

To: LEADERSHIP BOARD

On: 01 May 2024

Report by: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Heading: Review of Renfrewshire's Public Transport Provision

1. Summary

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Leadership Board of 26 April 2023, the Board approved recommendations relating to a review of Renfrewshire's Public Transport provision. The recommendations approved were:
- that the commencement of the Review of Renfrewshire's Public Transport Provision be noted;
 - that the first stages of the Review as set out in section 5 of the report be noted;
 - agreed that update reports be brought back to this Board;
 - as part of the review, Officers be instructed to engage with the Community Transport Association who had a track record in supporting communities in setting up successful, sustainable not for profit public transport options;
 - that Council called on the Scottish Government to take decisive action to
 - Reverse the soon to be implemented cuts to Renfrewshire bus services;
 - Investigate the placing of strict conditions on support to private bus companies;
 - Look at introducing caps on fares to encourage people to use bus services; and
 - Move towards bringing local bus services under local authority control
- 1.2 Officers engaged a transport consultant Systra, to deliver this review on the basis of the recommendations from the Leadership Board with a view to outlining recommendations for how the public transport network in Renfrewshire could be improved for the benefit of the communities of Renfrewshire.
- 1.3 This report sets out the key stages the consultant considered as part of the review and the local and regional context for the current public transport network as well as looking further afield for any successful models currently in operation elsewhere.
- 1.4 During this period, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) have also been conducting a Regional review of public transport and have developed a Regional Bus Strategy. The Renfrewshire report links to but is not constrained by the work ongoing at a regional level.

SPT's regional bus strategy is out for consultation at the present time. The strategy presents potential future operating models for the way forward for bus services across the region. The Council intends to submit a response to the consultation and this will be presented to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board in May, along with the response the Council would intend to submit to SPT a copy of the Systra report (as attached at appendix 1) to support the development on the strategy for Renfrewshire and the Region.

- 1.5 The full report is attached as an Appendix to this report but is summarised in some detail at sections 3 to 5 below.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Leadership Board:

- 2.1 Notes the completion of the review and the results of the public consultation highlighted within the report,
- 2.2 Agrees that officers from Renfrewshire should participate in wider regional discussions on the implications of alternative delivery models for bus services in Renfrewshire,
- 2.3 Agrees that officers should engage with bus operators and SPT in relation to the development of Bus Service Improvement Partnerships, and
- 2.4 Notes the positive progress been made with delivering a community transport model for Renfrewshire.

3. Public Transport Network Review

3.1 Background to the Review

The overall aim of the review was to assess the current local bus network and understand the range of interventions that may be available to the Council as well as understanding the role that community transport could play in a future model.

- 3.2 The review is set within the context of national, regional and local policy drivers including;
- **National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2)** – the strategy for Scotland aims to provide fair, easy and affordable access to all through an inclusive, safe and accessible transport system.
 - **Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)** – the RTS for the west of Scotland covers the period between 2023 and 2028 to ensure the area is well connected with active, liveable communities, facilitated by high quality, sustainable, low carbon transport.
 - **SPT Regional Bus Strategy** – SPT's regional bus strategy has been developed and is out for consultation at the present time. The strategy presents potential future operating models for the way forward for bus services across the region as outlined below:
 - Business As Usual;
 - Voluntary Partnerships;

- Bus Service Improvement Partnerships;
- Local Services Franchising; and
- Municipal Bus Company

The consultation on the regional strategy is open until 13 May 2024 and officers will provide a response to the consultation which will be provided to the next meeting of the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board for approval. We have advised SPT that the response provided by the closing date will be subject to approval of the ILE Board on 29 May 2024.

Officers appreciate that this is a topic which generates significant interest and elected members and the general public are encouraged to submit individual responses and the consultation can be accessed at the web address below:

www.spt.co.uk/about-us/what-we-are-doing/regional-transport-strategy/bus-strategy/

- **Local Transport Strategy (LTS)** – the Council is developing a new LTS which should be ready for publication in early 2025. The should reflect the key priorities for national and regional strategies but also identify measurable actions that the Council can take to achieve these ambitions.
- **Ren Zero** – Sustainable Transport is one of the key themes within the Ren Zero plan and will be a major focus for the organisation as we work towards net zero by 2030.

3.3 Renfrewshire Demographic Context

As outlined in Section 2 of the Review Report, bus journeys have been declining in Scotland and the former Strathclyde region have dropped by around 35% since around 2008/09.

3.4 Commuting and retail journeys make up over 50% of all journeys regardless of the mode of travel. bus journey purposes. When considering public transport journeys (bus and rail) commuting to work, the Renfrewshire figure is slightly higher at 16% than the Scottish average of 15%.

3.5 Over a similar timeframe car ownership has significantly increased, with that increase figure in Renfrewshire being around 20%. However, in Renfrewshire, there are currently 25% of households who do not have access to a car, this figure is even more start in lower income SIMD areas where they reach up to 55% and therefore these communities rely on these services to be operating effectively to go about their daily lives.

3.6 Consultation Process

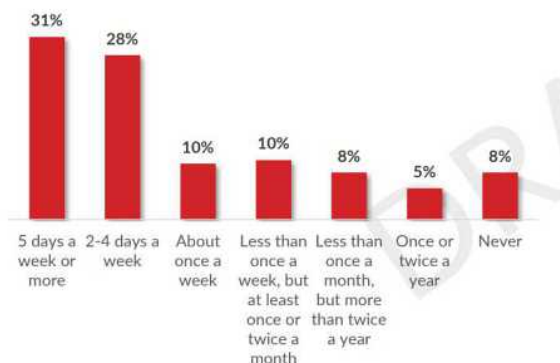
One of the key priorities within the review was to consult with the public to better understand the localised experience they have when accessing bus services and to identify the barriers to increasing public transport patronage.

3.7 The public consultation comprised of online and paper based surveys combined with a series of facilitated drop in sessions where the public could speak to Council officers about their concerns on a face to face basis.

3.8 Almost 1,800 responses were received during the consultation period with a summary of the main response issues highlighted below and expanded upon in more detail in the Appendix.

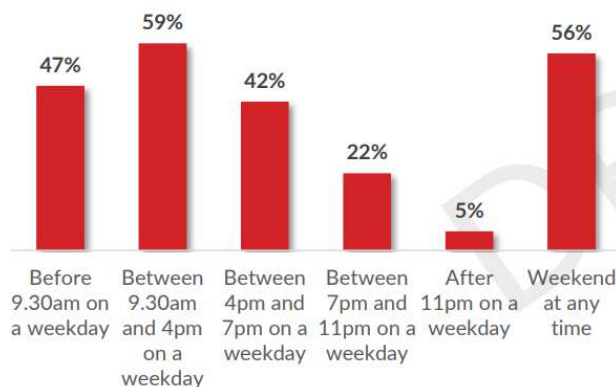
Frequency of bus use

From the figure below, many of the respondents were those who are frequent bus users with 69% using a bus at least once per week



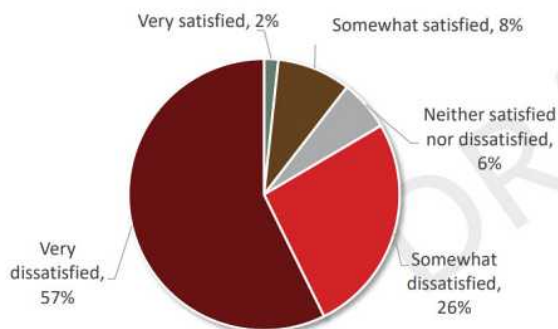
Time of Travel

The most frequent time of travel was between 9.30am and 4pm on a weekday, however more than half of the respondents also identified that they travel by bus at the weekend. The graph shows the level of demand there is for services operating in the off peak hours and weekends.



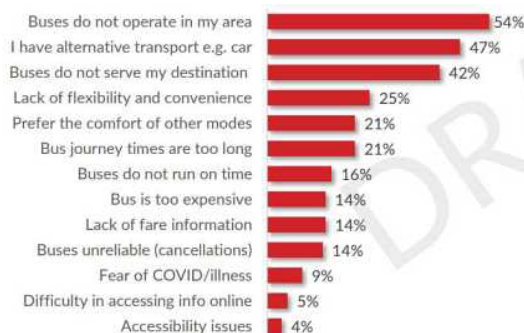
Satisfaction with buses in Renfrewshire

The overwhelming majority of respondents, 82%, answered that they were dissatisfied to at least some extent with the current provision of bus services in Renfrewshire. The response demographic outlines that bus users were on average more satisfied with services than non users although dissatisfaction reasons could include services no longer being available in certain areas.



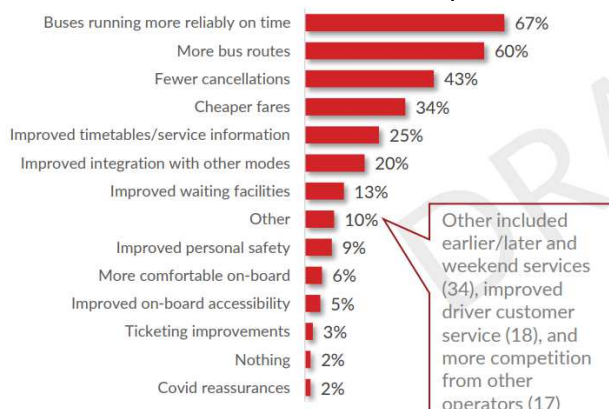
Reasons for not travelling by bus

A variety of responses were given by respondents in relation to the reason why they did not travel by bus with 54% stating it was because bus services did not operate in their area. These were closely followed by 47% stating it was due to access to alternative transport and 42% advising it was due to buses not serving their destination.



Measures to encourage more bus journeys

As expected, there were a number of improvements that would encourage more people to use bus services on a more regular basis. 75% of respondents advised that more frequent services would encourage them to use the bus as a method of transport.



Respondents also offered a number of other points including:

- 39 respondents advising they would like to see better regulation of bus operators and for them to be held accountable for service levels,
- 172 respondents felt that increasing competition and having more than one operator in the area would improve the service, and
- 53 highlighting they would like to see better customer service provided by drivers.

In addition to the public consultation document, the drop in sessions produced broadly similar themes with the key problems identified during these sessions highlighted below.



3.9 Bus Network Review

The bus network in Renfrewshire is dominated by one main bus operator (McGills) being responsible for over 75% of routes in the area, with the second biggest operator (First Glasgow) covering around 10% of the market.

- 3.10 In Renfrewshire over 80% of the bus network is service by commercial routes with the remaining share being subsidised services, where the route is not financially attractive to an operator but there is a community need and the routes are subsidised through SPT.
- 3.11 At the current time there are no direct bus services from Bridge of Weir, Kilbarchan and Houston to the Royal Alexandria Hospital or Paisley.
- 3.12 The frequency of bus services has been analysed over the time periods 2015 – 2019 and 2019 – 2023 in order to understand how bus services had changed before and after the pandemic. The changes were then analysed at different time periods during the day to identify how these changes then impacted services at peak and off peak times.

2019 v 2015 Frequency

- Between 7am and 9am the majority of routes lost up to 10 buses in the AM period, with reductions noted in key routes such as Paisley to Renfrew, Paisley to Johnstone, Glasgow to Erskine, and Paisley to Bridge of Weir,
- Between 10am and 3pm the majority of routes lost 10 buses per hour with the Paisley to Johnstone corridor showing a decrease of between 10 and 30 buses per hour.
- Between 5pm and 7pm the majority of bus routes lost up to 10 buses per hour with some stops in Renfrew showing loss of between 10 and 20 buses per hour.

2023 v 2019 Frequency

- Between 7am and 9am there were further frequency reductions across a number of Paisley routes, however some routes in Renfrew, Houston, Bridge of Weir and Howwood witnessed frequency increases.
- Between 10am and 3pm further reductions are noted across Paisley routes with some marginal increase on the Paisley to Johnstone route.
- The pattern of reduction from 2019 to 2023 continues in to the evening peak with a number of routes showing reductions.

- 3.13 In addition to frequency reductions, some bus routes have been withdrawn by operators. The Scottish Government had utilised a Network Support Grant (NSG) to assist bus operators with their recovery from the impacts of the pandemic. The removal of the NSG coincided with the withdrawal of 6 bus services which served Renfrewshire. 5 of these routes were operated by McGills, with 1 route being operated by First Glasgow.
- 3.14 Bus Services also play a key role in providing access to employment areas with Paisley, Renfrew, Johnstone and the Airport area being major employment centres. Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone are all well served with regular bus services, however the airport area only has one service and as a result any cancellations or delays have a major impact.
- 3.15 Network Review Summary
When reviewing the data on services and combining with the outcome from the public consultation process it is clear that there are a number of areas where the bus provision is sub-standard. The main areas affected are:
- Langbank to Paisley,
 - Dargavel/Bishopton,
 - Erskine to Paisley,
 - Connections to the Royal Alexandria Hospital, and
 - Connections to the Southwest area of Renfrewshire – Houston, Bridge of Weir and Kilbarchan.
- 3.16 A number of recommendations have been made in pages 67 and 68 of the report, however it should be noted that in the commercial operating market that bus provision is currently provided in, there are limitations on how many of these recommendations the Council can take forward in the short to medium term.
- 3.17 There is a specific reference to community or demand responsive transport and this is covered in more detail at section 4 of this report.
- 3.18 Previous engagement with bus operators has resulted in requests from operators for the Council to improve the infrastructure associated with public transport. The main areas that operators have highlighted which they advise would allow them to improve service frequency and reliability are:
- Provision of dedicated bus priority infrastructure including bus lanes and real traffic light priority systems,
 - Improvements to enforcement of traffic restrictions to reduce private cars being an obstruction to public transport,
 - Removal of on street parking from key bus corridors to support journey time and frequency improvements, and
 - Expansion of real time information infrastructure.

4. Bus Operating Landscape and Opportunities for Change

- 4.1 Since bus services were deregulated in 1986 the role of local authorities in the delivery of bus services is limited to the provision of infrastructure on the local road network and engagement with the regional transport authority (SPT) to make improvements to services.
- 4.2 The Council does not have the power to regulate bus operations across its area and it cannot prevent the withdrawal of services.

- 4.3 The current commercial market results in the commercial operators being responsible for bus network planning, bus fares and ticketing arrangements as well as the discretion of integrating their services with other transport modes.
- 4.4 As a result of this the bus operators have the power to plan and design services whereas the Council is only able to plan routes that are deemed to be required from a social rather than a profitable point of view and this is delivered with support from SPT.
- 4.5 As outlined at section 3.2 above, SPT's Regional Bus Strategy has highlighted a number of future potential operating models for the bus network and as part of the Council's review, Systra have carried out an assessment and options appraisal of the different models available.
- 4.6 The options considered are:
- **Status Quo** – Delivered through a voluntary partnership arrangement which seeks to strengthen current relationship and delivery of joint outcomes. At the current time the Council is already a member of the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership which is comprised of the eight local authorities, SPT and bus operators in the area.
 - **Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP)** – This is a new form of statutory agreement that would ensure agreements between operators and a transport authority were binding and can include sanctions if commitments are not adhered to.
 - **Bus Franchising Scheme** – Franchising moves competition on to an operating contract level rather than on road competition between operators. This provides a greater degree of control over bus service specifications and fares to local transport authorities. The authorities would then procure contracts to deliver the levels of service it requires necessary to meet the needs of communities.
 - **Municipal Ownership** – As a result of the changes from the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 local transport authorities can create municipally owned bus companies to compete for contracts and operate registered bus services. The municipal operator would likely be an arms-length organisation wholly owned by the authority but providing separation when competing for contracts.

The full detail of the appraisal is contained at page 74 of the review report, with a summary provided in the table below:

Model	Advantages	Disadvantages
Existing Competitive model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition between operators improve service provision • Financial risks lie with operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of competition for some routes results in monopoly • Services may be withdrawn with limited notice • LA do not have any control over services and network
BSIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory nature improves certainty of delivery • Responsive to customer demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seems to work best with just one main operator • Services may be withdrawn with limited notice
Bus Franchising Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can give control over bus network and services • Deliver integrated branding making networks easier to follow by the passengers • Easier to achieve social and community objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires significant resources and takes time for local authorities to build up expertise. • Transfers most financial risk to local authority • May be slow to implement and high cost
Municipal Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control over that part of the bus network • Allow delivery of services at lower profit margins • Any profits can be invested into service in the absence of shareholders • Easier to achieve social and community objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant resources and time to build up expertise • Start-up costs may be significant with no certainty of return on investment • Municipal bus company still open to market pressures from competing private sector • Danger of municipality diverting bus profits for other purposes

It is agreed within the report that the status quo is not the preferred way forward and is unlikely to have any real effect on improving the bus network in the future. The summary recommendations are that the alternative models should be explored and in order to derive the most significant improvements to the network, these should be considered at a regional level.

5. Community Transport

- 5.1 There are a number of circumstances where community transport can play a role in the delivery of vital transport services for local communities, particularly where users cannot access public transport because of mobility issues or there is a lack of service provision in their area.
- 5.2 Council officers have been working with a number of different community groups who have expressed an interest in starting a community transport organisation. This work has resulted in the creation of a group called Renfrewshire Community Transport. They are now a Scottish charitable incorporated organisation and have been successful in securing £25,000 funding from the Sustainable Communities fund to develop a business plan to identify a way forward for delivering a community transport model in Renfrewshire.
- 5.3 Council officers will continue to support the organisation and will provide resources to create a robust business plan that can then be adopted by other organisations in the future.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 It is clear from the report that there are options to consider for the future direction of the public transport landscape in the future, however there are some more short-term actions that the Council can set out to achieve in order to improve services for local communities whilst awaiting more fundamental model change.
- 6.2 Council officers will review the infrastructure provided for local bus services and identify where there are opportunities for delivering improvements. It is however worth noting that the SPT capital programme for 2024/25 has been reduced to £0 so there is little scope for delivering infrastructure improvements in 2024/25.
- 6.3 Officers will also respond to the SPT Regional Bus Strategy consultation, however given the varying personal opinions on the issue elected members may be keen to provide individual responses also.

Implications of this Report

1. **Financial** – Although the expected financial impact of alternative models for bus service delivery cannot be quantified at the current time it is anticipated that a franchising model could require significant additional public expenditure to deliver.
2. **HR and Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community Planning**

Our Renfrewshire is thriving / Reshaping our place, our economy and our future –
By continuing to support public transport improvements we will continue to facilitate access to employment and economic growth.

4. **Legal** – none
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** – none
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health and Safety** – none.
9. **Procurement** – none.
10. **Risk** – none.
11. **Privacy Impact** – none.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – none.
13. **Climate Impact** – Delivering an improved public transport service for communities across Renfrewshire should result in a decrease in private car mileage which is a major contributor to emissions across the area.

List of Background Papers - none

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Renfrewshire Bus Network Review and Future Options

Study Report

SYSTRA


Renfrewshire
Council



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Background to the Study

Section 1

Aims and Objectives of the Study

- Aims

- Undertake a review of local bus network in Renfrewshire and advise on the range of interventions now available to the Council to tackle any perceived shortfalls, including the potential role of the community transport sector.

- Objectives

- Identify gaps in local bus services
- Identify user (and non-user) needs and perceptions
- Identify potential solutions to improve bus provision

Policy Overview

The Renfrewshire Bus Network Review is set within the context of the goals and objectives set out by national, regional and local policies. Below is a summary of the policies and strategies that are relevant to this study.

National Policy

National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2)

Scotland's National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) envisage to have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors. To this end, NTS2 sets out priorities that include-

- Reduce inequalities
 - Will provide fair access to services we need
 - Will be easy to use for all
 - Will be affordable for all
- Take climate change action
 - Identify gaps in local bus services
 - Identify user (and non-user) needs and perceptions
 - Identify potential solutions to improve bus provision

Prioritising Sustainable Transport

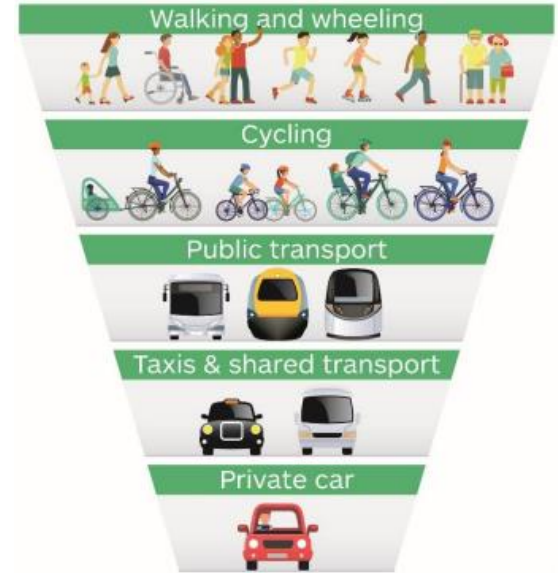


Figure 1 : Sustainable travel hierarchy

Policy Overview

Regional Policy

Regional Transport Strategy

The Regional Transport Strategy for the west of Scotland 2023-2038 aims to make the west of Scotland “an attractive, resilient and well-connected place with active, liveable communities and accessible, vibrant centres facilitated by high quality, sustainable and low carbon transport shaped by the needs of all”.

The following objectives of the RTS emphasise on the need for public transport improvement in the region to achieve its strategic vision.

- To improve accessibility, affordability, availability and safety of the transport system, ensuring everyone can get to town centres, jobs, education, healthcare and other everyday needs
- To reduce carbon emissions and other harmful pollutants from transport in the region
- To make public transport a desirable and convenient travel choice for everyone

Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy- Draft Case for Change

- The Regional Bus Strategy draft case for change aims “*To provide a world class bus network which reverses the long-term decline in travel by bus, by developing a more efficient bus system which is fully integrated with other public transport, affordable to all and plays a key role in the social, environmental and economic development of the region*”.

The SRBS sets out three key objectives-

- Increase Network Coverage
- Increase affordability of bus network
- Increase attractiveness of the bus network

Policy Overview

Local Policy

Key local Transport policies and strategies that identify public transport improvements as crucial for sustainable growth are discussed below.

Renfrewshire Local Transport Strategy

Renfrewshire is currently developing a new Local Transport Strategy (LTS). The 2017 LTS Refresh states the key objectives including-

- Extend opportunities for all by:
 - Combating poverty and promoting equality including
 - Supporting behavioural change;
 - Encouraging healthier lifestyles;
 - Encouraging a choice of transport options;
 - Improving access for all, including the mobility impaired.
- Encourage integration of services and an integrated approach by public bodies whilst achieving best value

Renfrewshire Economic Strategy 2020-2030

The Economic Strategy aims “*To improve the economic infrastructure of Renfrewshire including better public transport provision, rail and road capacity, and the provision of new digital connectivity and networks*”.

It recognises the need for interventions that influence travel behaviours and modal shift including public transport improvement, exemplary networks for walking and cycling, park and ride and demand management measures for private car use.

Policy Overview

Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2021

Renfrewshire LDP 2021 supports investment which assists sustainable communities by ensuring people and places are well connected through access to a range of travel and transport networks. In particular, new developments “on sites which can be accessed sustainably to encourage a modal shift from the private car to walking, cycling and public transport”.

The LDP also aims to support sustainable economic growth by delivering high quality development with “good accessibility to a range of sustainable travel modes, based on links to the hierarchy of walking, cycling, public transport networks and ensuring integration with the design and layout of the development and the wider network”.

Renfrewshire’s Plan for Net Zero

‘Sustainable Transport’ is one of the Key Themes and Actions within Renfrewshire’s Plan for Net Zero. The Priority areas for this theme include-Extend opportunities for all by:

- Maximise active travel opportunities;
- Increase public transport patronage;
- Minimise car miles;
- Enable modal shift to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs);
- Alleviate transport poverty; and
- Local carbon offsetting: to make every trip in the Renfrewshire area net zero carbon.

Improvements to public transport provision will help increase patronage and minimise car distance kilometres. This will contribute to reduction in carbon emission and help alleviate transport poverty.

Legislation

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

This review takes cognisance of the Transport Act 2019 and the powers given to local authorities related to bus operations, intended to give local transport authorities more flexibility to respond to their own transport challenges. These include-

- Provision of bus services etc. by local transport authorities
- Bus services improvement partnerships
- Franchising frameworks and franchise agreements
- Provision of service information when varying or cancelling registration
- Smart and integrated ticketing
- Provision of information about bus services

Demographic Context

Section 2

Renfrewshire Population

Population

- 2022 Census - 183,800, an increase of 9,000 from 2011
- Male - 48.4% ; Female - 51.6% (2021 estimate)
- Renfrewshire population by age group (2021 estimate):

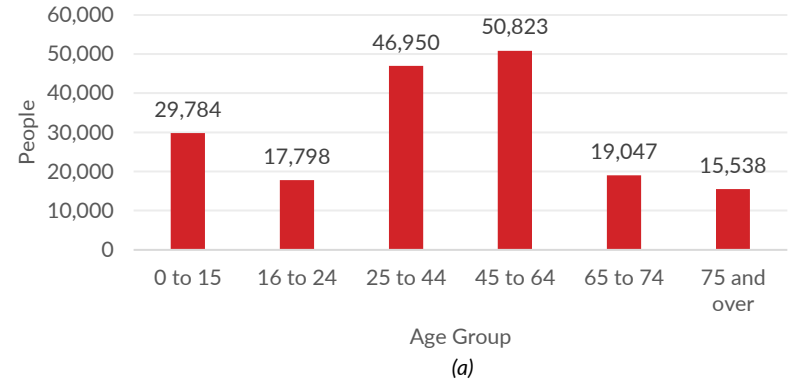
Ageing Population

- 17% are under 16; 12% are 16 to 24; 54% are 25 to 64; and 19% are 65 or over.
 - 65 and over age groups have grown since 2011, while the proportion of the population under 24 has dropped.

Ethnicity

- The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population accounts for 2.8% of the overall local population. This equates to 4,781 people. Of these:
 - 65% are Asian; 17% are African; 9% are from multiple ethnic backgrounds; 2% Caribbean; and 7% from other ethnic groups.

Population by Age Group
(NRS Mid-Year Estimate for 2021)



Population % Change by Age Group
(2011-2021, NRS Mid-Year Estimate)

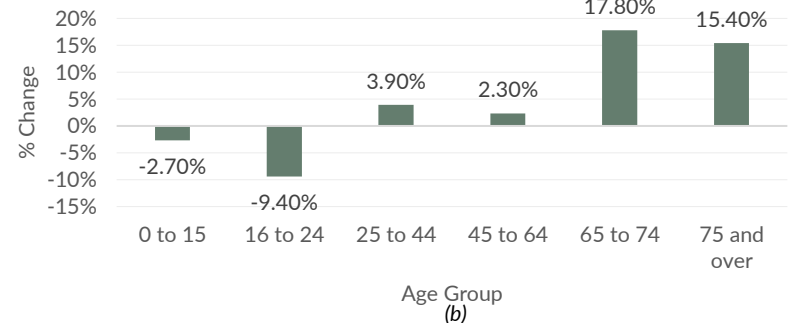


Figure 2(a,b): Age profile and population change in Renfrewshire

Socio-Economic Data

Deprivation

Figure 3 shows Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) in Renfrewshire. Most deprived areas are-

- Paisley
- Renfrew
- Johnstone
- Linwood

It is estimated that in 2019/20 6,997 (23.1%) children in Renfrewshire were living in poverty after housing costs. This is almost 1 in every 4 children. (Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership)

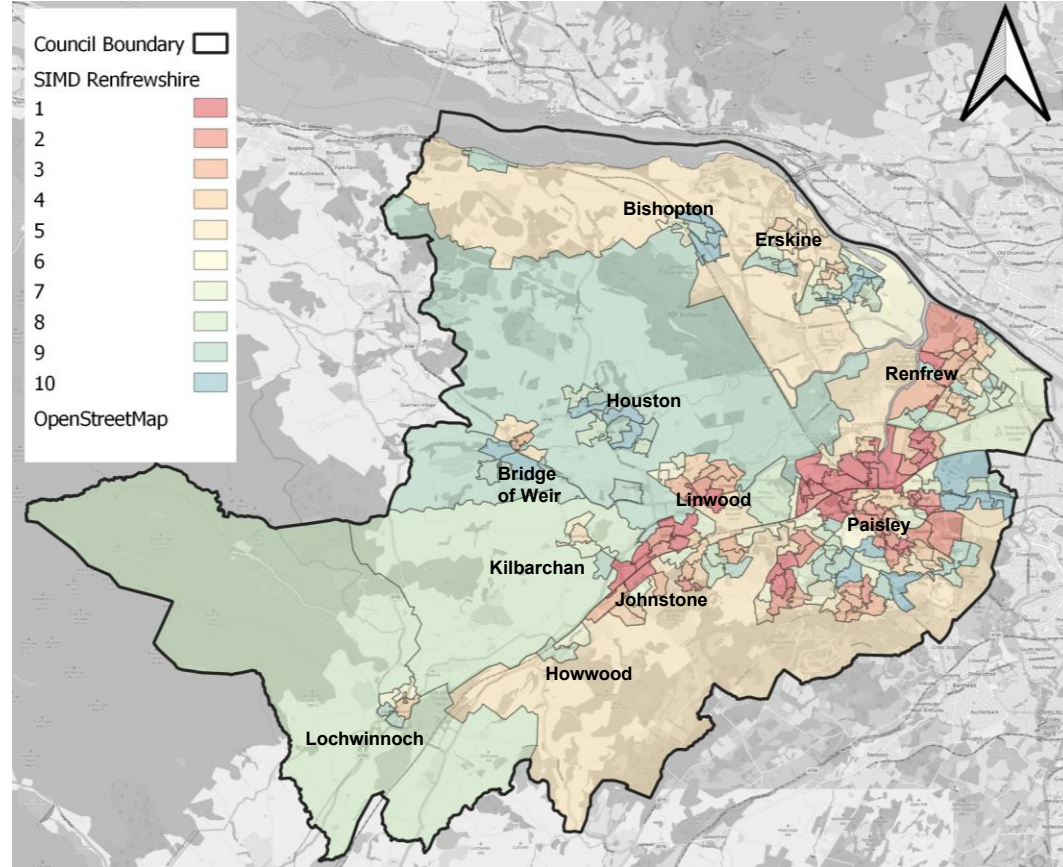


Figure 3: Level of deprivation in Renfrewshire

Historical Data

Passenger Journeys

Historical data shows that bus journeys in Scotland have been declining over the years (Figure 4). In Southwest and Strathclyde region, bus passenger journeys dropped by about 35% between 2008-09 and 2019-20.

Travel to Work and Other Purposes

Table 1 shows percentage of trips by purposes and Commute and shopping trips make up more than half of all journeys. Travel to work data 2019 in Table 2 shows that a similar proportion of people in Renfrewshire (16.0%) use public transport for commuting compared with the national average (15.0%). 2011 household survey data show that 62.4% of employed people in Scotland travelled to work by car. This implies that a majority of the commute trips in Renfrewshire are also made by cars.

Table 1: Percentage of trips by purpose in Renfrewshire and Scotland

	% Business Journeys	% Commuting Journeys	% Education Journeys	% Health Journeys	% Shopping Journeys
Scotland	2.4	23.3	5.6	2.2	23.6
Renfrewshire	2.0	24.0	5.0	3.0	30.0

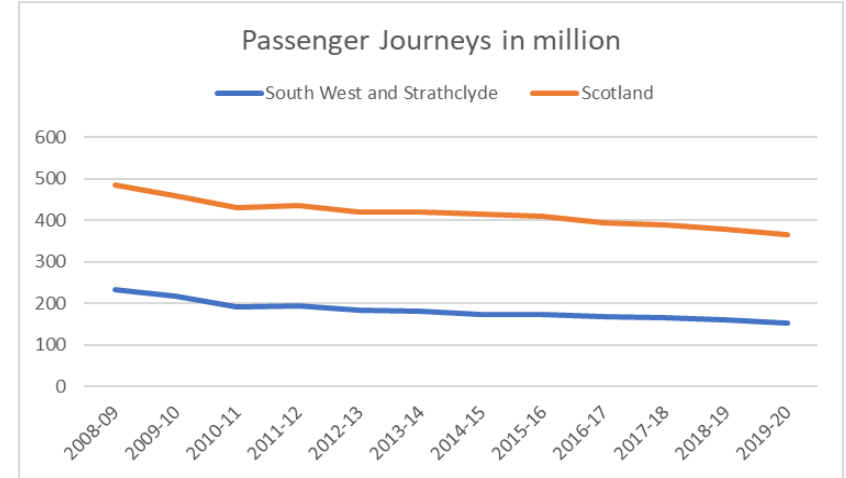


Figure 4: Change in total passenger journeys (Source: Department for Transport)

Table 2: Travel to work by mode in Renfrewshire and Scotland

	% Bus Journeys To Work	% Cycling Journeys To Work	% Train Journeys To Work	% Walking Journeys To Work
Scotland	9.6	2.7	5.4	12.0
Renfrewshire	10	1.0	6.0	4.0

Renfrewshire Car Ownership

Renfrewshire Car Ownerships

Figure 5 shows that car ownerships in Renfrewshire have increased by about 20% between 1999 and 2021. Currently there are 25% households who do not have access to a car.

Table 3 below gives an indication of the specific Intermediate Zones with the highest percentage of households without access to a car, for within the bottom 2 deciles for SIMD Income

Table 3: Car ownership level areas in low-income areas

Zone	Name	Income Decile	Percentage without a car
S02002263	Paisley Ferguslie	1.9	55.0%
S02002277	Paisley Gallowhill and Hillington	1.7	51.9%
S02002259	Johnstone Northwest	1.5	50.0%

Bus Reliance For Travel to Work

Table 4 shows the localities in Renfrewshire with the highest travel to work by bus mode share. This table is ordered by origin percentage travelling to work by bus. Nearly 20% of commute trips from Linwood are made by bus which is almost twice the national average (10.4%).

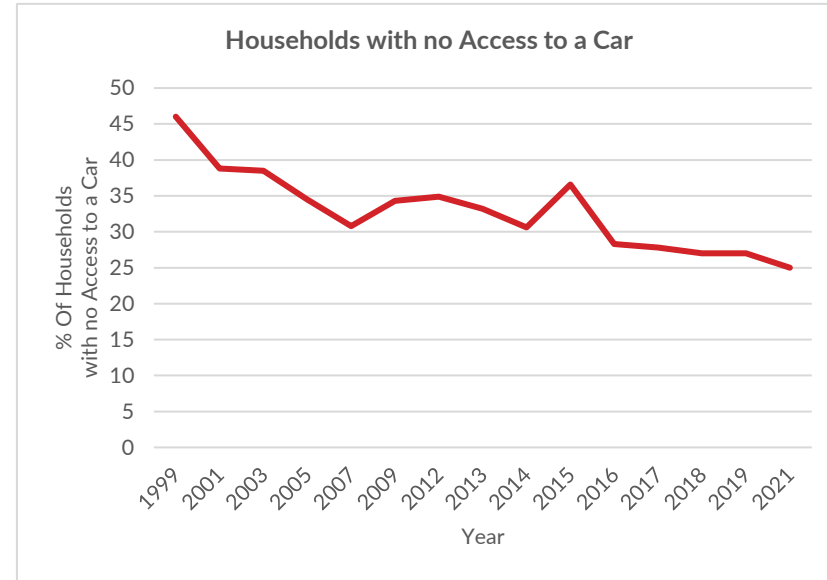


Figure 5: Household with no access to cars (Source: Statistics.gov.scot)

Table 4: Travel to work by bus in low car ownership areas

Locality Name	Percentage without a car	Origin TTW Percentage travelling to work by bus
Linwood	53.9%	19.8%
Renfrew	55.9%	15.5%
Paisley	60.0%	13.0%
Johnstone	55.3%	11.0%

Consultation

Section 3

Introduction

Public consultation has been undertaken using an online questionnaire survey and public drop-in sessions in Renfrewshire.

- **Online Survey**
 - A questionnaire survey was developed and disseminated via Renfrewshire council website, social media and targeted emails to community councils. Paper surveys were available on request. The survey was anonymous and included questions regarding the level of bus usage.
- **Public Drop-In Sessions**
 - Public drop-in sessions were held at five selected locations around Renfrewshire. The sessions were facilitated by a team of two members, one each from SYSTRA and Renfrewshire Council.

Online Survey

As part of this review, Renfrewshire Council undertaken an online survey between **Friday 20th October 2023 and Friday 24th November 2023**, to gather views from Renfrewshire residents.

The survey aimed to **understand local views** towards the bus network and **identify any gaps** in provisions/barriers to bus use.

The survey was designed by SYSTRA Ltd and hosted (online) and publicised by Renfrewshire Council through different channels, including on their website, social media and targeted emails to community councils.

A total of two hundred posters were displayed on prominent bus stops and on-board buses (Figure 6), and residents were also able to complete the survey at a number of drop-in sessions held across Renfrewshire.

The survey was anonymous and was open to all residents, regardless of their level of bus use.



Figure 6: Renfrewshire bus survey poster

Online Survey

Sample Profile

A total of **1,787 responses** were received during the survey period. Participants were self-selecting but covered a mix of demographic types.

Figure 7 shows that the majority of the sample identified as women (71%), whilst around three in ten respondents identified as men (28%). A higher-than-average proportion of women completed the survey compared to the average in Renfrewshire (71% vs 52%¹).

Just over a third of respondents fell within the 35-54 age category (35%), followed by a quarter of respondents who were aged between 55 and 65 (26%), and a fifth who fell within the 66-79 age category (20%). Just 2% of the sample were aged 80 or older. These figures are broadly representative of the age profile within Renfrewshire.

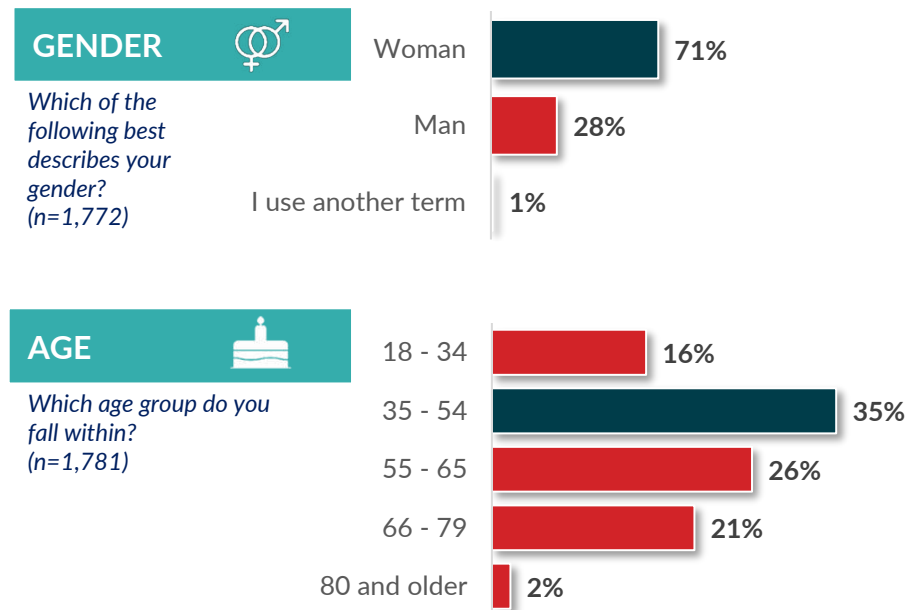
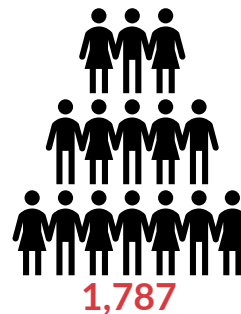


Figure 7: Survey sample characteristics in terms of Gender and Age

¹Scotland's Census 2022, National Records of Scotland

Online Survey

Sample Profile

Figure 8 shows that a fifth of the sample reported that the Equality Act definition of a disabled person applied to them (21%). This is representative of the proportion of disabled people in Renfrewshire.

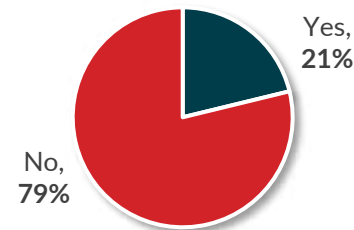
60% of the respondents did not have any concessionary bus pass. Majority of the bus pass holders were elderly people (60+).

Just under half of the respondents have access to a car or van as a driver (47%), while 1% have access to a motorbike or moped. Just over half of the respondents reported not having access to any of these vehicles as a driver (52%).

MOBILITY



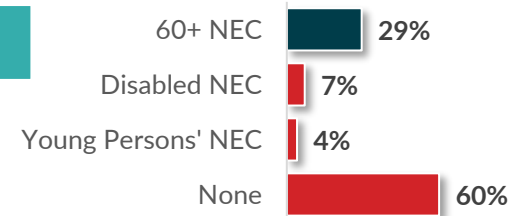
[Equality Act description of a disabled person] Does this definition apply to you?
(n=1,766)



BUS PASS



What type of Scottish National Entitlement Card do you have?
(n=1,787)



VEHICLE ACCESS



Do you have access to a car, van, motorbike or moped as a driver?
(n=1,787)

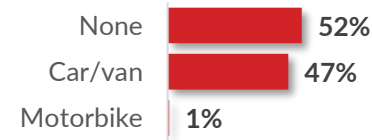


Figure 8: Survey sample characteristics in terms of Mobility, Bus Pass, and Vehicle access

Online Survey

Frequency of Bus Use

92% of respondents have travelled by bus within the last year, while 69% respondents are travelling by bus at least once a week (Figure 9).

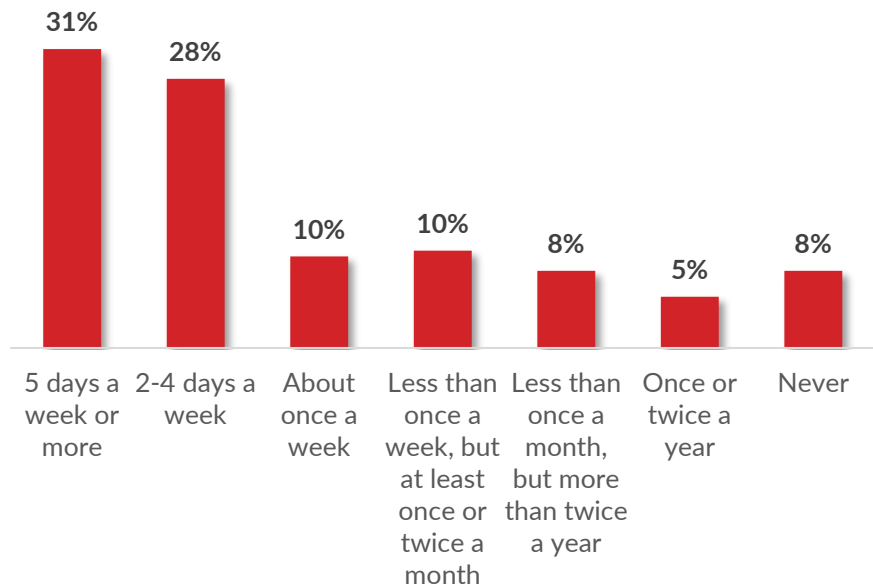


Figure 9: Participants' frequency of bus use

Q4. During 2023, how often have you used this mode (bus) on average?

N= 1,787



OVERALL SUMMARY

- Many respondents are frequent bus users, with nearly a third (31%) travelling 5 days a week or more.
- 69% travel by bus frequently (at least once a week), 23% are less frequent users (less than once a week but at least once a year), whilst 8% never travel by bus.

Online Survey

Time of Travel

As show in Figure 10, when travelling by bus, the most popular time to travel was between 9.30 and 4pm on a weekday, and at the weekends.

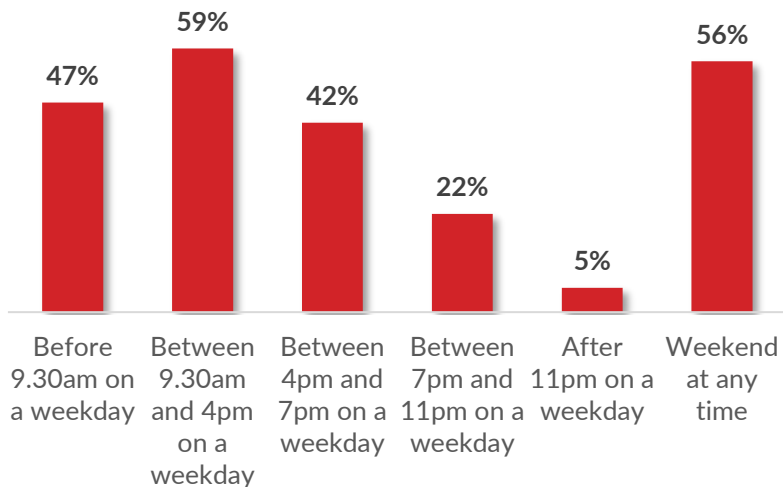


Figure 10: Participants' time of travel by bus

Q5. When travelling by bus, what time(s) of day do you tend to travel?
N= 1,644



OVERALL SUMMARY

- The most frequent time of travel by bus was between 9.30 and 4pm on a weekday (n=970, 59%).
- More than half of the respondents (56%) also reported that they travel by bus at the weekend.
- More than a fifth of the respondents travel late in the evening (between 7pm and 11 pm)

This demonstrates their reliance on buses in the off-peak hours and weekends.

Online Survey

Satisfaction with buses in Renfrewshire

Generally, respondents are dissatisfied with the provision of buses within Renfrewshire.

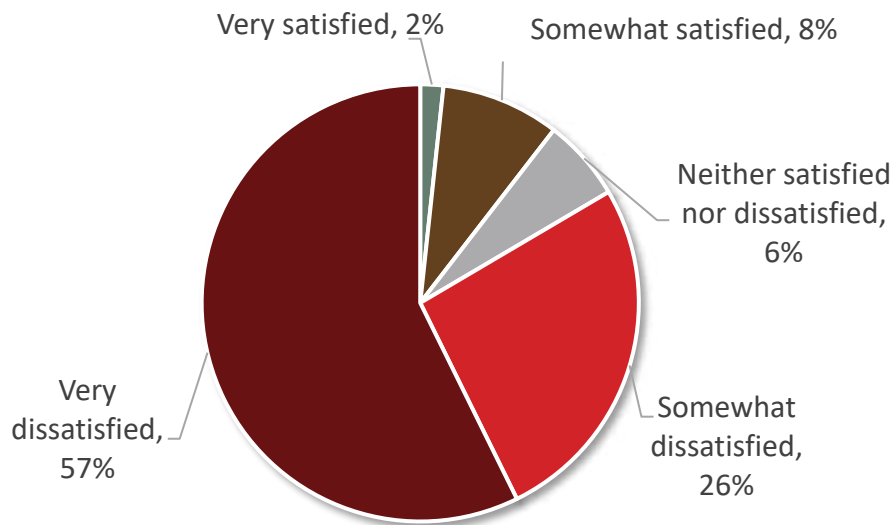


Figure 11: Bus user satisfaction

Q9. When travelling by bus, what time(s) of day do you tend to travel?
N= 1,644



OVERALL SUMMARY

- The majority of respondents (82%) answered they were dissatisfied to some extent with the current provision of buses (Figure 11).

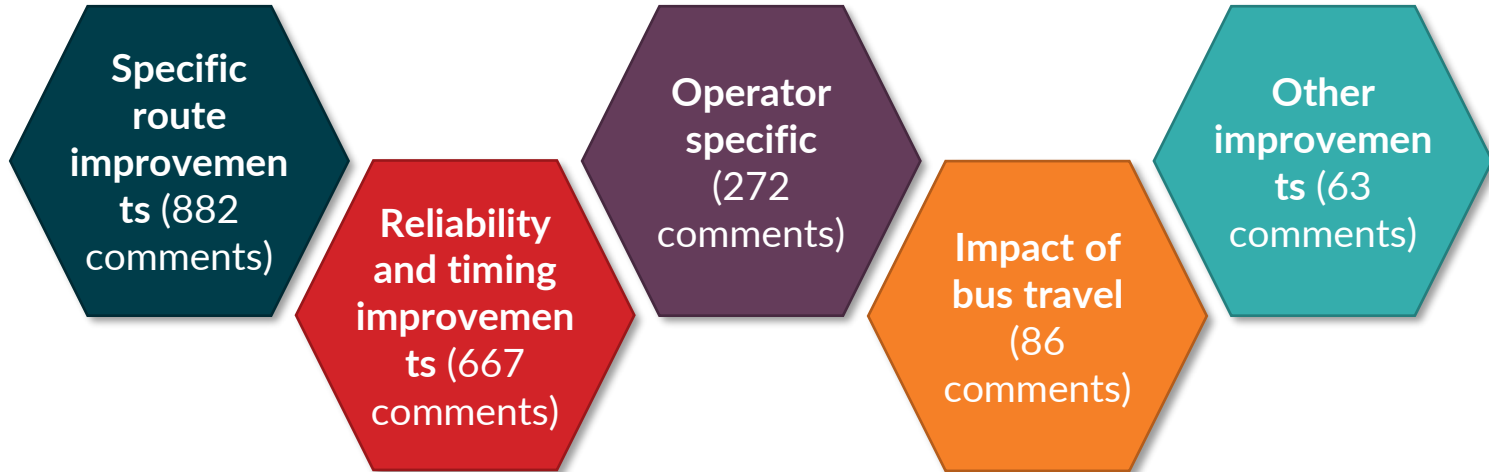


TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

- Bus users were slightly more likely to be satisfied than non-users (11% vs 2%).
- Scottish NEC owners were more likely to be satisfied than those without (15% vs 8%).

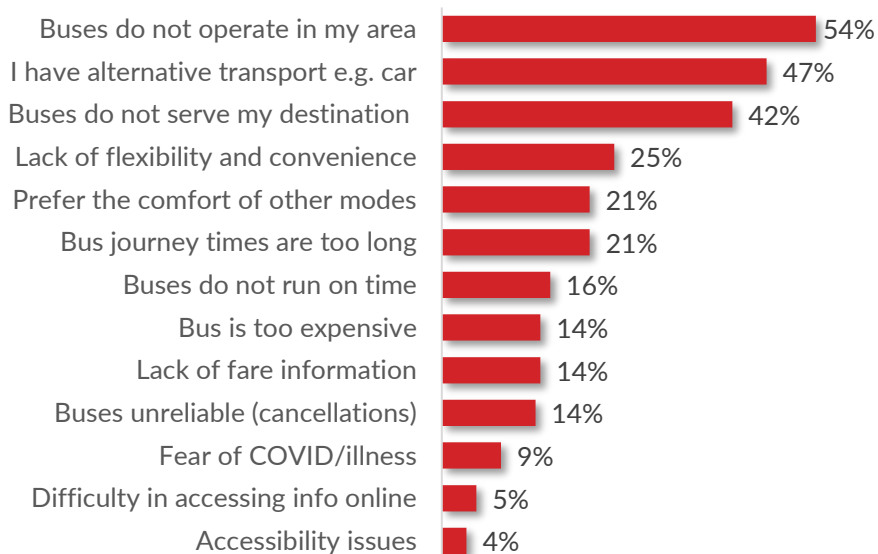
Suggested Improvements

Respondents were invited to provide further comments as to how bus provision in Renfrewshire could be improved. 1,058 respondents chose to make further comments, and these have been categorised as follows:



Non-users: Reasons for not travelling by bus

The main reasons for not using the bus are due to buses either not operating from respondents' origins or to their chosen destinations. Having alternative transport was also one of the main reasons for not travelling by bus.



OVERALL SUMMARY

- Respondents said they do not travel by bus due to buses not operating in their area (54%) or to their destination (42%) (Figure 12).
- Meanwhile 47% said they had alternative transport e.g. car.
- Male respondents were more likely to select 'long journey times' (38% vs 17%) or access to alternative transport (62% vs 42%).

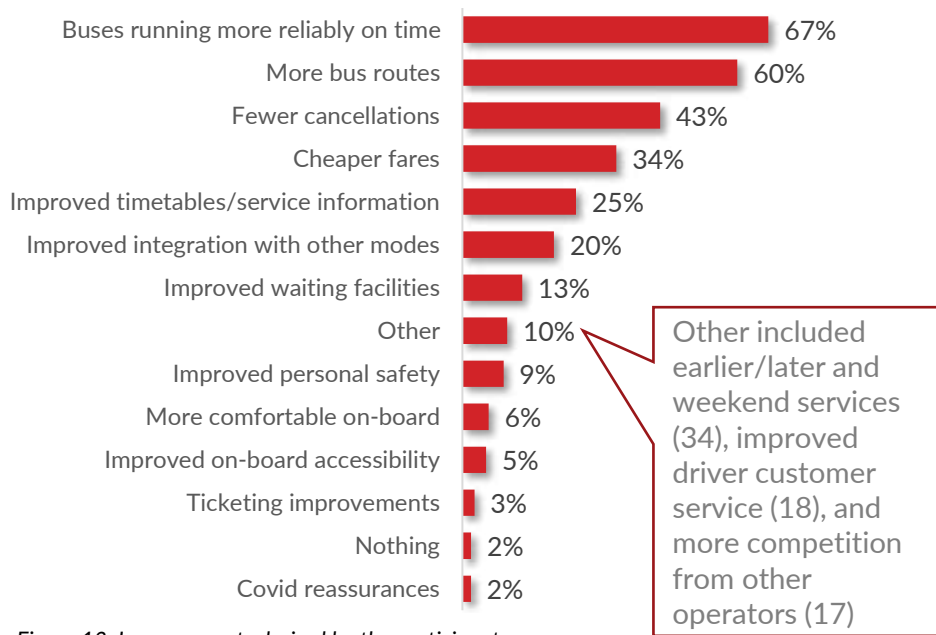
Figure 12: Participants' reasons for not travelling by bus

Q10. You mentioned that you have not travelled by bus within the last year. Why is this?

N= 143

Improvements to encourage more bus journeys

Respondents said that more frequent services, improved reliability and more bus routes would be most likely to encourage bus journeys.



OVERALL SUMMARY

- 75% respondents said that more frequent services would encourage them to use the bus, alongside more bus routes (60%) (Figure 13).
- Reliability is also an important factor, with 67% wanting more reliable services and 43% selecting 'fewer cancellations'.
- Disabled people were more likely to want improved on-board accessibility (17% vs 2%), and males were more likely to selected improved integration (28% vs 17%).

Figure 13: Improvements desired by the participants

Q11. What improvements to bus travel would most likely encourage you to make more journeys by bus?
(Select up to five) N= 1,787

Suggested improvements - Routes



Many respondents suggested locations where they felt bus routes were required:

50 respondents commented that they do not have a local bus service.

188 respondents commented that they did have a route, but it was either **withdrawn** or **changed**.

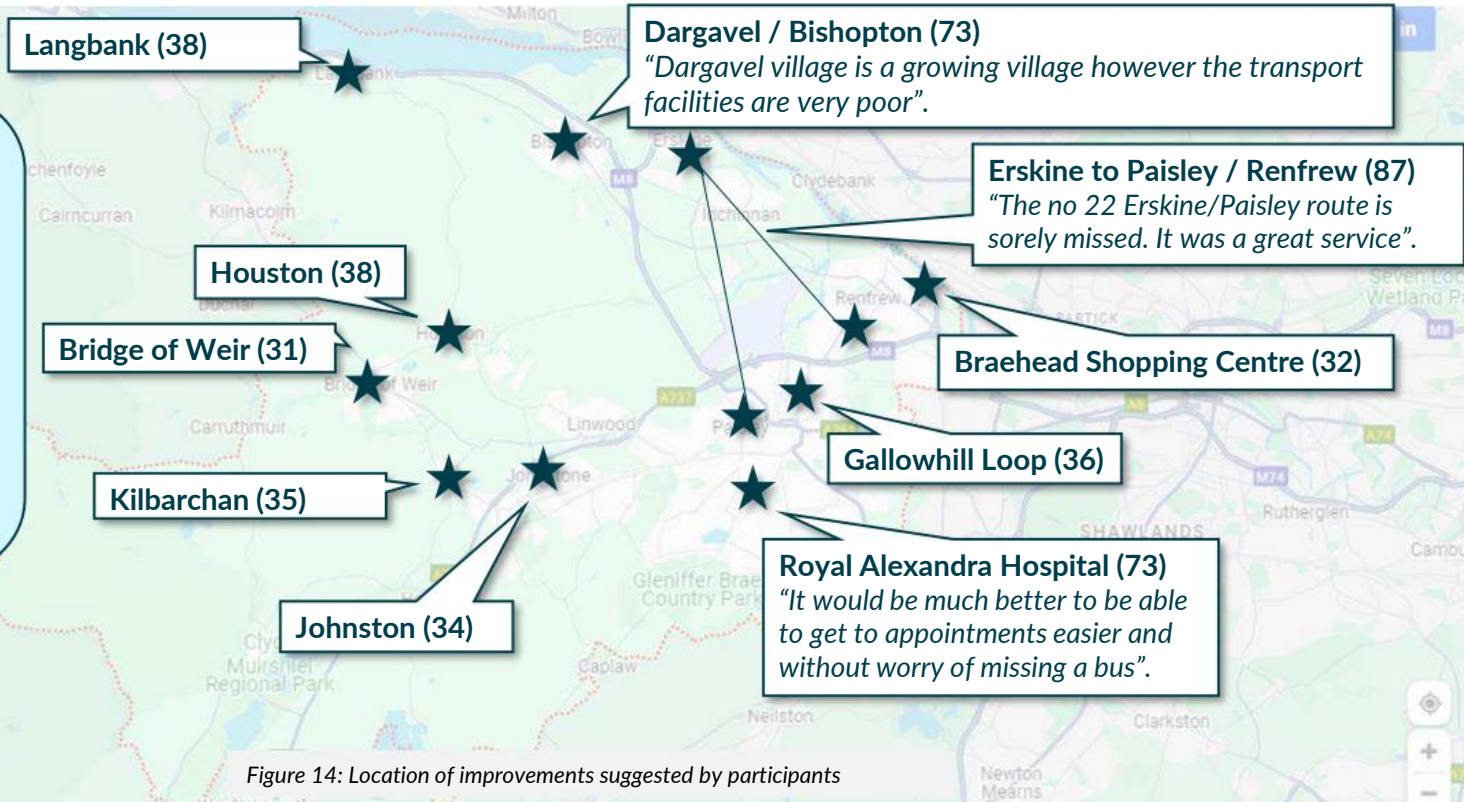


Figure 14: Location of improvements suggested by participants

N=1,058 that provided further comments. Number of comments made about each area is provided in brackets.

Suggested improvements – Reliability/timing



MORE FREQUENT SERVICES

166 respondents commented that they would like to see **more frequent bus services**. Some commented that there is one bus every 1 or 2 hours and would appreciate a half-hourly service during peak times.

“ *The current bus service is not working for most people with fewer buses and restricted times.* ”

“ *Why have an information board at a bus stop when they do not turn up on time or it is a no show.* ”

SERVICES RUNNING LATER/EARLIER AND/OR AT WEEKENDS

119 respondents commented that they would like to see services starting **earlier** in the morning or **later** in the evening, and more frequent services at **weekends**.

“ *More routes and more frequent buses. Where I live the buses stop running after 7pm.* ”



FEWER CANCELLATIONS

Cancellations were also an issue for many, with **151** commenting on this. There is also frustration around (lack of) communication of cancellations.



MORE RELIABLE SERVICES

95 respondents said they want a more reliable bus service and buses to run on time.

Suggested improvements – Operator



GREATER COMPETITION REQUIRED

Many respondents (**172**) felt that **increasing competition** and having more than one operator in the area, would improve the service provided.

“ Stop monopolising services, competition makes for a more cost effective and improved product for consumers. ”

“ With a lack of railway lines in Erskine and Renfrew, these towns are particularly left to the whims of the solitary bus provider. ”



REGULATION

39 respondents said they would like to see better regulation of operators. Some felt that operators should be held accountable for poor service, and some voiced frustration at complaints not being dealt with to their satisfaction.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

53 respondents commented that they would like to see better customer service provided by drivers.

Suggested improvements – Information, Fares and Ticketing

A smaller number of respondents made comments related to other areas, including communication/information, ticketing, and integration with rail:

- **43 comments** related to a request for **improved communication/information**, particularly when services are delayed and cancelled. Lack of information when a bus is cancelled or late is perceived to add to frustrations of customers.
- **43 comments** from respondents who feel the cost of travelling bus is too high for the service received.
- **24 respondents** commented that they would like to see **better integration with the rail network**, whilst **14 comments** were related to requests for **integrated tickets**.

“ *When buses don't come there is no information as to why and if the next one will appear.* ”

“ *Having a connected transport system without needing to pay for separate travel fares.* ”

“ *Bus provision has to be reimagined as a true public service. I think the status quo is failing and that we need new thinking, and expert driven solutions.* ”

Impact of Sub-standard Bus Provision



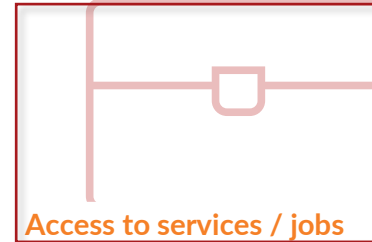
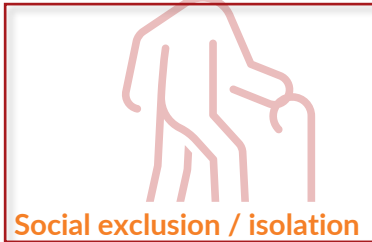
Some respondents commented on the impact that a good or bad bus service can have:

“ The bus frequency and routes have been cut and this is sometimes the only way elderly or disabled people can travel. ”

Many commented that cancelled services late at night had a negative impact on their personal safety due to having to either wait in the dark or walk home

“ It is very unsafe due to late or no-show busses, especially in the darker evenings. ”

Some felt that removal/change to services had led to some groups (particularly older/disabled people) becoming isolated



Respondents commented that a frequent and reliable bus service would help improve access to jobs.

Some respondents commented that a poor service has a negative impact on their mental health and they've felt stressed due to cancelled services



For some, an improved bus service would encourage them to get rid of their car and would have a positive impact on the environment.

Key take outs

Frequency

92%

respondents have used
the bus within the last
year

Base: 1,787

Covid changes

39%

travel by bus more since
the Covid-19 pandemic

Base: 1,787

Satisfaction

83%

respondents are
dissatisfied with the
current bus provision

Base: 1,787

Key take outs

Non-bus reasons

54%

don't travel by bus due to
lack of services in their
area

Base: 143

Improvements

75%

respondents would travel
more if services were
more frequent

Base: 1,787

Improvements

67%

would travel more if
reliability was improved

Base: 1,787

Public Drop In Sessions

To reach out to members of the public who unable to take the online survey or who feel more comfortable speaking to a member of the team, SYSTRA jointly with Renfrewshire Council undertook five public drop-in sessions around Renfrewshire. The locations were selected in liaison with the council's communications team, making sure that each location captures a certain geographic area. Two of the five sessions were run until late evening to allow people to drop in after work. Table 5 presents the schedule, locations and number of attendees in each session.

Table 5: Drop-in sessions schedule

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	FACILITATORS	NO. OF ATTENDEES
30 th October 2023	10:00 to 16:00	Erskine Library, Bridgewater Place, Erskine, PA8 7AA	Faqhrul Islam (SYSTRA) Ian Black (Renfrewshire Council)	34
31 st October 2023	13:00 to 19:30	Lagoon Leisure Centre, 11 Christie St, Paisley PA1 1NB	Faqhrul Islam (SYSTRA) Mark Higginbotham (Renfrewshire Council)	25
1 st November 2023	13:00 to 19:30	Braehead Shopping Centre, King's Inch Rd, Renfrew G51 4BN	Junaid Sahi (SYSTRA) Ian Black and Stephen Heron (Renfrewshire Council)	6
2 nd November 2023	10:00 to 16:00	Cargill Hall, Lintwhite Cres, Bridge of Weir PA11 3LJ	Craig Gow (SYSTRA) Ian Black (Renfrewshire Council)	4
3 rd November 2023	10:00 to 16:00	Johnstone Community Library, 25 Church St, Johnstone PA5 8FA	Craig Gow (SYSTRA) Ian Black (Renfrewshire Council)	35

Public Drop-In Sessions- Key Problems Identified

In the drop-in sessions, participants were asked about their experience of bus journeys. Conversations with the participants revealed the following key problems with existing bus provision

Poor/ Reduced Frequency

- Short notice cancellations
- Leaves people stranded

Unreliability

- Buses don't show up
- Delayed buses

Hours of Operation

- Service stops early in the evening
- No services on Sunday

Access to Network

- Long walk to bus stops
- No services in some areas

Journey Time and interchanges

- Long journey time for some trips
- 2 or more interchanges for some key trips

Inaccurate Information

- Some services are not shown on electronic displays
- Incoming buses suddenly disappears from the app

On-board Safety

- School Kids do not move for others
- Antisocial behaviour has been witnessed on buses

Crowdedness

- Overcrowded due to School Pupils
- A passenger had panic attack and had to get off.

Public Drop-In Sessions- Key Problems Identified

Unaffordable fares

- Long journey time for some trips
- 2 or more interchanges for some key trips

Multiple Tickets

- Need single tickets for one trip with transfers
- Incoming buses suddenly disappears from the app

Poor Bus Stop Facilities

- Lack of benches at busy stops
- Access to buses is difficult due to low kerbs

Bus Bunching

- 45-minute waits, bunches of buses all coming at once
- Service 26 too many buses, frequency too high, sometimes 3 buses in minutes

Bus Cancellations

- Short notice cancellations
- Leaves people stranded

Service Withdrawal

- Number 20, 22, 54 removed
- Number 64- replaced with 7A

Unsatisfactory Driver Behaviour

- Rude behaviour
- Starts driving before elderly people settle down

Operator Reluctant to Improve

- Lack of competition between operators
- Don't communicate, and do not attend council meetings

Network Analysis

Section 4

Existing Bus Operators

- Figure 15 shows that McGill's is the main bus operator in Renfrewshire with over 75% of the Weekly Total Revenue Distance. First Glasgow is the second biggest operator covering around 10% of revenue distance.
- 81% of the network is served by commercial services and 19% by subsidised services.

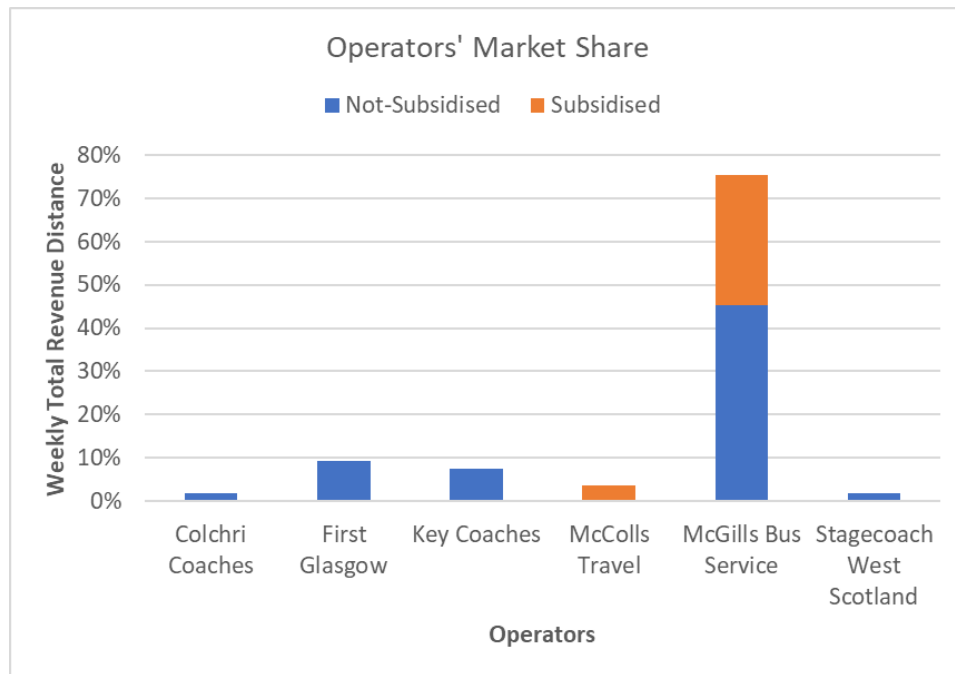


Figure 15: Bus operators market share in Renfrewshire

Subsidised services

Figure 16 Shows the bus routes in Renfrewshire that are subsidised by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport.

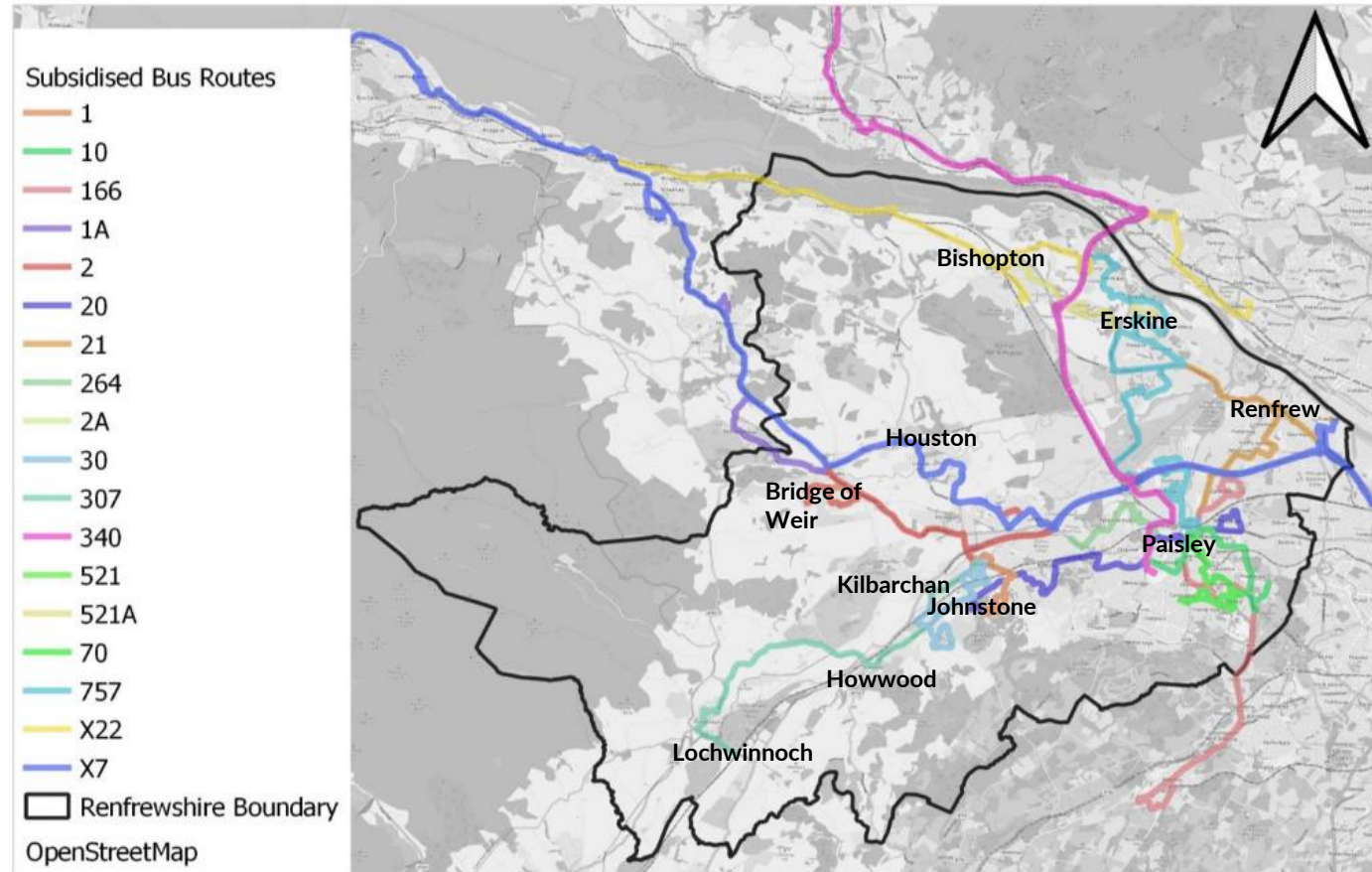


Figure 16: SPT subsidised routes in Renfrewshire

Core Service Routes

Table 6: Core service routes in Renfrewshire

No.	Description	Connects	Type of Route	First Service	Last Service	Service Frequency			
						Peak	Interpeak	Saturday	Sunday
26	Nethercraigs - Glasgow	Glenburn, Potterhill, Paisley Centre, Gallowhill, Porterfield, Renfrew, Braehead Shopping Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Govan, Glasgow Central	Core	05:22	23:02	8-10mins	8mins	7-15mins	10-30mins
38	Johnstone to Glasgow	Kilbarchan, Cochrane Castle, Spateston, Johnstone, Elderslie, Paisley Centre, Whitehaugh, Ibrox, Glasgow Central	Core	05:05	22:28	8mins	8mins	8mins	20mins
23	Erskine to Glasgow	Bargarran, Erskine Library, Park Mains, Inchinaan, Braehead Shopping Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Govan, Glasgow Central, Buchanan Bus Station	Core	04:58	22:31	15mins	30mins	20-30mins	30mins
X23	Erskine to Glasgow	Bargarran, Erskine Library, Park Mains, Inchinnan, Braehead Shopping Centre, Glasgow Central, Buchanan Bus Station	Express	05:55	19:55	20mins	30mins	30mins	-
757	Paisley to Clydebank Bus Station	Paisley Centre, Inchinnan, Park Mains, Erskine, Dalmuir, Clydebank Bus Station	Principal	05:27	23:00	30mins	30mins	30mins	60mins
17	Foxbar to Queen Elizabeth University Hospital	Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley Town Centre & Cardonald	Principal	05:59	20:00	30mins	30mins	30mins	-
61	Paisley Town Centre to Foxbar	Paisley town centre & Lounsdale Road	Core	05:25	23:30	10mins	10mins	10-20mins	20mins

No direct bus from Bridge of Weir, Kilbarchan and Houston to RAH or Paisley

Early Finishing and Night Services

Table 7: Services that stop early in the evening

No.	Description	Connects	Type of Route	First Service	Last Service	Service Frequency			
						Peak	Interpeak	Saturday	Sunday
70	Paisley – Lochfield (SPT Subsidised)	Seedhill, Hunterhill, Dykebar, Lochfield		09:55	16:24	60mins	60mins	60mins	-
1	Johnstone Station - Kilmacolm (SPT Subsidised)	Brookfield, Bridge of Weir, Quarriers Village		08:23	16:23	120mins	120mins	120mins	-
1A		Linwood, Houston, Bridge of Weir, Quarriers Village		07:19	15:19	120mins	120mins	120mins	
2/2A	Johnstone Station - Johnstone Station (SPT Subsidised)	Circular serving Brookfield, Bridge of Weir, Houston, Linwood		06:37	17:56	60mins	60mins	60mins	-
521	Erskine- Bishopton Station (SPT Subsidised)	Mains Hill, Linburn		07:44	18:38	60mins	60mins	60mins	-
6	Silverburn - Paisley	Nitshill, Hurllet, Lonend		07:31	17:48	60mins	60mins	60mins	-
10	Hawkhead Estate - Royal Alexandra Hospital	Ben Nevis Estate, Seedhill, Paisley Town Centre, RAH		08:45	17:45	60mins	60mins	60mins	-
30	Johnstone - Spateston	Johnstone, Corseford , Spateston		06:45	18:08	60mins	60mins	60mins	-

There is only one night service- N38 Glasgow – Paisley on weekends from 00:30 to 03:30

Changes in Bus Routes

Changes in bus routes have been investigated using GIS mapping of bus network exported from PODARIS for different years. We present a comparison between 2015 and 2019 to understand changes in the network in the pre-Covid years. A year-by-year comparison shows marginal change; hence it was deemed appropriate to present results across multiple years. Note that some areas are served by multiple bus routes, hence it may not be possible to identify the removal or addition of a specific service from this network comparison if the area is served by other routes.

2019 vs 2015 Bus Networks

Network Loss (in blue)

The Figure 17 shows the comparison between 2019 and 2015 bus network in Renfrewshire. Blue lines show the bus routes that existed in 2015 but not in 2019. Note that this does not indicate any change in the bus frequency or re-routing of bus routes.

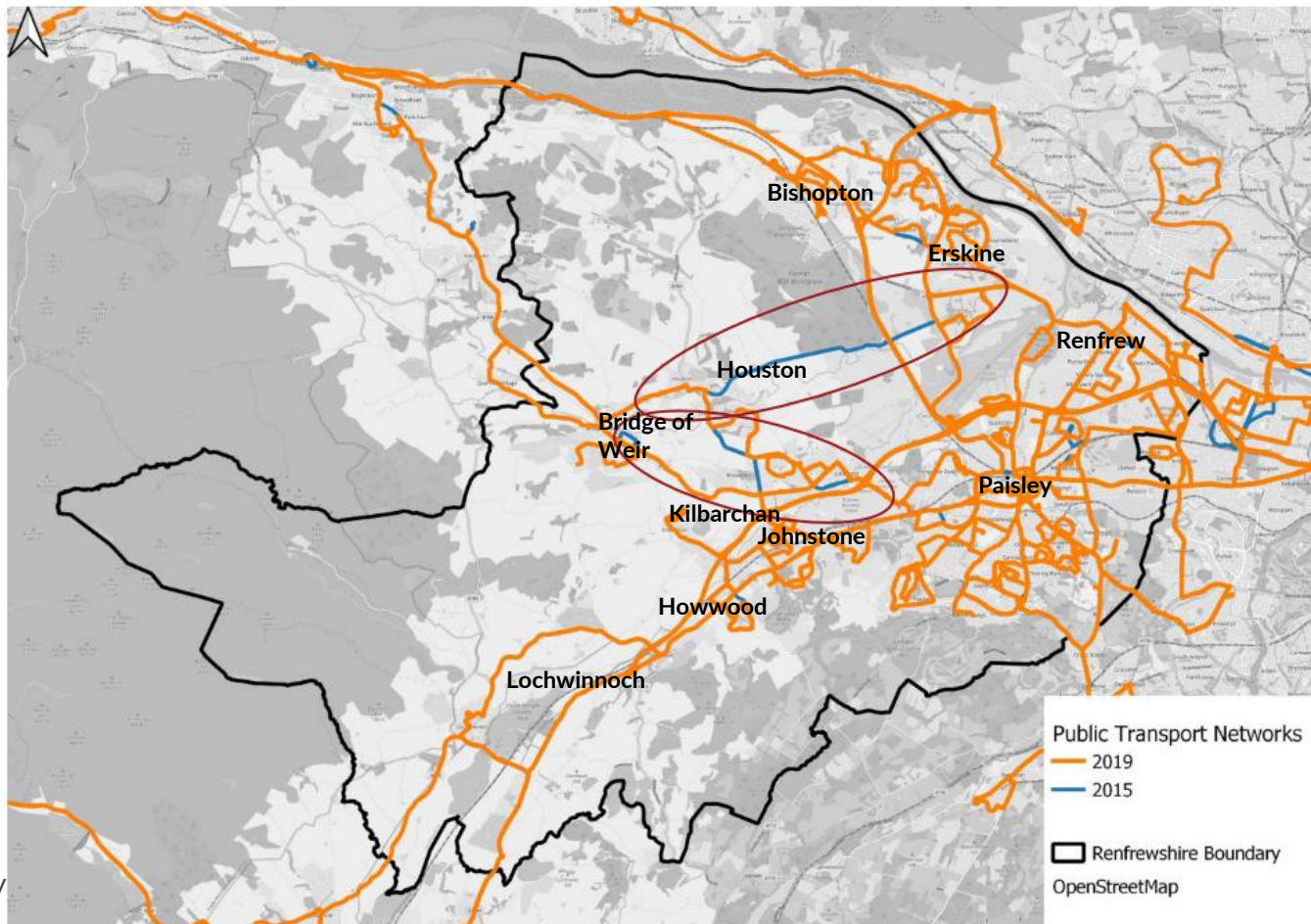


Figure 17: Loss of bus routes in 2019 compared with 2015

Changes in Bus Routes

2015 vs 2019 Bus Networks

Network Gain (in orange)

The Figure 18 shows the comparison between 2019 and 2015 bus network in Renfrewshire. Orange lines show the bus routes that did not exist in 2015 but do exist in 2019. Note that this does not indicate any change in the bus frequency or re-routing of bus routes.

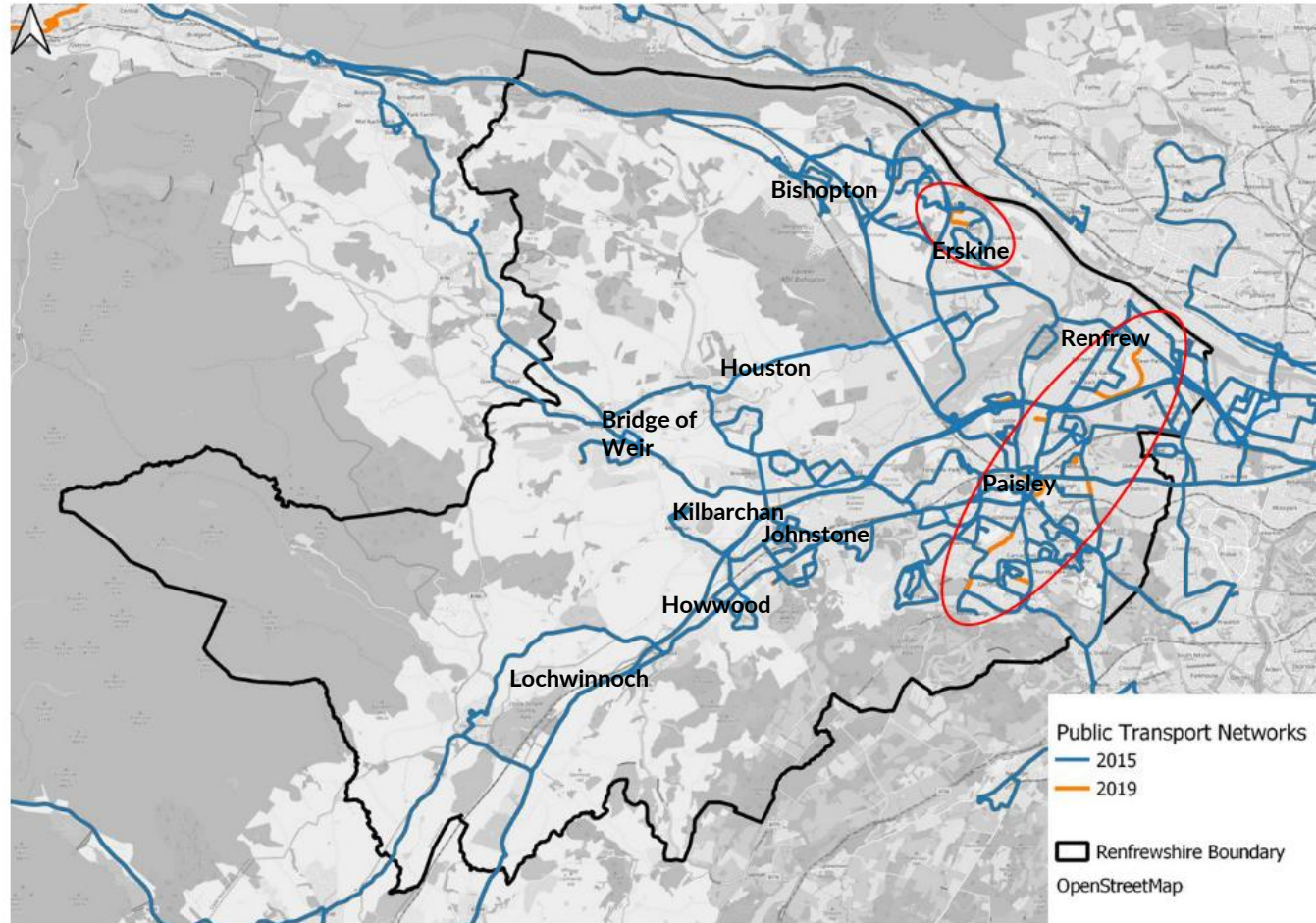


Figure 18: Gain in bus routes in 2019 compared with 2015

Changes in Bus Routes

We also present a comparison between 2015 and 2023 to understand changes in the network over the 8-year period.

Note that some areas are served by multiple bus routes, hence it may not be possible to identify the removal or addition of a specific service from this network comparison if the area is served by other routes.

2023 vs 2015 Bus Networks

Network Loss (in green)

The Figure 19 shows the comparison between 2023 and 2015 bus network in Renfrewshire. Green lines show the bus routes that existed in 2015 but not in 2023. Note that this does not indicate any change in the bus frequency or re-routing of bus routes.

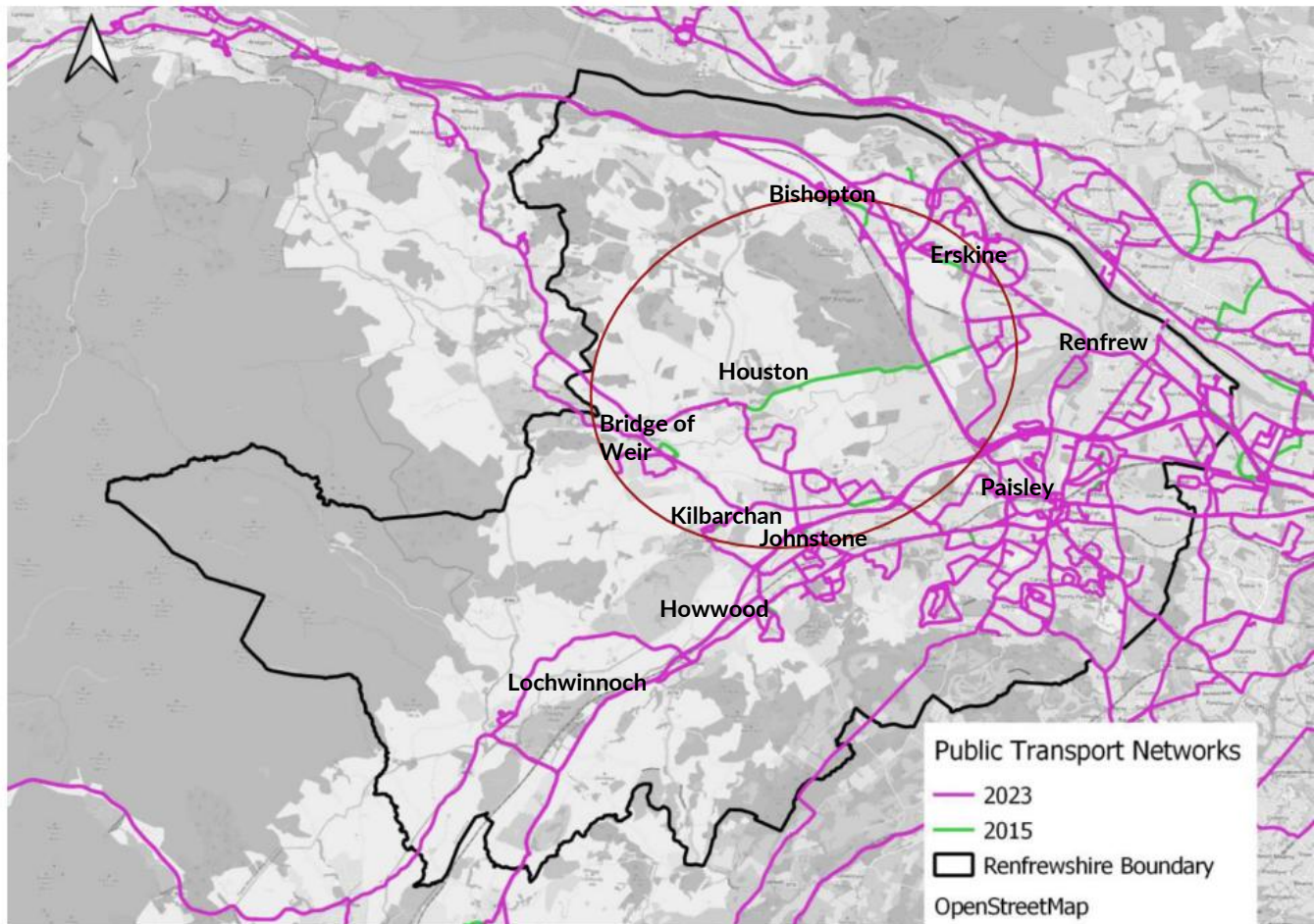


Figure 19: Loss of bus routes in 2023 compared with 2015

Changes in Bus Routes

2015 vs 2023 Bus Networks

Network Gain (in purple)

The Figure 20 shows the comparison between 2015 and 2023 bus network in Renfrewshire. Purple lines show the bus routes that did not exist in 2015 but do exist in 2023. Note that this does not indicate any change in the bus frequency or re-routing of bus routes.

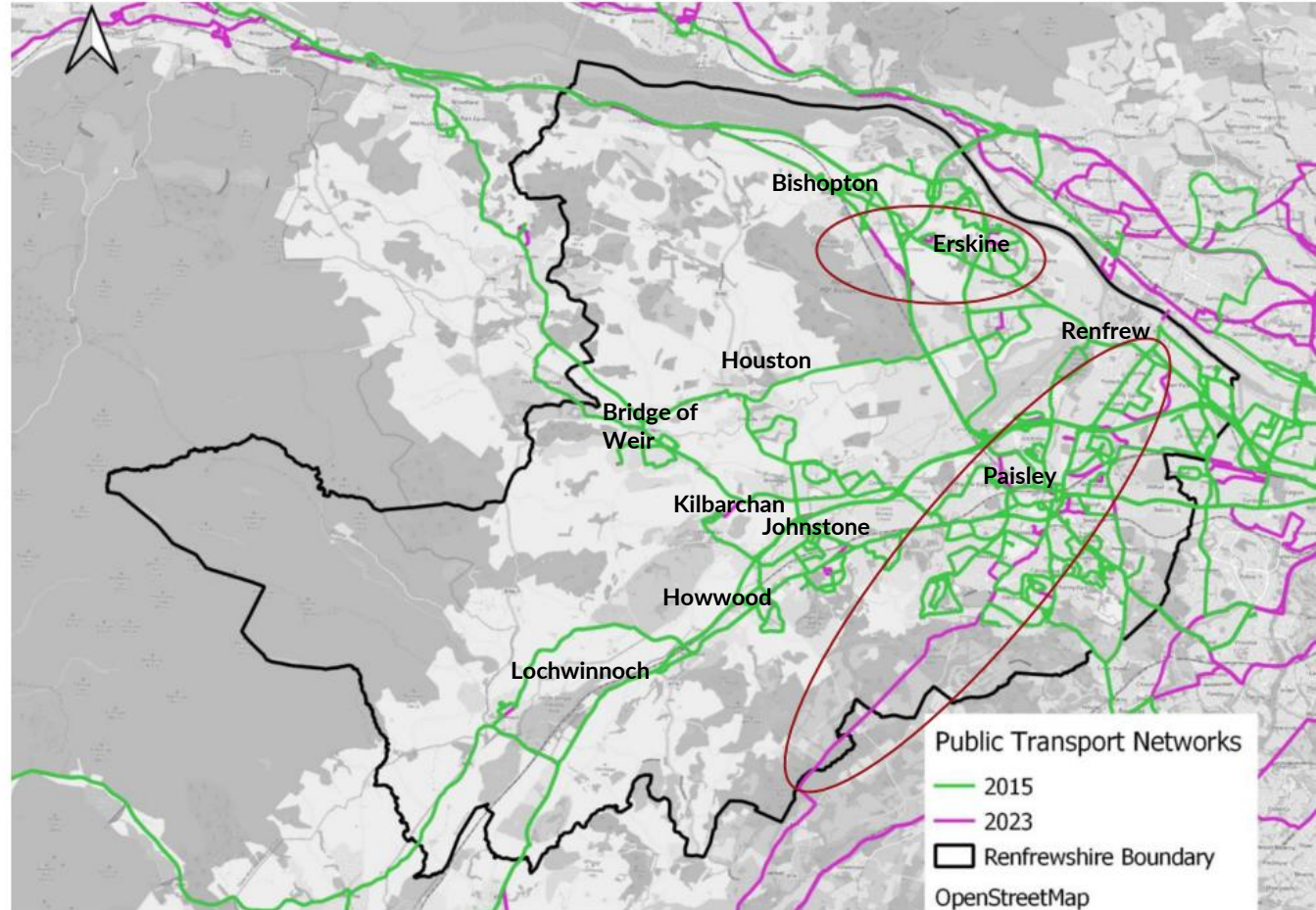


Figure 20: Gain in bus routes in 2023 compared with 2015

Changes in Bus Frequency

To understand changes in bus frequencies, we undertook frequency analysis at stops during different time periods. Average buses per hour (bph) at stops were compared between 2015 and 2019, and then between 2019 and 2023. This is deemed appropriate as it demonstrates how bus frequencies have changed before and after the COVID pandemic.

Figure 21 shows change in average buses per hour (bph) at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the AM period, i.e. 7am to 9pm. Majority of the routes lost up to 10 buses in the AM period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley - Renfrew
- Paisley- Johnstone-Kilbarchan
- Glasgow-Erskine
- Paisley - Potterhill
- Paisley- Bridge of Weir

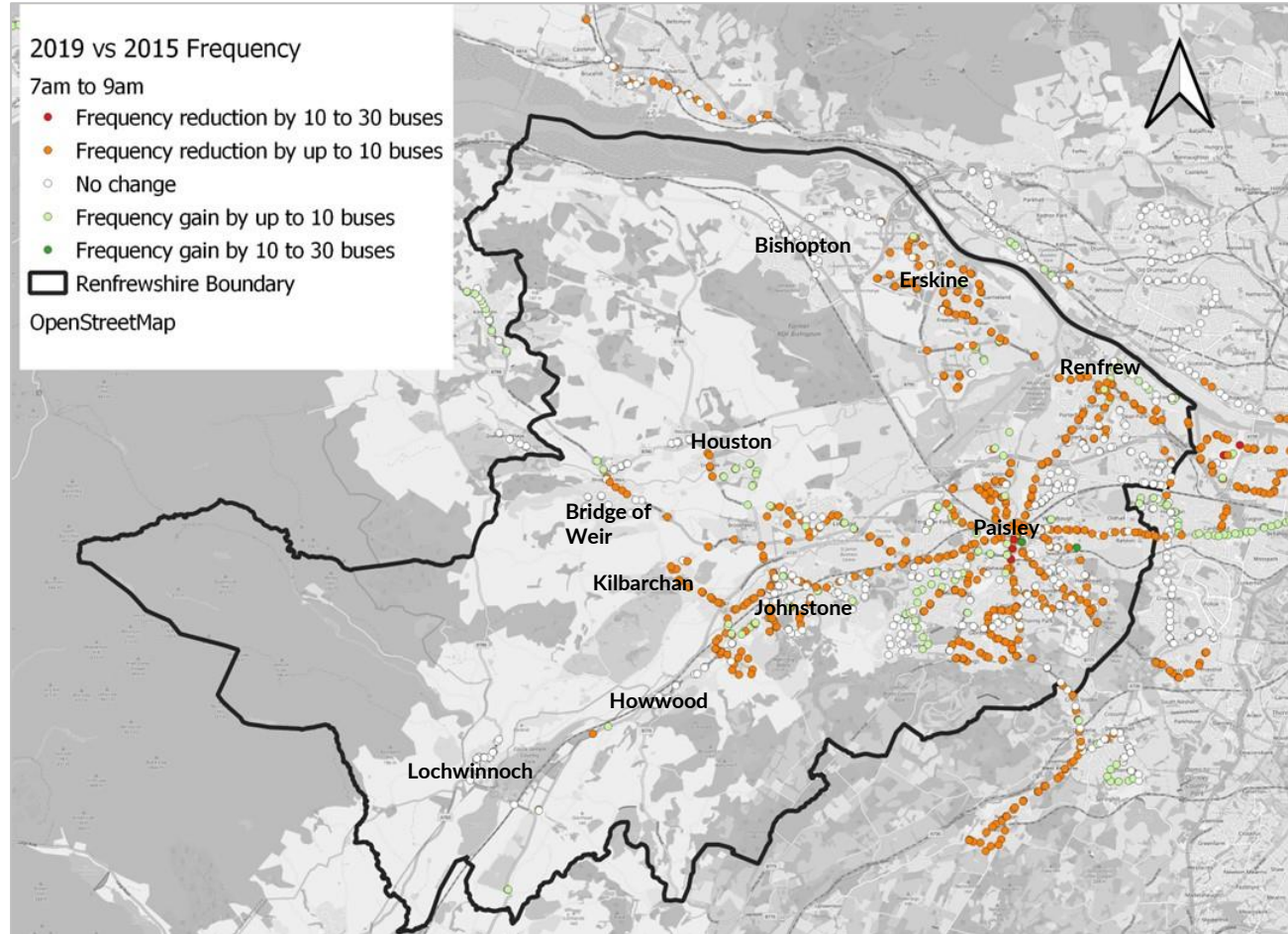


Figure 21: Change in average bph at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the AM period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 22 shows majority of the routes lost up to 10 bph in the interpeak period. Paisley- Johnstone corridor shows loss of 10 to 30 bph during this period. Some frequency gain are found within Foxbar area.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley – Renfrew- Erskine
- Paisley- Johnstone- Kilbarchan
- Paisley – Potterhill
- Paisley- Neilston (Cross-boundary)

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Paisley – Foxbar

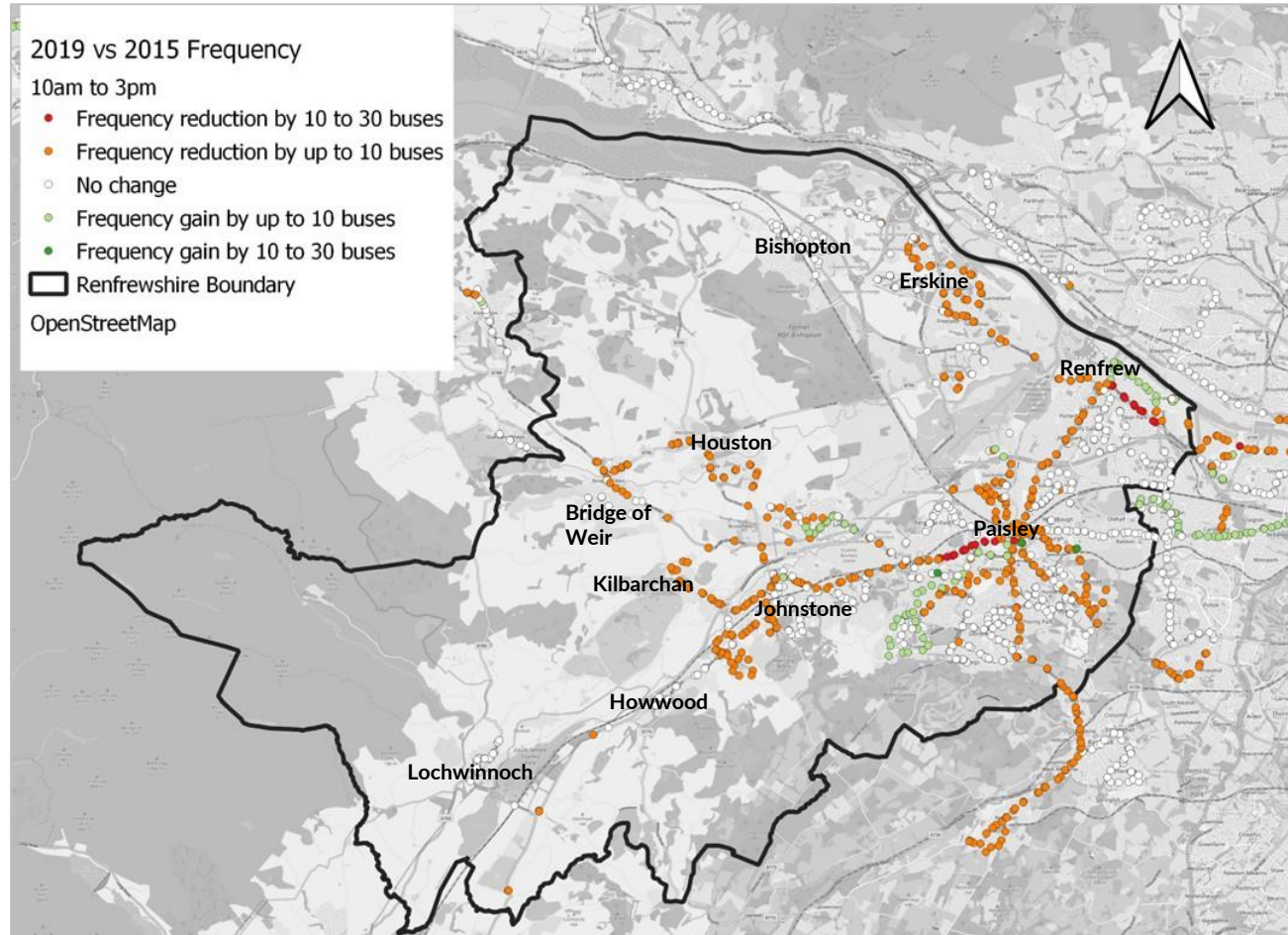


Figure 22: Change in average bph at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the interpeak period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 23 shows that the majority of the routes lost up to 10 bph in the PM period. Some stops in Renfrew show loss of 10 to 20bph during this period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley – Renfrew- Erskine
- Paisley- Glasgow
- Paisley- Johnstone-Kilbarchan
- Paisley – Potterhill
- Paisley- Houston
- Paisley- Neilston (Cross-boundary)

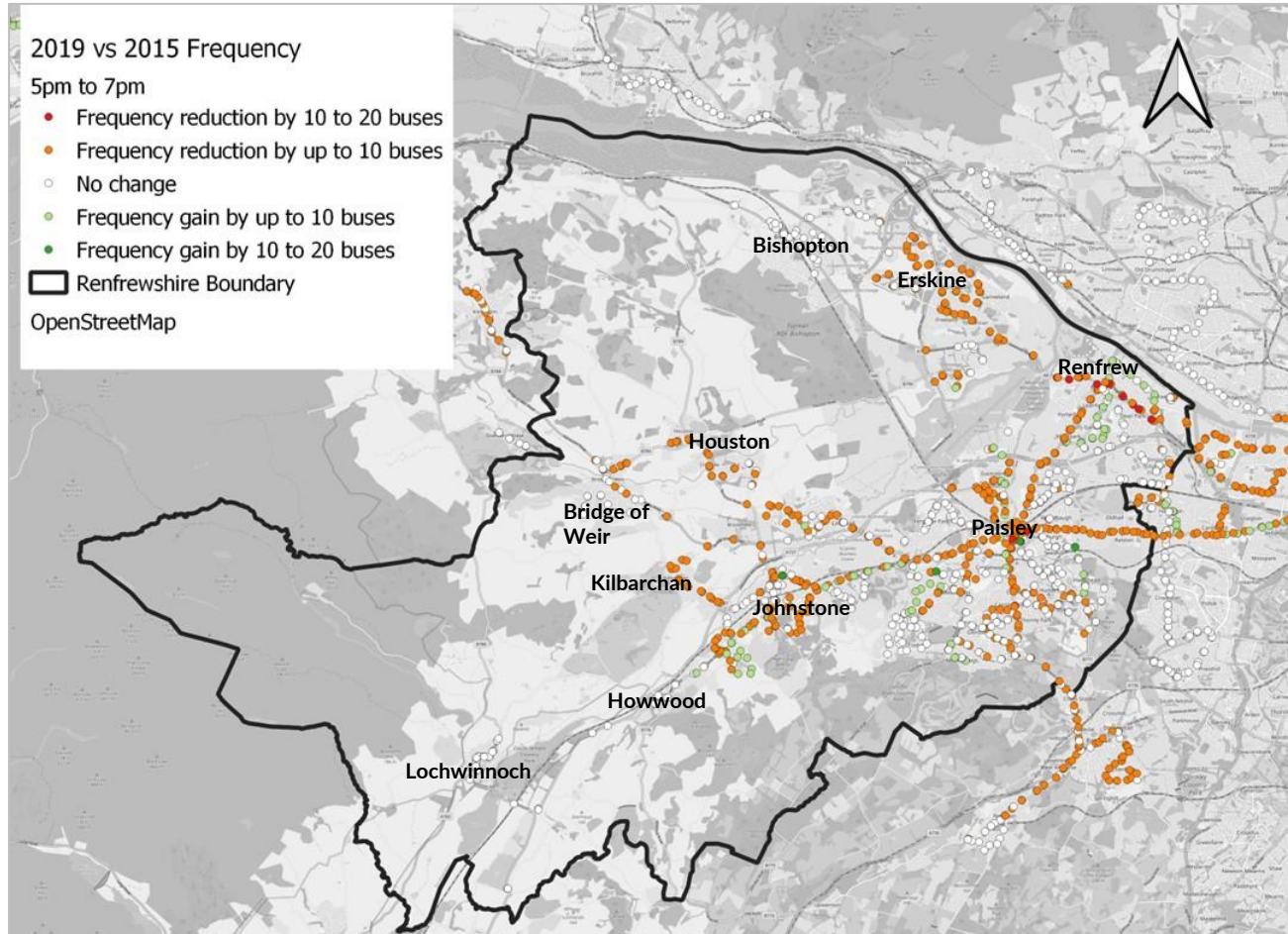


Figure 23: Change in average bph at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the PM period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 24 shows that the majority of the routes lost up to total 8 bph in the evening period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley – Renfrew- Erskine
- Paisley- Glasgow
- Johnstone
- Paisley – Foxbar /Nethercraigs
- Paisley- Auchenback

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Paisley – Neilston (cross boundary)

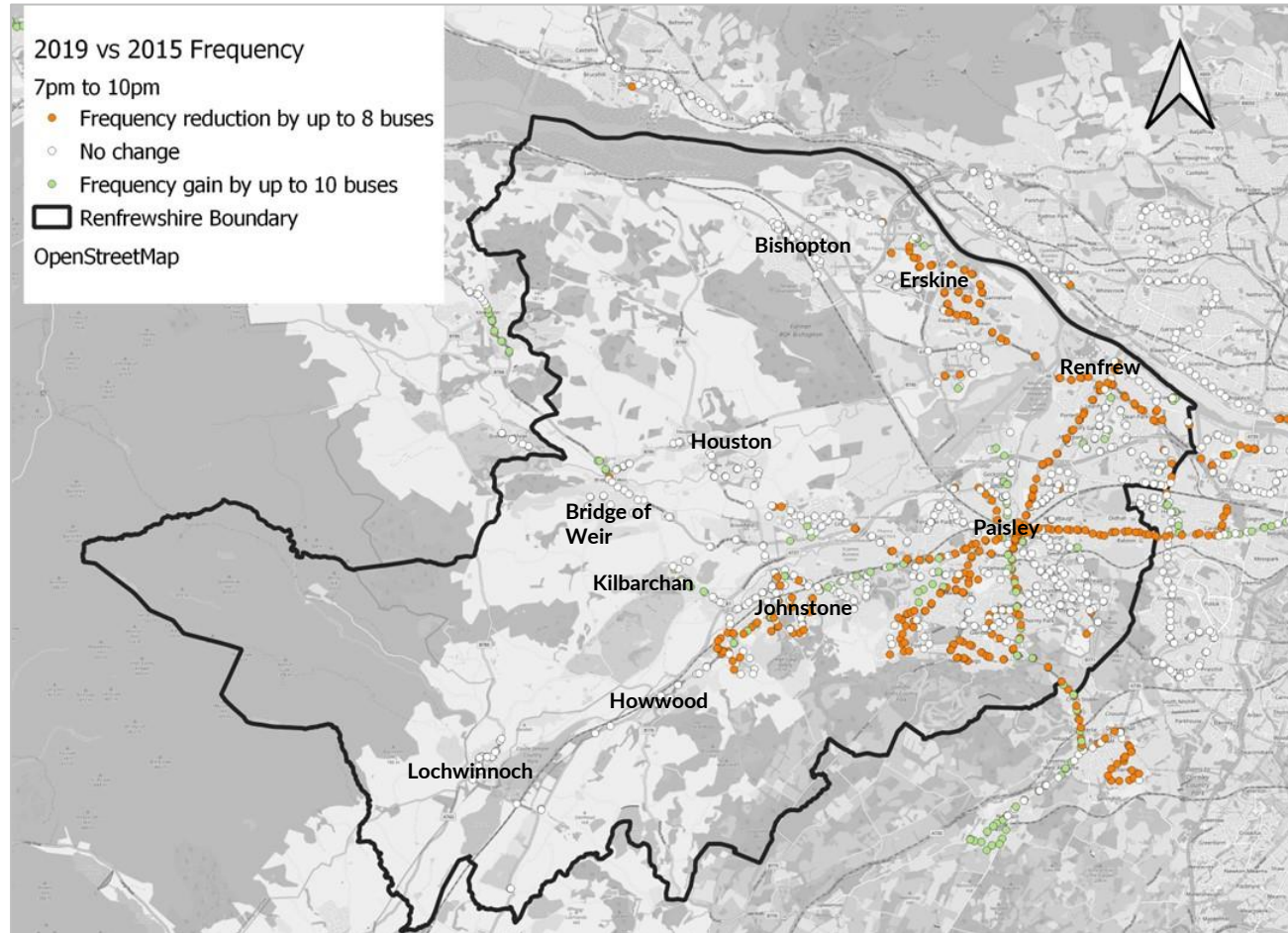


Figure 24: Change in average bph at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the evening

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 25 shows change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 during the AM period, i.e. 7am to 9pm.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley- Auchenback
- Paisley- Dykebar
- Paisley- Gallowhill
- Paisley- Ferguslie, Linwood
- Johnstone- Kilbarchan
- Paisley – Foxbar /Nethercraigs

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Renfrew
- Bridge of Weir
- Houston
- Lochwinnoch
- Howwood

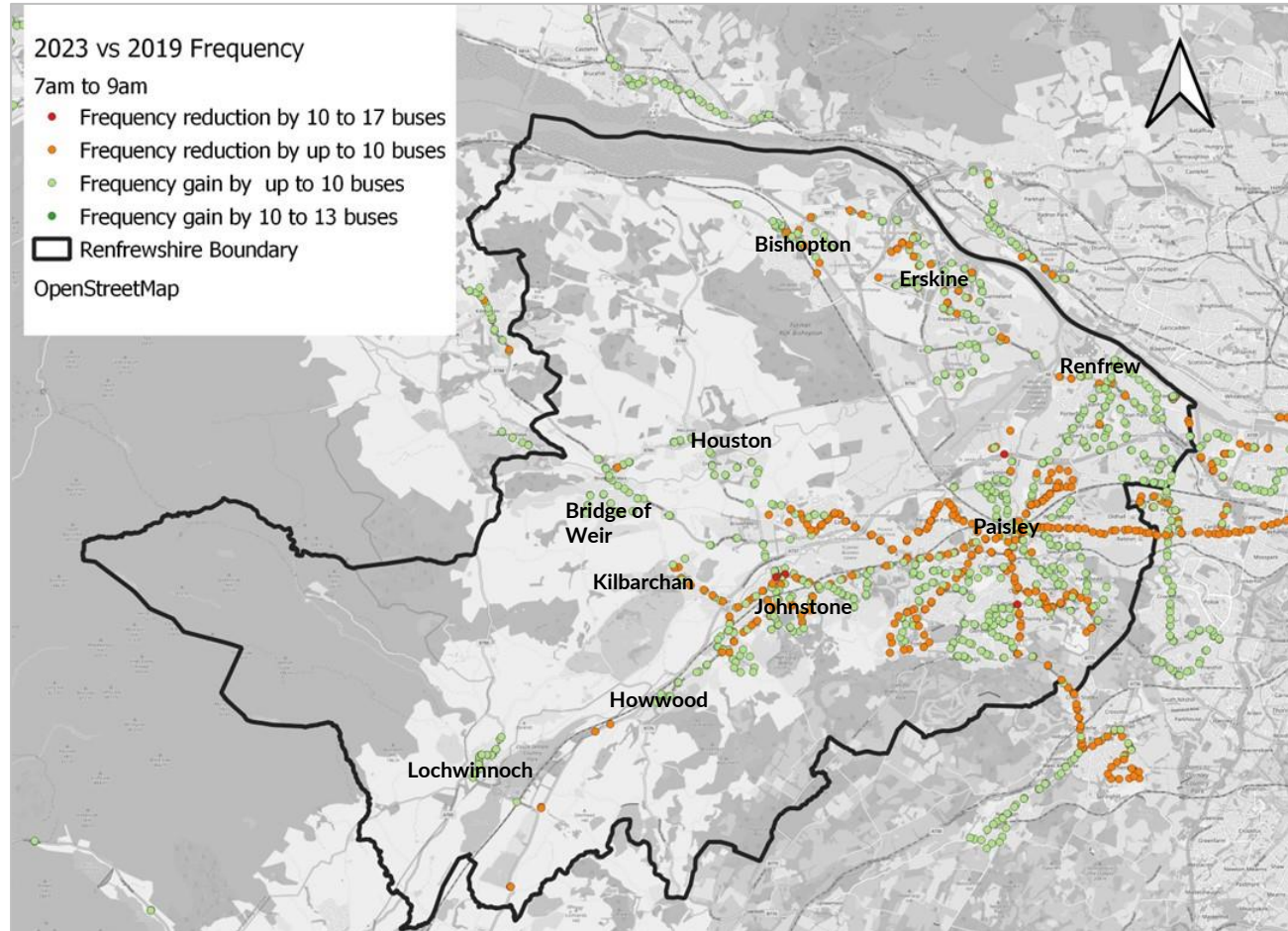


Figure 25: Change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 in the AM period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 26 shows change in average bph at stops during the interpeak period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley- Glasgow
- Paisley- Dykebar- Barrhead
- Paisley- Gallowhill
- Paisley- Feruslie, Linwood
- Johnstone
- Paisley – Foxbar

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Paisley- Johnstone

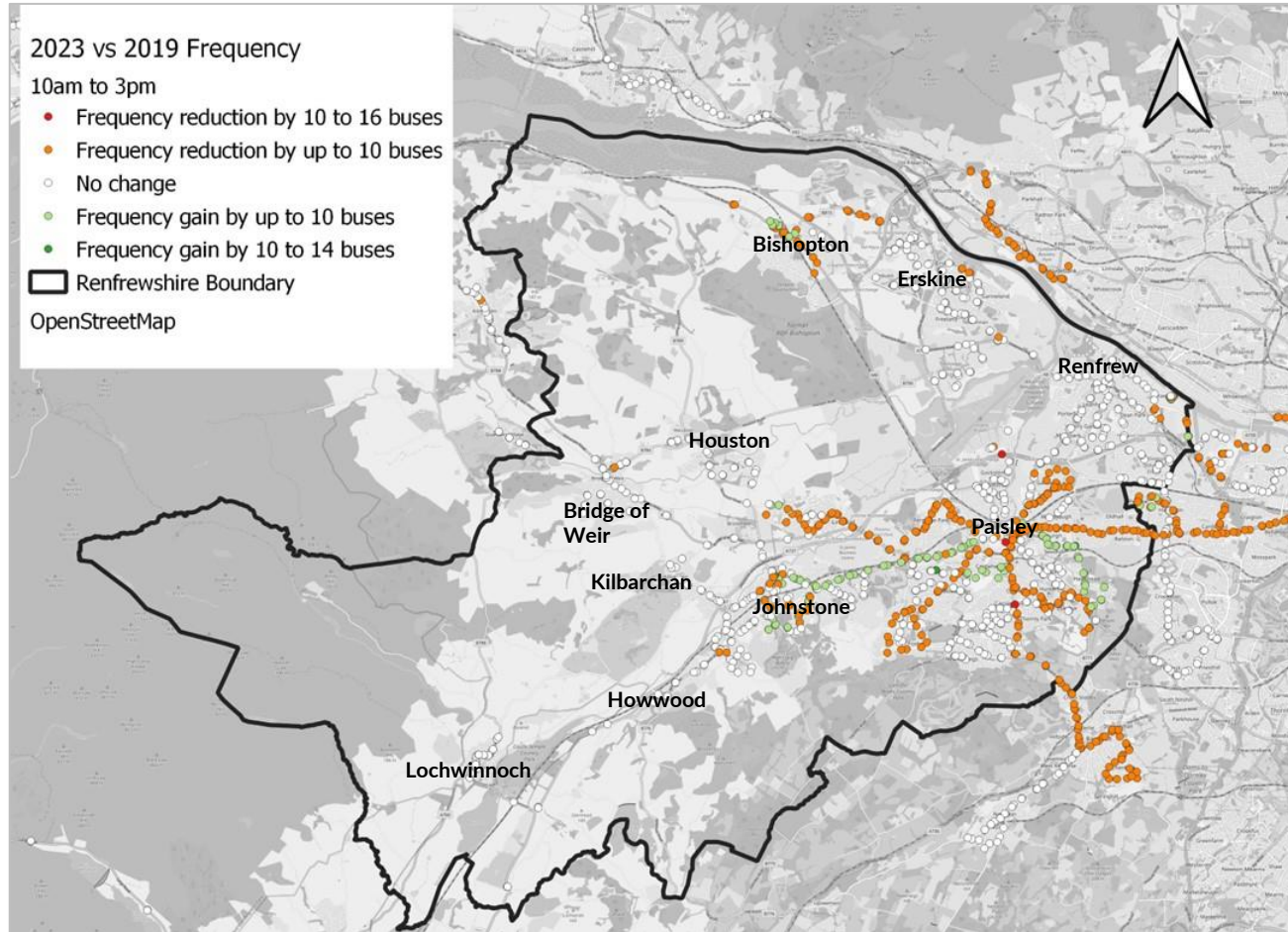


Figure 26: Change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 in the interpeak period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 27 shows change in average bph at stops between during the PM period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley- Glasgow
- Paisley- Dykebar
- Paisley- Feruslie, Linwood
- Paisley- Johnstone
- Paisley- Foxbar

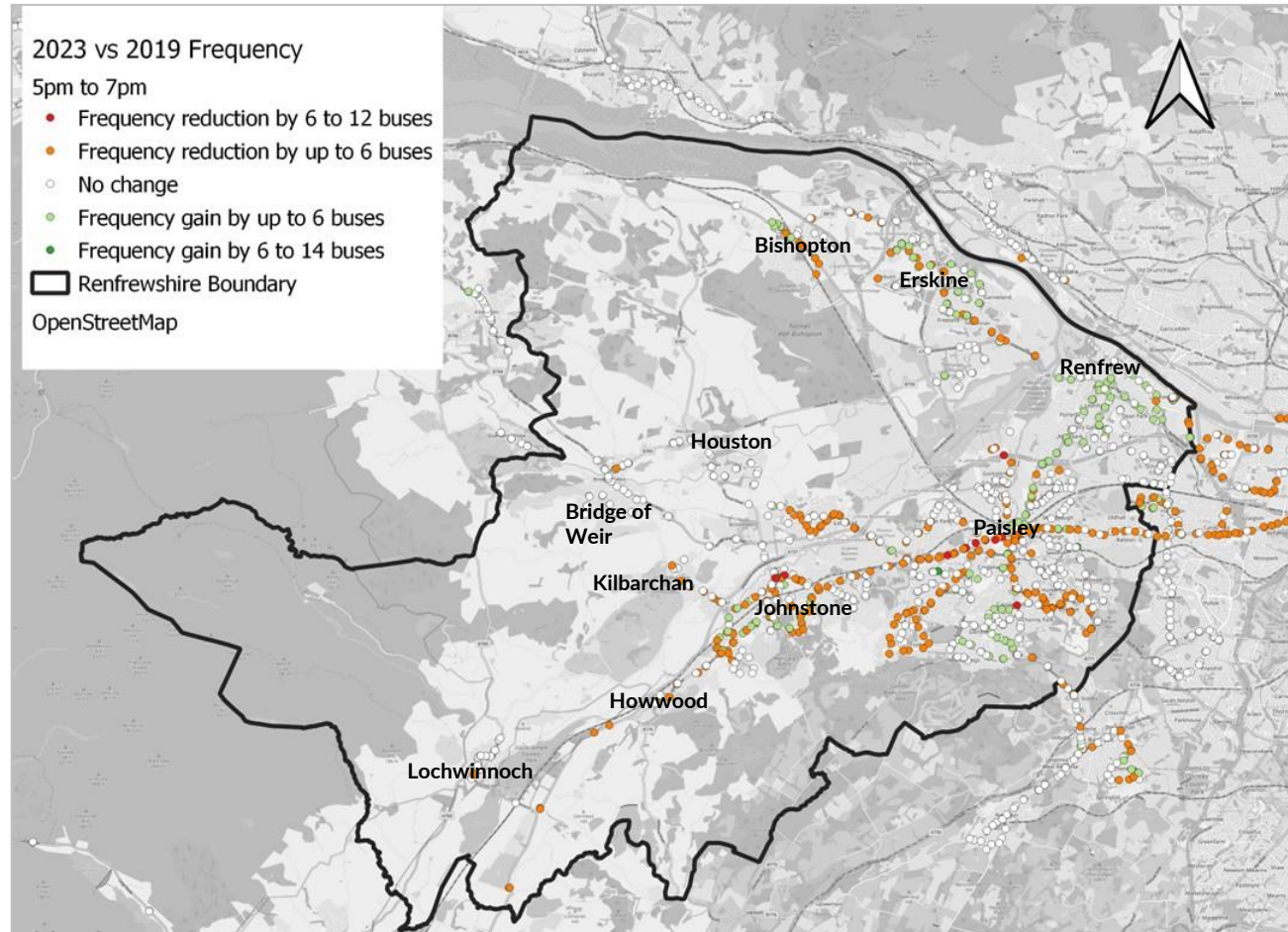


Figure 27: Change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 in the PM period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 28 shows change in average bph at stops between frequencies at stops during the evening period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley- Glasgow
- Paisley- Johnstone
- Paisley- Dykebar
- Kilbarchan

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Paisley- Glasgow

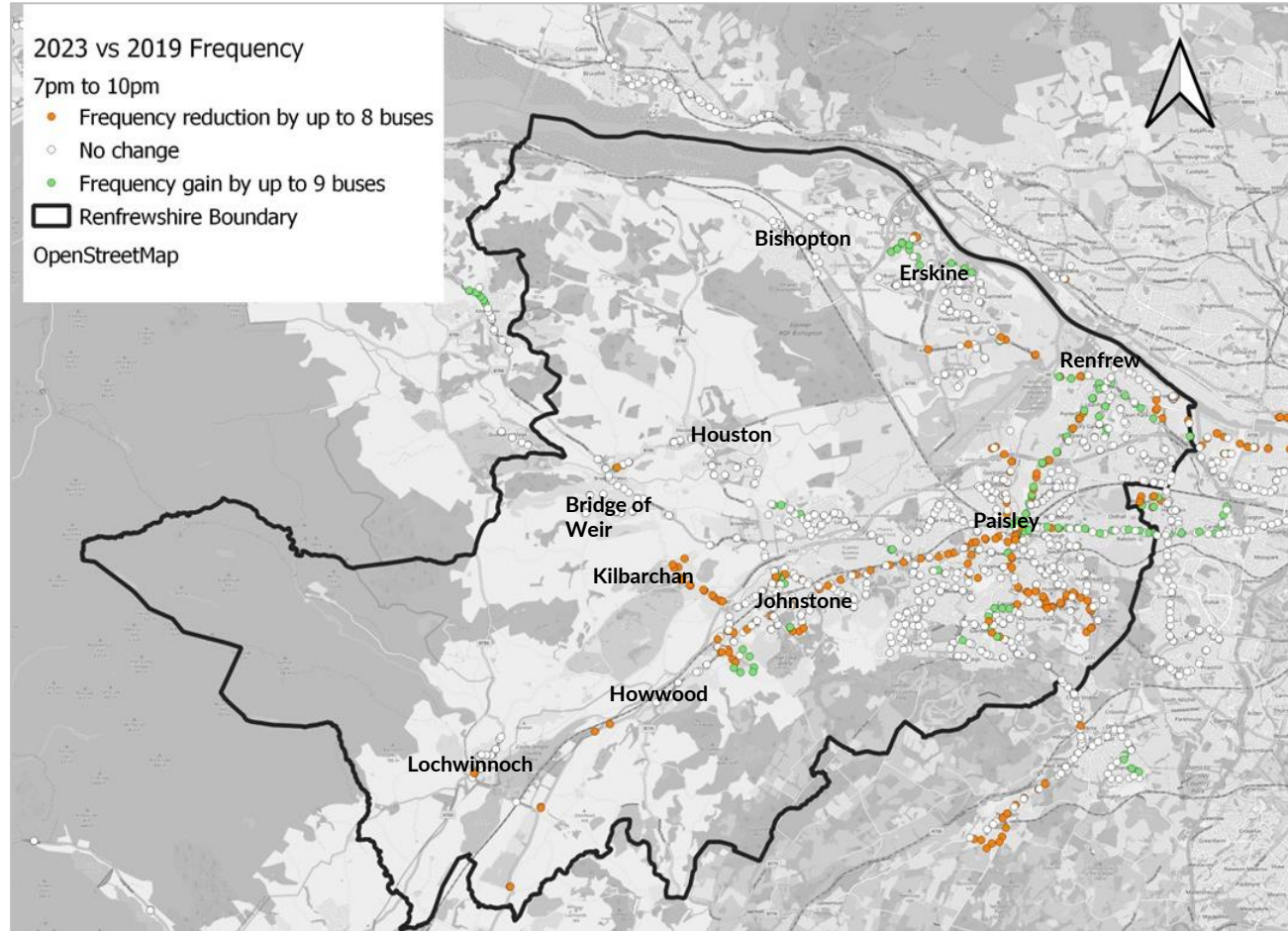


Figure 28: Change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 in the evening

Bus Service Withdrawal

Scottish Government's Network Support Grant (NSG) fund was available to both commercial and community bus operators to support Scotland's bus network, keep fares more affordable and recover from the Covid 19 impacts. The NSG ceased on 31 March 2023. Consequently, six bus services were withdrawn from Renfrewshire in May- July 2023 (Table 8). Withdrawal of these services caused inconveniences for a lot of passengers, some of which were reported through the public consultation.

Table 8: Service withdrawal in May-July 2023

Operator	Service no	Route
First Glasgow (No.1) Limited	N9	Sauchiehall St - Paisley, Gauze St
McGill's Bus Service	22	Paisley - Erskine
McGill's Bus Service	31	Johnstone Castle + Cochrane Castle circular - Johnstone
McGill's Bus Service	54	Neilston circular - Paisley
McGill's Bus Service	64	Phoenix Park or Glasgow - Gallowhill or Newton
McGill's Bus Service	22S	Paisley - Erskine

Services to Employment

We used Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) data 2022 for access to employment analysis. Table 9 shows number of jobs within each locality and the available bus services and frequencies. Major employment centres with more than 2000 jobs in Renfrewshire are –

- Paisley
- Renfrew
- Paisley Airport area
- Johnstone
- Elderslie

Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone are well served with services every 8-10mins in the peak hour. Paisley airport area has only one service (No757), therefore any delay or cancellations would have serious impact on the commuters.

Services to Employment

Table 9 Existing bus provision to employments

Name	Urban Rural Classification	No. of Jobs	Existing Bus Provision
Erskine	Other Urban Area	1,300	757: 15 mins peak and 30mins interpeak, 521/521A- Hourly services, 23/X23: 15- 20mins peak frequency
Renfrew	Large Urban Area	10,738	26: 8-10 mins peak frequency, 23/X23: 15- 20mins peak frequency, 21: half hourly services, 77:20-30mins
Bishopston	Accessible Small Town	865	521/521A: hourly services, Train every 15 mins
Inchinnan	Accessible Small Town	320	757: 15mins peak hour and 30mins inter peak time.
Paisley	Large Urban Area	32,930	26: 8-10 mins peak frequency, 38/38A: 8-10 mins peak frequency, 757: 15 mins peak and 30mins interpeak, 21: half hourly services, 6:hourly services, 51/51A: every 15 mins (peak), 66: half hourly services, 904: hourly services, 20/20A: 30 mins morning peak and hourly services, 61: 10mins frequency
Paisley-Airport Area	Large Urban Area	7,050	757: 15 mins peak and 30mins interpeak
Elderslie	Large Urban Area	2,210	20/20A: 30 mins morning peak and hourly services, 17A: 30 mins (peak and inter-peak), 38/38A: 8-10 mins peak frequency
Johnstone	Large Urban Area	3,530	38/38A: 8-10 mins peak frequency, 7/7A: 9-11 mins frequency, 17A: 30 mins (peak and inter-peak), 20/20A: Hourly services, 1/1A:half hourly services, 51/51A: every 15 mins (peak), 17A: 30 mins (peak and inter-peak), 32: half hourly peak and hourly interpeak frequency, 30: hourly services, 61: 10mins frequency
Kilbarchan	Large Urban Area	220	1/1A: half hourly services, 32: half hourly peak and hourly interpeak frequency, 38/38A: 8-10 mins peak frequency
Linwood	Large Urban Area	1,540	7/7A: 9-11 mins frequency, 1A: Hourly services
Houston/Crosslee	Accessible Small Town	615	1A: Hourly services, X7: 40-60 mins frequency
Bridge of Weir	Accessible Small Town	635	1/1A: half hourly services, X7:40-60 mins frequency
Howwood	Accessible Rural Area	120	904: hourly services
Lochwinnoch	Accessible Rural Area	260	307/307A: hourly services between 18:00 and 22:00
Langbank	Accessible Rural Area	115	No bus service. Trains every 30mins

Journey Time Reliability

Bus Punctuality

Glasgow and Strathclyde Strategic Bus Network Plan (GSSBNP) study identified the routes where services get delayed within SPT area. The study used data from July to September 2022 for a sample of services. Two of the identified routes connect Paisley with Glasgow-

- Glasgow to Paisley via M8
- Glasgow to Paisley via A761 (Glasgow Rd)

Table 10 shows the percentage of services that are late by more than 2 minutes at different time periods. Overall, more than half of the services are late on these routes in a day with almost all services late by more than 2 mins in the PM period.

Table 10: Percentage of services that are late by more than 2 minutes at different time periods

Time period	Glasgow to Paisley via M8	Glasgow to Paisley via A761 (Glasgow Rd)
Early AM (0400-0800)	25-50%	25-50%
AM (0800-0900)	50-75%	25-50%
Interpeak (0900-1700)	50-75%	50-75%
PM (1700-1800)	75-100%	75-100%
Evening (1800-2200)	50-75%	50-75%
All day	50-75%	50-75%

Accessibility to LDP Sites

Key LDP sites are concentrated across the following areas- Bishopton; Erskine; Renfrew Ferry . Industrial Supply Sites below deemed to not have access to a bus service within a 400m walk-

- Glasgow Airport – AMIDS
- Ferguslie Park
- Linwood

Table 11 shows LDP sites with proposed number of dwellings and existing bus provision. Note that new services might be planned as part of the planning applications.

Access to LDP Sites

Table 11: LDP sites with existing bus provision

Site References	Dwellings Pre-2026	Dwellings Post 2026	Total Dwellings	Bus Provision
RFRF1037 RFRF0911Z RFRF0911Y	576	1,343	1,919	Bishopton - new larger housing estate and no existing bus routes in vicinity (adjacent to RFRF0911Z). Design looks to be parking space for dwellings. Site approx. 1600m walk to Bishopton Rail Station.
RFRF0769B RFRF0994	225	559	784	Renfrew - at corner of Ferry Road and Kings Inch Road. Served by McGill's 26 and FGLA 77, with approx. 11-14 buses per hour (bph) in Peak. Located at Renfrew/Yoker Ferry which is understood to be replaced by a bridge (however limited as is a draw bridge). Located to the east of site RFRF0994 which is further away from bus corridor.
RFRF0971A	420	200	620	Dykebar - site located on McGill's 66 and 166 routes and encompasses Dykebar Hospital. Frequency approx. 4-6bph in peaks.
RFRF0971	140	110	250	Thornly Park - on B774 Caplehill Road. Served by McGill's 51 and 54 with 11-12 bph during peak times and mapping indicating within a walking distance of existing stop
RFRF1003	165	81	246	Erskine - located on A726 and serviced by McGill's 23D. Reasonable frequency however no bus stop infrastructure located on road at site which would be required.
RFRF0989A	195	15	210	Hawkhead - served by McGill's 10 and Key Coaches, with frequency of 1bph. Appears to be housing, many of which have driveways. Within walk distance of Hawkhead Rail Station.
RFRF1040	-	150	150	Ferguslie Park - main section of site located within 400m of existing service (McGill's 24 and 264), however not all parts of site are. East end of site walkable to Paisley St James rail station.
RFRF1024	50	50	100	Spateston - located on B787 Beith Road, service level of 7-9bph in AM peak.

Access to Active Bus Stops

We used Scottish Government's 6-fold Urban-Rural classification to determine the population within walking distances of bus stops. The following walking distances have been used -

- Urban areas: 400m and 600m
- Small towns: 600m and 800m
- Rural areas: 800m

Table 12 shows % of population within distance of a bus stop with at least an hourly bus service at different time periods. The analysis shows that a high proportion of population within urban areas are within 600m of bus stops. Small towns have relatively lower coverage (maximum 76% of population within 800m) and rural areas are poorly served with only around 40% population being within 800m of active bus stops. This indicates the limitations in terms of access to bus network in Howwood, Lochwinnoch and Langbank.

Table 12: Percentage of population within walking distances of bus stops in Renfrewshire

URBAN - RURAL CLASSIFICATION	TOWNS/SETTLEMENTS	MORNING PEAK (0700-0900)			INTER PEAK (1000-1500)			EVENING PEAK (1700-1900)		
		Within 400m	Within 600m	Within 800m	Within 400m	Within 600m	Within 800m	Within 400m	Within 600m	Within 800m
Large Urban Area	Renfrew, Paisley, Elderslie, Johnstone, Kilbarchan, Linwood	78%	88%	-	77%	88%	-	75%	87%	
Other Urban Area	Erskine	71%	80%	-	74%	82%	-	71%	80%	
Accessible Small Town	Bishopton, Inchinnan, Houston/ Crosslee, Bridge of Weir	-	68%	76%	-	69%	76%		63%	72%
Remote Small Town	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A
Accessible Rural Area	Howwood, Lochwinnoch, Langbank	-	-	41%	-	-	32%			42%
Remote Rural Area	N/A	-	-	N/A	-	-	N/A			N/A

Accessibility Gaps

Accessibility isochrones have been mapped to determine access to services by public transport, using the following criteria -

- Access to bus stops with at least an hourly service
- Number of transfers limited to 2
- Access to a bus /rail within 800m walking distance

Table 13 shows town/settlements where access to health and education by bus journeys require more than 50 mins. It is to be noted that the analysis has been undertaken using Podaris tool which takes account of average waiting time during each time period.

The analysis show that journeys to hospitals, universities and colleges from Bridge of Weir, Howwood, and Lochwinnoch take more than 50mins in all time periods, making it difficult and inconvenient to access these services for people who do not/cannot drive.

Table 13: Accessibility to health and education

Access to	AM Journey time >50mins	IP Journey time >50mins	PM Journey time >50mins	OP Journey time >50mins
Hospitals	Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Houston, Craigends, Lochwinnoch, Bishopton	Bridge of Weir Houston, Lochwinnoch	Bridge of Weir Houston, Craigends, Lochwinnoch	Bridge of Weir Houston, Craigends, Bishopton Lochwinnoch
GP	Part of Langbank	-	-	-
College	Part of Langbank, Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch	Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch	Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch	Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch
University	Part of Langbank, Part of Erskine, Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch	Erskine, Bridge of Weir, Lochwinnoch	Erskine, Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch	Erskine, Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch

Accessibility to Settlements

Definition of accessible towns and rural areas according to Scotland's Urban/Rural 6-fold Classification²:

- Accessible Small Towns: Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people, and within a 30-minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
- Accessible Rural Areas: Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a 30-minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more.

Table 14 below shows accessibility analysis results to determine whether the settlements are accessible by PT as per the definition above. The results show that majority of these settlements are out with 30mins of public transport journeys from a settlement of 10,000 or more.

Table 14: Accessibility by bus in 30 mins

Settlements	Urban-Rural Classification (6-fold)	AM	IP	PM	OP	Remarks
Bishopton	Accessible Small Towns	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	*Access to small areas of Paisley is possible
Houston/Crosslee	Accessible Small Towns	No	No	No	No	Not within 30mins of Johnstone or Paisley
Bridge of Weir	Accessible Small Towns	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Within 30mins of Johnstone
Howwood	Accessible Rural Areas	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Average wait time is much lower in the interpeak for train service to access Johnstone (morning peak wait time: 30 mins, Inter peak: 15 mins)
Lochwinnoch	Accessible Rural Areas	No	No	No	No	Not within 30mins of Johnstone
Langbank	Accessible Rural Areas	No	No	No	No	Not within 30mins of Erskine or Paisley

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-urban-rural-classification-2020/pages/2/>

Bus Priority Measures

Existing Bus Priority Measures

There are currently limited bus priority measures in Renfrewshire, as described below.

- No bus priority lanes with only one bus gate at Inchinnan Road.
- SCOOT systems are currently being planned and will be implemented in early 2024

Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership Fund study proposed a number of bus priority measures. Tables 15 and 16 below present the proposed priority measures that are within Renfrewshire Council area.

Survey findings revealed that some stops (e.g. Braehead Shopping Centre) suffer from bus bunching during peak hours. This could be a result of lack of bus priority measures which generates delays for buses and results in bus bunching.

Proposed BPF Bus Priority Measures

Table 15: Glasgow City Region BPF - proposed bus priority measures (1/2)

GSSBNP Corridor	Intervention Name	Intervention Description	Bus Priority	Interchange	Bus Service	Other
09 - Paisley Road West	Paisley Town Centre Junction Improvements	Key junctions to be recast to improve public transport priority, reduce large junction footprints, improve safety for walking and cycling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junction 1—Gordon St / Causeyside St / Canal St • Junction 2—Lonend / Bridge St / Mill St / Gordon St • Junction 3—Mill St / Glasgow Rd / Gauze St / Inle St • Junction 4—Inner Ring Road incorporating Wallneuk Gyratory 	x			
09 - Paisley Road West	Renfrewshire East - West Corridor including Johnstone High Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow Road to Paisley Abbey - Bus lane • Paisley High Street / Broomlands Road to junction with Gallowgreen Road - Parking and loading enforcement measures • Broomlands Street from Gallowgreen Road to A761 - Bus Priority • A761 to Johnstone - Designated Clearway with removal of parking and loading, including enforcement • Johnstone High Street from William Street to George Street - Infrastructure improvements including removal of parking, potential for bus gate 	x			
09a - Shieldhall/ Govan Road	Fastlink Extension through QEUH to Braehead/Renfrew	Western Approach to Renfrew	x			
09a - Shieldhall/ Govan Road	Fastlink Extension through QEUH to Braehead Renfrew to Glasgow Airport/AMIDS	Renfrew to Airport/AMIDS	x			
M8/Glasgow Airport	Glasgow Airport	Upgrade facilities to accommodate future 2025/2030 network levels of service		x		
Renfrewshire	AMIDS Travel Hub	A public transport hub to serve AMIDS, Scotland's Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District in Renfrewshire.		x		

Proposed BPF Bus Priority Measures

Table 16: Glasgow City Region BPF - proposed bus priority measures (2/2)

GSSBNP Corridor	Intervention Name	Intervention Description	Bus Priority	Interchange	Bus Service	Other
Renfrewshire	Renfrewshire North – South Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neilston Road - Review of parking and loading and enforcement. Potential for northbound bus lane. • Causeyside Street / St Mirren Brae - Bus priority lane • Smithhills Street - Investigation of bus only infrastructure. Potential to open Central Road bus stops for LEVs including streetscape work on Central Road. • Renfrew Road to Arklestone Road - Northbound bus lane • Renfrew Road to Renfrew - Potential to extend northbound bus lane or increase parking and loading enforcement. 	x	x		
Renfrewshire	Renfrewshire Orbital	Feasibility study	x			x
Renfrewshire	Upgrade to UTC system at key junctions in Renfrewshire	TLP scheme to reduce the delay experienced by buses at traffic signals primarily through SCOOT – based bus priority, making use of the recently introduced replacement SCOOT system.	x			
Renfrewshire	Camera Enforcement in Renfrewshire	Investigation of a camera-based enforcement regime on the key routes identified above. A suitable ANPR system would allow urban clearways to be created and importantly enforced. Assumed up to 20 locations.	x			
Renfrewshire	Braehead Bus Station	Upgrade facilities to accommodate future 2025/2030 network levels of service		x		
Renfrewshire	Improve interchanges - Paisley, Johnstone	Improve public transport offering (both services, connections and interchange facilities) in these locations where users are reliant on taking multiple public transport services to access key destinations		x		
Renfrewshire	Improve interchanges - Bishopton	Improve public transport offering (both services, connections and interchange facilities) in these locations where users are reliant on taking multiple public transport services to access key destinations		x		
Renfrewshire	LDP Service Change - Renfrewshire Sites - Changes to existing services (frequency, extension of existing service(s))	Changes to existing services (frequency, extension of existing service(s)) at sites - including: Bishopton, Renfrew Ferry, Dykebar, North Barr etc			x	

Network Review Summary

Suggested Route Improvements

The network review in conjunction with the public consultation reveal that there are a few areas and routes where bus provision is sub-standard. These areas include-

- Langbank to Paisley
- Dargavel/Bishopton
- Erskine to Paisley
- Connections to RAH
- Connections to Southwest- Houston, Bridge of Weir, and Kilbarchan

Recommendations

We recommend the following bus routes and associated service specification for consideration. Table 17 shows proposed new routes and Table 18 shows improved frequencies for some existing services.

Table 17: Proposed new bus routes

Area	Route	Route Category	Recommended Service
Langbank/ Dargavel/ Bishopton	Paisley- Renfrew- Erskine- Bishopton-Langbank	Principal or rural connector services	Half hourly services in the peaks and hourly services in interpeak and off-peak
Bridge of Weir	Bridge of Weir- Kilbarchan- Johnstone- Elderslie- Paisley	Principal or rural connector services	Half hourly services in the peaks and hourly services in interpeak and off-peak
Bridge of Weir	Bridge of Weir- Houston- Linwood- Paisley	Principal or rural connector services	Hourly services
Houston, Bridge of Weir and Kilbarchan	Connections to RAH and QEUH	On-demand	DRT or Community Transport for Hospital Runs

Table 18: Proposed improved frequency for the existing routes

Area	Route	Route Category	Recommended Service
Hawkhead	10-Hawkhead Estate to Royal Alexandra Hospital	Core services	Half hourly services in the peaks and hourly services in interpeak and off-peak
Dykebar/Potterhill	70- Potterhill- Dykebar- Hunterhill- Paisley	Core services	Half hourly services in the peaks and hourly services in interpeak and off-peak
Johnstone	20/20A- Johnstone to Paisley	Core services	Half hourly services

Recommendations

Hours of Operation

- All services should have core hours of operation between 07:00 and 19:00. Late evenings (19:00 to 22:00) can be covered by reduced frequencies.
- Night buses should be operated on 7 days a week rather than just weekends
- Night buses to late night shift workplaces, such as hospitals, Paisley airport should be considered.
- Guaranteed last bus for both regular and night services.
- Some routes do not operate on Sundays (shown in Tables 6 and 7). These routes should be served with the same services on Sundays with reduced frequencies.

Passenger Information

- An integrated real-time passenger information platform including different operators and other modes (i.e. Train) should be introduced.
- Based on survey findings, improvements need to be made to real-time information accuracy.
- Up-to-date printed maps and timetables should be available at bus stops for people who do not have access to internet.
- Information about delays, re-routeing, cancellations should be updated in the information platform to avoid inconvenience. Should such a situation arise, alternative options should be advised.

Fares and Ticketing

- Survey findings reveal that buses are expensive for the users. Affordable fare structures should be implemented: lower fares for all may be achievable (similar to the capped £2 single fares in England), and/or with a larger budget through an expansion of concessionary travel free of charge or at nominal cost for targeted groups such as those on lowest incomes.
- The existing *Glasgow Tripper* which allows multi-operator bus journeys includes First, McGill's and West Coast Motors. Other small operators should also be included under this ticketing scheme.

Alternatives for Change

Section 5

Current Operational Model

Bus services were deregulated across the UK in 1986 by the Transport Act of 1985. Existing bus companies (predominantly municipally or nationally controlled) became open to competition, provided they could satisfy some basic operational and safety requirements and obtain an operating licence. Figure 29 shows the roles and responsibilities in the current operational model.

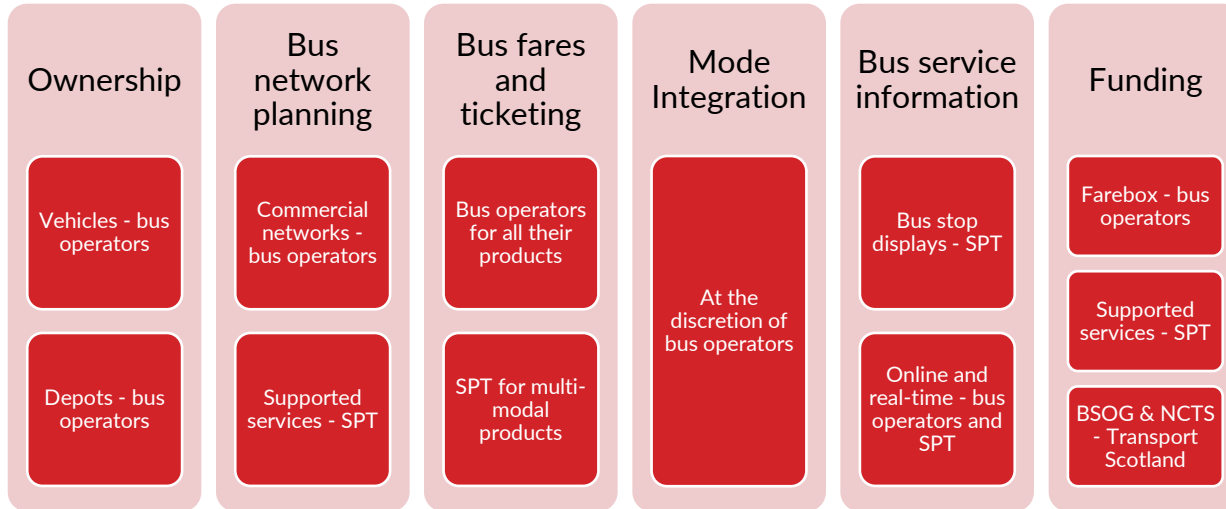


Figure 29: Roles and responsibilities in the current operating model

Limitations of the Current Operational Model

The current operational model poses certain challenges and limitations that hinder the desired improvements-

- The council does not have the powers to govern bus operations across their areas and cannot prevent the curtailment or removal of services. Example- withdrawal of Service 22.
- Lack of profits in some routes has resulted in lack of competition between operators, thus reducing service quality. McGill's currently holds a monopoly in Renfrewshire.
- Integrated transport has become more difficult as each operator has their own agenda and timetable to maintain.
- Survey findings reveal that there is lack of control and public accountability for bus services in Renfrewshire

Fundamentally under the current bus network delivery model, only bus and coach operators have the powers to plan and design their respective bus networks whereas Renfrewshire is only able to plan socially necessary bus services with support from SPT.

Bus Partnership and Reform Options

- **Voluntary Partnerships (VP):** A Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) provides a formal written framework within which bus operators, local transport authorities, local highway authorities and other relevant actors will work together to achieve stated objectives and deliver agreed measures and facilities. Renfrewshire Council is a member of the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership, which brings together SPT, eight local transport authorities, and bus operators.
- **Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP):** A Bus Service Improvement Partnership is a new form of statutory quality partnership enabled by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. A BSIP enables partners to come together and agree binding commitments that will be delivered during the term of the partnership. If measures and facilities agreed in the BSIP are not delivered then the relevant partner can be at risk of sanctions – as an example, an operator who fails to meet the agreed standards of operation for a service (a vehicle quality standard or the acceptance of multi-operator tickets, for instance) could see its services deregistered by the Traffic Commissioner.
- **Bus Franchising Scheme:** A Bus Franchising Scheme brings an end to on-road competition between commercial operators and replaces it with competition for operating contracts, placing a higher degree of control over bus service specifications and bus fares in the hands of the local transport authority. In its place, the local transport authority will competitively procure a series of bus service contracts that will deliver the levels of service (days/times of operation, service frequency, fare products available, vehicle specification, etc) it considers to be required to meet the needs of its communities, integrate with other transport provision in the region and be afforded with the finances available to it
- **Municipal Ownership:** The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 permits local transport authorities to establish a municipally owned public bus operator(s) that can compete for contracts and operate registered bus services, reversing the provisions of the Transport Act 1985 that prevented the creation of such an operator. The municipal operator would likely be an arms-length company wholly owned by the local authority, providing suitable separation when competing for tendered bus service contracts (as is the case in Edinburgh and Lothian Buses).

Case Studies for Franchising and Municipal Ownership

Franchising

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) started appraising bus franchising in 2017 and are currently implementing it. Full network implementation by 2025.
- Liverpool City Region Combined Authority: Phased franchising to be started in late 2026
- Other local authorities that are looking into bus franchising are-
 - Cambridgeshire Peterborough Combined Authority: Consultation likely to start in early 2024
 - South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority: Assessment of franchising options ongoing
- Briton and Hove City Council undertook (BHCC) Bus Franchising Feasibility Study. However, the study recommended that adoption of franchising in Brighton & Hove would be detrimental to bus users and risky for BHCC as the sponsoring authority which would incur high potential costs to set up and monitor the franchise arrangements with no guarantee that all its objectives would be addressed.

Municipal Bus Ownership

- Current Municipally Owned Bus Companies are Lothian Buses, Nottingham City Transport, Ipswich Buses, Reading Buses, Blackpool, Cardiff, Newport, Warrington.
- Many Municipal Bus Companies ceased to trade due to competition impacts or have since been sold, such as- Merthyr Tydfil, Taff Ely, Maidstone, Barrow, Chesterfield, Islwyn, Cynon Valley, Southend, Colchester, Grimsby & Cleethorpes, Darlington, Burnley & Pendle, Blackburn, Hyndburn, Fylde, Rossendale, Preston, Bournemouth, Derby, Eastbourne, Plymouth, Chester etc.
- These case studies suggest that entering new commercial local bus operations takes time, persistence, and has a major cost. Staff requirements are also a major consideration, along with the need to answer/defend complaints to the CMA, Traffic Commissioner and FOI requests.

Comparison of Operational Models

Table 19: Comparison of Operational Models

Model	Advantages	Disadvantages
Existing Competitive model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition between operators are likely to improve service provision Financial risks lie with operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of competition for some routes results in monopoly Data sharing restricted Services may be withdrawn with limited notice and without regard to wider consequences (e.g. social impacts) LA do not have any control over services and network Competition law rules out area wide common fares
Voluntary Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers improved benefits through bus operators' voluntary agreement Can be easily established Improved standards for all buses operating within a local authority area, and if it included cross boundary services would potentially improve services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition law rules out area wide common fare Data sharing restricted and Services may be withdrawn with limited notice and without regard to wider consequences Difference in geographies and political situation may make it an impractical proposition
BSIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory nature improves certainty of delivery Can reflect wider objectives, i.e., congestion and employment There are some examples of achieving growth and improved service ratings Responsive to customer demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seems to work best with just one main operator Competition law rules out area wide common fare Data sharing restricted Services may be withdrawn with limited notice and without regard to wider consequences, but only in line with BSIP agreement
Bus Franchising Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can give control over bus network and services including data and links to wider community Can deliver integrated branding making networks easier to follow by the passengers Does not seem to deter competition – London averages 3 tenders per route Easier to achieve social and community objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires significant resources and takes time for local authorities to build up expertise. Transfers most financial risk to local authority May be slow to implement and high cost - given as reason why West Midlands not going for franchising May not be responsive to customer demand
Municipal Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can give control over that part of the bus network and services provided by the municipal bus company, including access to data and links to wider community Give a clear sense of local identity May reduce operating costs and/or allow delivery of services at lower profit margins Any profits can be ploughed back into service in the absence of private shareholders (the Social Dividend) Better growth and quality record than other operators (e.g. Lothian Buses, Reading Buses) Easier to achieve social and community objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires significant resources and takes time for local authorities to build up expertise Financial risk for local authorities Start-up costs may be significant with no certainty of return on investment Municipal bus company still open to market pressures from competing private sector bus operators which could potentially erode its revenue base and destabilise its financial position Danger of municipality diverting bus profits for other purposes

Appraisal of Bus Partnership and Reform Options

A qualitative appraisal of bus partnership and reform options has been undertaken. It is acknowledged that each bus option is likely to produce partial or full benefits in terms of the proposed improvements. Hence, the appraisal used a four-point scale as shown in Table 20.

Table 21 presents qualitative Appraisal of Bus Reform Options.

It should be noted that some of the scorings for the municipal ownership option would require a significant network share in order to be realised, e.g. to improve reliability and fewer cancellations. This may not be achievable if other bus operations in the area cannot successfully be competed with or acquired.

Table 20: Appraisal criteria

✓	Partially achievable
✓✓	Moderately achievable
✓✓✓	Fully achievable
×	Little or no scope for achievement

Appraisal of Bus Partnership and Reform Options

Table 21: Qualitative Appraisal of Bus Reform Options

	Proposed Improvements	Status Quo	Improved Voluntary Partnership	BSIP	Bus Franchising	Municipal Ownership
Passenger Needs	Improve reliability and fewer cancellations	×	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
	Improve access to network	✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
	Accurate and integrated passenger information	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
	Extended hours of operation	×	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
	Improve driver behaviour	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Minimise service withdrawals without adequate alternative provisions	×	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
	Reduce bus bunching	×	×	✓	✓✓	✓
	Multi-operator and multi-mode ticketing	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
Implementation and Operation	Data management for network analysis and planning	×	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
	Indicative cost	-	-	Implementation- around £1.5 million, Management-£200,000 to £250,000	GMCA spent around £15m, in building the case for franchising and around £135m in total to complete the transition to a franchised network in 2025. Renfrewshire would require about £1.5m to build the case and around £15m-20m to complete the transition	At least £30m to finance acquisition of operators' businesses in Renfrewshire
	Required resources (local authority staff expertise and workforce)	No additional burden	Low additional burden	Low to moderate additional burden	Very high additional burden, not achievable within existing council staff resources. However, skill requirements are known and could be delivered with additional resources.	Very high additional burden, not achievable within existing council staff resources. However, skill requirements are known and could be delivered with additional resources.
	Legal Risk and Liabilities (to leading local authority)	As Current	Low	Moderate	Very high	Modest in the short term but high in the longer term
	Timescale	None	5-10 weeks	9-12 months from initial informal discussions	minimum of 6-7 years	1-3 years for small scale operations and a minimum of 6-7 years for larger scale operations

Qualitative Appraisal Summary

- It can be seen that, in relation to the criteria assessed in this qualitative appraisal:
 - The *status quo* has limited potential to deliver the types of proposed improvements required on the bus network. In some instances, such as extended hours of operation, improving reliability and having fewer cancellations, and reducing bus bunching, there is little to no scope for achieving these based on the recent trends observed in the analysis. Indeed, the status quo may be a worsening of the currently situation.
 - While Renfrewshire Council is part of an existing VPA, an improved agreement could increase the potential for delivering some of the improvements required. This would need members to agree that these improvements are a priority and approve actions and resources to deliver them. However, VPAs are not typically a suitable foundation to take forward major joint initiatives between the public and private sectors. Due to the optionality of the agreement, meaningful actions can be slow to materialise and additional resource commitments from partners can be modest, resulting in only the partial delivery of the full scope of potential improvements that could be achieved.
 - *BSIPs* are defined by statute and, therefore, intended to offer a much more robust governance structure than VPAs, whereby commitments made by partners are carefully matched, and – in certain circumstances – can even be imposed on operators who are not willing partners. The anticipation is that by making this governance process more robust it will give greater certainty and encourage all partners to make more ambitious commitments. As such, *BSIPs* may have a positive role to play in delivering the types of proposed improvements required on the bus network to a greater extent than the status quo or an improved VPA. However, achieving outcomes would be heavily dependent on availability of additional funding and positive and ambitious engagement between principal partners, and ultimately there is no absolute certainty of sustained delivery.
 - *Franchising* can take multiple forms, in terms of risk sharing, geographical scope and flexibility of operational delivery. If the franchising authority can afford to fund its initiatives, then it can take complete control to direct the outcomes it desires. Therefore, there is a very strong *potential* for delivering the types of improvements required on the bus network. However, a franchising arrangement has: very significant costs to establish and maintain; requires a long setup time, of at least 5 years; would need additional council staff members and skills to administer; and there are major risk burdens for the leading local authority. Crucially, also, improvements can likely only be delivered through additional funding from the status quo not through the delivery model alone.
 - *Municipal bus ownership* has moderate potential to deliver the types of proposed improvements required on the bus network, for example by operating services to extend operating hours, manage service withdrawals etc. However, it also comes at a significant cost, major staff requirements, long timescales for establishment, and numerous risks. Furthermore, achieving many of the improvements would require the municipal operations to either successfully compete with or acquire existing bus services in the area, which would be a significant challenge and would come at major cost.

Costs and Revenues of Delivery Models

- Table 22 below shows costs and revenues for different delivery models, including- Base (status quo), and Stability (maintain the current network based on the challenges facing the bus industry).

Table 22: Cost and Revenue for Status quo, BSIP and Franchising (in millions and rounded)

		Base	Stability	BSIP	Franchising
Base	Revenue	£11.2m	£11.2m	£11.2m	£11.2m
	Cost	£23.1m	£23.1m	£23.1m	£23.1m
Level of Service Initiative	Revenue	-	-	£0.9m	£2.2m
	Cost	-	-	£3.0m	£8.1m
Affordable Fares Initiative	Revenue	-	-	-£0.5m	-£2.0m
	Cost	-	-	-	-
Quality Initiative	Revenue	-	-	£0.3m	£0.4m
	Cost	-	-	£0.2m	£0.2m
Non Farebox Income		£12.3m	£12.3m	£13.9m	£14.8m
SPT Supported Services		£0.6m	£0.6m	£0.6m	£0.6m
Future Additional SPT Subsidy Request		-	£0.3m	£0.5m	£4.8m
Total Operators Revenue		£24.1m	£24.4m	£26.9m	£32.0m
Total Cost to Operators		£23.1m	£23.1m	£26.3m	£31.4m

Cost of Municipal Ownership

- An approximate cost estimation to start a municipal bus company with a fleet of 75 vehicles are presented below:
 - Fleet size: 75
 - Peak vehicle for Service: 65
 - Engineering Spares: 10
- Capital cost of £3.75m and total annual cost of £10.8m. The annual cost includes:
 - 50% of costs attributed to Drivers
 - 14% of costs attributed to fuel
 - 15% of costs attributed to engineering
 - Vehicle depreciation assumed at market value and not net book value with interest at 4% to obtain capital
- This cost is for Peak Vehicle Requirement (PVR) of 65 vehicles. For reference, the PVR for the current network in Renfrewshire is approximately 250-300.
- Any significant increase in costs on drivers, fuel or engineering has major impact on profits. This leads to the inevitable decision of rationalising the network and/or increasing bus fares.
- Setting up an arms-length company has risks as the LA will have to compete with big companies and may not be successful in this. The alternative option is to buy the existing operators' business which will be even more expensive. For Renfrewshire, it is estimated to be around £30m.

Observations on Costs

- Under existing arrangements or a BSIP, operators will only enhance services if the cost of doing so is met by additional income generated. As Table 22 shows, even for an ambitious BSIP this is unlikely, resulting in a requirement to subsidise the operators.
- Under franchising, a significant increase in service levels and a suite of fares initiatives targeted at the most disadvantaged groups in Renfrewshire, would require even more subsidy and major start-up costs.
- Municipal operation of a bus company requires significant start-up investment, and in all models of local bus service delivery there is extensive commercial risk, which would lie with the public sector (e.g. dealing with cost increases, fluctuating demand, etc). We have not established how required subsidies or initial investments would be funded.
- However, as we also show in Table 22, doing nothing is not cost free either. It is likely that the current levels of fares and services do not represent a stable situation – without additional subsidy for local bus services in Renfrewshire it is likely that operators will need to reduce operated kms further and/or increase fares above inflation. This is represented by the ‘Stability’ scenario, which shows costs incurred just to maintain the network.

SPT Bus Reform Options Appraisal

- SPT is currently developing their Regional Bus Strategy which includes looking into bus reform options. Their committee report published on 15th March 2024 provides the following recommendations for Future Delivery of the Regional Bus Network for public consultation:
 - *SPT should commence work on franchising, in line with the requirements of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.*
 - *SPT should progress with Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) arrangements to provide a firm basis for private and public sector commitments to arrest further passenger decline and improve the bus network over the medium term. -If proven beneficial by the SPT study, these options could be considered at the regional level.*
 - *As and when it may be required, SPT will consider developing business case(s) for small-scale municipal bus company(ies) aimed at providing socially necessary services in parts of the region where private operators are currently very limited.*
 - *SPT should continue working with local authorities, Transport Scotland and bus operators to continue delivery through the Bus Partnership Fund (Temporarily suspended for financial year 2024-25 and may return under a different fund).*
 - *Business As Usual and Voluntary Partnerships should be ruled out as means to deliver a better bus network as more radical intervention is required.*

Recommendations for Renfrewshire Council

- The public consultation findings suggest that passengers want better frequency, reliability and more routes which supports the case for change, along with the other analysis presented in this study.
- The appraisal of bus partnership and reform options shows the likely benefits of the alternatives for change. It is anticipated that partnerships with bus operators – voluntary or BSIP, could improve the situation from the status quo and bus franchising and municipal ownership models offer further opportunity to tackle the problems identified in this study and help provide a world class bus system.
- While benefits are possible through the partnership and reform options, it must be clearly noted that improvements to local bus services in Renfrewshire would come at a significant cost (potentially initial investment and ongoing subsidy). These costs, lack of funding, and wider deliverability issues and risks are likely to be the main limiting factors for Renfrewshire in pursuing one of these ways forward.
- The recommendations for Renfrewshire Council on alternative transport models are as follows:
 - Based on this study and the SPT bus reform appraisal outcomes, it is clear that Business As Usual or Voluntary Partnerships do not have the potential to deliver a better bus network. Therefore, Renfrewshire Council should investigate the possibility of implementing a BSIP in the short term, as either a regional scheme with SPT or at a local level, and liaise with SPT regarding franchising for consideration at a regional level.
 - As highlighted in Slides 79-80, municipal operation of a bus company requires significant start-up investment, and there is extensive commercial risk. Therefore, it may not be suitable for Renfrewshire Council given the cost, commercial risks and competition with other operators. However, as mentioned in Slide 81, SPT will consider developing business case(s) for a small-scale municipal bus company(ies) aimed at providing socially necessary services. Renfrewshire Council should also liaise with SPT to explore this option at a regional level to serve the unmet demand within their network.
 - The bus reform options are being considered by many local, regional or combined authorities following the Bus Services Act 2017 and Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. The council should seek views, knowledge and lessons learnt from other local authorities when exploring the potential for implementation of the new bus reform options.

Community Transport

Section 6

Purpose and Types of Community Transport

Community transport fills the gaps left by most public transport services. It is there to help people who:

- Can't use 'normal' buses because of health or mobility problems; or
- Don't have a bus service in their area; or
- Can't use public transport because it doesn't take them where (or when) they need to go

Types of Community Transport

- Dial-A-Ride (Demand Responsive) Services
- School Transport
- Hospital Transport
- Group Hire
- Voluntary Car Schemes
- Shopmobility – A national scheme which provides mobility equipment for hire in towns or city centres. Such as wheelchairs and electric scooters. Advanced booking is advised.
- Wheels to Work / Wheels to Learn – Mopeds or bicycles are available for low-cost loan alongside travel advice. This is for individuals, who must be at risk of losing, or have a promise of a place at either education or work.

Existing Provision

Renfrewshire Community Transport as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation have been set up recently. It aims to apply to the Renfrewshire Sustainable Communities Fund to look at scoping the need and developing a business plan for Renfrewshire Community Transport. The organisation is also looking to build a formal partnership with Community Transport Glasgow and set out service level agreement.

- Currently only one operator registered with Community Transport Association (figure from January 2024)
- Entry barrier is high, requires very large upfront investment for vehicles
- Mostly relies on volunteers to operate
- Majority of funding is from grants and donations

SPT MyBus

This is a dial-a-ride service can be booked for shopping, GP appointments, visiting friends, attending local clubs, and much more. Based on survey anecdotes, many people may not be aware of this service. Additionally, the services are available only to those with temporary or permanent mobility issues and the trip requests are not confirmed until the day before travel, which makes it inconvenient for some. As per the SPT website, MyBus currently have reduced and restricted services in place, with a reduced fleet and vehicles operating across larger areas. As such, spare capacity does not currently exist which could adequately serve unmet public transport demand.

MyBus services that run in Renfrewshire are shown in Table 23. The services run from Monday - Saturday 0900 – 1800 and Sunday 0900 – 1700.

Table 23: MyBus services in Renfrewshire

MyBus Route	Areas where available	Areas connect to
M45 Renfrew	Renfrew, Glasgow Airport, Bishopton, Erskine, Inchinnan	Phoenix Centre, RAH, Paisley Centre, Dykebar Hospital
M65 Johnstone	Elderslie, Johnstone, Linwood	Paisley Centre, RAH, Dykebar Hospital
M85 Paisley	Foxbar, Glenburn, Thornly Park, Castlehead, Ferguslie Park, Gallowhill, Oldhall, Hillington Industrial Estate	Phoenix Centre (Linwood), Braehead

Demand for Community Transport

Areas/Routes to be served by Community Transport

Bus network analysis revealed a few areas where the demands are not met by bus services. The following areas are not well connected with Johnstone or Paisley and Journeys to RAH or QEUH take multiple transfers and a long time.

- Houston.
- Bridge of Weir.
- Kilbarchan.

Proposal for Community Transport

Proposed Community Transport Options

The following community transport options could be explored-

- **Dial-a-Ride:** Renfrewshire Council should discuss potential service provision in these areas for people who find it difficult to use public buses due to age or long-term disabilities. SPT already have some services in Renfrewshire. However, lack of awareness about this service was realised through the public drop-in sessions. Hence, public awareness should be raised to make it known to people.
- **Hospital Services:** A community transport service for hospital. This could be planned in liaison with NHS non-urgent patient services.
- **Collector Bus:** People of these villages/settlements have less frequent and less-direct services to major towns. Hence, services with small buses could be deployed to collect people and get to a hub where a high frequency bus will take them to major towns. The services should be coordinated to minimise travel times.

Funding for Community Transport

Capital Funding

- Renfrewshire Sustainable Communities Fund through Renfrewshire Community Transport
- Transport Scotland's 'Community Bus Fund'

For feasibility studies, assessments or developing a business case, Community Transport Association (CTA) can help developing the funding plan.

Revenue Funding

- SPT Fund

Actions to Take Forward

Section 7

List of Actions to Take Forward

The following actions have been listed for Renfrewshire Council to take forward:

Short Term

- Continue to take steps to solve the identified problems that are within the Council or SPT's responsibility, such as providing new bus stops, and improving bus stop facilities and passenger information.
- Should continue to engage with bus operators to improve driver behaviour, avoid short notice cancellations and service withdrawal.
- Should start to engage with-
 - Police and wider communities to ensure on-board safety; and
 - The Renfrewshire Community Transport Association to explore the options proposed on Slide 87.
- Should explore Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) arrangements with bus operators, SPT and other neighbouring local authorities to address the key problems identified through the consultation. This will provide a firm basis for private and public sector commitments to arrest further passenger decline and improve the bus network over the medium term.
- Feed into the SPT consultation including public and key stakeholders on the recommended bus reform options.

Long Term

- Based on the outcomes of SPT's ongoing consultation, consider how Renfrewshire's local needs can be met through a regional level implementation of a bus franchising scheme or other bus delivery options taken forward at a regional level.

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