

# Tap, Travel, Trust: Why Customers Don't Care About ABT - Only the Experience



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# WHO AM I?

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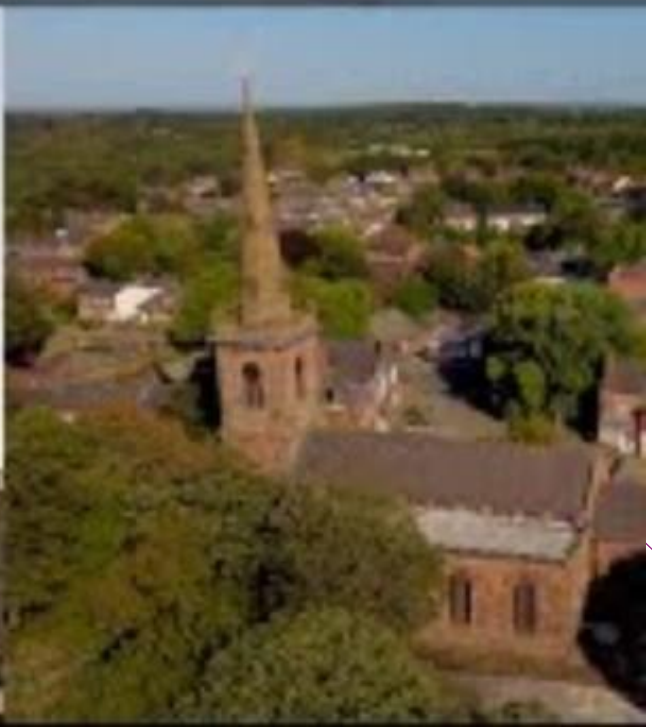


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# Why Transport Is a Defining Political Issue

***Transport is highly visible, deeply felt, and politically powerful - making it a defining issue in mayoral elections.***



- The Mayor has clear, visible control over transport through devolved powers
- A long-term commitment to an integrated transport network keeps transport central to the political narrative
- Transport directly affects daily life and access to essential services
- High-profile improvements and record investment have raised public expectations
- Transport is one of the most recognised and scrutinised mayoral responsibilities
- Better transport underpins access to jobs, economic inclusion, and reduced inequality

# Devolution -What Local Control Means for Passengers

***A joined-up network that feels simple, fair, and reliable - so passengers can just tap, travel, and trust.***

- One simple way to pay, wherever they travel
- Just tap and go - no tickets to buy or manage
- Fares that feel fair, without having to work them out. The same experience on bus, train, and ferry
- Easy interchange between services, with less hassle
- Confidence it'll work the same tomorrow as it does today and charge the lowest price fare
- New ways to pay or travel introduced smoothly, without disruption

# What It Feels Like as a Passenger

***When transport works, life feels easier. When it doesn't, it affects everything.***



- I rely on public transport to get to work, school, appointments, and see people
- When services are late, crowded, or unreliable, it's frustrating and stressful
- When things run on time and feel clean and safe, my day is noticeably better
- I remember good journeys - but bad ones stick with me even more
- That's why transport matters to me, and why it matters when people make promises to improve it

# What do Passengers actually want...???

Passengers don't wake up wanting account-based ticketing. They wake up wanting to get where they're going without stress, surprises at the lowest price available.

# 1. Customers don't think about "systems" - they think about moments



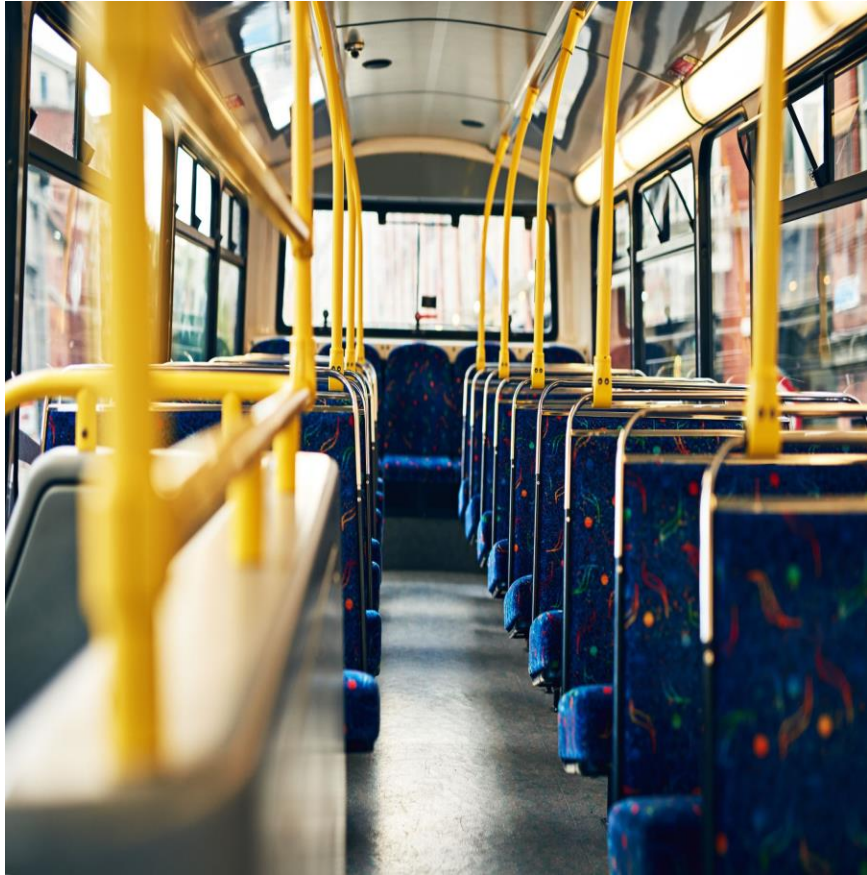
"I just tapped my card and got on the bus. I didn't think about tickets at all - it just worked."

## What this shows

- Customers don't notice ABT when it's working
- They only notice friction, not architecture
- The absence of hassle is the success metric

***If customers are thinking about ticketing, something has gone wrong.***

## 2. Trust is built when the price feels fair – without effort



“I used the bus twice and the train once. I didn’t know the fare rules, but later I checked my bank app and thought: ‘Yeah, that seems right.’”

### **What this shows**

- People don’t want to calculate fares
- They want confidence they won’t be overcharged
- Capping works because it removes fear, not because people understand it

***Customers trust outcomes, not explanations.***

### 3. The biggest win is removing anxiety, not selling features



“Before, I’d stand at the stop Googling tickets. Now I just get on. I don’t worry about buying the wrong thing anymore.”

#### What this shows

- Fare complexity creates stress before the journey even starts
- Integrated ticketing removes cognitive load
- Confidence encourages spontaneous travel

***When people stop planning fares, they start using transport more.***

## 4. Consistency matters more than choice



“I don’t care who runs the bus or the train. I just want it to feel the same every time.”

### What this shows

- Operator boundaries mean nothing to customers
- Inconsistent rules break trust fast
- A single experience beats multiple ‘options’

***Passengers experience the network as one system - even when it isn’t.***

## 5. Customers notice fairness, not technology



“I realised I’d done loads of trips that week and it hadn’t cost more than my usual spend. That felt fair.”

### What this shows

- People don’t talk about ABT, back office, or platforms
- They talk about fairness, value, and being treated properly
- This is where loyalty and advocacy come from

***Fairness is the feature passengers remember.***

## 6. Good ticketing disappears into daily life



“I tap in the same way I pay for coffee. It’s just part of the day now.”

### What this shows

- The best ticketing is invisible
- Public transport starts to compete with the car when it feels effortless
- Frictionless payment means habitual use

***When ticketing feels normal, transport feels reliable.***

## 7. When it works, nobody thanks you - and that's the point



"I've stopped contacting customer services about fares. There's nothing to complain about anymore."

### **What this shows**

- Success looks like silence
- Fewer complaints mean higher confidence
- Trust reduces operational noise as well as customer pain

***The goal isn't applause - it's having no problems.***

# In Summary - what passengers actually care about...



*If we've done our job right, customers never learn the words "account-based ticketing" - they just trust the network.*

- Can I just get on and go?
- Will it cost what feels fair?
- Will it work the same tomorrow?
- Do I need to think about it?

## **What they don't care about**

- ABT architecture
- Back-office systems
- Commercial models
- Who runs which service

# CASE STUDY - Care Leavers Tap & Go Metro Card

Launched 2025. Free, unrestricted travel for care leavers aged 18–21 across the Liverpool City Region on buses, trains, and ferries.

Over 1,500 young people are eligible across the city region's six boroughs and are currently using their free travel pass.



# Care Leaver Travel Pass – Early Impact

- Around 1,770 care leaver travel passes currently in use across the Liverpool City Region
- 44% use their travel pass every day
- 54% feel more confident travelling independently
- 84% are spending less on travel
- Increased use of public transport:
  - 78% use buses more
  - 61% use trains more
- No significant change in ferry use
- Less worry about affording travel
- Greater confidence and independence
- Better access to appointments, education, work, and social opportunities

**Free, simple travel is reducing cost anxiety, building confidence, and helping care leavers access opportunities and independence.**





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**Thank You**

# Why Public Transport Is Such a Focus in Mayoral Elections



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