

# Newham Youth Safety Action Team

# Listening Campaign

March 2022

## AIM OF THE LISTENING CAMPAIGN

The campaign aimed to explore the views of children and young people about the safety of public transport and their prospects of living and working in Newham once they leave education.

## RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

We listened to children and young people attending schools and colleges in Newham. We also ran community conversations from a group of students who had completed the survey.

## THE SURVEY

The main tool of the campaign was a project survey (Dec 21-Jan 22) which gathered information on young people's experiences of public transport as well as their work readiness. The information was collated and analysed by the University of East London (UEL). The Newham Youth Safety Action Team (comprising of both students and educators) guided what to examine during the research process.

## TAPPING INTO COMMUNITY NEEDS

The results of this study will inform the practices of the organisations involved (e.g. local schools and colleges) to help shape future activities, interventions and campaigns. These will be co-

developed and co-delivered with young people to promote safety on public transport and their successful transition into the local workforce.

## PARTNERSHIP

TELCO (also known as Newham Citizens), a local branch of Citizens UK, had invited UEL to become research partners for the campaign. Together they systematically collected information in support of Newham Youth Safety Action team stated outcomes.

Other partners included:

- St Bonaventure's Catholic School
- London Design & Engineering UTC
- Sarah Bonnell School
- School 21
- Community Links
- New Vic College
- University of East London

## ETHICAL APPROVAL

University of East London Research Ethics Sub-Committee

Reference No: ETH2021-0066

## ACKNOWLEDGING ASSISTANCE AND CONTRIBUTIONS

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Shan Zhang  
Prof Andrew Ravenscroft

# Insights from the Listening Campaign: Safety on Public Transport and Living and Working in Newham

## 1,037 survey respondents

**90.5%**  
live in  
Newham



**11.4%** Aged 11  
and under

**51.5%** Aged 12-14

**30.5%** Aged 15-17



**47%** Female

**50%** Male

**3%** Prefer not to say



**36.5%** Sarah Bonnell

**49.7%** St Bonaventure's

**13.1%** New Vic College



At St Bonaventure we have been involved in listening to students across our school on their experiences of safety. We sent out a survey that reached almost 550 students to understand how they could feel safer. We wanted to know what their solutions were. We spoke to people in forms across the school from 6th Form students through to Year 7's to get a good picture of what's going on. We heard from them about the big challenges people have and we know we need to see change and ways to make Newham safer and we want to be part of the solution!"

Tomas Tamasauskis, St Bonaventure's Catholic School

# PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Who do you travel to school or college with?



on your own  
**49.1%**



family  
**28.4%**



friends  
**21.8%**

How do you get to school or college?

(The vast majority of young people travel using more than one mode of transport)



bus  
**65%**



tube  
**2.3%**



cycle  
**2%**



train  
**7%**



walk  
**51.3%**

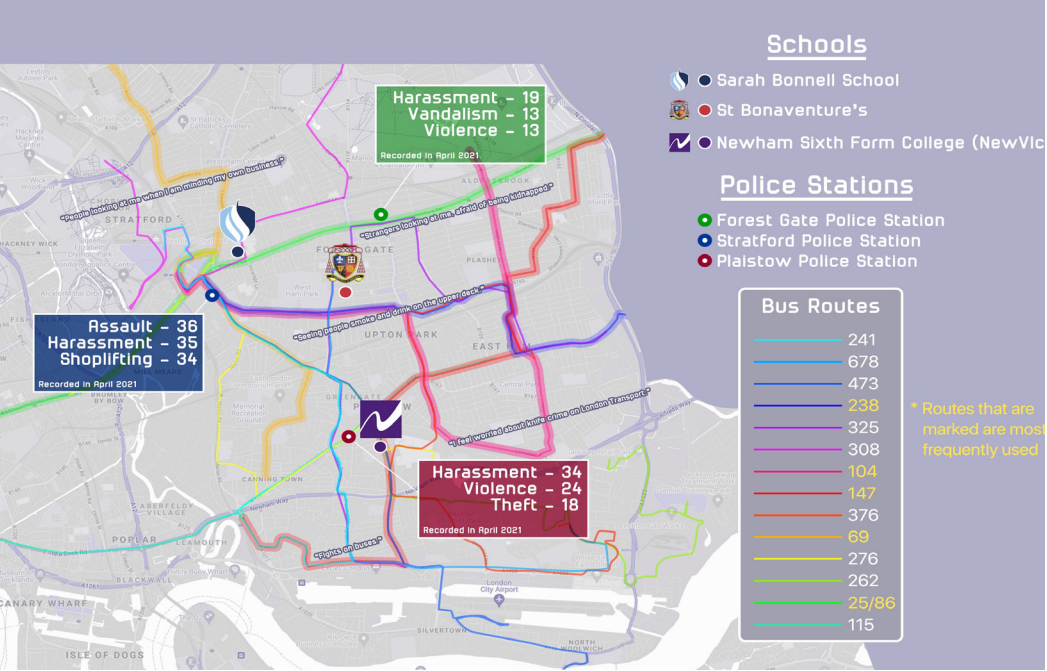
# PUBLIC TRANSPORT

## Reasons for feeling unsafe on public transport

REASON	SOLUTIONS
<b>COVID-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus drivers' stewardship               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Control antisocial behaviour</li> <li>- Enforce COVID-19 measures</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>SAFETY ON BUSES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of stewardship from bus driver</li> <li>• Lack of cleanliness and hygiene</li> <li>• Road safety and fear of accidents</li> <li>• Perceived dangerous driving style</li> </ul>
<b>CROWDS ON BUSES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No personal space</li> <li>• Uncertainty over people's intentions</li> <li>• Sexual harassment</li> </ul>
<b>ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear of crime: pickpocketing, knife crime, gangs</li> <li>• Racial harassment, islamophobia</li> <li>• Rowdy, loud , intimidating people</li> <li>• Feeling of being watched/ followed</li> </ul>
<b>FEELING UNSAFE IN THE DARK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travelling with family: improved perceived safety</li> <li>• CCTVs emergency buttons and body scanners on buses: more controlled environment</li> <li>• Introduce school buses with responsible adult supervision</li> </ul>
<b>FEELING UNSAFE IN THE DARK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less people on buses: feeling more exposed, more chance to be approached</li> <li>• Fear of crime: gangs, kidnapping while walking to and from bus stops</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing school timetables: avoiding travelling in the dark (long journeys)</li> <li>• Increase bus frequency in the evening: less waiting times in bus stops</li> </ul>	

# PUBLIC TRANSPORT

## Common bus routes and crime in the area



“

At St Bonaventure safety has always been a big issue. We know where the crime hotspots are in our borough, and this can affect our students and their way of getting home. Stratford comes up every time we do listening. So, we went down to create Safe Haven's in the Stratford Centre so young people could go there if they feel unsafe. We can't take all the credit for ourselves as we had a little bit of help from Sarah Bonnell. We even had some help from the Mayor of Newham as well. Recently we have been thinking about how we can make the routes to school safe on transport and have surveyed our school, from our smallest Year 7s up to the young adults in 6th Form. We can't wait to take action for change again soon.”

Guylian Vaz-Pereira, St Bonaventure's Catholic School



# SARAH BONNELL SCHOOL

## ISSUES/CONCERNS WE HAVE HEARD:

Youth safety is important to us because coming from an all girls school and being young women, we often feel more targeted and vulnerable. We deserve to feel safe in our journeys to and from school.

## EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES OF THESE:

- Crowded buses
- Inappropriate catcalling and unwanted attention from men
- Young women of colour not being represented in the media

## OUR STORY AS A TEAM:

We are all young women and want to feel empowered in our local community. Unfortunately, we have all experienced feelings of worry and anxiety on our journeys to and from school. We feel that we are more targeted as young women. Boys and men may never truly understand how our lives are impacted as women feeling unsafe but having the conversation is a step forward.

## STATISTICS:

As part of the Newham Youth Safety Listening Campaign which took place between December 2020 - January 2021, we were able to identify that:



**70.9%**

of young people travel to and from school / college on their own or with friends – with no adult supervision.



**65%**

of young people use the bus and **53%** also walk in some part of their route.



**62.9%**

Of the survey respondents were children up to the age of only 14.

## POWERFUL STORIES WE HAVE HEARD:



I got on a bus at 6pm and a boy was behind me and had left his football practice (he looked about 12) and asked the bus driver to get on but he forgot the Oyster - the driver said no. I felt bad for him.



One time I was getting the bus with my mum and I didn't have my Oyster card. My mum asked if I could get on as I have free travel but the driver said I had to pay and "that's not how it works".



I was on the bus going to a cousin's house, wearing school uniform. Some guy came up to me and said call me - he could see I was a child from the uniform.



9pm at night, me and my sister were on our way home from tuition, saw a guy who looked drunk. Later on, whilst waiting, the man got his phone out and started filming me.





# ST BONAVENTURE'S

## ISSUES/CONCERNS WE HAVE HEARD:

As a school, we have heard that students have had trouble with getting on buses due to conflicts with bus drivers, problems with oyster zip cards and timings with buses.

## EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES OF THESE:

- Buses not arriving on time
- Buses overcrowded.
- Buses not arriving at all
- Students being refused

## OUR STORY AS A TEAM:

Many of our members in our team have experienced negative events on public transport. One member has been made to walk home, during winter in the dark, although he was wearing his school uniform with the official crest. This is because bus drivers have repeatedly decided to refuse the student from getting onto the bus.

## STATISTICS:

As part of the Newham Youth Safety Listening Campaign which took place between December 2020 - January 2021, we were able to identify that:



**43.8%**

of students within our school use the public transport system daily to get to and from school.



**54.1%**

of staff within our school use the public transport system and **40.5%** of staff use the system alongside students.



Students feel that the system is, at times, unsafe and dangerous. Situations concerning students on buses have occurred and **21.6%** of staff have spoken about having to intervene.

## POWERFUL STORIES WE HAVE HEARD:



Sometimes the buses are not always clean as you may want to sit down and turn to see liquid poured all over the seat.



There have been intoxicated individuals on buses who make me feel uncomfortable and unsafe.



The bus can, at times, be really full and the drivers refuse to let us in.



Bus drivers have been rude and have not threatened to not let me on the bus if he saw me the next time



# NEWVIC SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

## ISSUES/CONCERNS WE HAVE HEARD:

As a college we have heard that students find it very difficult to travel to and from college safely. There has been a number of issues at the front of the college which means a number of students are anxious to leave college. There has been an increased amount of police presence around the college which makes the students uncomfortable. Students want to feel safe when travelling to and from college.

## EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES OF THESE:

- Not being able to get on a bus even with college ID on
- Police intimidating students when they are just trying to get to a lesson
- Public transportation being very crowded at times
- Students sometimes feeling like they are being followed when walking home
- Female students are being harassed by males when trying to travel to/from college.

## STATISTICS:

As part of the Newham Youth Safety Listening Campaign which took place between December 2020 - January 2021, we were able to identify that:



**65%** of young people take a bus as part of their commute to school/ college



**49.1%** of young people travel to and from school/ college on their own

## POWERFUL STORIES WE HAVE HEARD:



Someone tried to rob me when I was walking at night.



I frequently feel followed or unsafe when walking by myself.



I always wanted to study and make something of myself but the environment I grew up and the people around me led me down a bad path.



We shouldn't have to be afraid to walk around on our streets, hangout with friends or walk home from college. We are tired of hearing stories of young people, some of whom we know getting harassed, kidnapped and sometimes even killed when all they are trying to do is walk home.

## NEWHAM CITIZENS YOUTH SAFETY ACTION TEAM WILL:

Run workshops by young people across Newham Citizens members, supporting young people to use Newham Council's 'journey map'. The workshops will explore the gendered nature of safety, and support young people to know what to do to prevent danger and what to do if they see or find themselves in a dangerous situation.

## POLICY ASKS TO TRANSPORT FOR LONDON:

1. Evidence from the Greater London Authority shows, between 3pm and 10pm on a school day, are a lost opportunity in deterring young people from being exposed to criminal exploitation. Transport for London: Will you introduce a protocol in Newham to allow students who forget their ZIP Cards to still travel if they are in school uniform or have their college card, so they can get home as safely as possible at that crucial time?
2. Will Transport For London work with our Youth Safety Action team to improve the transport system in Newham to ensure thousands of children across the borough can get home quicker in the after school period?

# What students and pupils say matter most to them to keep them safe and for brighter futures.

SARAH BONNELL	NEW VIC COLLEGE	ST BONAVENTURE'S
Job opportunities for young people to gain relevant work experience	More apprenticeships and job opportunities for young people	More job/apprenticeship/work experience opportunities
	Address the attainment gap in education	
More career fairs and workshops		
	Reduce knife crime	Tackle crime, mainly knife crime
Create youth clubs to provide a safe place for young people		Create more youth clubs/centres with various activity options
	Provide financial support for young people	Financial support and affordable housing
More mental health support, funding and campaigns, mainly during exam period		More mental health support

## Addressing the needs of young people: Recommendations

### SAFETY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- Youth clubs to provide safe places for young people and entertainment in the evenings.
- A Transport System in Newham which is designed and continually improved to get thousands of children home safely, including school buses for young people and more buses on the busiest routes at peak times.
- TFL and Bus Operators to allow students travel in even if they forget their Zipcard, if they are wearing their School Uniform.

### INCLUSIVE GROWTH FOR LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE

- Paid work experience and apprenticeship opportunities in the community and at local businesses.
- Career fairs for and in the community, meeting young people where they are whether it's School or College.

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