

## Transport Strategy consultation response

### Question 1: Integrated Transport

Transport Integration means that whatever types of transport are involved, they all operate as one seamless system, and generally, make public transport as easy as possible.

#### Ticketing

We would like to see a ticket system similar to the Transport for London Oyster Card in operation across Edinburgh, and would fully support the implementation of the Scottish Governments proposed 'Saltire Card' scheme. This would reduce the need for people to pay as they get on the bus or tram, and we believe this would help to reduce the time it takes to get on the bus and make journey times quicker, especially during peak times.

#### Information

The information provided on the Bustracker at specified stops and on the downloadable app is of great benefit to our students on and off campus. We would like to see more bus stops getting the Bustracker system across the city.

#### Accessibility and Interchange

The following information comes from a survey that we sent out to Heriot-Watt students.

- Bus frequency

Most of our students thought that the frequency of the buses could be improved. During peak times, such as 8am-10am and 5pm-6pm, the buses were not deemed to be frequent enough. This goes for all services that come to the Riccarton campus, including the 25, 34, and 45. It was generally thought that the morning time buses to campus were worse than the ones leaving campus at night. Some students have struggled to get into campus on time during week day morning's due to the bus times and overcrowding. Students would also like to see more buses running at the weekend. We would therefore like to see more buses running to and from Riccarton, especially during peak times and more frequent buses on the weekend. We believe there is an urgent need for this, especially as more organisations move out to the Heriot-Watt research park.

- Overcrowding

A large majority of our students noted that a lot of buses out to Riccarton were extremely overcrowded, especially, but not exclusively, during peak times. During the morning peak times students complained of buses being so overcrowded and six or seven buses can go past them until there is space on a later bus. This has caused huge problems for students getting to class or labs on time. Because of the precarious nature of the buses in the morning, some students have to leave their house an hour earlier than they planned too. Some of the number 34s and most of the 45s in the morning are single decker, and students have expressed that they would like to see all buses to campus during the peak times to be double decker. This will certainly help to ensure there is more space on the buses you already put on.

The first few weeks of the semester are usually the worst for overcrowding in morning buses, but this whole year has seen a weekly trend in overcrowding. This could be due in part to increased student numbers on our own campus, and other student campuses on the 25, 34, and 45 bus routes. The increased number of students should be taken into account and more buses should be put on to Riccarton to ensure that our students can arrive in time for their classes.

With Napier opening halls at Fountain Park in September there will need to be a much greater provision of 34 buses in the mornings. The service is already exceeding capacity, and this will only be exasperated

once new student accommodation is built. We would like to see more 34 buses put on to help with the increased numbers of students who will be using this service.

- Haymarket/Gyle interchange and links

To help combat the overcrowding issues that our students face, some students have reported that they get another bus to the Sighthill campus bus stop and change onto another bus out to Riccarton. For this reason, we would like to see an official Interchange at the Sighthill bus stop which has bus times matched up for an easier route to Riccarton. We hope that this would also make it quicker for our students who have to change busses because their regular bus to campus is full and they have to get another bus to Sighthill.

- Bus links from Edinburgh Park/the tram stop to Riccarton

We would also like to see a bus link from Edinburgh Park and the new tram stop to Riccarton. We believe that this will encourage more people to use public transport. The people that already use Edinburgh Park currently have to walk from the station to campus. This walk is not fully lit and does not have a continuous walking path. This makes it a dangerous route to walk.

- Road works

Most of our students complained about the amount of road works that are being carried out during term time. It would be great if these were planned for the summer when traffic and buses are quieter. This is particularly troublesome during our exam periods, therefore, we would like to see all road works avoid this time.

### **Question 2: Supported Bus Services**

Supported bus services are subsidized from other routes, and help to maintain and improve the extent of coverage of services across Edinburgh.

- Number 45 increased service

Students who use the number 45 to travel to Riccarton complain that it is not frequent enough during the week, and it should run at the weekends. We understand that this bus route might not be the most profitable, but we believe that it should be increased as more students would use it if it was more frequent and had a service running to campus at the weekends. A more frequent 45 might also encourage more students to live in other parts of the city other than Gorgie and Dalry, but this would only happen if the bus route was as accessible as the 25 and the 34.

### **Question 10: Travel Planning**

The Council could employ an officer whose remit is to liaise and consult with major employers and organisations on travel planning.

Yes, we do agree with a person being appointed with a specific remit to engage with businesses and other organisations on travel planning. We think it is imperative that this post holder also engages with Universities and Colleges across the City.