

Statements made by Student members of Envision Project, Chew Valley School

Rosie McKeown

- We are year 12 A level students aged 17, that are part of the Chew Valley Envision team. We have been meeting every week since September and have generated a number of issues involved with transport in our local area that we intend to change.
- We all feel strongly about the considerably high prices of bus tickets and the lack of regular routes from the Chew Valley into the surrounding town areas, as we are dependant on this service for social means and because of the lack of job opportunities in the Chew Valley area. The job market is very competitive and we need to show that we have experience in the work place to help us get jobs in the future. The Chew Valley only offers a handful of jobs, if we are able to reach the surrounding town areas then we would have access to a much wider range of jobs or even voluntary positions.
- We feel that, as students, we shouldn't have to pay such high prices, and shouldn't have to depend on our parents for lifts; young people prefer independent especially throughout A level years. We think this is particularly important because this is the most vital stage in our lives to learn about the world around us

Laura Harrison

- Not only does Bath offer job opportunities, it is a large city with lots happening, where we can broaden our minds and develop as young adults. We are told time and time again to stand out from the crowd, and Bath offers a number of activities and opportunities that will help us learn about culture, self-help and volunteering. Bus prices are so high and bus runs are so scarce, not only to Bath but to other towns as well, so because of this we feel isolated in our community and depend on our parents. Students rarely have the option to depend on driving themselves, as it is very expensive in terms of petrol and car ownership. And of course won't even be possible

without a job! A prime example of this is our last speaker, she couldn't make it here today because her parents are away and simply couldn't rely on the bus service to get in and out of Bath.

- Having such a bad transport system will undoubtedly lead to several more cars being on the road which is a contributing factor to the increasing impact on the environment, and with energy resources being such a scarce commodity surely you would think governments would want to choose greener alternatives to travelling?
- Another issue that needs to be addressed is the age boundary at which we are considered 'an adult'. First buses consider an adult to be 15. We don't believe that this is an appropriate age to be labelled as an adult as the conventional age is 18.

Katie Purchase

- We have recently created a petition to support our ideas and have had an extremely positive response and have managed to gather over 100 supporters. We have also created an online survey for students to voice their opinions and suggestions on transport. 100% of students aged 15-18 agreed that bus prices are unfair or too expensive. One response was as follows:
- 'It is ridiculous that a child aged 15 is supposed to pay over £5 for an adult bus ticket. Most people who are classed as 'adults' at 15 do not have jobs, therefore cannot afford costly bus tickets. It is a fact that at 18 you become an adult, so why is it any different for the bus services? The cost from Pensford (which is a short car journey from me) is about £5 for a child's ticket on a First bus which I believe to be way too much, especially since adult tickets are way higher. Why would people who have cars choose to use an expensive bus at about £7, when driving in and parking would be the same, maybe less? The cost of the buses are too expensive and for people to continue to use them, they should be reduced slightly in price, so it is affordable for young people and adults'

- We have come here today to show that we are fed up with paying so much for public transport and that being classed as an adult at 15 is unfair. We would like to advise the council to subsidise local transport for young adults and we suggest an introduction of a student card valid within the Chew Valley area.
- We have had our story covered by the Chew Valley Gazette, and our community and parish council have both shown their support. Thank you for listening.