



Compassion
In London,
LIFE on BUSES



By Prof Frances, A. Maratos
and Bethan Mobey

ABOUT THIS REPORT



As the London Museum prepares to relocate in 2026, we are establishing a Research Centre to become a leading resource for knowledge on London-specific topics. This Centre will foster collaborative and inclusive research, bringing together expertise from diverse perspectives, including those with lived experience of London's communities.

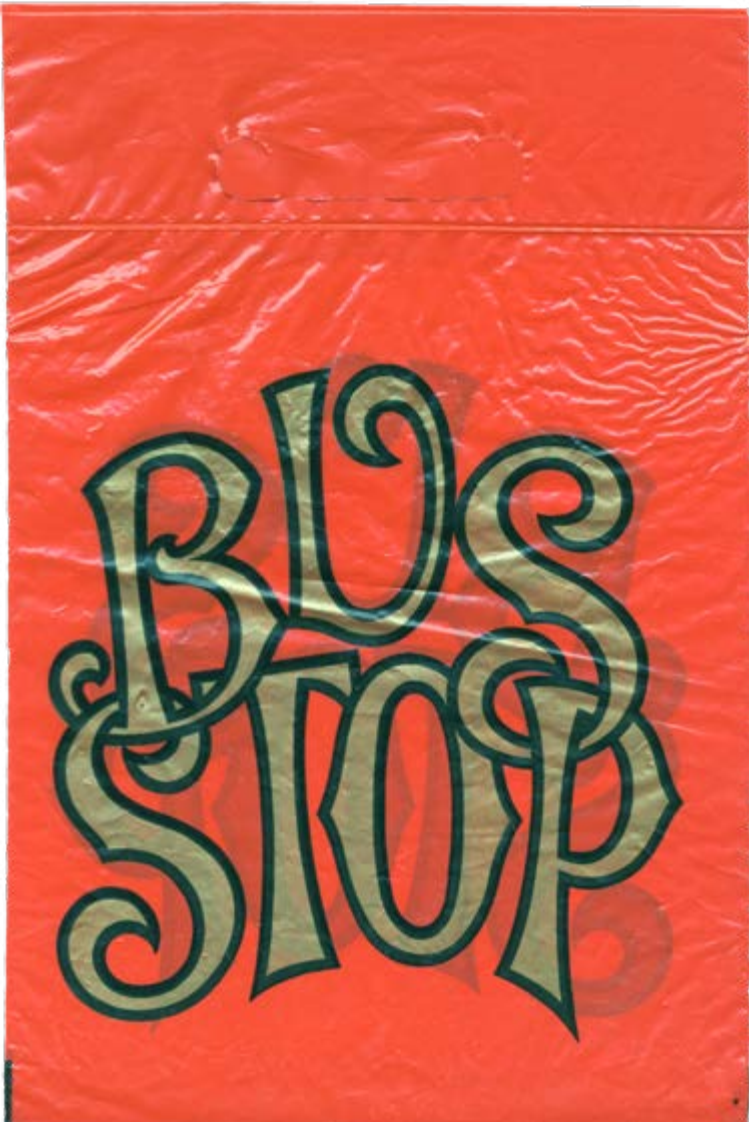
In shaping this approach, the museum is exploring new ways to co-produce research that resonates with Londoners. Working alongside individuals with lived experience, artists, academics, and community groups, we piloted a series of Ideas Generation Sessions—drawing inspiration from the “sandpit” method of fostering interdisciplinary research. These sessions generated research themes that informed a 2024/25 museum-funded project examining Londoners’ interactions on buses. More details on the methodology and creative techniques used in these sessions can be found in the report *Co-producing Research with Londoners: Exploring Compassion*.

To carry out the research, a team of community researchers and a research associate were brought on board during the summer and autumn of 2024, with the School of Psychology at the University of Derby serving as the academic partner. As part of this initiative, the museum also committed to commissioning an artwork inspired by the project’s findings.

Community researchers worked closely with the museum to co-develop the artist brief, shaping the vision and requirements for the commission. A draft of the research report was shared alongside the brief.

If you have any questions please contact research@londonmuseum.org.uk

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1971-1982; ID: 82.318/23

COMPASSION IN LONDON, LIFE ON BUSES

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FOREWORDS

As someone who lives and works in London, I use buses every day. They're an essential part of my routine, a way of getting from one place to another. But being part of the project gave me a much deeper understanding of what buses mean for Londoners.

Joining this project as a community researcher felt like an incredible opportunity. It allowed me to step out of my usual day to day and really listen to the stories of people from all walks of life and understand my thoughts and challenges too. I worked alongside others to carry out both independent and collaborative research, digging into the experiences of different communities. This wasn't just about collecting data it felt it was about gaining a real sense of the challenges, needs, and perspectives that shape people's daily experiences on buses.

By analysing both qualitative and quantitative data, we were able to spot patterns that revealed not just the problems, but also the potential for change. We could see the opportunity to make buses more compassionate spaces where people felt safe, heard, and valued.

One of the most meaningful parts of the project was the opportunity to develop an arts commission, where we took the research insights and applied them to create a community art form to represent the project. It was all about amplifying the voices of those often overlooked and addressing the collective needs of the community.

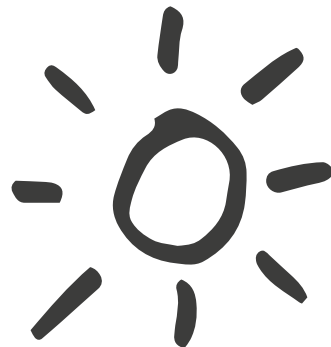
What struck me most through this journey was how much more buses are than just a way of getting from point A to point B. They're a shared space, a place where London's diverse communities intersect. It became clear that small acts of compassion – whether it's a smile, a kind word, or simply respecting each other's space - can make a huge difference in how people experience these public spaces.

This project is important because it highlights the power of kindness and care in even the most everyday of settings. It's a reminder that our public spaces should be reflective of the diverse, inclusive city we want to build, and that compassion should be at the heart of how we engage with one another.

Looking back, I can honestly say this project meant a lot to me, both as a researcher and as someone who rides the bus every day. It has reshaped the way I see those small, ordinary moments on the bus and I hope it will do the same for others.

Hazira Begum

Community Researcher



Urban life is often portrayed as marked by anonymity, haste, and self-interest. Yet such characterisations fail to account for the more complex realities of shared public spaces. 'Compassion in London: Life on Buses' challenges these reductive narratives by examining how dynamic acts of care emerge in the everyday interactions of Londoners on the move.

The research was led by Bethan Mobey in collaboration with Prof Frances Maratos of the University of Derby and community researchers Sistah Stella, Reuben Braithwaite, Dana Moreno Perez and Mirza Hazira Begun. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the research team for their unwavering dedication and the profound insights they contributed to the project.

London's public transport system provides a compelling lens through which to explore these dynamics. As a site of constant flux, it is emblematic of the city's diversity, yet often framed as impersonal or fragmented. This project foregrounds the human connections that occur within these spaces, drawing on participatory methodologies to amplify voices that are often marginalised in institutional research. Through this approach, it seeks to present a more nuanced understanding of the social fabric that sustains urban life.

London Museum is committed to fostering research that interrogates dominant narratives and reflects the lived realities of London's residents. The opening of our new home in Smithfield in 2026 and the establishment of our new Research Centre underscores this commitment, creating a dedicated space for interdisciplinary inquiry into the city's past, present, and future. By engaging with themes of compassion and shared humanity, this project aligns closely with the Centre's broader mission to reframe the way we interpret and represent London's multifaceted identities.

Moreover, the project exemplifies an essential shift within cultural institutions toward more inclusive and collaborative research practices. By integrating academic expertise with community-led insights the project demonstrates the value of co-produced knowledge in museums. This methodology is crucial as we seek to challenge static, hegemonic interpretations of the city and instead embrace its dynamic and contested narratives.

'Compassion in London: Life on Buses' is therefore both timely and necessary. It offers a critical intervention into how urban life is studied and understood, providing insights that resonate beyond the confines of transport systems or geographic boundaries. As London Museum continues to support work that reflects the city's complexity, this project serves as a model for how research can foster deeper engagement with the emotional and relational dimensions of urban life.

Dr Domenico Sergi
Senior Research Lead, London Museum



I would like to begin with a question, if I may. Imagine that each day on your commute within London to your place of work, you pass a homeless person. Seeing this individual creates feelings of sadness for you, sorrow for them, and perhaps distress when you think about their life situation. However, there is an alternative route you could take to your place of work. If you go via this route, you avoid having to pass them. My question to you is which route do you choose?

What we know is that for people who are highly empathic, sometimes these types of situations can cause high distress. The emotional feelings and thoughts that people have can be so intense that to cope with these thoughts and feelings they will avoid the situation. The same may be true of any of us if we are experiencing particular challenges or tricky periods in our lives. So, taking that alternative route to work or, if we do pass them, avoiding eye contact, smiling or speaking to the individual, are the behaviours we might engage in to reduce our distress.

This is where compassion comes in, compassion is based on wise intention and motivation. Compassion involves the basic intention of doing no harm, but also the motivation to address suffering. Indeed, our definition of compassion centres on: i) the intention to anticipate and/or notice disadvantage, distress or suffering in the self and/or others, and ii) taking action to address this disadvantage, distress or suffering in the self and/or others. So, compassion is a conscious process, often involving courage. It is a skill that can be developed, including the choice to take different action – *compassionate action* – that is wise and intentional.

From this definition, you will note that compassion encompasses flows. There is compassion for self, compassion for others, and compassion from others. We can develop skills and abilities to enable i) greater self-compassion, ii) the giving of compassion to others and iii) the acceptance of compassion from others. Importantly, if we only have self-compassion then this can lead to self-centredness and no consideration of the effects of our attitudes/behaviours on others - we lose the ability to 'mentalise'. If we continually engage in acts of compassion towards others, then this can lead to a lack of self-care and burnout. Finally, if we never accept compassion from others, then not only can this lead to burn-out, but it can also lead to poor bonding experiences and poor relationships.

Through sharing this introduction to compassion with the community researchers, so came about 'Life on Buses'. A compelling, thought-provoking and action for change Compassion in London project.

Frances Maratos

Professor of Psychology and Affective Science, University of Derby



Toy bus shelter
1935-1948; ID: 79.395/11





Bus queue
ID: IN38475 © Estate of Bob Collins

BUS STOP
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1. THE RESEARCH TEAM

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Bethan Mobey: Bethan specialises in participatory approaches to research and policy development. She works from the principle that people affected by inequality are best placed to improve institutions, systems and structures that impact their lives. She collaborates with communities to develop research they have ownership over and care about, and helps them find ways to take action that make the world more just.

COMMUNITY RESEARCHERS

Benna Braithwaite: Benna is an award-winning, London-born and -raised writer, spoken word artist, and former Poet Laureate for Lambeth. From intimate poetry exhibitions at the Department Store and high-profile engagements with the Prince and Princess of Wales to events at Outernet London, his work transcends boundaries, inviting audiences to engage with thought-provoking narratives that challenge, inspire, and represent London. He draws on the history, community, culture, and intergenerational interactions of growing up in South London to explore the nuances of cultural heritage and societal dynamics in his work. He has collaborated with brands such as Bacardi, the National Lottery, Roundhouse, Rich Mix, Virgin Media, Elevate, the Crown Estate, and various others.

Dana Moreno: Dana is a design educator and cultural manager with a background in leading academic and cultural projects at institutions such as Royal College of Art, University of the Arts London and Istituto Marangoni; and museums such as IWM and Tate Britain. Currently she leads modules in design thinking and cultural contexts for BA Interiors, Furniture and Product Design students, and guides them in exploring critical practice in design. Her career spans curatorial work, strategic programmes management, and fostering partnerships to enhance learning and engagement. With a degree in art and design history and fashion history from the Courtauld Institute of Art and Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Dana is committed to using art and design to promote inclusivity, collaboration, and practical innovation.

Hazira Begum: Hazira is a passionate advocate and community leader committed to supporting marginalized groups and driving positive change. With experience in areas such as mental health, domestic violence, and financial empowerment, I have worked as a debt advisor, community researcher, and co-production partner to address systemic challenges and amplify underrepresented voices. Whether organising workshops, leading fundraising events, or developing strategic campaigns, I strive to create meaningful impact and improve access to vital services.

Sistah Stella: Stella was born in Southeast London and currently leads Rastafari Movement UK Wellbeing (RMUKW) CIC, an organisation supporting the intersectionality of cultural, social, economic, and personal well-being of underserved communities across South London who are facing harm from food insecurity and at risk of well-being due to systemic and structural inequalities. Stella works on the principles of dignity, belonging, love and kindness and advocates that hunger and poverty have no colour, postcode or other boundaries. Stella's work is based lived experience, is trauma-informed, and based on living knowledge of arts and creation. Stella has been instrumental in setting up and establishing over 12 social supermarkets across London and the UK. Stella studied for a Masters in Educational Research following a Post Graduate Degree post-compulsory community education, and a BA Degree in Caribbean Studies, and Education Studies. With over 40 years in community development, being the first Global Majority woman in the UK to achieve a community radio licence, developing a HNC in radio journalism and production in community radio, co-creation of exhibitions with Black Cultural Archives, London Museum and British Library and the National Museum of Ethiopia.

ACADEMIC PARTNER

Professor Frances Maratos: Frances is a chartered psychologist and Professor of Psychology and Affective Science at the University of Derby. She is a leading academic expert in the science of emotion and wellbeing, including compassion. Relatedly, her research includes the development and delivery of compassion initiatives for adults and children to support wellness and protect from mental health disorders. She has published over 60 peer-reviewed papers in the areas of wellbeing, emotion and/or compassion and works with mental health researchers across the world. For instance, she is currently working with U.S. colleagues to understand the role of compassion and criticism in Youth suicide ideation and behaviours. At the University of Derby she also leads our Compassion in Education provision.

Adanna Uzoma: Adanna is a graduate of the University of Derby and holds a BSc. Psychology Degree. Her interests include mental health and public health. Adanna's work experiences involve working as a research intern at various organisations, including the University of Derby and The Thomas Theyer Foundation. She has also worked as an honorary assistant psychologist in a children's learning disabilities service. Adanna's hope for the future is to be involved in research that influences positive change.

2. RESEARCH APPROACH

2.1 PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (PAR)

Historically, in universities or museums, certain people with certain experiences typically get to create knowledge about what's happening in our society. These people have usually been professionally trained at universities, often elite universities – and in the context we are in (Britain), they have often had the privileges of wealth and whiteness alongside their professional education. This can provide a very narrow view of what is happening in our society, and it means the power of interpretation is often in the hands of a small group of people.

This research was developed using a Participatory Action Research approach. No specific person or community created **Participatory Action Research**, and there is not one approach on how to do it. However, the principles behind it can be traced back to key thinkers. Brazilian educator **Paulo Freire** emphasised the need for liberatory education in order for marginalised groups to understand and transform their realities. **Orlando Fals Borda** built on Freire's work, applying it to research that aimed to create social change in Colombia. Many modern scholars interested in decolonising research use a Participatory Action Research approach too, such as Maori researcher **Linda Tuhiwai Smith**.

Participatory Action Research provides an opportunity for groups of people or communities with much more diverse experiences to create knowledge together. It involves a group of people building a collective understanding of what is happening about a certain issue that affects them and creating and presenting knowledge in a way that makes sense to them.

It is also concerned with creating positive change. It isn't research that creates a report that sits on the shelf and gathers dust – it is used by the people who create it to try to push for positive changes to society.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF COMPASSION

The value of cultivating compassion to encourage prosocial behaviours and improve wellbeing, at the level of both the individual and society, has been recognised for thousands of years (Ricard, 2015). Whilst there are many varying definitions of compassion and various approaches (see for example Goetz et al., 2010), the work of Gilbert (2010; 2014) has been highly influential in this field. Based on a cross-disciplinary approach that includes psychological and social relating theories, as well as understanding brain-body evolution, biology and physiology, Gilbert and colleagues have theorised that the human brain is both highly evolved for social processes and shaped by such processes.

To expand, our self-to-self relating, how we relate to others, and how others relate to us, affects our everyday behaviours and wellbeing. In this respect, being motivated to be caring and compassionate to the self and others has a range of benefits that support mental health, physical health and prosocial behaviour (e.g. Di Bello et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2020; Maratos et al., 2019; 2024; 2025). Here, understanding key motivators to our behaviour is helpful in understanding compassion, and why compassion is a motivation not an emotion. To expand, in our theory and research, compassion arises from intention. Put simply, compassion is:

- *Firstly, the intention of anticipating or noticing distress in the self and/or others*
and then,
- *Secondly, the intention and motivation to take action to address this anticipated or actual distress.*

So, compassion does not rely on felt emotion. At the very minimum, it is the intention to do no harm. This is not to say compassion cannot be felt, but just that it does not rely on 'raw' emotional feeling - as compared to say empathy. Compassion, therefore, is a skill that can be developed, trained or prompted. Using the above definition, compassion is also a motivation that involves flow. It involves abilities and skills related to: i) compassion for self, ii) compassion for others, and iii) the ability to accept/receive compassion from others (e.g. Gilbert, 2020; Maratos & Harvey, 2024):

- **'Compassion for self'** involves the ability and courage not only to move to our own distress or suffering (or the anticipation of such), but the intention to work with, and through, that distress to enable better wellbeing and/or coping.
- **'Compassion for others'** involves the ability and courage to notice the distress or suffering (or the anticipation of such) in others, with the intention of helping others work with, and through, their distress or suffering, to improve wellbeing and/or coping.
- **'Compassion from others'** involves the ability and courage to wisely accept support from others, to aid our wellbeing and ability to cope with that which is causing our distress or suffering.

Of note, all three flows of compassion can improve social relationships and bonding with others. For example, to enable equitable relationships with others, we need to be able to accept compassion from others, as well as provide compassion to others – too much imbalance in either creates power hierarchies e.g. the 'rescuer'/'provider' ...and/or the 'rescued/subordinate'. Moreover, to have capacity to provide discerning, sincere compassion for others, we need to have good wellbeing and good psychological capacity – this includes both self-compassion and the accepting of compassion.

However, it is important to note that facilitators and inhibitors to compassion exist. These can arise not only via nature (e.g. our genetic dispositions) and nurture (e.g. the immediate environment we were raised in), but via the social, cultural and political landscapes we exist within. All of the latter can shape our motivations and propensity to engage in compassionate behaviours or otherwise. Here, it is helpful to understand that our emotions, often without explicit thought, also shape and activate our behaviours (e.g. to fight or flee; to socialise or avoid). Whilst emotion theory is complex, much theory of emotion can be assimilated into a three systems 'threat', 'drive' and 'soothing' model (Gilbert, 2010; 2014; see also Richardson, 2016). This model allows individuals to easily understand motives underlying everyday behaviour and can be used to help understand why, or why we may not, engage in compassionate behaviours.

Let us begin with threat. The function of the threat system is defensive and protective, our threat system alerts us to potential threats in the environment (e.g. Maratos et al 2008; 2009; Maratos & Pessoa, 2019) and motivates safety seeking behaviours. Threat is concerned with protection, safety seeking, and activating or inhibiting feelings associated with anger, fear, worry, anxiety and sadness. The brain and bodily responses when we are in threat are instigated by a branch of our nervous system called the sympathetic nervous system (SNS). You have probably heard of this system as the 'fight or flight' system. But the SNS is actually a system that prepares us for, and enables, action. It is involved in activities associated with energy expenditure – in this respect it prepares us to fight or flee ...or even freeze. It also enables a 'zoom' like attentional lens to ensure focus on the threat is prioritised and sustained.

Then there is the Drive system. Drive can be understood as a positive motivator ...it is what motivates us ...perhaps to watch or play sport in the pouring rain ...to hit that deadline ..to revise for that exam ..to get the bus into town to buy that product ..to get out of bed to go to work every day etc. Drive is resource focused, wanting, pursuing, achieving and consuming. The function of this system is to drive us toward resources and rewards. As such, it is associated with feelings of excitement, joy and pleasure. Importantly, the brain and bodily responses related to drive emotions are also instigated by the sympathetic nervous system (SNS). Indeed, as the SNS prepares us for and enables action, it is also implicated in drive emotions. As such, it too results in the narrowing of attention. For example, imagine you have just won the lottery! What would you think about? ...probably anything and everything to do with the sum of money you have just won and nothing else! Given that both threat and drive are associated with the SNS, it is a misnomer to call it the 'Fight and Flight' system – rather it is the '*Fight, Flight and Fun*' system (Maratos & Harvey, 2024; [Maratos, 2024](#)).

Finally, we have a Soothing/Contentment system. This system is associated with safeness, connection and affiliative focus. It is active when we are neither striving to achieve nor safety seeking. It is associated with feeling soothed and/or content. When in soothing, we can engage in calming, affiliative and caring attachment behaviours. Additionally, when in soothing we often find that we have a wider attentional focus and/or can more easily turn our attention to others. This is because soothing is associated with different physiology than threat and drive. It is associated with parasympathetic nervous system (PNS). You might have heard of the PNS as the 'rest and digest' system. The PNS increases the body's supply of stored energy. In essence, the SNS and PNS are like two sides of a coin – one prepping us for 'threat' and 'drive' action, and one prepping us for 'soothing' and recovery. This also means that engaging the soothing system can 'turn-off' or 'tone-down' drive and threat systems (Gilbert, 2014).

It is important to understand these emotion systems, as threat, drive and soothing can all aid the flows of compassion or inhibit them. Thinking first about the threat system, humans (as well as other animals) are designed to prioritise the processing of threat above all else and we refer to this as the 'tricky brain' problem. Threat is so important to our survival that it can hijack our attention, thoughts and behaviours (Maratos & Pessoa, 2019). This is very helpful when we are in immediate danger (e.g. the threat of a dangerous snake in our ancestral past or a vicious looking dog running loose in the park today), but it is not useful for the majority of modern threats (e.g. that single 1 of 100 social media comments you received that you just can't help thinking about, or that employee performance review that is coming up). Often, these types of threat result in brain processes that affect our ability to mentalise. Our ability to mentalise is our ability to put ourselves in the position of another – and if we cannot mentalise – then we will struggle with compassion, especially compassion towards others.

The same goes for drive. When we are constantly striving to achieve ...perhaps to be the best ...to perform the best ...to look the best etc., our ability to mentalise – to experience something from another's position – is reduced. When we are in self-focused drive, we may not only lose abilities to be kind and caring to others, but we may also feel that accepting acts of compassion from others is a weakness. So whilst threat and drive can be motivators for compassion (but exploration of such is beyond the scope of this brief theoretical introduction), often in today's societies, threat and drive are inhibitors to the flows of compassion. For instance, if you are put in direct competition with a friend or colleague – perhaps related to a reward, promotion or 'performance' metric – that only one of you can achieve, then this situation is not particularly conducive to the flows of compassion.

Thus, in addition to our evolutionary propensity towards threat and drive, today's societal norms further push us towards these systems. However, knowing this can help us to achieve better balance and move us towards soothing. Certainly, whilst compassion can arise from any of the three systems, being in the soothing system activates physiological and brain processes that allow better mentalising and, consequently, the flows of compassion.

This is the power of wisdom, the knowledge that modern day life and pressures are often (unconscious) inhibitors of compassion, but now knowing this we can consciously (and courageously) choose compassion. To consciously engage in acts of self-compassion. To consciously engage in acts of compassion to others. To consciously engage in the acceptance of compassion. Compassion – for the good of all: to share, care, co-operate and flourish.



Carrier Bag
1970-1971; ID: 71.97

3. METHODOLOGY



The research was developed between September and December 2024. Community researchers participated in six half-day workshops in-person at the London Museum Docklands to co-design the research with the facilitation team. They collected data and came together to analyse the findings as a group, before developing recommendations together.

3.1 COMMUNITY RESEARCH TEAM RECRUITMENT

The main focus for recruitment was to put together a diverse team of Londoners who had an interest in the subject of compassion. No prior experience of research was necessary. Community researchers were recruited to the team over three weeks using an online survey shared through the networks of the facilitation team. 17 Londoners expressed interest. The project lead and museum staff reviewed the details of who had applied and recruited four applicants of different ages, genders, racial backgrounds and disability. Community researchers were chosen based on the following criteria:

- Live in London and regularly use London buses
- Be respectful of others and happy to work together towards group goals
- Have an interest in understanding what compassion means for Londoners

Alongside remuneration, London Museum's offer to community researchers was:

- The opportunity to make a difference in how people think about or approach compassion on public transport
- An opportunity to shape a research project with others based on your interest in the topic of compassion
- An opportunity to learn basic research skills and training from an academic about compassion

3.2 CO-DESIGNING THE RESEARCH

Co-design with community researchers took place over seven-half day workshops at London Museum Docklands, with one online session. The research lead facilitated the community researchers' collective decision-making, based on a consensus development approach.

Community researchers explored the significance of compassion on buses in their own lives. The group discussed concepts like '**Ubuntu**' ('I am, because we are') and whether Londoners were becoming less community focused and more individualistic. Professor Frances Maratos, a compassion expert at the University of Derby, provided an academic introduction to key concepts in compassion such as the flows of compassion and the concept of 'mentalising'. Community researchers reflected on their own experiences within these frameworks.

'It's 'hard to be the perfect human'

– Reflection from community researcher at the first workshop

The project lead introduced approaches to research question development and shared an overview of recent research findings related to compassion on public transport. The community researchers deliberated on potential research questions, ultimately agreeing the following:

“How do people with different life experiences experience compassion on buses?”

The group agreed that findings on this question could support Londoners to better understand one another, and that they would explore differences related to parenthood, disability, ages, ethnicity, gender and income. Storytelling was considered a powerful way to support Londoners to understand and connect with each other’s experiences, inspiring more acts of compassion towards one another.

3.3 DESIGNING DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

After an introduction to qualitative and quantitative data and collection tools, the community researchers agreed to use:

- Voice recordings containing observations of their experiences of compassion on buses
- A digital survey asking what kind of acts of compassion people do on buses, what kind of compassion they expect from others, and measuring the impact of compassionate acts people experience on bus journeys
- Conversations with friends or family about their experiences of compassion on buses

The group also considered accessibility, aiming to include underrepresented groups like older adults and non-English speakers. After the session, the facilitation team developed the data collection tools, this also included information sheets and consent forms in preparation for submission to the University of Derby ethics board. Refer to Appendix 1 and 2 for more details on the data collection tools used.

3.4 ETHICS

In order to safeguard and protect the dignity, rights and welfare of all those involved in research, which includes both the participants and the researchers, obtaining ethical approval for a research project is an essential aspect of the research process. This process involved Professor Frances Maratos and Bethan Mobey preparing an ethical application that overviewed the rationale for the project, the research methods and materials needed, and how processes of integrity, academic excellence, accountability, inclusiveness and professionalism could be assured. For example, the application detailed why the research was worthwhile, with benefits outweighing any risks; processes of due diligence in the preparation of materials to ensure informed consent; and procedures related to the collection, withdrawal, storage and analyses of data, to protect participants from harm. As the present research involved human participants, the ethical process was managed by the Health, Psychology and Social Care (HPSC) Research Ethics Committee (REC). This committee specialises in human participant research, thus it not only ensures general principles underpinning the [University of Derby’s approach to research ethics](#) are followed, but for accredited Psychologists, also ensures applications meet the [British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct](#).

Professor Frances Maratos submitted this application to the HPSC REC in September 2024. The application was then reviewed by this REC, receiving an initial outcome of ‘minor amendments’ related to further information needed as to: London Museum GDPR policies and the voice recording methodology; and minor changes to the participant facing materials. Following the addressing of these, REC ethical approval to collect data was granted in early October 2024.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION AND TRAINING

Community researchers took part in practical training to understand how to collect data ethically and how to collect rich data. The group generated their own ideas for how to tackle some of the difficulties in facilitating group conversation based on their own experiences. When encouraging a participant to bring their point to a close, a community researchers offered the following approach:

“I take a deep breath...then say...’ok’...and open out the conversation again.”

Over five weeks, community researchers recorded their observations of compassionate acts taking place on buses and organised a conversation each with friends and family. The survey was shared through online networks of the team and through a total of 4,000 business cards with a QR code link printed, which were then distributed by the research team on buses and public spaces and workplaces in London.



3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND CO-DEVELOPING RECOMMENDATIONS

The data consisted of three focus groups attended by 9 participants, 7 observations, and 81 survey responses. Survey findings were shared, then contextualised with findings from the qualitative data.

Community researchers delivered three focus groups, with participants self-describing their backgrounds. The first focus group consisted of one Black man and two Black women. The second focus group consisted of one Black woman, one Afro-Caribbean descent and the other one white British. The final focus group consisted of a woman from Latin America, a man from Spain and a Polish-British man. The focus group participants represented a range of ages, but under 24s and over 70s were not represented.

The community researchers also recorded seven voice recordings of their observations as Londoners of acts of compassion on buses. Any relevant demographic information pertaining to these is presented in the findings section.

The raw survey data was analysed by the project facilitation team, with support from a University of Derby graduate, and colleagues at London Museum.¹ This early analysis was then presented, responded to and deepened by the community researchers in a workshop. Community researchers brought their own knowledge as Londoners to generate a collective understanding of the significance of the data, which forms the bulk of the analysis in this report. One of the community researchers was also commissioned to provide a poetic response to the data, using his voice to tell the story of what had surfaced.

The community researchers fed back on the write-up of the analysis they generated in the first workshop. They then reflected on what they felt the findings told them when it came to what needed to change for there to be greater compassion on London buses.

3.7 A NOTE ON RACE

This research commenced during the 2024 race riots in the UK - a time of stress and vigilance by many Londoners - of racism, Islamophobia and xenophobia. The research team anticipated that race would be a significant factor in Londoners' experience of compassion on buses. However, while the scope of this survey was small, race did not emerge as a significant determinant of people's experiences of compassion on buses. Community researchers reflected that buses in London are not generally white majority spaces, and often passengers on the routes they ride are for example, majority Black and Afro-Caribbean. There may also be an unspoken code of how to behave on buses amongst racialised communities that creates a sense of protection. One community researcher also reflected that micro-aggressions can leave Londoners unsure whether acts of compassion or lack of compassion are racially motivated.

"Maybe someone avoids sitting next to you [...] we maybe don't realise that or it's not explicit at the time".
- Community Researcher

As a general note on methodology related to race - One community researcher felt strongly that asking focus group participants to include their race and other demographics in the focus groups led the conversations in a way that shaped and perhaps narrowed what they shared. In the future demographic data could be collected at the end of the focus group, similarly to the survey method.

¹ Regarding the survey data, 64% of survey respondents were female, 34% were male and 2% self-described as non-binary. 26% were aged 16-24, 25% were aged 25-34, 22% were aged 35-44, 17% were aged 45-54 and 10% were aged over 55. Whilst the majority of respondents (57%) self-described being of middle income, 22% self-described as being of low-income, 5% self-described as being of high income and 16% preferred not to say. With respect to ethnicity, 14% reported being of black origin, 38% reported being of white origin, 20% reported being of Asian origin and 28% preferred not to say. 66% of participants reported having no children, whilst 44% reported having children (comprising 60% having children under 18 and 40% over 18). 15% of participants further reported having a disability. Finally, regarding sexuality 37% chose not to disclose this, whilst 50% self-reported as 'heterosexual or 'straight' and 13% self-reported as 'Bi/Bi-sexual', 'Lesbian' or 'Queer'. Thus, the survey captured a wide demographic of those who use London buses.



Bus Stop

ID: HG2942/36 © Henry Grant Collection/London Museum



THE FILM THEATRE
POTTERS BAR
BARNSLEY ROAD - WALK STREET
WEDNESDAY 10th SATURDAY 13th 1968
Presented by
The Mirror Crack'd
A British Production
Produced by
Directed by
Starring
CIVIL
The

555

s to taste,
umber

Three More Ways to
Save Money
LOW TAX
DAILY WARNING
DON'T SMOK!

CIVIL
The

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The following findings are based on the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data collected. As part of the research process, spoken word artist and community researcher Benna Braithwaite was commissioned by the museum to develop a creative writing response, reflecting on the insights gathered.

4.1 MANY LONDONERS HAVE SHARED EXPECTATIONS OF HOW COMPASSION IS EXPECTED TO BE SHOWN AND OFFERED ON BUSES

whether we're born here or from out of town,
whether we respect the space of others as we line up to get on,
or its everyone for themselves as we crowd around,
from when fare was 4Op to around a pound,
these rides capture the zeitgeist found,
in the heart of the city as the pedal meets the metal,
and unwanted DJs finally get the memo,
its the ride we all hope for where compassion in all of its urgency,
comes down to everyone upholding the codes of common courtesy.

Benna Braithwaite

The most popular compassionate acts toward others were using headphones when making a call or listening to music and giving up a seat to someone who needed it more. The least popular compassionate act towards others was paying for someone to get on if their oyster or bank card was not working. People generally did not expect others to step in and manage a disagreement they were having.

Londoners generally expect elders, disabled people and parents of small children to be offered compassionate acts, recognising they will face extra challenges to their journeys.

"Helping people with prams or wheelchairs getting on and off if I see they are struggling. Helping people with disabilities getting on and off the bus if I see if they are struggling. I always ask first if they want my help."

– Survey response from woman, 25-34, middle income, not a parent, white Latin American/
European, not disabled, heterosexual

Making space came up again and again as part of compassion etiquette on buses, whether that was moving upstairs when downstairs was crowded, getting up from priority seats, sitting by the window or moving bags to free up a seat.

“It shouldn’t be that you have to ask can I sit down. Just it should just be normal, man, that you just you pick your bag up.”

– Focus group response from Black British, female, 30s, mother

Being compassionate towards their fellow passengers may be a source of pride or identity for some Londoners.

“It’s just the way I am. I mean, if I’m just a general, I generally have a lot of empathy for other people.”

– Focus group response from White British, female, middle aged

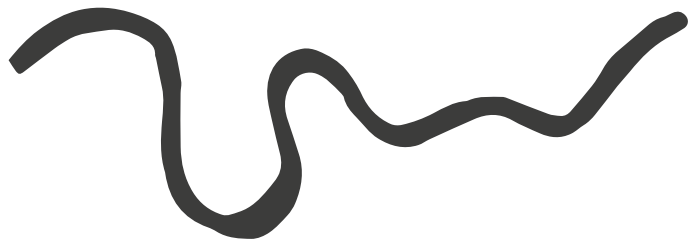
“Oh by nature, I’ve got an empathetic personality so I am very compassionate so I always see the need and if I can help or offer a solution.”

– Focus group response from Afro-Caribbean female, middle-aged

“It’s just, it’s just second nature, isn’t it? Do to others what you would like them to do to you.”

– Focus group response from Black British female, 30s, mother

However, there were some ways that compassion was expected or offered by people that seemed to be shaped by their specific life experiences or culture.



4.2 “WHO FEELS IT KNOWS IT”

a disability from the outside looks like wisdom
emitting from within,
but when you’ve been in similar shoes you resonate
like next of kin,
soul to soul, so,
as the saying goes, if you know you show.

Benna Braithwaite

We found evidence that when people have experienced struggles or challenges on buses, this motivates them to show compassion in response to the struggles of others.

Disabled Londoners were more likely to offer compassion in every category than non-disabled people, with a particularly higher likelihood (%) they would use headphones when making a call (87.4 vs. 67.6), ring the bell if they see someone struggling to catch the bus (78.2 vs. 59.7), and step in to manage a disagreement between strangers (34.6 vs. 19.8). Disabled people also offered a somewhat wider variety of ways of showing compassion, ranging from giving directions, offering first aid, supporting women to get home after a night out, or advocating to the bus driver on behalf of people with mobility issues.

We further found that parents are more sensitive to the challenges of travelling with small children, having faced them firsthand. While compassion for such parents was common across all groups, the survey indicates that parents are more likely to expect and offer it. Parents with adult children were the least likely to expect others to give up their seat, compared to those with children under 18, who were the most likely.

“I try and be supportive of mums with buggies / crying babies etc as I remember how stressful it could be travelling with a baby. This could be giving up a seat or space or just smiling at them.

– Survey response from woman, 35-44, middle income, parent of children under 18, white British, heterosexual

Examples came up of the compassion older adults can have for younger people’s struggles. A community researcher recorded a case of a man showing an act of compassion towards a teenager:

So basically it might have been about 9pm, it was quite dark outside, and there was a teenager who was trying to go on the bus, but for some reason didn’t have his Oyster card. So he was trying to negotiate with the driver, and there was this older guy. and he just paid for him. I was thinking for me alot comes out around the intergenerational type of masculine nature from an older man. For me it was just the principle of the older guy, almost knowing where this younger person’s coming from, knowing or understanding that maybe this guy was young once as well and I think you just maybe recognise the lifestyle and also just recognise that it was a good thing to do, like not even that it was a good thing to do, it was the right thing to do, you know.

– Observation by community researcher, play recording.

A community researcher reflected:

“I’ve been in situations like that myself when I was younger and I didn’t have, sort of money or my bus pass didn’t work or something. And you know how it feels and you shrink and it’s just so, like, soul destroying, everybody’s watching you. And so I guess as you get older, cause I’ve done what this older person has done a few times, when I’ve seen a young person get on the bus and sort of try and negotiate with the driver and the drivers sometimes give them a hard time...I’ve just got up and just tapped cause I just think that you’re just destroying this person”.

“I think that it could be the whole thing about who feels it knows it. You feel it for the person”.



4.3 OLDER AND YOUNGER GENERATIONS HAVE DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS OF COMPASSION ON BUSES

in an age where ‘me’ time,
means ‘meme’ time,
who knows our youth better than the algorithms
living in an ever changing city full of chaos, we find,
when things aren’t looking up it seems,
the youth looking down is what we see,
avoiding dangers in-between
stops, with every interaction
it’s easier to manage strangers on a screen,
our youth find themselves in a dichotomy
between, transcending permissions to speak up
and being expected to raise a hand,
sometimes making a point to the elders means

Benna Braithwaite

Young Londoners seem to value being left alone, having personal space and not being disrespected over traditional compassionate etiquette expressed by older people, such as offering their seat. Expected compassionate acts included “*Not deliberately pushing past me*” – (Woman, 18-24, Black African) and “*No glares and dirt side eyes*” – (Woman, 18-24, Bangladeshi).

Community researchers reflected this idea of compassion could be related to the dangers of being a young person on a bus. “There’s a lot happening around crime and stuff like that in London, especially on the buses as well, there’s certain things that happen, situations and whatnot, so maybe young people are thinking, I’ll just keep myself to myself.”

People aged 24 and below were also the most likely to use phones to avoid unwanted attention from strangers which could speak to the desire to avoid difficult or dangerous interactions.

Community researchers also discussed that the bus is a unique social space for young people. “When I was younger, the bus journey was the social space where you come out of school and you just stretch across the seats because there was space to sort of be social on that bus”. Young people can also have their own social codes for space on buses, such as sitting in the seat in front of a friend, rather than next to them.

Further analysis revealed that people aged 24 and below were the most likely to use mobile phones to relax, compared to people over 55, who were the least likely to. The researchers discussed that the bus may be a space for young people to engage in self-compassion between school and home journeys.

The survey showed that Londoners between 18 and 24 were most likely to only experience “some impact” from receiving a compassionate act from another passenger.

Additionally, there was a perception amongst older people that younger generations are less inclined to act compassionately on buses, which may be backed up by survey responses showing that those under 18 were less likely to give up their seat to someone who needed it, second only to the over 65 age group.

“I am a fit older person – 69 years old. Sadly, I don’t have the same expectations of others (e.g. a younger / agile person giving up a seat for someone less able bodied than myself) as I have of myself. Acts of compassion do happen, but often don’t when they should. It’s heartening when it does – little acts of mutual aid.”

– Survey response from man, 65+, middle income, parent of adult children, white UK, heterosexual

A community researcher shared a sense that “there’s a kind of tension at the moment whereby, young people have been told that these are your rights and your voice is important, and then at the same time, you’ve got older people who are still kind of going through that stage where they’re expecting younger people to be different.”

This opened further discussion and Professor Maratos reflected that in today’s societies, especially Western societies, the ‘norm’ is to encourage an overly competitive culture. She explained that we put individuals in situations where we constantly monitor and compare their performance with, and to, others. She stated this is especially true for adolescents and young adults when one considers that for several years now the emphasis of schooling, college and University has largely been academic performance compared with developing more rounded individuals.

And that this emphasis on individual performance – the needs of the self over others – is not conducive to kindness nor compassion. It is a barrier to the flows of compassion and may reflect some of the differences found and tensions observed.

So, Professor Maratos reflected that modern day societal pressures may explain some of these generational differences.



Night Bus
ID: 94.165/1 © Timothy Hyman



4.4 GENDER SHAPES LONDONERS EXPERIENCE OF GIVING AND RECEIVING COMPASSION

when the words from guys are,
weapons with intentions loaded,
the bus is a book coded,
in body language to decipher,
toxic masculinity is sometimes a quake,
some women can never shake,
but we always remember the day,
someone steps in to stop the smoke
before the fire escalates.

Benna Braithwaite

Generally, women were more likely to give up their seats than men, use headphones when making a call, and ring the bell to stop the bus if someone was struggling to catch it. However, on average, men were more likely to manage a disagreement between strangers.

Sexual harassment and unwanted attention from men towards women motivated compassionate acts on buses.

“Keeping an eye on women who might be at risk of, or are already, receiving unwanted attention or harassment and being ready to either intervene or take quieter action (e.g going to sit near them in a ‘big sister’ sort of way, taking a picture of the person doing the harassment in case it is needed). Helping visibly vulnerable/drunken women get home after they get off the bus.”

– Survey response from woman, 45-54, middle income, not a parent, white, fluctuating long term condition

“As a woman it is really nice to have others recognise when I am being approached/talked to by strange men and help me remove myself from the situation safely.”

– Survey response from woman, 25-34, middle income, not a parent, white, not disabled, straight

“Pushing men off the night bus who are harassing women”

– Survey response from man, 35-44, middle income, not a parent, white, not disabled, bisexual

"I looked around to see, oh, where shall I sit? And this lady? She was kind of moving her dress and, like, budging up towards the kind of window, [...] she was then kind of telling me[...] you can come and sit next to me"

– Observation by community researcher, play recording

Men shared that gendered expectations could create uncertainty or conflict around what compassionate behaviour they should expect or give.

"Specifically with the prams, obviously it's heavy lifting. As a society, we usually say that it's the men that kind of have to use their strength and be the gentleman and all."

– Focus group response from Black British man, 30s

"Absolutely. Even, even if I'm at the train station and I see a mother going up the stairs and the lifts out of order and men are walking up the stairs, going past her. I will automatically expect the man to say 'I will take the lead' and help the mother up the stairs."

– Focus group response from Black British woman, 30s, mother)

"[I] avoid sitting next to a woman when it looks as if that would be culturally uncomfortable for her."

– Survey response from man, 55-65, middle income, parent of adult children, white British, not disabled, straight)

"This put into perspective how ingrained even some of the positive leaning aspects of toxic masculinity are - that is, as a man I feel it is my duty to make these small compassionate sacrifices without the expectation that they will be returned"

– Survey response from Man, 25-34, middle income, not a parent, not disabled, White, straight

This uncertainty is echoed in the experience of one community researcher who shared that men completing the survey told her "they actually didn't have any sort of expectations and from anybody else to be compassionate towards them".

Men did describe making conversations with others as an act of compassion.

"Made conversation with a lonely man"

– Survey response from Man, 55-65, middle income, parent of adult children, white British, not disabled, straight

"Have had a couple of incidents recently where someone was quite drunk, behaving a little erratically, was trying to interact with other people, and I'm not sure if everyone else was comfortable, but I felt safe enough so decided to interject and talk to the person and on both occasions found someone who just wanted to chat/ be heard and had a positive conversation/ interaction."

– Survey response from Man, 25-34, middle income, not a parent, white Irish, not disabled, heterosexual

It may be that men's position of relative safety on buses made them well placed to have compassionate conversations with people who others felt would not be safe to engage with.

4.5 EXAMPLES SHOW LONDONERS WITH DIVERSE LIFE EXPERIENCES ACTING COMPASSIONATELY ON BUSES TO OVERCOME CONFLICT.

The research offered examples of Londoners using compassion as a way to work out situations where people had competing needs, often around the use of the wheelchair space.

“She asked the driver to put the ramp down and he did, and then when she got on the bus, she said to the two people with the buggies that they didn’t need to come off or anything if you could just move them to just slightly at an angle, then she’ll be able to put the wheelchair on.”

– Observation by community researcher, play recording.

“She was kind of walking very close to her mum, towards one of the seats and basically the disabled person got up and [...] basically told the mum in a nice way to sit down with her daughter. And the mother [...] she appreciated it a lot. Said thank you. There was kind of like a little small talk around the daughter wanting to, needing to sit down and be close to her mum and the person who looked disabled, she would just reciprocate the energy, saying, I understand we was all that age once upon a time kind of thing and I feel like that the daughter during all this [...] She was observing everything and she was smiling. [...] It’s gonna just help shape her as a person, you know, especially in today’s world, where a lot’s happening and compassion isn’t really a popular act.”

– Observation by community researcher, play recording.

However, this was not a universal experience. People using the priority seats were often treated with scepticism if they did not have a visible disability. If someone was seen to be unpredictable because of mental illness, people sometimes avoided showing them compassion, prioritising their own need to feel safe and choosing not to engage.



4.6 GENERALLY, MOST PEOPLE SAID THAT EXPERIENCING AN ACT OF COMPASSION WOULD HIGHLY IMPACT THEIR DAY

when there's a lot on our plate,
negative interactions leave a bad taste,
and a sad face,
but we all win in the long run
when we relay compassion like a baton in the rat race,
giving others the B.O.T.D
plus remembering to add grace.

Benna Braithwaite

Adults aged 35 to 44 were likely to experience the most positive impact from an act of compassion. People with children under 18 were likely to experience more of an impact from a compassionate act compared to people without children who were the least likely to feel an impact, with the average sentiment being that they would feel "some impact".

Compassion or uncompassionate acts can make or break some people's days.

"If it's positive, then [...] you will have made my day, I am happy. Yeah. Knowing that it's been a good outcome. If it's negative [...] It sticks with me for the whole day.

– Focus group response from Black British, female, 20s, mother

"Well, it makes you feel good. I know that when I've done things for others on the bus or helped someone, it makes you feel good. You feel good inside and it sets you up for the day and you hope if someone's nice to you, then you hopefully will be nice to someone else."

– Focus group response from White British woman, middle aged

Finally, Londoners desire small acts of compassion as a way to feel connected to one another.

"I wouldn't say expect, but a smile or friendliness if we interact for whatever reason is always a nice moment of connection after/before a long day at work or similar.

– Survey Response from Man, 25-34, middle income, not a parent, white Irish, not disabled, heterosexual

"Q. What if someone helped you with your bags, how would that make an impact for the rest of your day? A. I will feel seen, which is very difficult in a city like London."

– Focus group response from woman, 35, Latin-American

"You know, it's just it's just nothing [...] it's a big thing [...] I think if we could all of us do the same, it will change a lot the daily things in general in the city, so [...] It's like not like family, but at least you know, like sense of community, at least. [...] So it needs to be like. Give and take something."

– Focus group response from man, Spanish



IN EMERGENCY
PLEASE DO NOT USE THIS
EXIT UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO
BY THE DRIVER. THANK YOU
FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Young woman with two children on
a double-decker bus, near Trafalgar Square
ID: IN4O201.1 © Peter Marshall



no these signs

Priority seats for elderly and disabled people

JOSEPH LONDON PALLADIUM

AMAZON

Theatre Centre

5. REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Public transport, especially buses, are one of the few places where people from all walks of life cross paths in London. This research shows that compassion can be a part of Londoners' identity, but there are areas of tension where compassion becomes more complicated to give and receive. Community researchers shared the following reflections on what they've learned about how to tackle those complexities.

DEVELOP POLICIES THAT PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE ACTS OF COMPASSION

Community researchers reflected that a change in some policies for TFL and private bus companies could make buses a more compassionate place. There could be a rule that bus drivers could not deny someone onto the bus if another passenger is willing to tap for them. Researchers reflected that young people and homeless people would benefit from this rule. Having training on compassion for bus drivers involving role play to show the different daily experiences of Londoners and wellbeing support for bus drivers who are often in 'threat', could help them be more compassionate.

SUPPORT CAMPAIGNS HELPING PASSENGERS TO CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

'Distance causes disrespect'. Important learning came out from the research about how lack of insight into the experiences of others could cause a lack of, or misdirected, compassion. Campaigns by TFL to encourage passengers to see different perspectives could help them to 'mentalise' the struggles of others, and stories and poetry can be a powerful way to do this. Researchers reflected that 'distance causes disrespect', and that there needed to be more opportunity for connection, particularly between older and younger generations, whilst appreciating that technology may be driving that difference further. Could there be ways to open conversations that connect the two generations around compassion in public spaces, perhaps through technology?

ENCOURAGE COMPASSION AS A SOURCE OF PRIDE

For some Londoners, compassion towards others is a source of pride and identity. Developing this culture of compassion as something to be proud of and aspire to as Londoners could be really beneficial for the city – and this is something community researchers felt should be cultivated and shared with the next generation.



Female bus conductor

ID: HC2857/54 © Henry Grant Collection/London Museum

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APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY RESEARCH PACK

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus group - Step by step process

How to introduce yourself and frequently asked questions

3 x Information sheets

3 x Informed consent sheet

Focus group question guide

Focus group debrief

3 x £25 vouchers

Pencils for participants to doodle

VOICE RECORDING OBSERVATIONS

Voice recordings – Step by step process

Information sheet

Consent form

Debrief

SURVEY (SEE APENDIX 2)

100 business cards

Flyer to put beneath cards in public places

FOCUS GROUP – STEP BY STEP PROCESS

- Share the **‘information sheet’** with your participants at least **24 hours in advance**
- Let [name redacted] know when and where you are planning to run the focus group so she can be available by phone for any reason
- On the day of the focus group, welcome participants to the conversation, buy them a drink and settle them into the space.
- Give a clear introduction to your role as a community researcher and what the research is about (See ‘How to introduce yourself’ sheet below)
- Give an opportunity for participants to ask questions (See ‘FAQ’ sheet below)
- Share the consent form with participants. Give them a chance to read it through or read it out for them.
- Start recording
- **Ask participants to provide verbal consent to take part in the research (recorded)**
- Ask the questions on the question guide
- Remember to probe, using questions like ‘tell me what you mean by that,’ ‘Tell me more about this’ and ‘how’ and ‘why’
- Debrief

HOW TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF

Example of how to introduce yourself and the research

“Thanks for agreeing to take part in this focus group. I’ve asked you to take part because I’m a community researcher, working with the London Museum to develop research about compassion on buses in London. My role in the project is to be a community researcher, drawing on my own experience and interest in compassion in London to develop the project, with the support of academics and research professionals. I play a role in asking questions to community members about their experiences of compassion on London buses, which is why I invited you to join me today.”

HOW TO RESPOND TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What's the difference between community research and traditional research?

The idea behind community research is that people directly affected by issues are involved in creating knowledge and understanding that can lead to positive change for themselves and the communities they live in. It aims to empower communities. Research is often done 'to' communities, and people often don't hear back about what happened next once the research was completed. In community research, the aim is for communities to shape, conduct and create learning about what's happening in their communities, and for communities themselves to use this learning to create positive change.

Q. What's the research for? What will the end result be?

- By talking about compassion, we all might learn something new about ourselves and others that we can take away into our own lives.
- There will be a report that the London Museum publishes to share learning from the research with people who are interested in the topic of compassion. It will also be held in the London Museum's new research centre.
- The research team will make recommendations about what needs to happen based on the findings from the research
- A public art piece will be created to spread the findings and recommendations to more people and to inspire more compassion in London.

Q. What do you do with what we have shared with you?

I will send the recording to the project manager who will securely store it according to the process in the information sheet. I will then delete the recording from my phone.

Q. How do we know what happened as a result of the research?

I will contact you in early 2025 to share the results of the research

FOCUS GROUP INFORMATION SHEET



You are being invited to take part in a focus group as part of a study into compassion on buses in London. The study has been designed by a group of Londoners with the support of London Museum and the University of Derby. The aim of the research is to learn about compassion in London, with a focus on people's experiences of compassion on buses. Our hope is to learn about how compassion is experienced by people of many different life experiences. We are interested in how people of different ages, genders, ethnic backgrounds, income levels, disability and/or parenthood experience compassion on buses. We hope by learning more about this, we can encourage greater understanding and compassion amongst Londoners when on buses and beyond.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME IF I TAKE PART?

If you choose to take part, you will participate in a focus group conducted by a community researcher. The focus group will take place during a bus journey or a cafe with up to three other participants. You will be asked a series of questions by the community researcher about your experience of compassion on buses. The community researcher will record the conversation and the recording will be submitted to be analysed as part of the study. You will be supplied with a pre-loaded Oyster card with enough funds for a return journey and will receive a £25 voucher for taking part.

WHAT QUESTIONS WILL I BE ASKED?

You will be asked the following questions as part of the focus group:

1. How would you describe yourself? For example: 'I am a white British woman in my 30's, and I am a community worker'
2. Now let's think about compassion. Compassion has flows - there is the compassion we can give to others, the compassion we can give to ourselves, and compassion we can accept from others. What compassionate acts do you take towards other people on buses?
3. What compassionate acts do you expect from other people on buses?
4. What impact does experiencing an act of compassion on the bus - which is someone taking action to try to make your journey easier or more pleasant - have on the rest of your day?
5. How does use of mobile phones on buses affect your experience of compassion?

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER TAKING PART?

By taking part in this study, you will contribute to increased understanding about different people's experience of compassion on London buses. The community research team hope by learning more about this, we can encourage greater understanding and compassion amongst Londoners when on buses and beyond.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to participate. The focus group should take no longer than **15-30 minutes** to complete. Focus groups will be conducted in person on the bus. Please note that participation is voluntary and if you do not wish to take part, then you do not have to.

WILL MY INFORMATION IN THIS STUDY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

All information collected will be kept strictly confidential. Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of study material through anonymisation of everyone's data. To enable us to do this, you will be asked to create a unique ID. This will be a single **pseudonym** of your choice. The questions for the focus group are appended to this information sheet (below the project privacy notice). If you are happy to take part, then we will arrange a time to progress the focus group with you.

PRIVACY NOTICE

If you agree to take part in this research project, the information that you supply will be recorded and processed in line with the UK GDPR / Data Protection Act 2018 / EU GDPR.

Data collected from this survey will be stored by the project manager [name redacted] and accessible only by the project manager and project partners. Your information will be used solely for the purpose of this project. This means it will contribute to increased understanding about different people's experience of compassion on London buses.

Your data will be processed in line with the following privacy policy:

London Museum Data Privacy Policy

Our lawful basis for processing this data is your explicit consent.

As a data subject you can request withdrawal of consent within two weeks of collection, by contacting the project manager [name redacted]. If you consent for your data to be used it will be held by the London Museum for a maximum period of 6 years. Further information on how we handle your information and details of our DPO can be found on our website:

<https://www.londonmuseum.org.uk/about/policies/privacy/>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ethics approval for this research has been granted by the University of Derby College of Health, Psychology and Social Care Research Ethics Committee.

We are obliged to:

- Not seek more information from you than what is essential and necessary for this research;
- Make sure that you are not identified by using pseudonyms
- Use your pseudonymised data for the purposes of this study and for any relevant publications or artworks that arise from it;
- Store data safely in password-protected databases to which only the named researchers have access.

For any queries, please contact [names and contact details redacted]

FOCUS GROUP – INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my FOCUS GROUP responses up to two weeks after taking part without giving any reason.
2. I am aware of what my participation will involve.
3. I am aware that my data are to be held confidentially for a period of six years by the project manager [name redacted] and accessible only by the project manager and project partners.
4. I understand that in accordance with the requirements of some organisations and scientific journals, anonymised study data may be shared with other competent researchers. My name and other identifying details will not be shared with anyone.
5. I understand that the overall findings (i.e., not individual data) may be submitted for publication in a scientific journal or similar publication or presented as artwork or to key stakeholders concerned with this project, or kindness and compassion.

I consent to take part in this research – verified verbally in the focus group

FOCUS GROUP QUESTION GUIDE

1. How would you describe yourself? You can give an example: ‘I am a white British woman in my 30’s, and I am a community worker’
2. Now let’s think about compassion. Compassion has flows – there is the compassion we can give to others, the compassion we can give to ourselves, and compassion we can accept from others. What compassionate acts do you take towards other people on buses?
3. What compassionate acts do you expect from other people on buses?
4. What impact does experiencing an act of compassion on the bus – which is someone taking action to try to make your journey easier or more pleasant - have on the rest of your day?
5. How does use of mobile phones on buses affect your experience of compassion?

FOCUS GROUP DEBRIEF

Thank you very much for taking part in this focus group

Please note that your participation is very valuable to us and will help us to increase our understanding about different people's experience of compassion on London buses. The community research team hope by learning more about this, we can encourage greater understanding and compassion amongst Londoners when on buses and beyond.

Please be advised that your participation is anonymous. This is ensured through the use of the unique pseudonym created by you. The resulting raw data will only be viewed by the project manager [name redacted] and project partners at University of Derby and London Museum for research purposes (i.e. the evaluation of the intervention) and stored securely in password protected databases. Additionally, once we have entered all data into the password protected closed database, all audio materials will be destroyed.

Please remember that your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw your anonymised data up until two weeks after the focus group has taken place, in which case, your data will not be transcribed and/or used in further analysis. To enable you to withdraw your data, you simply need to email or ring [name redacted] stating your pseudonym and your data will be withdrawn from any subsequent transcriptions. If necessary, please insert your pseudonym here as a reminder:

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries. If taking part in this focus group has raised any emotional issues which you feel you need to discuss with somebody, you might find information on the Mind Website a useful tool in allowing you to gain further support: <http://www.mind.org.uk/>

If you have any further queries, please contact [names and contact details redacted]

VOICE RECORDING OBSERVATIONS – STEP BY STEP PROCESS

1. Read the information sheet and consent sheet
2. Observe without drawing attention to yourself when you see an act of compassion during a bus journey. This can be on any bus route.
- 3. Get off the bus, and wait until you reach an area where you can no longer be overheard by people who were on the bus**
4. Leave a voice note for [name redacted] on WhatsApp or do a voice recording with your observations of the act of compassion
5. Verbally consent for the voice recording to be used in the research
6. Read the debrief sheet

VOICE RECORDINGS INFORMATION SHEET



As community researchers in London, you have chosen to focus on people's experiences of compassion on buses via three methods. The hope is that by using three different methods we will be able to learn about how compassion is experienced by people of many different life experiences, to encourage greater understanding and compassion amongst Londoners when on buses and beyond. One of the methods you have picked is to observe compassionate behaviours on buses as part of your own daily life/travel on buses and then record these acts of compassion when ethical to do so. That is, to minimise any risk, you will be asked to progress the voice recordings after the compassionate event has taken place when the individuals involved are no longer present. In other words, when you have departed the bus and are no longer with any of the passengers.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME IF I TAKE PART?

If you choose to take part, you will participate in a focus group conducted by a community researcher. The focus group will take place during a bus journey or a cafe with up to three other participants. You will be asked a series of questions by the community researcher about your experience of compassion on buses. The community researcher will record the conversation and the recording will be submitted to be analysed as part of the study. You will be supplied with a pre-loaded Oyster card with enough funds for a return journey and will receive a £25 voucher for taking part.

WHAT QUESTIONS WILL I BE ASKED?

If you choose to take part, following the training event on 4th October 2024, you will journey on buses as usual but will observe and document any compassionate acts you observe. That is, you are looking to observe "How do people with different life experiences (parenthood/disability/ ages/ethnicities/ genders/incomes) experience compassion on buses?" using the following guidance:

1. Describe the act of compassion you saw. You could share the time of day it was and where in London the bus was passing through, then the situation that happened from beginning to end.

Remember, compassion = empathy + action

2. How do you think different people involved were experiencing compassion?

Remember, compassion has flows. There is the compassion we can give to others, the compassion we can give to ourselves, and compassion we can accept from others.

You will be asked to use WhatsApp to record your reflections. As this form of voice note is accessible to all of the community researchers and encrypted. After you have finished your voice recording, you will send this to the Project Manager ([name redacted], who will move the recordings to a secure password protected database, in line with London Museum's privacy and GDPR policy.

Remember, to minimise risk, these voice recordings should not be progressed as the compassionate acts unfold, but when the soonest opportunity arises after such. This should be a space where you cannot be overheard by any of the bus passengers. For example, always when you have left the bus and are in a new venue or are back in their home.

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER TAKING PART?

By taking part in this form of data collection, you will contribute to increased understanding about different people's experience of compassion on London buses. That is, you as a community research team, collaborating with the London Museum and the University of Derby, hope by learning more about this, we can encourage greater understanding and compassion amongst Londoners when on buses and beyond.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to participate. The focus group should take no longer than **15-30 minutes** to complete. Focus groups will be conducted in person on the bus. Please note that participation is voluntary and if you do not wish to take part, then you do not have to.

WILL MY INFORMATION IN THIS STUDY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

All information collected will be kept strictly confidential. Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of study material through anonymisation of everyone's data. To enable us to do this, you will be asked to create a unique ID. This will be a single pseudonym of your choice.

The questions for the focus group are appended to this information sheet (below the project privacy notice). If you are happy to take part, then we will arrange a time to progress the focus group with you.

PRIVACY NOTICE

If you agree to take part in this research project, the information that you supply will be recorded and processed in line with the UK GDPR / Data Protection Act 2018 / EU GDPR.

Data collected from this survey will be stored by the project manager [name redacted] and accessible only by the project manager and project partners. Your information will be used solely for the purpose of this project. This means it will contribute to increased understanding about different people's experience of compassion on London buses.

Your data will be processed in line with the following privacy policy:

London Museum Data Privacy Policy

Our lawful basis for processing this data is your explicit consent.

As a data subject you can request withdrawal of consent within two weeks of collection, by contacting the project manager [name redacted]. If you consent for your data to be used it will be held by the London Museum for a maximum period of 6 years. Further information on how we handle your information and details of our DPO can be found on our website:

<https://www.londonmuseum.org.uk/about/policies/privacy/>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ethics approval for this research has been granted by the University of Derby College of Health, Psychology and Social Care Research Ethics Committee.

We are obliged to:

- Not seek more information from you than what is essential and necessary for this research;
- Make sure that you are not identified by using pseudonyms
- Use your pseudonymised data for the purposes of this study and for any relevant publications or artworks that arise from it;
- Store data safely in password-protected databases to which only the named researchers have access.

For any queries, please contact [names and contact details redacted]

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT – VOICE RECORDINGS

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my voice recordings up until 10th November 2024.

1. I am aware of what my participation will involve.
2. I am aware that my data are to be held confidentially for a period of six years by the project manager [name redacted] and accessible only by the project manager and project partners.
3. I understand that in accordance with the requirements of some organisations and scientific journals, anonymised study data may be shared with other competent researchers. My name and other identifying details will not be shared with anyone.
4. I understand that the overall findings (i.e., not individual data) may be submitted for publication in a scientific journal or similar publication or presented as artwork or to key stakeholders concerned with this project or kindness and compassion.

VOICE RECORDINGS DEBRIEF

Please note that your participation is very valuable and will help to increase understanding about different people's experience of compassion on London buses. By taking part in this form of data collection, you are contributing to increased understanding about different people's experience of compassion on London buses. That is, you as a community research team, collaborating with the London Museum and the University of Derby, hope by learning more about acts of compassion on London buses, we can encourage greater understanding and compassion amongst Londoners when on buses and beyond.

Please remember that the resulting raw data will only be viewed by the project manager [name redacted] and project partners at the University of Derby and the London Museum for research purposes (i.e. the evaluation of the intervention) and stored securely in password protected databases. Additionally, once we have entered all data into the password protected closed database, all audio materials will be destroyed.

Please further remember that your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw your anonymised data up until 10th November. In which case, your data will not be transcribed and/or used in further analysis. To enable you to withdraw your data, you simply need to WhatsApp [name redacted] stating which recording/s you'd like to withdraw.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries. If taking part in this observation method has raised any emotional issues which you feel you need to discuss with somebody, you might find information on the Mind Website a useful tool in allowing you to gain further support: <http://www.mind.org.uk/>

If you have any further queries, please contact [name and contacts redacted]



APPENDIX 2: SURVEY

SHARE YOUR VIEWS BY SCANNING THE QR CODE ON THE CARD



The survey closes on Sunday 10th November 2024

You can take part in this survey if you are aged 16 or over

This survey is designed by a group of Londoners with the support of London Museum and the University of Derby. The aim of the research is to learn about compassion in London, with a focus on people's experiences of compassion on buses. Our hope is to learn about how compassion is experienced by people of many different life experiences. We are interested in how people of different ages, genders, ethnic backgrounds, income levels, disability and/or parenthood experience compassion on buses. We hope by learning more about this, we can encourage greater understanding and compassion amongst Londoners when on buses and beyond.

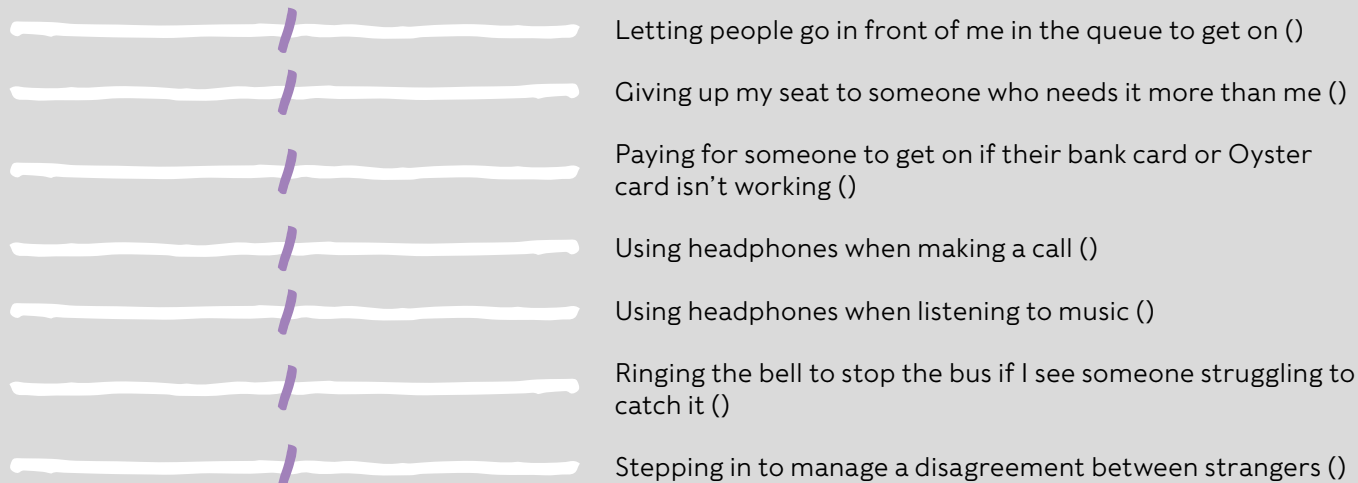
The survey contains two pages of questions. The first page contains 6 main questions asking you about your experience of compassion on buses. The first few questions ask what compassionate acts you take towards other people on buses, the next set of questions ask what compassionate acts you expect from other people on buses. There are then some questions about mobile phone use on buses. The second page contains 7 short questions about who you are. For example, gender, age, ethnicity etc.

At the end of each page you will be asked if you are happy to submit your questions. Data privacy and how your data will be used. Data collected from this survey will be stored by the project manager and accessible only by the project manager and project partners. Your information will be used for the purpose of this project. This means it will contribute to increased understanding about different people's experience of compassion on London buses'. Your data will be processed in line with the following privacy policy: London Museum Data Privacy Policy and retained as long as is necessary following our retention and records management processes. Ethical approval for this study was further obtained from the University of Derby. For any queries, please contact [names redacted] If you are happy to take part, please press the blue arrow below to continue – that is, consent – to take part in the two page survey.

Q3 1. What compassionate acts do you take towards other people on buses? (Please note, you need to touch each of the 'scale' buttons at least once to register a response)

Never Some times About half the time Most of the time Always

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

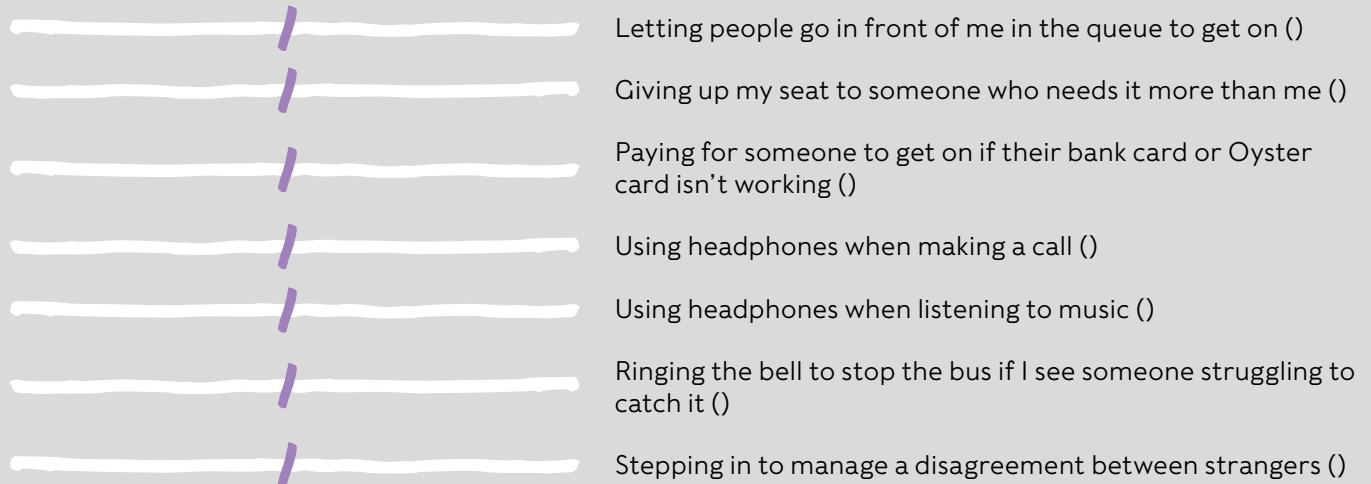


Q4.2 Use the box below to describe any other compassionate acts you take towards other people on buses:

Q5 3. What compassionate acts do you expect from other people on buses? (Please note, you need to touch each of the 'scale' buttons at least once to register a response)

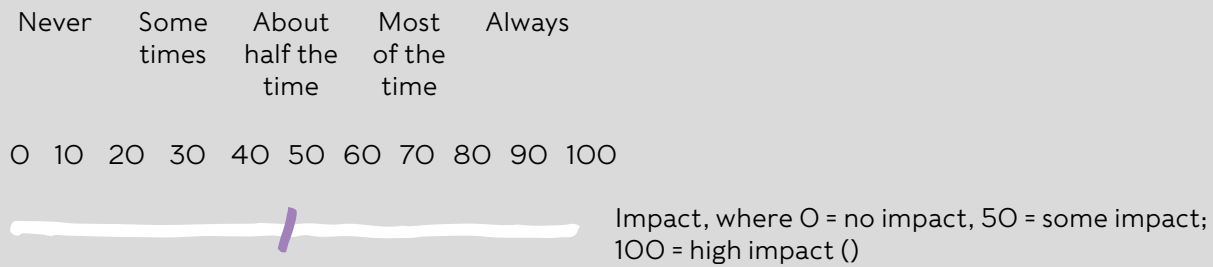
Never Some times About half the time Most of the time Always

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

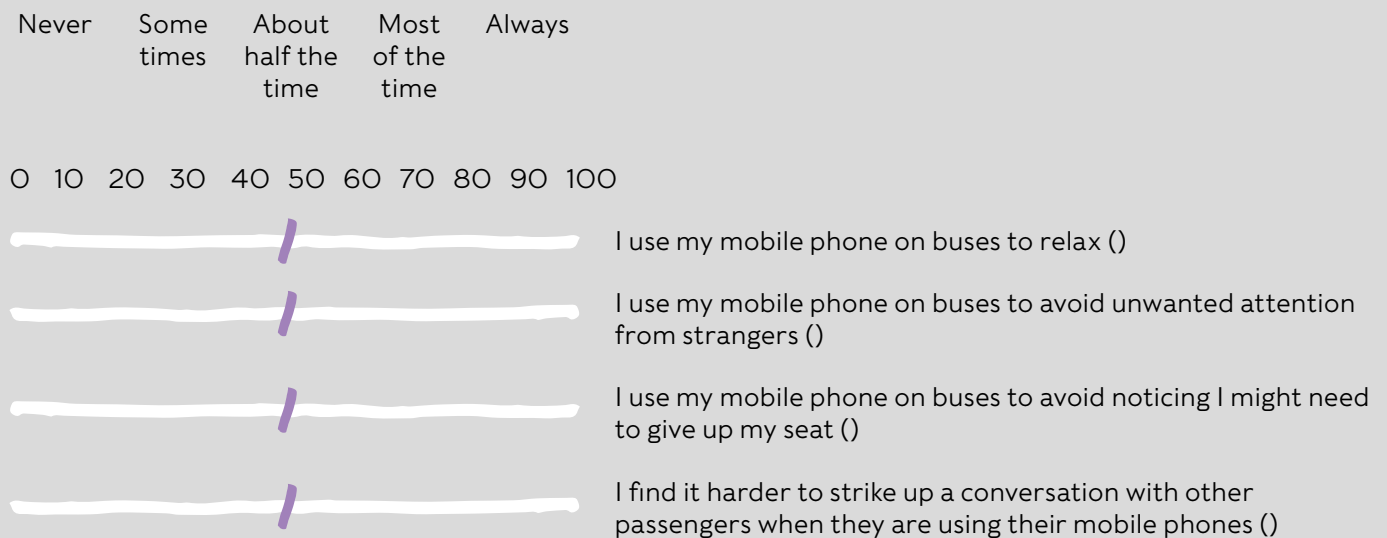


Q6 4. Use the box below to describe any other compassionate acts you expect from other people on buses.

Q7 5. What impact does experiencing an act of compassion on the bus – which is someone taking action to try to make your journey easier or more pleasant – have on the rest of your day? (Please note, you need to touch each of the ‘scale’ buttons at least once to register a response)



Q8 6. We’d now like to ask you four questions to understand your use of mobile phones on buses. (Please note, you need to touch each of the ‘scale’ buttons at least once to register a response)



Q19. Thank you for completing the compassion and mobile phone use questions. If you are happy for this data to be included in the project, please click ‘yes’. If you want to withdraw your data please click ‘no’.

- Yes I am happy for my answers to be submitted (1)
- No I want to withdraw my question answers (2)

Q10. This page contains questions about who you are – your ‘lived experience’. We would be very grateful if you could answer all the questions on this page as that will help us to understand how people of different ages, genders, ethnic backgrounds, income levels, disability and/or parenthood experience compassion on buses.

Q9 1. How would you describe your gender?

- Woman (1)
- Man (2)
- Self Describe: (3)
- Prefer not to say (4)

Q11 2. What is your age?

- 16 to 17 years (8)
- 18 to 24 years (1)
- 25 to 34 years (2)
- 35 to 44 years (3)
- 45 to 54 years (4)
- 55 to 64 years (5)
- 65 years and over (6)
- Prefer not to say (7)

Q9 1. How would you describe your gender?

- Low Income (1)
- Middle Income (2)
- High Income (3)
- Prefer not to say (4)

Q13 4. Are you a parent?

- Yes, of children under 18 (1)
- Yes, of adult children (2)
- No (3)
- Prefer not to say (4)

Q14 5. How would you describe your ethnicity:

- Option to self describe: (1)
- Prefer not to say (2)

Q15 6. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- No (1)
- Yes (2)
- Option to self-describe: (3)

Q17 7. Could we also ask your sexual orientation?

- Option to self describe: (1)
- Prefer not to say (2)

Q19. Thank you for completing the demographic questions. If you are happy for this data to be included in the project, please click 'yes'. If you want to withdraw your data please click 'no'.

- Yes I am happy for my answers to be submitted (1)
- No I want to withdraw my question answers (2)

Q18 Compassion in London: Life on buses' survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. All data collected will be held on this secure Qualtrics survey database until 10th November 2024. After this date it will be downloaded to a secure database and analysed by the project manager and project partners to enable understanding about different people's experience of compassion on London buses' (see again London Museum Data Privacy Policy). To close the survey please click on the below blue arrow button. However, if you would like to be notified of the results of this survey, please open this link in a new window and enter your email address. By providing your email address in a separate survey, it means that your answers on this survey are entirely anonymous. Although don't forget (afterwards) to click on the below blue arrow button to close this survey. For any further queries, please contact [names redacted].





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