, to achieve change for young people across the County.

The young people will be working with Gloucestershire Education Transport Partnership to ensure their results are acted upon. The young people have regular meetings scheduled to look at how best to present their findings and create positive change for their peer group. Local youth councils and youth forums will be essential to the success of their project.

## ANNEX 1 – Examples of Countryside Agency Work Relating to Young People

The Countryside Agency is funded by Defra. It is the statutory body working to make:

- **the quality of life better for people in the countryside;**
- **the quality of the countryside better for everyone.**

### Transport projects

Examples of projects funded through our Rural Transport Partnership scheme include:

- The provision of two multi purpose people carriers for young people in a number of parishes of the Stroud and Cotswold districts to access educational and recreational opportunities.
- A project in East Durham where young people and friends can book a bus, as long as there are 2 responsible adults traveling with them. It costs them £1 each and they choose their destination. This scheme was introduced following consultation with young people which identified the need for it.
- 38 Wheels to Work (W2W) scheme which provide access to employment and learning opportunities for individuals who would not otherwise be able to access them due to a lack of suitable public transport. Although not designed exclusively for them, young people make up the majority of the clients of such schemes.

### Addressing the needs of young people in rural areas

The Countryside Agency is running a dedicated programme to investigate ways of improving the life chances of young people between the ages of 14 and 25 in rural areas, through research, demonstrating good practice and advice to policy makers on how to deliver policies and programmes that meet these needs. Work includes:

- An audit of government programmes and policy initiatives to understand where policies overlap and where there are gaps.
- A map of CA work on young people to absorb the lessons of existing research and good practice on the issues facing rural young people.
- Demonstration projects which deliver real outputs for young people who face difficulties in rural areas and at the same time illustrating how national programmes can join up to be more effective in rural areas

### Other research and demonstration activities

- **Children's Fund** – A study to monitor the proportion of the Fund allocated to rural areas and the number of projects supported by the Fund which benefit rural children and young people.
- **Aspirations of young people in rural and urban areas** – This survey in 2003 of 606 young people aged 14–24 in both urban and rural areas found that rural respondents were more likely to see poor leisure facilities and job opportunities as the worst things about their rural location.



## ANNEX 1 – Examples of Countryside Agency Work Relating to Young People

- **National Forum for Rural Children and Young People.** This Forum was set up by the Countryside Agency in 1999. The main aims of the Forum are to influence policy, disseminate good practice, ensure that the voices of children and young people are heard and provide a forum for organisations to think strategically and exchange information.

### Good Practice Guidance

- **Two wheels work** – A good practice guide for developing and implementing Wheels to Work schemes, May 2002 (ref. CA 108)
- A good practice guide to the implementation of **Connexions in Rural Areas**, October 2003. (ref. CA 150)

Both available free of charge from Countryside Agency publications (tel: 0870 120 6466).

To find out more about our work and for information about the countryside, visit our website: [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

## ANNEX 2 – Children and Young People: What the Department for Transport is doing

The Department for Transport's (DfT) aim is transport that works for everyone. To that end we will work in partnership with others to:

- Tackle congestion
- Improve accessibility
- Reduce casualties
- Respect the environment
- Support the economy

The Department is committed to ensuring that children and young people have a transport system that works for them, making transport provision more responsive to their needs and those of their parents and communities. We want all children and young people, including the hardest to reach and those facing disadvantage and inequality, to get excellent service and to involve them in the development of those services. Our Children and Young People Action Plan <http://www.dft.gov.uk> outlines our priorities.

### Examples of what we have achieved so far

- Commissioned a major research programme looking at the transport needs of children and young people. We will report on progress in the Spring 2004.

### School Travel

- Together with DfES announced £50 million of additional funding in support of our joint *Travelling to School* initiative. This will help local authorities and schools to develop school travel plans to reduce the need for the present level of car use for journeys to school and to improve road safety. School travel plans provide an excellent opportunity for young people to say how they would like to travel to school and to work with their local authority and others to draw up plans for making this possible.
- Produced *Guidelines for safer journeys to school*: over the last 10 years journeys to school by car have nearly doubled from 16% to 29%. Only one in eleven primary pupils goes to school unaccompanied and the average length of journey by secondary school children has increased by a third.
- Developed the "School Run" bus drivers training pack to improve relations between drivers and young people.
- Established a Cycling Projects Fund of around £4.5m for a range of cycling projects. Many grants were made to fund both facilities and training opportunities enabling more students to be able to cycle to schools or colleges. The grants made included cycle parking, improved access and cycle training.
- On the specific issue of children with mobility difficulties, the Department has produced a video and supporting literature entitled 'It's not my problem'. This material is designed to promote better quality special needs transport services for children as young people who need specialised provision to get to school, attend a youth club, or go on holiday.

## ANNEX 2 – Children and Young People: What the Department for Transport is doing

### Yellow Bus

- First and other operators are running innovative yellow school bus schemes, which offer an improved service. Features of the scheme include pick-up points at or close to home, a seat for every child, seatbelts and regular drivers specifically trained in customer care, safety, security and child behaviour. The operators believe that such schemes will cut car journeys to school, and reduce pollution, congestion and accidents.

### Local Transport Provision

- Reviewed all of our Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and Annual Progress Reviews (APRs) to assess local transport provision for young people.

### Safer Cycling

- The Driving Standards Agency together with the Department, has produced *The Road Code* – a document based on the Highways Code specifically written and designed for younger road users. For example, it contains advice and guidance on cycling proficiency, the Green Cross Code, and general information on staying safe on the road, both as young pedestrians and cyclists.
- Arrive Alive is a similar document which can be used by children and their carers. It is free and also used by professionals in teaching children. Cycle Smart comics and posters are also available for younger children.

### Personal Security

- We have undertaken research into young people's perception of personal security on public transport. A report of the findings was widely distributed to transport operators to inform service delivery.

### Road Safety

- Undertaken a comprehensive review of road safety strategy for young people. A range of guidance material has been published by the Department aimed at children, parents, teachers and road safety professionals.

### Road Safety: Pedestrians

- Worked with young people to assess different creative approaches of communicating pedestrian road safety to form a cinema, radio and poster campaign. Over 800 young people were involved in a subsequent tracking study evaluating the impact of the campaign.
- Undertaken a programme of research based on establishing and explaining child (5–15) pedestrian behaviour **Child Perception Phase 1** which has led to the development of various practical child pedestrian training courses by the Department and Local authorities e.g. Let's decide Walkwise and Footsteps.

## **ANNEX 2 – Children and Young People: What the Department for Transport is doing**

- Funding and evaluating a research project implementing 103 schemes to train 5 to 7 year olds in pedestrian skills in 64 English local authorities. Schemes have been launched in areas where deprivation and children's casualties are particularly high. The purpose of the project is to see how the Kerbcraft training scheme, initiated in Drumchapel in Glasgow, can work in a variety of different areas and circumstances; and to advise on how projects can be made sustainable long-term. Similar schemes are running in Scotland and Wales.

### **Road Safety: Campaigns**

- The Hedgehogs campaign, which has been running since 1997, remains a popular and effective form of advertising simple road safety messages to young children. Again, research is being undertaken to assess how useful these are at communicating messages. Further brand extension is planned for the coming year.

### **Road Safety: Future Car Drivers**

- Examiners give free presentations to 16–19 year olds in a wide range of organisations including schools, colleges, young offenders units and the armed forces. Presentations include guidance on: vulnerable road users; adopting the correct attitude; speed; drink and drugs; choosing a driving instructor; and the practical and theory (including hazard perception) driving tests.



## ANNEX 3 – Children and Young People: What the Department of Food and Rural Affairs is doing

- The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs is responsible for promoting the Government's aim of sustainable development which, in general, means a better quality of life for all, both now and for future generations taking account of economic, environmental and social factors.
- Defra is committed to ensuring that children and young people have the opportunity to voice their opinions about the policies and services that affect their lives in a real and meaningful way. The department created a Children and Young People's Team in 2003 whose focus is to facilitate the effective engagement of Defra's policy divisions with young people.
- In doing this, we have developed a number of strong links policy units internally, other government departments, NGOs, youth organisations, young people and voluntary organisations.
- Our action plan <http://www.defra.gov.uk/schools/policies.htm> outlines the framework for participation, and so far we have made the following achievements:

### Biodiversity Project

We conducted a project to find ways of engaging with young people on the issue of biodiversity. The programme used a number of techniques and developed partnerships with the RSPB, Wildlife Trusts, Eden Project along with Defra officials and professionals in the field. We consulted with young people from all social groups in workshop and focus group settings. We produced a website which had an interactive questionnaire and the opportunity for young people to create a biodiverse habitat. Our findings have now been published. See <http://www.defra.gov.uk/schools/policies.htm>

### Research

The department commissioned research (based on recent research literature, consultations with Defra policy officials and a focus group with young people) that would help develop our knowledge on several key areas: young people's attitudes, their experiences, demographic characteristics and circumstances. This will provide a basis about the best course of action for strengthening policy areas work with young people.

### Waste and Recycling

Friends of the Earth have created an annual week of activities to raise awareness of environmental issues, which is aimed at Key stage 3 pupils. The focus for 2003 was waste and activities took place between 3–7 November. Schools were invited to enter the Spotlight competition, designed to highlight the most exciting waste activities going on in Shout About Week.

Defra worked with Friends of the Earth to select candidates for the competition and the winners, Riverston School in South East London, met with Environment Minister, Elliot Morley at the houses of Parliament. Find out more at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/issues/2003/waste11a.asp>

## **ANNEX 3 – Children and Young People: What the Department of Food and Rural Affairs is doing**

### **Rural White Paper Review (consulting young people)**

Defra, working with the Forum for Children and Young People and Countryside Agency met with young people (aged under 18) and youth workers/service providers in Worcestershire to discuss their views regarding quality of life in their rural area and any concerns that they had. Transport came out as the major issue for young people. To read their views go to

**[http://defra.gov.uk/rural/pdfs/rafe/meeting7/7\\_6rural\\_children.pdf](http://defra.gov.uk/rural/pdfs/rafe/meeting7/7_6rural_children.pdf)**

For more information see our Children, Young People and Education Website at:

**<http://www.defra.gov.uk/schools/default.htm>**



