Initial Statement 2.0

A major issue faced by Govan is the lack of easily accessible and affordable public transport, as approximately only 45% of households own a car. A group that especially needs affordable public transport is refugees, with 1,000 refugees seeking asylum in Govan. Unfortunately, the prices of transport are much to high for the refugees due to their limited allowances.

Pushing people towards more sustainable forms of transport is not the only cause we feel strongly about. It is our belief that helping the local community in other ways is also very important to make Govan a much more sustainable place.

As software engineers we plan on creating a website that will have all the information required for people to access help such as foodbanks and fundraisers. More people getting access to foodbanks and fundraisers will lead to the reduction of hunger and poverty in Govan. The website will have a unique feature that will allow people to Create polls and start petitions for things they feel strongly about. The Polls can be used to highlight issues with the Council and allow residents’ voices to be heard. Issues such as a lack of certain goods and services including halal food, sports facilities, and food banks can be raised. Moreover, there are long waiting lists for schools, nurseries, clinics, and dentists. This forces people to travel outside Govan to get access to these facilities, which is exceedingly difficult as it requires a 20-minute walk from Govan Community Project to the nearest bus stop to leave Govan and there is not even a direct bus route from Govan to the city centre. Using the subway is faster than taking the bus, however this proves costly for people on a low income. Petitions for the introduction of new bus routes and setting up easily accessible food banks can be started for these types of issues. Polls and petitions will encourage these changes to be made which will lead to the revival of the poorer areas in Govan.

As Software Engineers it is our job to come up with creative solutions for these problems. We believe that Setting up a website for transport in Govan is the best way to begin a revolution and revival in the town. The website is a great place for the people of Govan to begin becoming more sustainable along with saving money and time.

We plan on developing an app with our website like the UK’s top carpooling app Liftshare which boasts 50,000 members with each regular member saving up to £1,000 per year by sharing rides and members also substantially reduce their carbon footprint by using the app to plan their commute which is very beneficial for the environment. Although the app would be on a smaller scale in Govan the members would still reap similar benefits to those of Liftshare.

We believe that developing a car-pooling app within the website that allows people in Govan to commute and travel around more affordably will really benefit asylum seekers and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. It is essential to consider that refugees in Govan often live off as little as £40.85 per week, leaving them with only £5.83 to live of per day with the cost of public transport it is not a viable option for them. There is also a large population of low income and unemployed youths in Govan, with the cost and time involved with travelling this leaves many people at home unable to attend community events and interact with people, leading to a decrease in the mental health of Govan. The car-pooling app will make life a lot easier for people in these situations.

It is our plan that certified drivers can offer available seats in their car to users even for the shortest of journeys (i.e., to the shops, work, school, university, hospitals) and for longer journeys (i.e., traveling to get halal foods, going on a day trip, traveling to a medical specialist). To keep our members safe, we require drivers who wish to register with the app to provide their full name, date of birth, home address, email address, full driving licence, car registration number and a disclosure certificate, which they can apply for through Disclosure Scotland. This is a criminal background check used to ensure that drivers are trustworthy. Users and drivers on the app should never disclose their personal information such as home address when sharing lifts. When being collected or dropped off this should always be done in a public space to ensure users’ private information is not revealed.

We believe that with the help of radio advertisement and our website we will be able to promote the app. Guaranteeing that the carpooling app will reach much of the public in Govan most importantly the 1,000 asylum seekers currently housed there.

Two of the main issues we face in relation to app accessibility are Wi-Fi costs and access to mobile phones. Within the app we will have a donate mobile phones section which will allow users to apply for a mobile phone and for users donating they will get the information they need to donate any old mobile phones that are no longer needed. These phones will then be sent throughout the community to anyone who has applied.