Wokingham Borough Council

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 4

Annex B: Spring 2023 Engagement Report

v1
June 2023

Public

Wokingham Borough Council

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Type of document (version) Public

Project no. 70102232

Our Ref. No. PCv1

Date: June 2023

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of the LTP Project

1.1.1. A Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a statutory document. It contains the transport strategies and intervention plans of the local authority for future years and is an important component of transport planning in the UK.

1.1.2. WSP has been commissioned by Wokingham Borough Council to develop its next Local Transport Plan, LTP 4.

1.1.3. To inform the development of LTP4, WSP worked with the Council to develop an opinion survey to gain an early insight of the transport choices, views and priorities of Wokingham residents on various aspects of transport such as electric vehicles, provision of pedestrian space, air quality, etc.

1.1.4. Termed Principles Engagement, the survey results provide a valuable insight and assist in creating an LTP that addresses those issues that are most important to residents.

1.2 About the Principles Engagement

1.2.1. The Principles Engagement was hosted on the Council's Engage Wokingham website. This 'all-in-one participation platform' is a Wokingham Borough Council initiative used for a number of functions, including public consultation processes. Information gathered through Engage Wokingham is used to help the Council make better decisions and tailor its services to the needs and desires of its residents and businesses.

1.2.2. The Principles Engagement was live for six weeks from Wednesday 1 February 2023 to 12 March 2023.

1.2.3. In addition, where requested, paper copies of the questionnaire were sent to residents and organisations such as Parish Councils in the Borough. The questionnaire is shown in Appendix A.

1.3 Number of respondents

1.3.1. In total 747 responses were received from the public, of whom 729 (98%) stated they were residents of Wokingham Borough. This includes responses received from a number of groups and organisations, which are reported in Section 7.

1.4 Age Profile of respondents

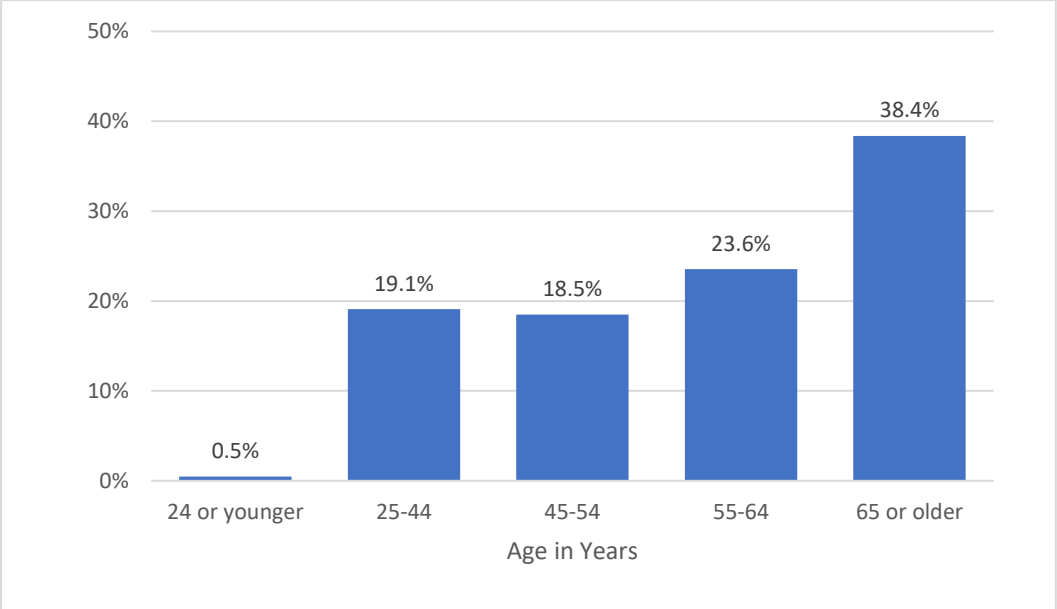
1.4.1. Figure 1 shows the proportion of the different respondents in accordance with their age groups.

1.4.2. The largest volume of responses, approximately 38%, were from those aged 65 years or older. This age group accounts for 17% of Wokingham Boroughs Population (2021 Census).

1.4.3. The proportion of responses received from age groups between 25 and 44years, 45-54 and 55- 64 years varied between 19% and 26%. The total of 61% of respondents in these age groups is comparable with the population breakdown of the Borough, where approximately 53% of residents are in the 25-64 years age groups.

1.4.4. There was however a low response rate from those aged 24 years and under. Despite accounting for 30% of the Borough's population, they accounted for just 0.5% of respondents. The Council did try to engage with younger adults by promoting the survey through the My Journey Wokingham and other social media sites.

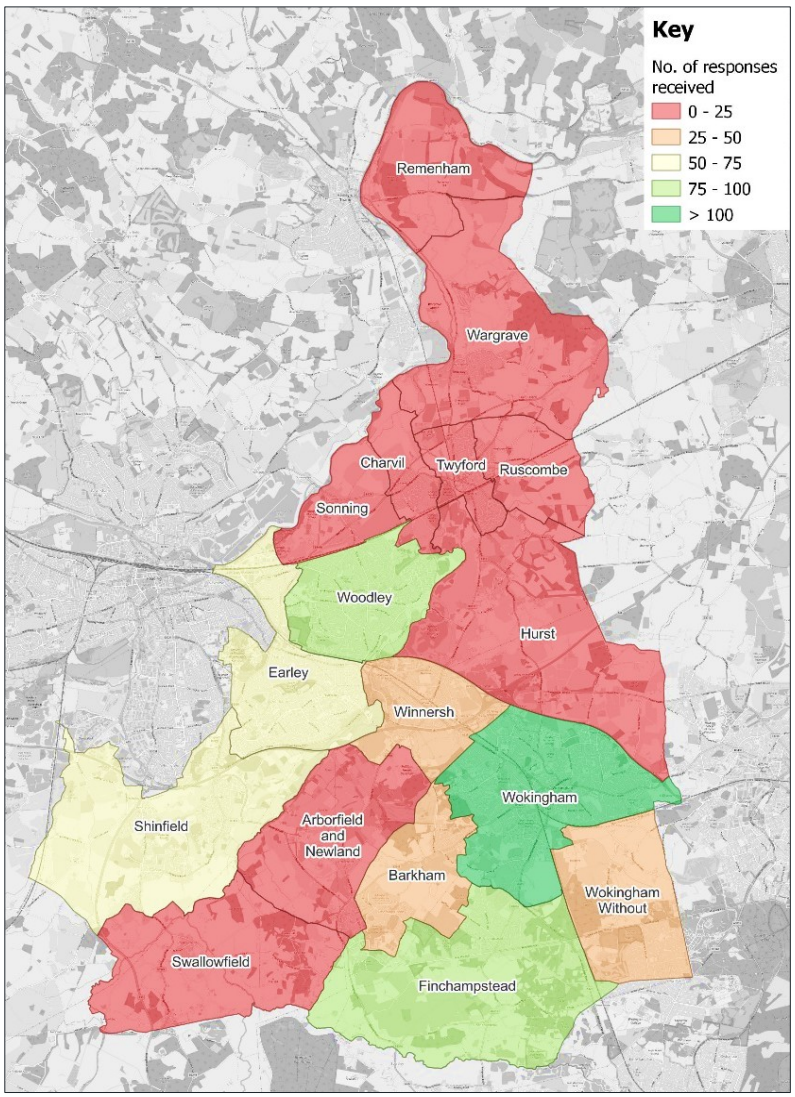
Figure 1: Age profile of respondents



1.5 Respondents by Area

1.5.1. Figure 2 shows the number of responses received from each town and civil parish within the Borough, where respondents provided location data. It shows the greatest number of responses were from the Wokingham town area, Finchampstead and Woodley, then Earley and Shinfield areas. Fewer responses were received from the more rural parts of the Borough.

Figure 2: Responses received from each town or civil parish area



1.5.2. Table 1 and Figure 3 presents further analysis carried out to identify how the responses correspond to the identified area typologies for the LTP. Typologies are used to understand the differences in demographic groups that live in Wokingham Borough and to identify similarities. Through understanding these variables, it gives valuable insight into how people travel within the area. For the purpose of this study, data was used to give insight into car ownership levels, likely travel habits and the willingness of people to change their travel patterns / mode.

1.5.3. From this analysis, four general typology areas were indicated in Wokingham: Wokingham Town and Winnersh; Woodley, Earley and Shinfield which are termed Reading-facing towns; and the respective villages and rural areas of North and South Wokingham. These four typology areas were used to simplify the reporting of travel patterns in the Borough by grouping areas with similar travel characteristics.

1.5.4. As not all respondents provided postcode/parish data, the dataset used in this area-based reporting is from a sub-set of all responses (706 responses, or 95% of all responses). However, it does show a fairly even spread of responses across the area when attributed to each of the four identified place types.

Figure 3: Responses received by Place Type

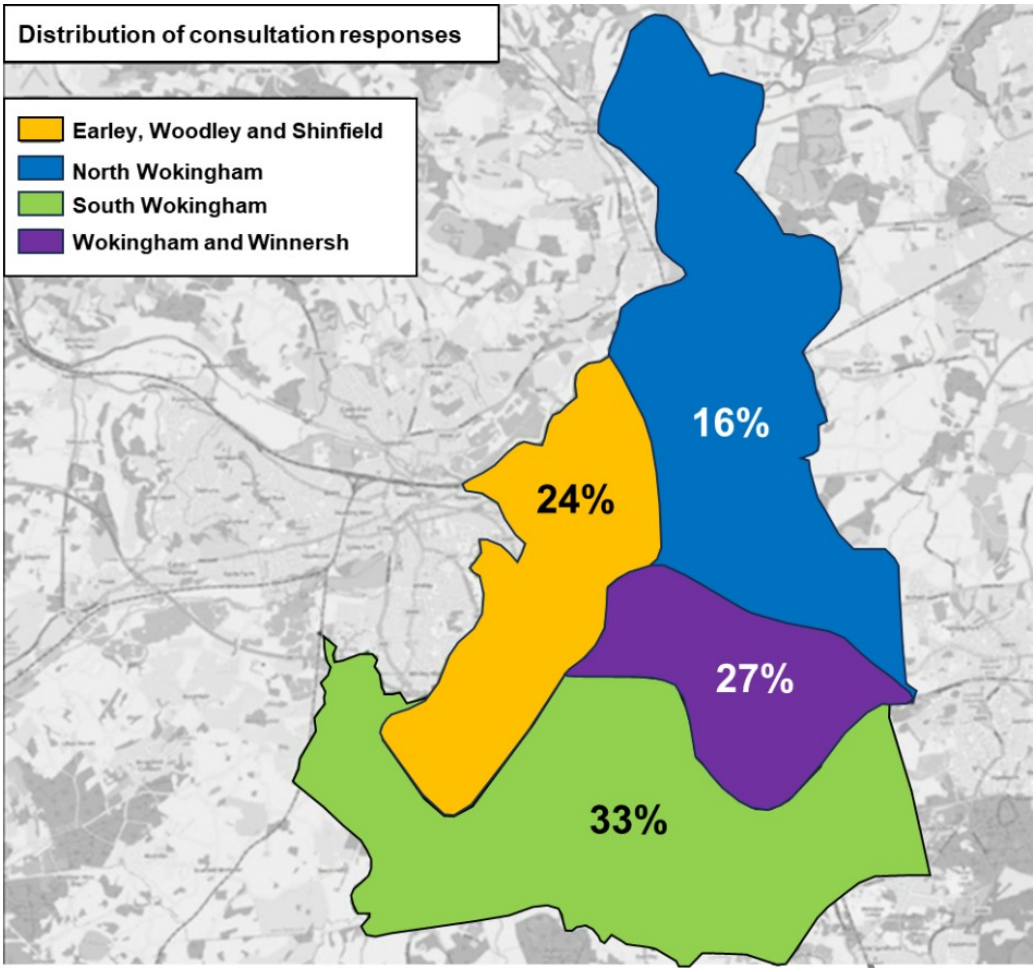


Table 1: Details of the respondents by place type

Place Typologies	Responses	Percentage
Reading-facing Towns	168	24%
North Wokingham	115	16%
South Wokingham	229	33%
Wokingham Town & Winnersh	194	27%
Total	706	100%

2 How do Respondents get around Wokingham?

2.1.1. Respondents were asked to indicate how they travel and how often for trips under and over five miles based on a list of travel modes.

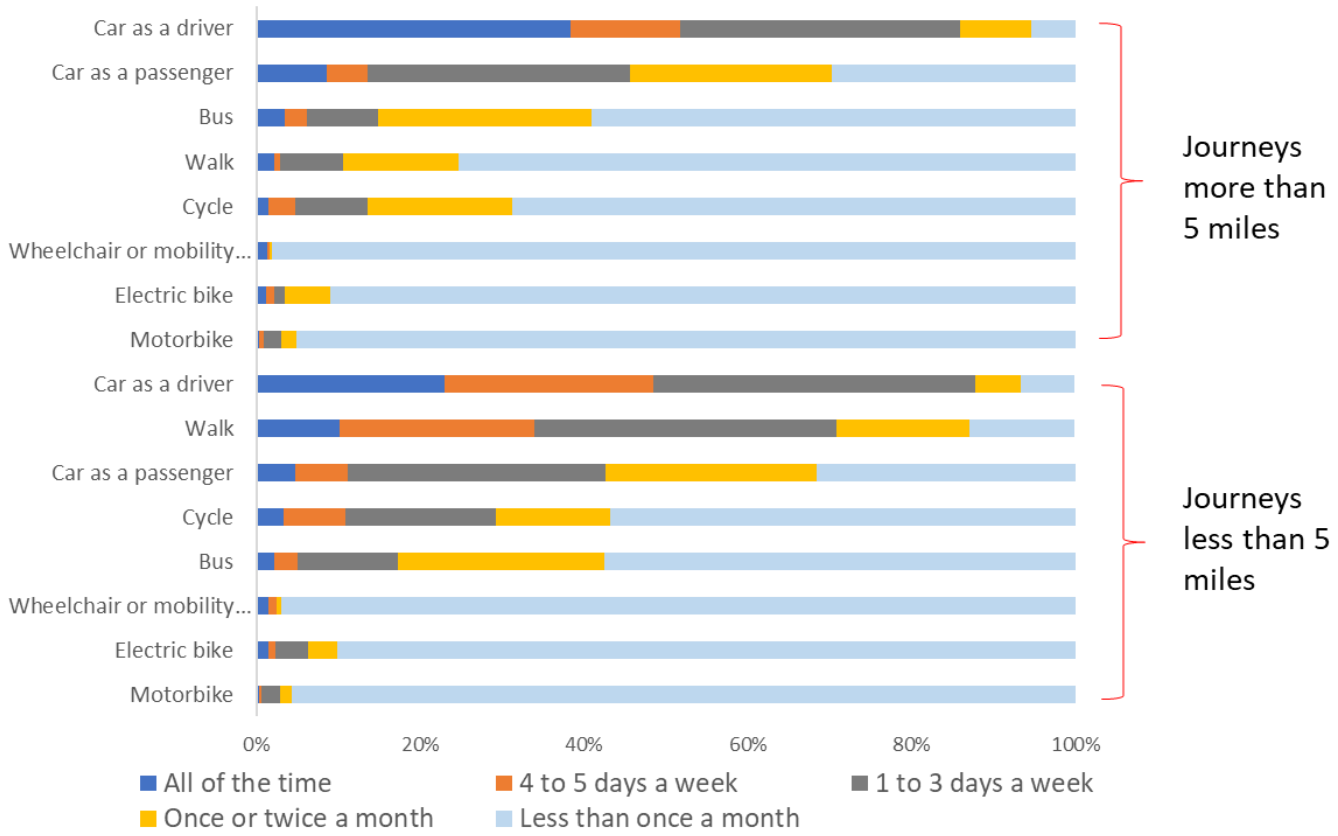
2.1.2. Figure 4 highlights that car is the dominant mode of travel for journeys over five miles, followed by car passenger for journeys undertaken regularly.

2.1.3. For those trips over five miles that are undertaken less frequently, i.e. twice a month or less, a higher number of these are made by other modes such as bus or cycling.

2.1.4. Similarly, for journeys under five miles, car is the most popular. However, walking, and to a lesser extent cycling, account for similar amounts of regular travel.

2.1.5. Approximately 100 respondents also identified train as a regular mode of travel.

Figure 4: Choice of mode for journeys less than 5 miles



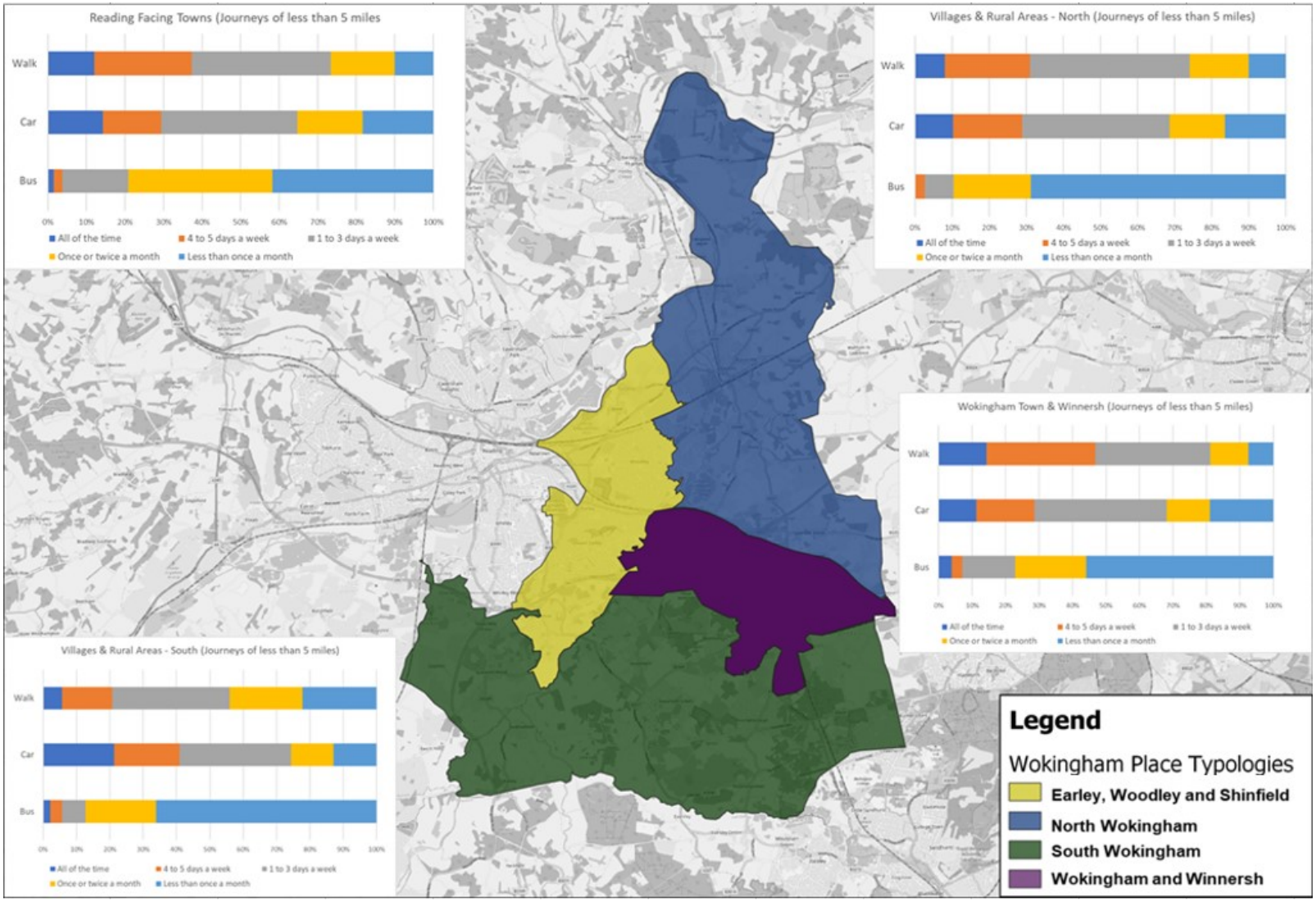
2.1.6. For shorter journeys of less than five miles, car driver remains the most common mode of travel. However, walking is a close second and ahead of car passenger.

2.1.7. Figure 5 shows the preference for travel by bus, on foot, and by car based upon the responses received from each place typology (as stated in Table 1).

2.1.8. Figure 5 highlights the differences in modal choices between the different place types. In particular, it highlights that walking is the most common mode choice in the more urban areas of Wokingham Town and Winnersh, and in the Reading-facing Towns such as Earley, Woodley and Shinfield.

2.1.9. The graphic also highlights that bus has the greatest role in the Reading-facing Towns followed by Wokingham Town and Winnersh.

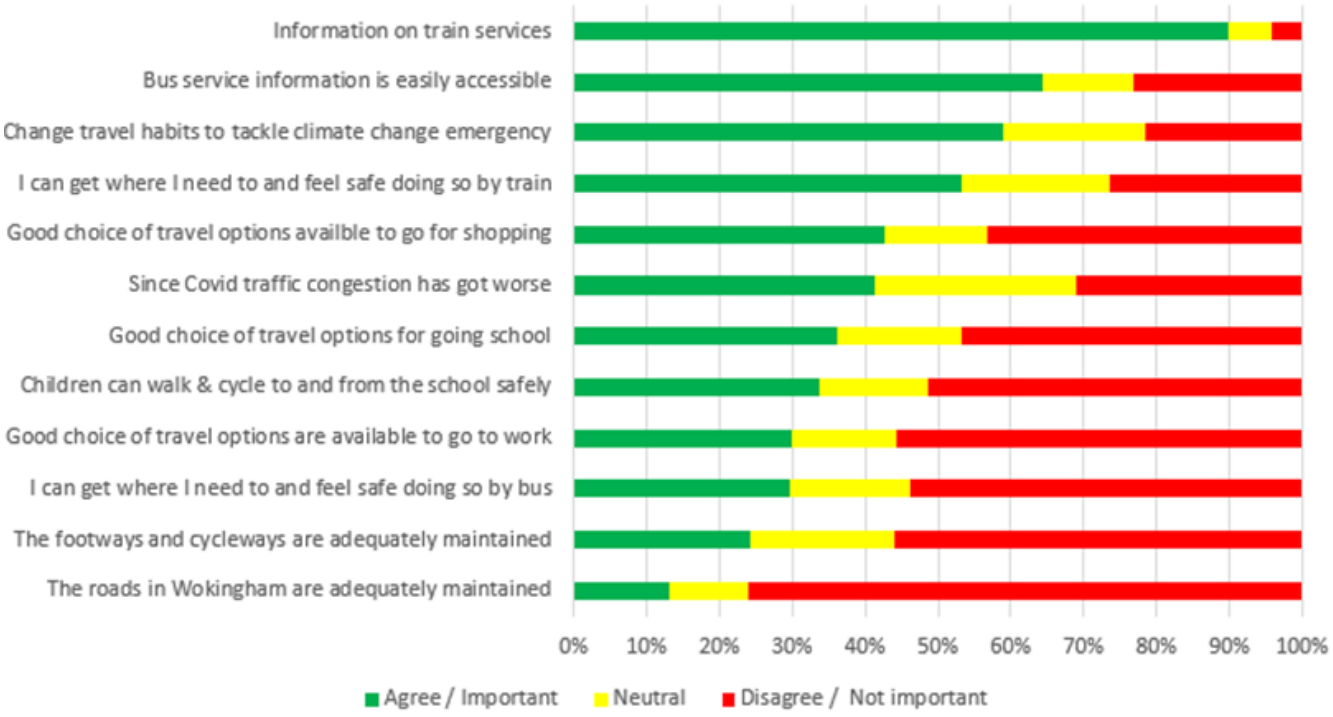
Figure 5: Choice of mode for journeys less than five miles by typology



3 Residents' Views on Local Transport

3.1.1. The views of the respondents on local transport provision was analysed and ranked according to the extent they agreed with statements. This is shown in Figure 6. Respondent's views on maintenance, asked under My Streets section, are also included within this figure.

Figure 6: Agreement on current travel options and facilities



3.1.2. The highest levels of agreement were regarding the availability of information on bus and train services.

3.1.3. 60% of respondents said they would be willing to change their travel habits to reduce carbon emissions, compared to 20% against.

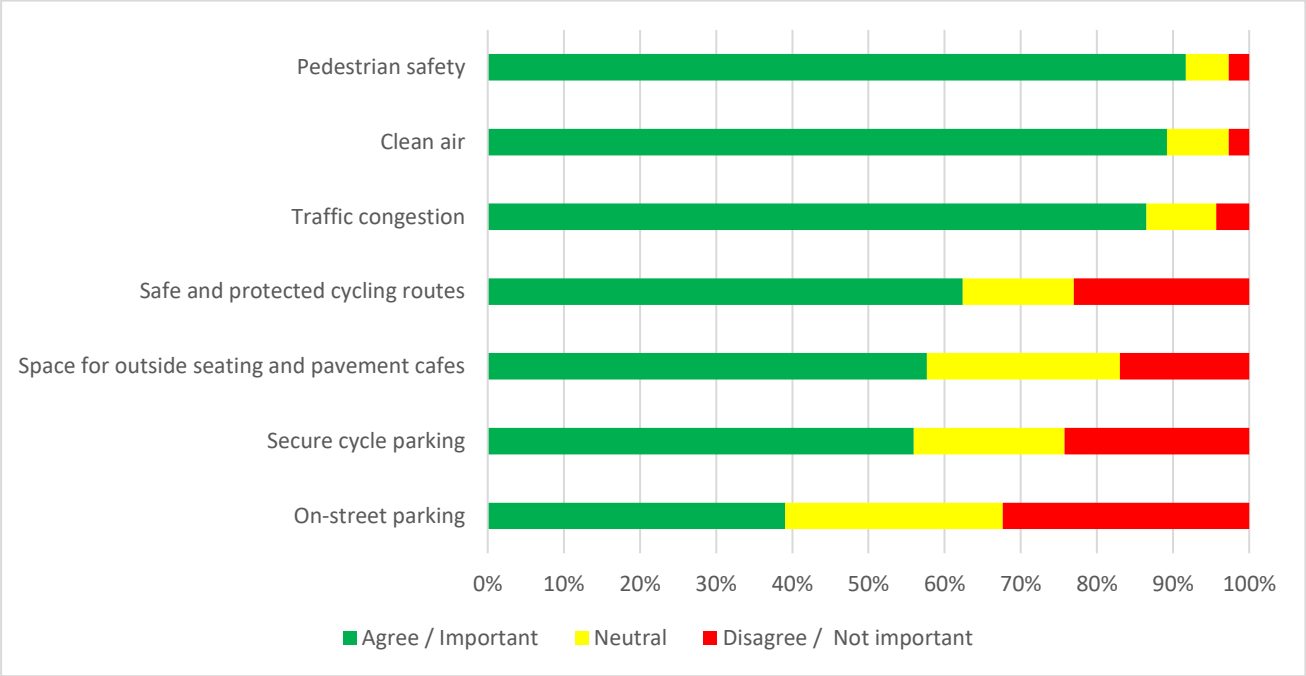
3.1.4. Respondents typically disagreed that they had a good range of travel options, albeit a view that travel options for shopping (45% agree) was better than the options for going to school or work, for which just 35% and 30% of people agreed with the statement.

3.1.5. Only a third of respondents felt that children can safely walk and cycle to school.

The most disagreed with statements were those around maintenance, with the majority of respondents stating that they did not feel that footways, cycleways or roads in Wokingham were adequately maintained.

3.1.6. Respondent's views on what is most important in urban centres are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Agreement of attribute importance in urban centres



3.1.7. The responses to the priorities in urban centres highlighted three areas which approximately 90% of respondents felt were important, these are:

- Pedestrian Safety,
- Clean air, and
- Traffic Congestion.

3.1.8. Overall respondents also typically agreed that space for outside seating/pavement cafes and safe cycling routes were important, albeit a much larger proportion of people (20% disagreed with these. Outside space for business/pavement cafes was highlighted as being more important than on street parking.

3.1.9. On street parking was the only option where less than 50% agreed with its importance, although that may reflect that there are various off street parking options.

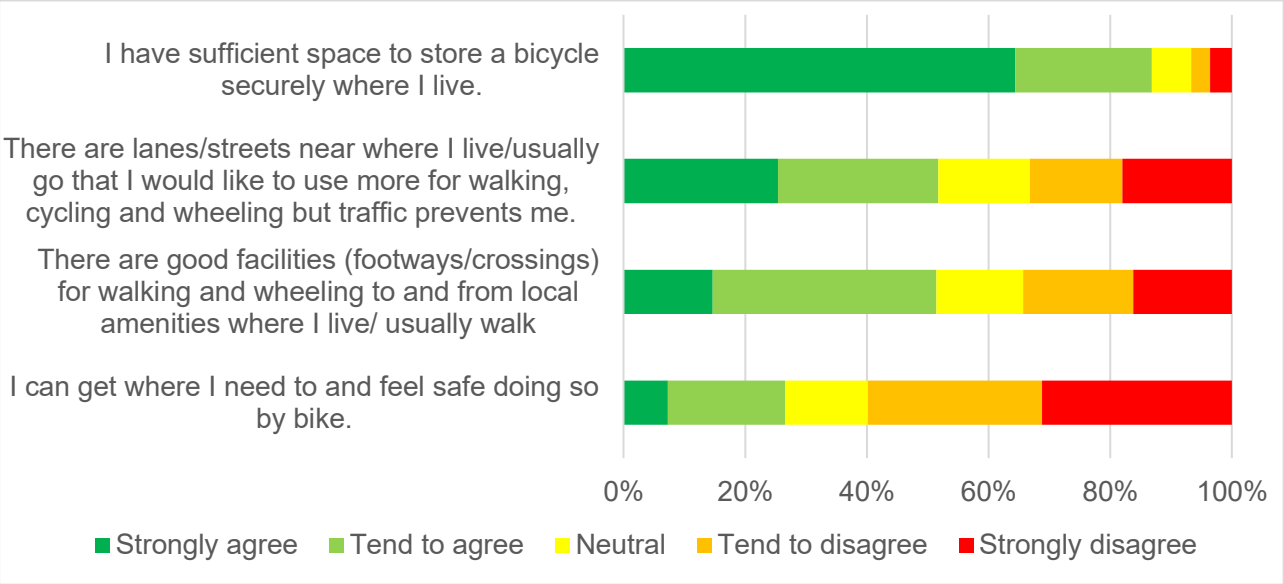
4 Walking, Cycling and Wheeling

4.1.1. Walking is the second most popular way of getting around and the number of people cycling has increased significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic. 'Wheeling', refers to anyone using a wheelchair or a pushchair as well as those travelling on a scooter. Many people rely on wheeled aids to access local services and amenities, while children and others cycle and scoot for local trips, fitness and leisure activities.

4.1.2. The walking, cycling and wheeling data was analysed to identify respondent's level of agreement with statements regarding the current facilities for these modes in their area. Figure 8 shows the respondents level of agreement regarding the current facilities available for walking, cycling and wheeling.

4.1.3. The views on some potential improvements and/or changes which would likely promote the use of active travel are also considered later in this section.

Figure 8: Level of agreement with current facilities for walking, cycling and wheeling

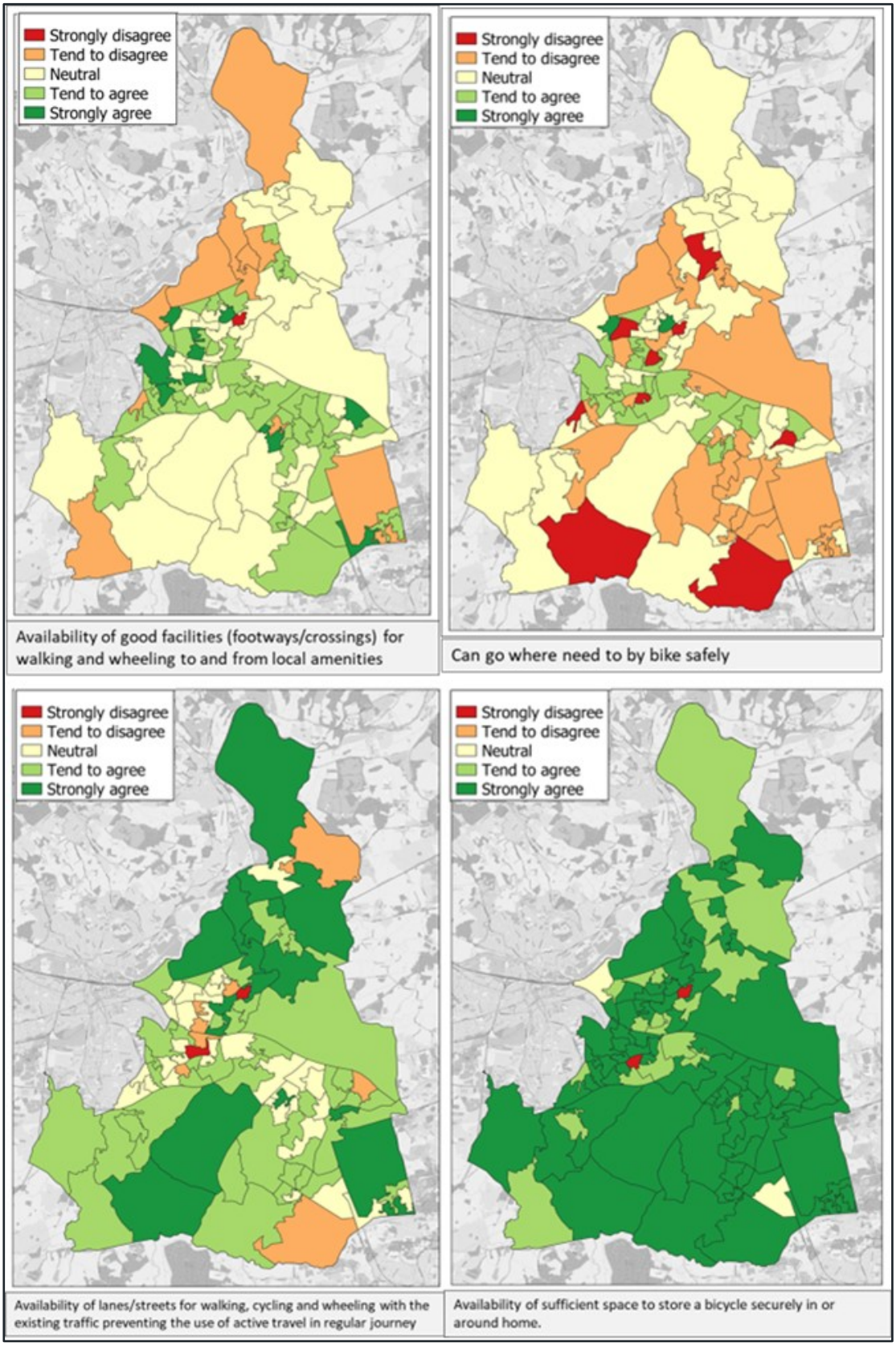


4.1.4. The majority of residents in the Borough (86%) agree that they have sufficient space available in or around their homes to securely store a bicycle.

4.1.5. There were mixed views on perceptions of safety, traffic and the condition of active travel routes in their local area with around 50% of the respondents agreeing that existing traffic conditions prevents the use of active travel for their local journeys. Equally, a similar percentage of respondents agreed there were good facilities such as footways and crossings for walking and wheeling near where they live . However, less than a quarter of respondents agreed they could get where they needed to safely by bicycle.

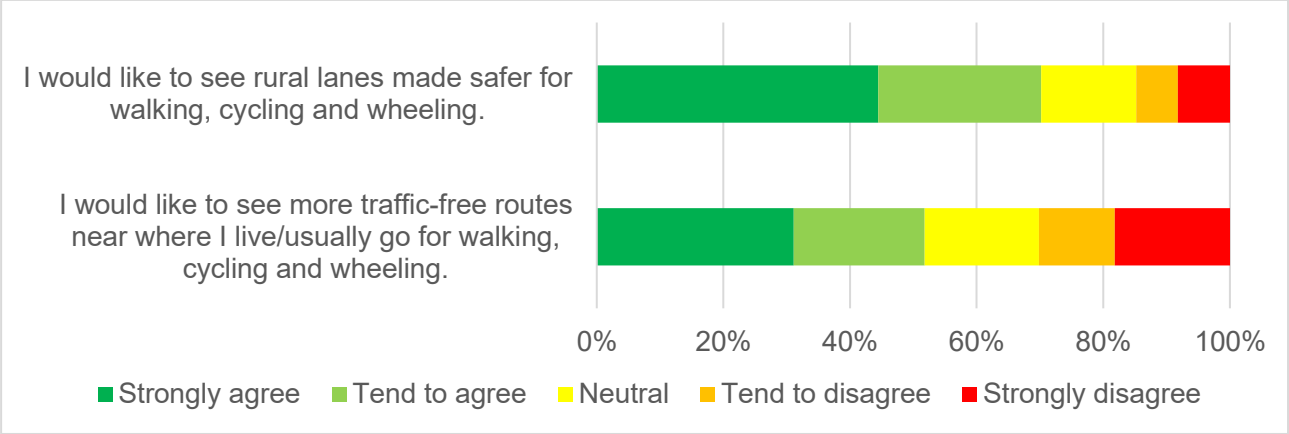
4.1.6. Figure 9 shows how the level of agreement with the current facilities available for cycling, walking and wheeling varies across the Borough. This typically highlights respondents in urban areas felt they had better facilities and were safer than those who live in rural areas.

Figure 9: Level of Agreement with Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Facilities Questions across Wokingham Borough



4.1.7. Figure 10 shows the respondents preference to potential active travel improvements along rural lanes in the local areas.

Figure 10: Level of agreement on potential active travel improvements



4.1.8. Safer rural lanes for walking, cycling and wheeling were highly supported, with around 70% in agreement. Around 52% of the respondents were also in favour of more traffic-free routes near where they live or usually walk, cycle and wheel.

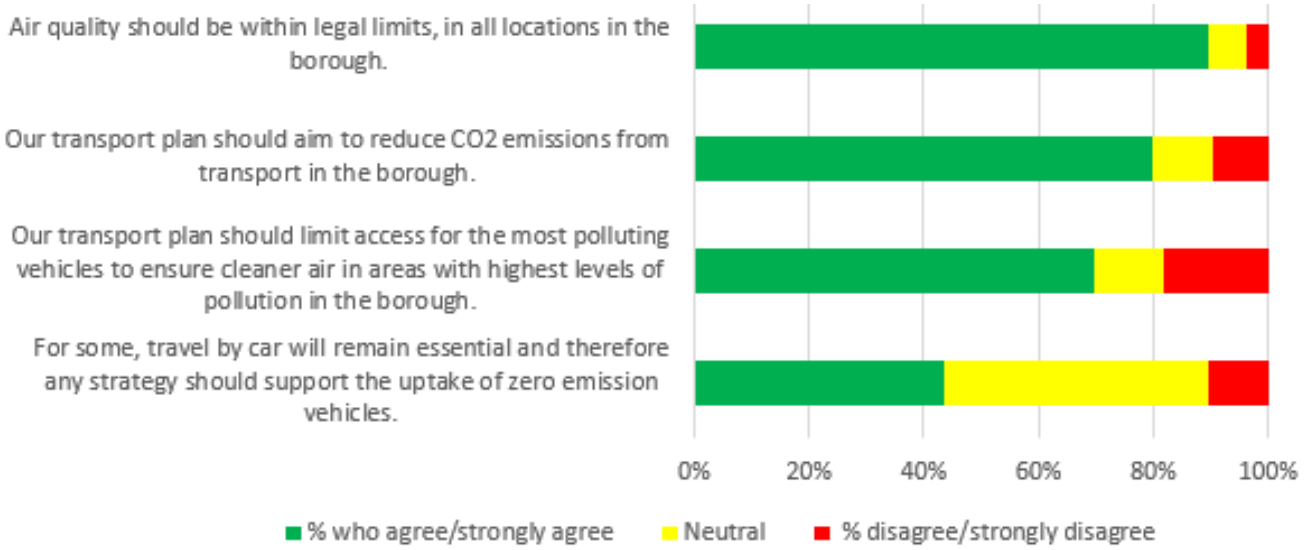
4.1.9. Further analysis only showed limited variation in these views by place type across Wokingham.

5 Environmental Impacts

5.1.1. Emissions from travel by car are a major cause of CO_2 emissions, air pollution and noise, all of which affect health and wellbeing.

5.1.2. The consultation included a number of questions relating to environmental factors. The level of agreement from respondents regarding the environmental questions, including those relating to air quality, electric vehicles and climate change, are shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Level of agreement regarding the environmental attributes



5.1.3. Respondents strongly supported improving air quality and reducing it to within legal limits across the Borough, with 90% in favour and 5% opposing the statement.

5.1.4. Similarly, there was support for reducing carbon emissions from transport, with over 80% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing compared to 10% who disagreed. By comparison, the responses in Section 3 of this report found that 60% of respondents were prepared to change their travel habits to reduce emissions, compared to 20% who disagreed.

5.1.5. There was comparatively lesser but still strong agreement on limiting access for the most polluting vehicles in areas with highest levels of pollution in the Borough - although two thirds expressed support, almost one in four people disagreed with the statement.

5.1.6. There were fewer respondents supporting the statement on measures to influence the uptake of zero emission vehicles - a significant proportion of the respondents were neutral regarding this aspect – but only around 1 in 10 did not agree with the statement.

6 Extent of Agreement with Statements of Change

6.1.1. The extent of agreement with a number of statements of change are shown in Figure 12.

6.1.2. Traffic management can reduce the use of local streets and direct traffic to the main roads in the Borough. Electrification of road transport is growing, with the number of electric cars and buses increasing. Zero emission vehicles will make travel cleaner and quieter. There is also shared mobility options, which include scooter and bike hire as well as access to car-hire clubs, ready for use on demand for as long as users need them. With fuel prices rising, "shared mobility" can offer a cheaper way for residents to have access to a car when they need it. In addition, financial measures can be used to support traffic management and to raise funding to support wider transport improvements that help mobility and reduce carbon emissions across the Borough.

6.1.3. Those statements of change which were **typically well supported**, with twice as many people agreeing than disagreeing included:

- I would accept slightly longer journeys by car to make it safer to use active travel modes to school;
- I would like there to be less traffic on the street where I live/tend to go;
- I would support redesignation of roads in my nearest town to provide more outdoor spaces for businesses, provided access was retained.

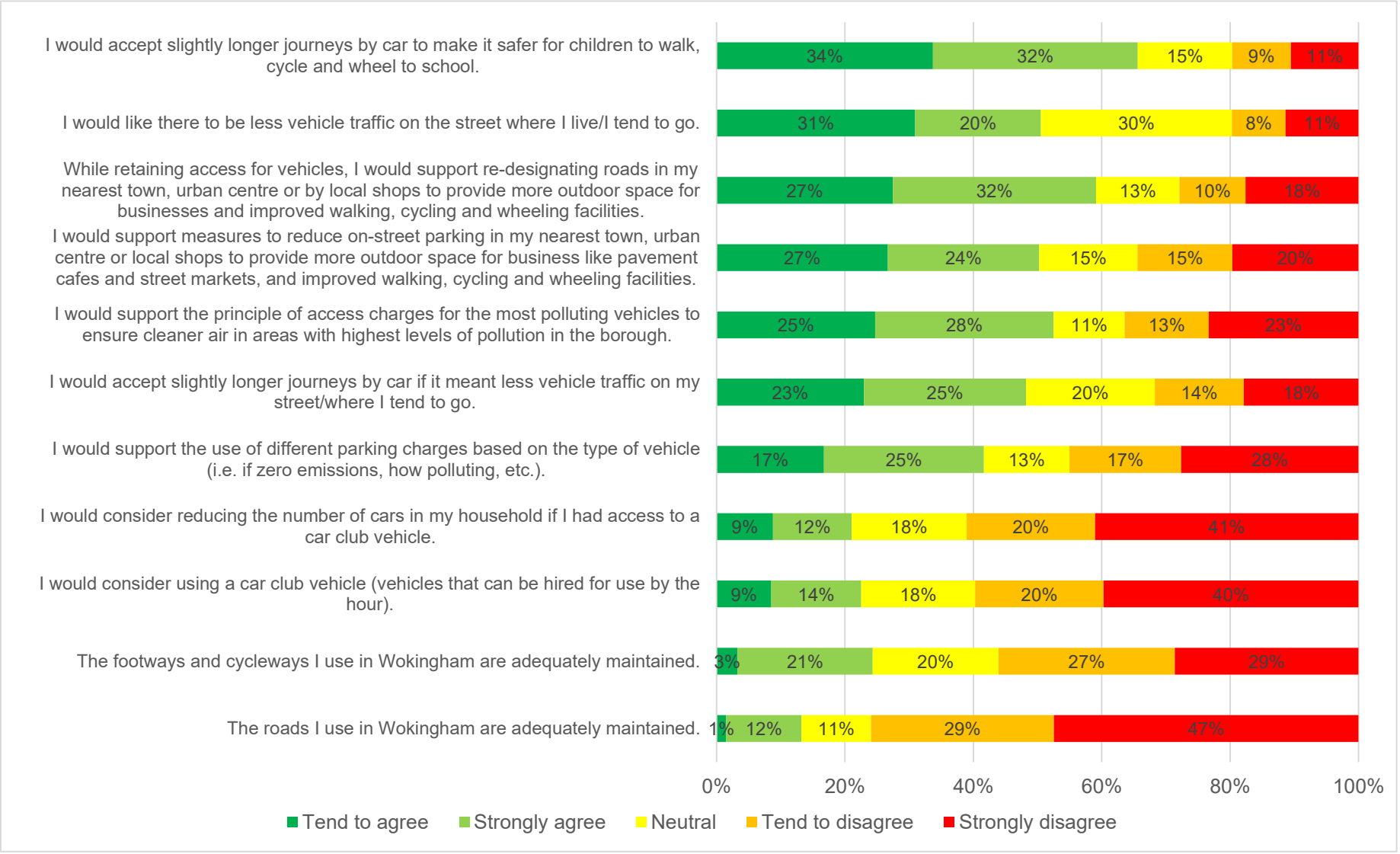
6.1.4. The following statements generated **mixed views,** with approximately 50% of respondents agreeing with the following statements and between 30-40% of respondents disagreeing:

- I would accept slightly longer journeys by car if it meant less traffic on my street/where I tend to go;
- I would support reducing on street parking in nearest town to provide more outdoor spaces for businesses;
- I support the principle of access charges for the most polluting vehicles to improve air quality;
- I support different parking charges based on vehicle emissions.

6.1.5. The following proposals had the lowest levels of agreement with a significantly large proportion of respondents disagreeing:

- Roads, footways and cycleways in Wokingham are adequately maintained.
- I would consider using a car club and/or reducing the number of cars in the household if access to a car club vehicle was provided.

Figure 12: Extent of Agreement with the proposals



7 Responses Received from Organisations

7.1 Arborfield and Newland Parish Council

7.1.1. The response from Arborfield and Newland Parish Council highlighted that walking as an option for travelling up to five miles is only available within the village of Arborfield Cross and the former Garrison area (referred to as the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL)) and that, for most journeys of less than five miles, residents use cars with some of them additionally carrying passengers.

7.1.2. For journeys over five miles, the parish council stated that buses going into Reading or Wokingham are quite regular and are well supported by locals. Some of the residents also use cycles, electric cycles, motorcycles and mobility scooters.

7.1.3. According to the parish response, transport options such as “on demand” buses or electric scooter hire should be considered in the Local Transport Plan. In addition, secure cycle locking areas for cyclists along with provision of more footpaths and pavements in the busy roads of the parish are required.

7.1.4. Outside the centre of Arborfield Cross the limited number of pavements on busy roads makes safe walking difficult.

7.2 Cycling UK Reading

7.2.1. Cycling UK Reading is part of the national organisation, Cycling UK. The organisation mostly agreed with the statements of change in the consultation and expressed their support.

7.2.2. Cycling UK responses did however highlight concerns regarding the fast traffic movement on many of the 30mph roads which they feel would need to be limited to 20mph in all the urban areas. They also raised concerns about the amount of space currently available in their homes for secure cycle parking.

7.3 Great Western Railway

7.3.1. Great Western Railway identified Twyford station to be the major station it serves in the Borough and that its priorities were for more facilities at Twyford station. Its priorities included:

- **Car parking at Twyford station**. With good connectivity to London, the station has a large catchment, including both Wokingham town and surrounding rural areas, and parking remains busy even post-COVID. A scheme for 60 spaces has been designed.
- **Public realm/Forecourt at Twyford station:** Improving the passenger experience, door-to-door journeys, including interchange facilities for buses, and increasing passenger waiting areas away from the platform for safety.

- Provision of a **better pedestrian crossing of the branch line** between Twyford and Henley-on-Thames.
- **Future decarbonisation of the branch line** to Henley would be needed. How to achieve this goal is unclear since electrification of the line is unlikely to happen. There is a possibility of implementation of battery technology.

7.3.2. GWR also noted that due to constraints on the existing Paddington line it would be difficult to accommodate additional stops on this section of rail line.

7.3.3. The former GWR stopping service that called at all stations between Reading, Twyford and London Paddington is now operated by Transport for London Elizabeth Line services. GWR still provides limited stopping services between Didcot, Reading, Twyford, Maidenhead, Slough and Paddington, but these use the fast lines between Maidenhead and Paddington which are shared with long distance trains that operate non-stop and at speed between Reading and Paddington.

7.4 Reading Buses

7.4.1. Reading Buses is a bus operator mainly serving the towns of Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell, and extending to Newbury, Slough, Windsor, Maidenhead and the surrounding areas and parts of Greater London.

7.4.2. Reading Buses provided mixed views on the statements of change in the consultation. Although it agreed with some of the principles, it disagreed strongly with the suggestion of access charges for the most polluting vehicles in the Borough.

7.4.3. In addition, it has asked the Council to consider the approach to planned and emergency roadworks in LTP4 and the likely impact of roadworks on public transport services.

7.5 The British Horse Society

7.5.1. The British Horse Society (BHS) is the largest equine charity in the UK, with over 100,000 members.

7.5.2. The society observed that Wokingham's bridleway network is fragmented and fails to offer safe off-road links for the majority of journeys. Providing horse riders with full inclusion on the proposed Greenway and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network would make horse riding a more feasible active travel choice. Upgrading footpaths to bridleways would also further enhance the bridleway network, recognising that this would likely require landowner agreement.

7.5.3. The society also felt that horse riders and the PRoW network were not considered in the survey. The recreational benefits of the PRoW were only recognised in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and only walking and cycling were referenced within urban areas. This is despite the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) being one of the documents included in the Transport Plan list on the first page. The ROWIP highlights the inequality in the off-road network in Wokingham.

7.5.4. BHS also highlighted that although horse riders are able to use on road facilities, they are not permitted to use shared pathways. There are however some instances where shared use pathways are considered more appropriate than on carriageway facilities despite horse riders still needing to use the route. The BHS states that linking bridleways/ PRoW with shared use pathways or high vehicle corridors is not appropriate and consultation should take place before any new on road/shared use footways are created.

7.6 University of Reading

7.6.1. The University of Reading is a major employer, education provider and destination location on the edge of the Borough.

7.6.2. Overall, the University of Reading's responses suggested that the focus for improvement should be to ensure alternatives to driving are made as easy as possible.

7.6.3. The University also suggested that the park & ride parking charges at Thames Valley Park are too expensive which is discouraging its use. Reducing charges to £1 (in line with the Mereoak facility), it suggested, would encourage drivers to leave their cars at the edge of Reading and take the bus to the university.

7.6.4. The University would welcome further consultation with development of the LTP.

8 Analysis of Open Responses

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1. Respondents were able to provide comment via open text at the end of the survey on their experience and how they travel around the Borough. An overview of these, by theme and in alphabetical order, is provided in this section.

8.1.2. **All of the content in this section is taken from the questionnaire responses. They should not be interpreted as suggestions from the Council or that the views expressed are those of Wokingham Borough Council**.

8.2 Active travel (walking, cycling, and wheeling)

8.2.1. A few respondents mentioned that cycling around the Borough is generally challenging, that Wokingham is not a cycle-friendly town and that, specifically, cycling infrastructure from Twyford to neighbouring towns/villages is almost non-existent.

8.2.2. There were several comments suggesting an increased number of direct cycle routes. In particular, views that more classified (A, B &C) roads should have segregated cycle paths along them since these are often the most direct route between neighbourhoods and popular destinations (e.g. work/school/shopping/leisure). Also, these roads are fast and busy, and the footpaths are narrow and not designated as shared use.

8.2.3. Specific examples given by respondents included: A327 Shinfield Road; there are no safe, viable continuous walking/cycling routes from Arborfield Green to anywhere except via the California Greenway; and narrow cycle lanes along Wokingham Road and Reading Road, especially in Winnersh where school children ride along the pavements. Some respondents also gave suggestions for upgrading the quality of some local footpaths/ byways from being unpaved to paved.

8.2.4. Some respondents raised concern about existing cycle parking provision. They suggested that cycle racks tend to be open to the elements, are rarely spaced widely enough apart, and are not monitored making bicycles and property vulnerable to theft.

8.2.5. Maintenance of the roads was also raised as an issue for cyclists, especially where potholes can catch unwary cyclists off guard.

8.2.6. Similarly, comments were raised about footways and footpaths being restricted by:

- Vehicles parked over footpaths and footways.
- Vegetation overgrown onto footpaths restricting width and/or headroom.
- Fallen vegetation causing footpaths to be unsafe to walk on.
- Blocked or poor drainage causing water to stand on the footpath.
- Trip hazards and exposed tree roots, posing safety risks for pedestrians.

8.2.7. To improve accessibility for pedestrians with mobility impairments, it was suggested to implement raised pathways at road junctions. In particular, it was suggested in residential areas, to facilitate easy road crossings for pushchairs, wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

8.2.8. The suggestion also includes the addition of regular dropped kerbs and crossing points on busier roads, along with reducing the speed limit in residential areas to 20mph and enforced through physical means. This approach would create safer and more pedestrian-friendly environments in residential areas. Lower speeds, it was suggested, would reduce the likelihood and severity of collisions, and make walkers and cyclists feel more comfortable using the footways and roads respectively.

8.2.9. Several respondents said that giving more space/priority to cyclists and cycle routes does not help those with mobility issues but forces them further into more car use for reasons of safety and efficiency.

8.2.10. Along with improvements in facilities for walking and cycling, some respondents highlighted improving pedestrian and driver safety, and concerns about interaction between pedestrians, cyclists and e-scooter riders.

8.2.11. The Council should work to support residents and businesses that seek to use active travel modes on a regular basis. This means following current best practice (LTN1/20 guidance) and ensuring that cycle routes are coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive. It was suggested that approaches of other countries that have rolled out extensive cycle paths successfully should also be considered.

8.2.12. Some respondents also suggested that much of Wokingham town centre should be pedestrianised with access only for public transport and delivery/maintenance vehicles (outside of core trading hours).

8.3 Electric Vehicles

8.3.1. Respondents expressed concerns that implementing "clean air" policies without addressing the affordability of electric vehicles could result in an unfair society, where those who cannot afford electric vehicles are penalised. Some respondents suggested that measures such as subsidies or other incentives to reduce the cost of electric vehicles may be necessary to encourage wider adoption and promote equitable access to clean transportation options.

8.3.2. Respondents expressed the view that solely encouraging the use of electric vehicles may not be effective in reducing congestion, as they can still contribute to pollution through factors such as particulate pollution from tyres, discouragement of active transportation, space consumption, congestion, and potential status anxiety.

8.3.3. Some respondents also believed that electric vehicles are not a comprehensive solution to environmental concerns. Those respondents expressed concerns that promoting larger, heavier electric vehicles could be short-sighted and environmentally counterproductive, as the pollution created during their manufacturing and charging infrastructure installation may not be fully offset until they have been driven for many tens of thousands of miles. Some

respondents suggested that smaller, lighter petrol cars, particularly mild hybrids, may be better for the environment. They also expressed concerns about imposing additional taxes and charges on owners of older, low-mileage internal combustion engine cars, viewing it as illogical by not taking into account their manufacturing.

8.3.4. Some respondents expressed their interest in switching to electric cars but cited concerns about cost and limited range as barriers. They also highlighted the need for more widespread availability of charging infrastructure, including fast charging (super chargers), to support the adoption of electric vehicles.

8.3.5. Additionally, some respondents suggested that local authorities should take the lead by implementing a strategy to transition to hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles for their own transportation needs and other services provided or contracted by the Council.

8.4 Environment /Pollution/ Air Quality

8.4.1. Respondents commented on the issue of air quality and pollution in their locality resulting from transportation. Some expressed the view that efforts should be focused on pushing for the electrification of all modes of transport as a priority while others believed the bigger impact will come from shifting towards renewable power generation and improving insulation for energy efficiency.

8.4.2. Respondents highlighted that while low emission vehicles are important, simply encouraging people to change their personal vehicles may not effectively address congestion. They emphasised the need to promote alternatives such as public transport, walking and cycling as means to tackle both congestion and carbon emissions. By promoting and supporting sustainable transportation options, it may be possible to reduce congestion, lower emissions, and improve overall mobility and quality of life in the community.

8.4.3. Respondents strongly urged against the consideration of introducing an ultra low emission zone (ULEZ) style scheme in Wokingham, expressing concerns that such a scheme could disproportionately affect lower-income individuals. They emphasised the need to carefully consider the potential impacts on different socio-economic groups and ensure that any measures implemented are fair and equitable to all residents. Furthermore, as vehicles naturally transition to less polluting options over time, there may not be a need to impose additional charges on drivers, which could potentially harm the local economy.

8.4.4. Respondents suggested that road user charging should be implemented at a national level, with local authorities having powers to impose supplementary charges based on factors such as vehicle type, owner residency, time of day, distance, and duration of the journey. The purpose of such charges would be to address issues such as congestion, air quality, and road maintenance costs.

8.5 New Development

8.5.1. Some respondents felt that the level of traffic has significantly increased due to the addition of new housing in and around the area. However, new houses being pushed on existing infrastructure creates congestion.

8.5.2. Many respondents stated that the Local Transport Plan needs to address and mitigate the impact of new development in the area. The Arborfield Bypass aids in routing Arborfield traffic to the motorway bridge but has increased the flow of traffic on routes to and over the motorway leading to queuing.

8.5.3. Concerns were raised that people living in Arborfield have no choice but to drive. Getting into Wokingham may be possible by bus, but the route is indirect and journey times are slow.

8.5.4. Infrastructure, including road networks and bypasses, should be carefully planned and implemented to support the changing needs of a growing population and ensure efficient and safe transportation options for the community. Proper urban planning and transportation integration can help address issues such as congestion, accessibility, and safety, and contribute to a more sustainable and liveable community.

8.6 Parking

8.6.1. Respondents raised concerns about pavement parking by vehicles as it makes the pavements narrow, obstructs emergency service vehicles and those using wheelchairs, prams, buggies and bicycles on shared use pathways. The roads around residential areas are congested with parked commuter vehicles trying to avoid paying for parking, which has negative impacts on residential safety. Respondents suggested that the Council should be more flexible with planning applications for driveways in order to address the issue of reduced on-street parking in residential areas.

8.6.2. Concern was also raised in rural areas, where there are ecological and environmental concerns with vehicles parking on roadside verges. This is because it compacts the ground, prevents absorption of rainfall, destroys vegetation, and increases emissions in residential areas.

8.6.3. Some respondents felt that there were insufficient disabled parking spaces throughout Wokingham.

8.6.4. While efforts may be made to reduce car journeys, it may not be feasible for most people to eliminate the need for a car, and thus parking spaces remain a necessity. As such, respondents suggested a need for a balanced approach that considers the practicality of reducing on-street parking while also accommodating the parking needs of residents.

8.7 Public Transport / Bus / Rail

8.7.1. Respondents gave suggestions for public transport, with many feeling that more should be done to increase the contributions/subsidies for local bus routes to increase the frequency of bus routes. A number of respondents highlighted the importance of higher frequency services such that provided an attractive enough facility to offer an alternative to other alternatives (e.g. their own car). Similarly, some respondents recognised that would not be possible to achieve high frequency to everywhere, especially from rural areas.

8.7.2. Respondents expressed concerns about the reliability and frequency of bus services, particularly during peak times. The impact of reduced service levels at different times of the day was highlighted by some respondents, with examples of having to change their working hours to fit around lack of early morning bus service.

8.7.3. Specific examples included the lack of bus services in Shinfield and Spencers Wood, making bus travel into Reading impractical, bus routes in Maiden Earley not going to the main shopping area (Asda), and that the 19a and 19c routes have very slow circuitous routes. Similarly, concerns raised that bus services along Nine Mile Ride are unreliable, and that public transport is also not available in Finchampstead.

8.7.4. Suggestions for new services included a park & ride from Wokingham to Royal Berks Hospital, reintroduction of services from Arborfield Green through to Bracknell, and new bus services to be introduced in the North Wokingham corridor to improve public transportation options in the area. Detailed suggestions to refine existing routes were also provided, including for 121, 123 and 128/9.

8.7.5. Suggestions were also provided for improved bus connections from Wokingham, Winnersh and other areas to allow residents to make better use of the Elizabeth Line.

8.7.6. To improve rail services, suggestions included improvement in the journey times on South West Rail (SWR) trains to Waterloo, an additional fast service to Gatwick, and need to install third rail operations all along the line between Wokingham and Redhill to get rid of diesel trains.

8.7.7. Some respondents expressed support for the idea of bringing back trams or implementing a new type of district light rail service into Reading that would connect all the districts in the Borough to Reading and Bracknell without being affected by traffic, like the London underground services. This would encourage people to switch from cars to public transportation, reducing congestion and promoting greener mobility choices.

8.8 School Travel

8.8.1. The impacts on safety of parking around schools was highlighted. Some respondents either highlighted a desire to alleviate issues related to parking congestion and safety concerns near schools and encourage more sustainable transportation options for school-related travel, or suggested a need for changes in how traffic is managed around the schools.

8.8.2. Some respondents suggested that schools should take more responsibility for off-street parking and regulation of on-street parking near their premises. This could include measures such as providing adequate off-street parking facilities for staff and visitors and implementing parking regulations and enforcement to ensure that on-street parking near schools is managed effectively.

8.8.3. Responders also suggested that a school bus system (similar to the USA) should be introduced to ease traffic at peak times, enabling parents to get their kids to school without wasting time. It would be safer for kids, more efficient for the economy, reduce pollution and traffic, reduce time spent travelling and improve mental health.

8.9 Speed limits / Safety issues

8.9.1. Respondents expressed concerns about traffic congestion, especially during rush hour and at other times, despite the construction of new roads.

8.9.2. Some respondents suggested that lower speed limits could improve safety for all road users, with particular focus on in areas where there may be higher pedestrian and cyclist activity. It was suggested this could help address traffic congestion and create a safer and more pedestrian and cycle-friendly environment in Wokingham and aligns with the goal of creating safer roads and neighbourhoods in Wokingham. Specific suggestions included:

- Basingstoke Road (some of which is the B3349) through Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross shouldn't have a 40mph speed limit when there is a directly parallel A33 that can take the higher speed traffic instead.
- Hyde End Road (B3349) and Church Lane/Brookers Hill, where a 40mph speed limit encourage being used as part of alternative long distance to non-local traffic.
- Hollow Lane through Shinfield

8.9.3. Respondents also highlighted that any small decrease in speed limits would have a bigger increase in overall emissions reductions in the area. Finally, for local short journeys, with a slightly slower speed limit, the differences in journey time for car versus cycling would be smaller, again encouraging more journeys to be taken by active travel options.

8.10 Vehicular Travel and Roads

8.10.1. Respondents highlighted that car/vehicle use is essential for many individuals, including those with disabilities, young children, or the elderly. Respondents felt that there is a need to find ways to balance accessibility, safety, and environmental concerns in traffic management decisions. This may involve finding innovative solutions that address the needs of all road users, while minimising negative impacts on the environment and promoting sustainable transportation options.

8.10.2. The condition of roads all around the area was raised by a number of respondents, with specific concerns about potholes and a need to plan to get them properly repaired. Some respondents felt emphasis should be on sorting out and repairing potholes throughout the

Borough before allocating more funds for new infrastructure and that such an approach would benefit both vehicle drivers and cyclists alike.

8.10.3. The completion of the South Wokingham Distributor Road needs to be expedited to address the issue of access to roads like Easthampstead Road. Currently, cars often get stuck at the level crossing, and there is no other direct route to get to the other side without driving long distances. Improving access to these roads would help alleviate congestion and provide more efficient routes for motorists. Some respondents suggested there should be a bypass of Wokingham town centre, whereas others suggested segregated cycle lanes, suitable active transport infrastructure along with positive discrimination against cars was the only ways to actively encourage short journeys by means other than car.

8.10.4. Reference was also made on the use of Church Road, Earley, as a short cut over the past few years. Concerns were raised about vehicle speeds and that the mini-roundabout is too small, lacks suitable pedestrian facilities even though there is a school nearby and frequently congested.

8.10.5. There are far too many heavy vehicles using Hyde End Road in Spencers Wood. Some respondents feel the Council were remiss to allow the use of Hyde End Lane and Ryeish Lane for access to the new housing developments.

8.10.6. Respondents gave suggestions on the need to maintain trees, hedges and road borders for effective energy efficient street lighting and visibility of signages.

8.10.7. The role of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods was highlighted as redressing balance between vehicles and pedestrians, although some respondents also raised how these had divided communities in West London. Some respondents feel that traffic calming or access restrictions on certain roads may increase congestion on arterial roads, leading to more queuing and emissions.

8.10.8. Also, the respondents stated some advantages of car usage, such as cars offer convenience which public transport cannot match as it is impossible to go shopping without a car, as public transport couldn’t possibly carry everything.

Appendix A – Consultation Responses

Question 1

Are you responding as a:

Answer Choices	Responses %	Response Number
Wokingham borough resident	97.59%	729
Live outside the borough but regularly travel into Wokingham borough	1.61%	12
Representing an organisation or individual	0.54%	4
Other (please specify): Show	0.27%	2
Answered: 747 Skipped: 1	Response Total:	747

Question 2

If you are representing an organisation or individual, please tell us more, such as the name of the organisation:

Responses:

4 The British Horse Society

3 University of Reading

2 Reading Buses

1 Cycling UK Reading

Answered: 4

Skipped: 744

Response Total: 4

Question 3

How do you usually travel for journeys of less than 5 miles?

How do you usually travel for journeys of less than 5 miles? Answer Choices	All of the time	4 to 5 days a week	1 to 3 days a week	Once or twice a month	Less than once a month	Response Total
Walk	10.12% 66	23.77% 155	36.96% 241	16.26% 106	12.88% 84	652
Cycle	3.34% 16	7.52% 36	18.37% 88	13.99% 67	56.78% 272	479
Electric bike	1.42% 5	0.85% 3	3.98% 14	3.69% 13	90.06% 317	responses352
Bus	2.16% 11	2.94% 15	12.16% 62	25.29% 129	57.45% 293	510
Car as a driver	23.03% 161	25.46% 178	39.34% 275	5.58% 39	6.58% 46	699
Car as a passenger	4.76% 24	6.35% 32	31.55% 159	25.79% 130	31.55% 159	504
Motorbike	0.29% 1	0.29% 1	2.33% 8	1.46% 5	95.63% 328	343
Wheelchair or mobility scooter	1.51% 5	0.90% 3	0.00% 0	0.60% 2	96.99% 322	332

Answered: 744

Skipped: 4

Comments 102

Question 4

How do you usually travel for journeys over 5 miles in length?

How do you usually travel for journeys over 5 miles in length? Answer Choices	All of the time	4 to 5 days a week	1 to 3 days a week	Once or twice a month	Less than once a month	Response Total
Walk	2.22% 9	0.74% 3	7.64% 31	14.04% 57	75.37% 306	406
Cycle	1.51% 6	3.27% 13	8.82% 35	17.63% 70	68.77% 273	397
Electric bike	1.24% 4	0.93% 3	1.24% 4	5.57% 18	91.02% 294	323
Bus	3.51% 16	2.63% 12	8.77% 40	26.10% 119	58.99% 269	456
Car as a driver	38.41% 265	13.33% 92	34.20% 236	8.70% 60	5.36% 37	690
Car as a passenger	8.63% 43	5.02% 25	31.93% 159	24.70% 123	29.72% 148	498
Motorbike	0.31% 1	0.62% 2	2.15% 7	1.85% 6	95.08% 309	325
Wheelchair or mobility scooter	1.28% 4	0.32% 1	0.00% 0	0.32% 1	98.08% 307	313

Answered: 736

Skipped: 12

Comments 181

Question 5

Thinking about your nearest town, urban centre and local shops, how important are the following to you?

Thinking about your nearest town, urban centre and local shops, how important are the following to you? Answer Choices	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not that important	Not important	Response Total
Pedestrian safety	66.53% 495	25.13% 187	5.65% 42	1.34% 10	1.34% 10	744
Safe and protected cycling routes	36.65% 269	25.75% 189	14.58% 107	8.99% 66	14.03% 103	734
Secure cycle parking	30.17% 219	25.76% 187	19.83% 144	7.02% 51	17.22% 125	726
On-street parking	16.33% 120	22.72% 167	28.57% 210	18.64% 137	13.74% 101	735
Space for outside seating and pavement cafes	23.58% 175	34.10% 253	25.34% 188	10.38% 77	6.60% 49	742
Clean air	57.28% 425	31.94% 237	8.09% 60	2.02% 15	0.67% 5	742
Traffic congestion	50.07% 371	36.44% 270	9.18% 68	2.56% 19	1.75% 13	741
Public transport services (bus/rail)	46.14% 341	32.61% 241	11.77% 87	4.33% 32	5.14% 38	739
Public transport information	42.35% 313	33.15% 245	15.02% 111	3.65% 27	5.82% 43	739

Question 6

How much do you agree with the following statements about local transport?

How much do you agree with the following statements about local transport? Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neutral	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable / don't know	Response Total
I have a good choice of travel options to go to work	5.65% 42	13.17% 98	9.14% 68	13.31% 99	21.77% 162	36.96% 275	744
I have a good choice of travel options to go shopping	10.59% 79	30.97% 231	13.81% 103	19.03% 142	23.19% 173	2.41% 18	746
I have a good choice of travel options to go to school	2.74% 20	8.64% 63	5.35% 39	5.62% 41	9.05% 66	68.59% 500	729
I can get where I need to and feel safe doing so by bus	6.35% 47	19.86% 147	14.86% 110	18.92% 140	28.78% 213	11.22% 83	740
I can get where I need to and feel safe doing so by train	9.05% 67	40.14% 297	18.78% 139	11.08% 82	13.38% 99	7.57% 56	740
I know where to go to get information on bus services	25.68% 190	34.59% 256	11.62% 86	12.70% 94	8.92% 66	6.49% 48	740
I know where to go to get information on train services	43.92% 325	42.97% 318	5.81% 43	2.43% 18	1.49% 11	3.38% 25	740
Children can travel safely walking and cycling to and from school	5.56% 41	18.18% 134	10.58% 78	18.86% 139	17.37% 128	29.44% 217	737
I would change my travel habits to help tackle the climate change emergency	19.97% 148	37.38% 277	18.89% 140	9.72% 72	11.34% 84	2.70% 20	741
Since Covid traffic congestion has got worse	17.65% 131	21.02% 156	25.88% 192	23.45% 174	5.66% 42	6.33% 47	742

Answered: 746

Skipped: 2

Question 7

Thinking about where you live, how do you feel about the current facilities for walking, cycling and wheeling, and what might enable you to undertake more active travel?

Thinking about where you live, how do you feel about the current facilities for walking, cycling and wheeling, and what might enable you to undertake more active travel? **Answer Choices**	**Strongly agree**	**Tend to agree**	**Neutral**	**Tend to disagree**	**Strongly disagree**	**Not applicable / Don't know**	**Response Total**
There are good facilities (footways/crossings) for walking and wheeling to and from local amenities where I live/ usually walk	14.38% 107	36.02% 268	13.98% 104	17.74% 132	15.86% 118	2.02% 15	744
I can get where I need to and feel safe doing so by bike.	5.29% 39	13.98% 103	9.91% 73	20.76% 153	22.66% 167	27.41% 202	737
There are lanes/streets near where I live/usually go that I would like to use more for walking, cycling and wheeling but traffic prevents me.	24.09% 179	25.03% 186	14.27% 106	14.40% 107	17.09% 127	5.11% 38	743
I would like to see more traffic-free routes near where I live/usually go for walking, cycling and wheeling.	30.42% 226	20.19% 150	17.63% 131	11.71% 87	17.77% 132	2.29% 17	743
I would like to see rural lanes made safer for walking, cycling and wheeling.	43.80% 325	25.34% 188	14.82% 110	6.47% 48	8.09% 60	1.48% 11	742
I have sufficient space to store a bicycle securely where I live.	53.51% 396	18.65% 138	5.41% 40	2.57% 19	2.97% 22	16.89% 125	740

Answered: 745

Skipped: 3

Question 8

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neutral	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Response Total
Air quality should be within legal limits, in all locations in the borough.	65.23% 486	22.95% 171	6.85% 51	1.74% 13	1.88% 14	1.34% 10	745
Our transport plan should aim to reduce CO2 emissions from transport in the borough.	54.37% 404	25.17% 187	10.50% 78	4.44% 33	4.98% 37	0.54% 4	743
Our transport plan should limit access for the most polluting vehicles to ensure cleaner air in areas with highest levels of pollution in the borough.	41.88% 312	26.85% 200	12.21% 91	7.92% 59	10.07% 75	1.07% 8	745

Answered: 745

Skipped: 3

Question 9

To what extent do you agree with the following?

To what extent do you agree with the following? Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neutral	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Response Total
For some, travel by car will remain essential and therefore any strategy should support the uptake of zero emission vehicles.	45.77% 341	32.48% 242	10.74% 80	4.97% 37	5.37% 40	0.67% 5	745
I would consider using a car club vehicle (vehicles that can be hired for use by the hour).	8.11% 60	13.38% 99	16.89% 125	19.05% 141	37.84% 280	4.73% 35	740
I would consider reducing the number of cars in my household if I had access to a car club vehicle.	7.99% 59	11.11% 82	16.26% 120	18.16% 134	37.26% 275	9.21% 68	738

Answered: 745

Skipped: 3

Question 10

To what extent do you agree with the following?

To what extent do you agree with the following? Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neutral	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Response Total
I would support measures to reduce on-street parking in my nearest town, urban centre or local shops to provide more outdoor space for business like pavement cafes and street markets, and improved walking, cycling and wheeling facilities.	26.51% 197	23.42% 174	15.21% 113	14.67% 109	19.52% 145	0.67% 5	743
While retaining access for vehicles, I would support re-designating roads in my nearest town, urban centre or by local shops to provide more outdoor space for businesses, like pavement cafes and street markets, and improved walking, cycling and wheeling facilities.	27.21% 203	31.37% 234	12.87% 96	10.19% 76	17.43% 130	0.94% 7	746
I would like there to be less vehicle traffic on the street where I live/I tend to go.	30.74% 229	19.46% 145	29.53% 220	8.32% 62	11.28% 84	0.67% 5	745
I would accept slightly longer journeys by car if it meant less vehicle traffic on my street/where I tend to go.	22.45% 167	24.73% 184	19.62% 146	13.58% 101	17.47% 130	2.15% 16	744
I would accept slightly longer journeys by car to make it safer for children to walk, cycle and wheel to school.	32.79% 243	31.04% 230	14.30% 106	8.91% 66	10.26% 76	2.70% 20	741

To what extent do you agree with the following? Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neutral	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Response Total
The roads I use in Wokingham are adequately maintained.	1.48% 11	11.68% 87	10.74% 80	28.32% 211	47.11% 351	0.67% 5	745
The footways and cycleways I use in Wokingham are adequately maintained.	3.08% 23	19.71% 147	18.36% 137	25.74% 192	26.81% 200	6.30% 47	746

Question 11

To what extent do you agree with the following?

To what extent do you agree with the following? Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neutral	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Response Total
I would support the use of different parking charges based on the type of vehicle (i.e. if zero emissions, how polluting, etc.).	16.49% 123	24.53% 183	13.14% 98	17.16% 128	27.21% 203	1.47% 11	746
I would support the principle of access charges for the most polluting vehicles to ensure cleaner air in areas with highest levels of pollution in the borough.	24.26% 181	27.35% 204	10.86% 81	12.87% 96	22.92% 171	1.74% 13	746

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