

Connexions Cornwall and Devon

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Background late 1990's

Connexions was originally set up in response to Bridging the Gap report which highlighted the proportion of 16-18 year olds not in education or work has remain static for over 10 years. Connexions role is to join up young peoples services (e.g. careers services) and to break down barriers for 13-19 year olds to employment and education (e.g. Financial, housing advice).

Key Issues Highlighted:-

1. **Access**
Lack of Transport has been identified as a major barrier to education and employment.
2. **Students Access Issues**
 - Restriction of after school activities / services (e.g. Parent Evenings). Especially for those who are wholly dependent on school transport or come from one-car families.
 - Increased flexibility of curriculum assumes young people can travel easily – often they are dependent on public transport and as a result they have to miss part of the curriculum in order to fit in with public transport. Not all-further education options are on bus routes
3. **Work Access**
 - Established public transport routes do not necessarily cater for all employment opportunities.
 - Transport needs are likely to be off traditional routes and / or off peak times.
 - Inaccessible next village - lack of transport links forms a barrier.
 - Access across town during peak times is often very difficult and time-consuming.
 - Apprentice schemes more difficult to access in rural settings.
4. **Alternative Transport schemes**
 - Wheels to Work moped loans scheme.
 - Fare car
 - Life in the bus lane- very successful, greater discounts for young people– very popular scheme..
5. **Safety**
 - Young males (20 %) and females feel unsafe using public transport.
 - Concerns about young people walking home alone.
6. **School retention post 16**
Those who continue in education - higher in rural communities than in urban areas.
This may be a reflection of a filtering process whereby students have to be more committed to sign up in the first place where transport problems exist.
7. **High Travel Times**
 - Journeys take much longer on public transport then by car.
 - 11-16 are the most isolated schools post 16 young people have long travel times to FE colleges.
8. **Life in the bus Lane**
Has been a very successful scheme- discounted bus fares including weekends and evenings.

Recommendations For The Next DLTP (2006-2011)

1. **Suggestions From Young Peoples Surveys**
 - Provide free school transport for all.
 - Later start time for schools.
 - Allow children to carry less.
 - Return Fares before 9.00.
 - More buses in rural areas.
 - More discounts for young people.

DEVON LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN – 2006-2011

- 2. Connexions Recommendation – Students**
 - Travel Skills within the curriculum – reading bus timetables.
 - Reduce the Risk – danger awareness classes / free attack alarms.
 - Late buses which run after extra curricular activities- that stop on school property – thus children are not waiting outside after dark.
- 3. Connexions Recommendation – Young Employed**
 - Subsidised travel for all trainees - employed or student.
 - More bus services/ routes.
- 4. Life in the bus Lane**

Very successful – Investigate extending to the rest of Devon.
- 5. Alternative schemes**

Schemes such as fare car and moped schemes have a high potential. These schemes need to be developed further.

Handouts

The following papers were circulated by John Davey:-

- **Connexions- The best start in life for every young person**
- **Case studies for Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011**

Panel Discussion:-

- For limited / no extra cost access can be improved – e.g. changing transport links to include extra pick up points at the end of the day.
- In rural areas employment based training will improve access and employment opportunities.
- The moped schemes are highly beneficial for short distances however they are not suitable for longer distances.
- In order for children to carry less material they require secure lockers, unfortunately Connexions cannot provide money for this.
- Connexions role is information advice and guidance, finance can only be provided for this
- The Connexions card can be extended throughout Devon.