Oxfordshire Residents' Travel Survey

Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership

Spring 2024

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership (OxCRP) are working with Great Western Railway (GWR) on the 'Connecting Communities' project. Almost 1000 Oxfordshire residents responded to an online survey exploring travel choices and experiences, the role that transport places in community wellbeing and what might encourage travellers to switch to train travel. This project supports OxCRP's focus on accessing and amplifying the community voice, particularly those less heard.

Travel Choices & Influences

- The diverse population of Oxfordshire utilises multiple transport modes, with cars most prevalent for many journey types. Public transport is used for leisure and commuting, with cycling also popular.
- Travel mode choice is most typically driven by reliability – though qualitative feedback demonstrates this applies both to service reliability on trains and risk of congestion on road routes. Convenience is also a strong choice drive and for some creates a barrier to public transport, where an integrated door-to-door service that meets the travellers needs does not, or is not believed to, exist. Environmental impact is a driver of choice for just over a quarter of people, though it is more important for train travellers demonstrating an awareness of the environmental benefit of train over car travel.
- Barriers to train travel are a mix of both actual and perceived ones. Access to a station or lack of direct routes may be real barriers for some, while concerns about cost and overcrowding may be based on experience or hearsay. This illustrates the need for both an integrated transport offer and strong communication where perceptions are not felt to reflect the reality.
- Over half of residents say it is easy to get to a train station, rising to over three-quarters of those who would cycle to the station. People who need to travel by bus or car are least likely to say getting to the station is easy, again reflecting the need for integrated solutions to enable easy access to stations.

Transport and Community

- Residents note that transport links into and out of Oxfordshire are good, enabling good access to London in particular, and also other parts of Southern and Central England.
- In and around Oxford the view of transport connectivity is positive, but in other areas of the county there is more criticism of the lack of integrated transport options. This leads to a divergence of views around the role public transport plays in enabling access to opportunities, with similar proportions say it helps and hinders.
- Those who are new to the county are typically more frequent train travellers, reflecting perhaps a move out of London to somewhere that they can commute into by train.

"OxCRP is focused on supporting underrepresented communities to access opportunities via rail, while encouraging new visitors to enjoy the county sustainably.
As part of this, OxCRP is interested in accessing and amplifying community voice, particularly the views of those often less heard in our communities including people from minority ethnic groups, areas of deprivation, young people, and new residents in the county.
OxCRP is interested in understanding existing barriers to sustainable transport for these groups, while identifying solutions and opportunities to improve access and encourage modal shift.
OxCRP recognises sustainable modes of transport as enablers to accessing education, employment, social connections, and healthy leisure and recreation. It recognises that underrepresented communities may be disproportionately excluded from accessing these opportunities, is therefore interested in identifying and addressing access barriers for these groups.
OxCRP is also interested in understanding what motivates and encourages people to switch from private travel to more sustainable and active modes of transport."
About us | Oxfordshire CRP (oxfordshirecommunityrail.org)

Executive Summary

Community Wellbeing
- There is considerable positivity around living in Oxfordshire, with the range of facilities/amenities, a sense of feeling safe and the environment in the county are all key drivers. Those taking part in the research are positive about their accommodation, the local area and their sense of belonging. The majority are satisfied with opportunities for education and employment.
- Personal wellbeing in the county is above the national average*, though the survey respondents scored lower, particularly having higher anxiety levels.
- The aspects that have the lowest satisfaction levels are access to healthcare and leisure facilities, with 29% and 20% respectively dissatisfied with these facilities/services. Linked to the split view of whether transport helps or hinders access to facilities, this suggests that whilst for some there may be a lack of healthcare and leisure facilities, for others it is the lack of transport accessibility to these facilities.

Young People
- Younger people taking part in the research, tend to be newer to the county or at least to their community. They are more likely to be living in Oxford or towns in the county rather than in rural areas.
- Anxiety levels are higher among young people, in line with national data*
- Being heard and inclusivity are considerably more important to young people than older people in supporting community wellbeing.
- Younger people are most positive about public transport supporting employment opportunities.
- Cost is the biggest influencer of travel choices for young people. They are more likely than older people to travel regularly by train and a greater proportion of their journeys are made by train.

Diversity & Inclusion
- Those of minority ethnic backgrounds are typically newer residents to the country and/or their community.
- Being heard is considerably more important to this group and personal wellbeing scores are typically considerably lower.
- Travel behaviours are similar to those from other ethnic backgrounds. Some factors have greater importance (cost, convenience, comfort etc.) in their decision-making process.
- Those with impairments typically score lower for personal wellbeing, but have similar views of their community to those without impairments.
- This group is much less likely to travel by train, particularly if their impairments are physical. Barriers to train travel are around availability, access and cost. For some their impairments are seen as blockers to accessing stations and/or travelling by train.

Sustainability /Carbon Reduction
- Two-thirds of people claim high awareness of sustainable transport, but this doesn't always translate to active consideration of using sustainable transport.
- Younger people are slightly more likely to consider sustainability in their transport choices.
- Those of minority ethnic backgrounds are less aware of sustainable transport and it has less influence on their travel choices.

*UK Population (YE March 23) Personal well-being in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Executive Summary

New Housing

- OxCRP are committed to promoting the need for new housing developments to have good access to sustainable transport networks and options
- People living in newer housing are typically less convinced by the value of public transport to their community, reflecting their greater reliance on cars to get to their end-destination or to the station.
- However, they do see public transport as a way of accessing opportunities, primarily employment, for example to commute to a job in London.

Stations in Focus

- When looking at individual stations, larger/main line stations are like because of the choices of trains and routes, direct trains etc. while more rural stations have a 'softer' appeal, being pleasant to use, close to home with easy drop-off/parking.
- Transport to the station varies from those that are very car dependent (Hanborough, Oxford Parkway, Bicester North), those where bus is important (primarily Oxford) and those where more travellers are able to walk to the station (Bicester Village, Charlbury, Banbury). Ease of getting the stations also varies with Bicester North and Radley seen as easiest and Didcot Parkway and Oxford the least easy.

Implications and Next Steps

- Strong foundations of positivity towards Oxfordshire and the communities lived in, though a need to focus on easy integrated public transport access to healthcare and leisure facilities (routes, connectivity, timetables etc.) is important to explore and communicate.
- Transport modes are diverse, but each have perceived advantages and disadvantages. Enabling people to use multiple modes across or within journeys will support the growth of public transport.
- Barriers to train travel are a mix of both concerns driven by experience and things that may be reputation rather than reality. Cost, reliability, service level, over-crowding etc. may be 'real' issues or based on hearsay. Congestion on the road network, makes car travel unappealing for many and public transport providing a convenient alternative could drive switching from car to train. Clear communication of performance and promotion of routes and services will contribute to addressing inaccurate assumptions.
- Promotion of public transport as a viable option for leisure travel may help to raise awareness of service levels and opportunities to use sustainable transport options
- Whilst awareness of the sustainable transport concept is high, there is still a need to translate that into behaviours, making the benefits of sustainable travel outweigh the perceived advantages for some of other transport methods.
- A focus on improving accessibility for minority groups is important as those with impairments find train travel more challenging.
- The main train routes into and out of the county (London, Birmingham, Bristol etc.) are well-known and supported. There is scope to improve service awareness and access to and from more rural areas of the county.

Background and Research Overview

Background and research overview

- **Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership (OxCRP)** are working with **Great Western Railway (GWR)** on the **'Connecting Communities'** project.

- As part of that project a **survey of residents** has been carried out, **to understand experiences, perceptions and challenges of rail travel for local Oxfordshire people**.

- More specifically the community research scope includes exploration of:
  - **how travel choices are made**, including **triggers and barriers to travelling on public transport**
  - **who might switch to train travel** and **why** and how **triggers to travel more** by train can be activated
  - local peoples' **motivations, incentives and drivers for travel behaviour change**
  - the local community appetite and need for **community rail initiatives**
  - What role **travel** and **transport play in community wellbeing and local identity**
  - **what changes** might be wanted to the **services** provided
  - what **need** there is for **more information** about existing services

- An **online survey** was promoted across Oxfordshire via social media and through stakeholders networks
  - Fieldwork ran from **6th February – 25th March 2024**
  - A total of **955 people** completed the survey

- The nature of the research methodology is such that the sample achieved is not necessarily fully representative of the Oxfordshire population. For example, only a limited number of people under the age of 25 took part in the survey and, whilst all areas of the county are included, a few stations are underrepresented compared to their recorded passenger numbers.

Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership (OxCRP)

OxCRP covers 22 railway stations across the county and works with local people, visitors, community organisations, and transport operators to deliver a strategic programme of research, consultations and engagement activities.
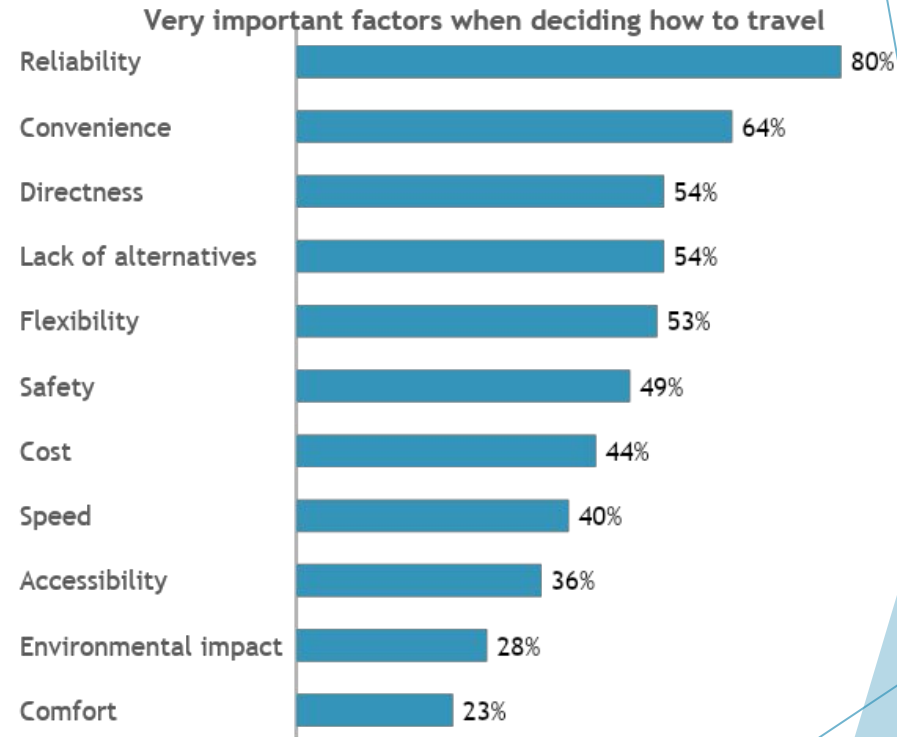
Our goals:

- Focus on the inclusion of diverse and less advantaged groups and communities, developing rail-based solutions that address both short-term needs and enable longer-term opportunities.
- Inclusively empower local communities to connect to Oxfordshire's railway to enrich lives and create new opportunities.
- Improve the welcome for everyone who travels to and through Oxfordshire's stations and help visitors to access neighbouring spaces and places.
- Add a voice and activities to promote sustainable and active travel.
- Work in partnership with others to improve the fabric and quality of places in and around the railway and the communities it serves

Travel Choices

Travel Choices

- Modes of transport among those taking part in the research, vary by journey purpose
  - Car is the most prevalent, particularly for leisure trips, shopping and errands
  - Train is the second most popular mode for leisure travel
  - Aside from walking, bus is second most popular for social trips and commuting
  - There is a high incidence of cycling particularly for commuting, social trips and errands

- Overall, reliability is the most important factor in deciding how to travel, this will be a combination of both actual and perceived reliability. For example, a perception that trains are reliable on particular routes encourages usage for some, versus a fear of traffic jams on the A34 that deter others from travelling by car. Overall, it is those who travel by car who are slightly more likely to say reliability is very important.

- Convenience is the second most important factor and may create a barrier for some to using public transport, unless integrated accessible services are available. 75% of those who commute by car say convenience is very important.

- Directness, flexibility and comfort are stronger motivators among car travellers than train travellers.

- Environmental impact is more important for train travellers than car travellers, reflecting the environmental benefit of travelling by train rather than car

Very important factors when deciding how to travel

Factor	Percentage
Reliability	80%
Convenience	64%
Directness	54%
Lack of alternatives	54%
Flexibility	53%
Safety	49%
Cost	44%
Speed	40%
Accessibility	36%
Environmental impact	28%
Comfort	23%

Q2. Thinking about the various journeys you may make, how would you usually travel for each of them?
Please select the main modes of transport you would use. Base: All respondents who make journeys for each purpose
Q3. How important are each of these in deciding how you travel? Base: All respondents

Train Travel

- The survey includes people with a wide range of travel behaviours, from those who travel mostly by train to those who rarely or never do so

- Those who **always travel by train**, tend to be limited in alternatives, though there is also recognition of benefits

> I can't drive due to disability, I don't feel safe on buses due go previous discrimination. I need wheelchair accessible taxis which are hard to find. I have no option but to travel by train.

> Environmental reasons. Safety. Fastest. Can take bicycle on train. I do not own a car, the bus journey takes a very long time, there are no buses to where I live on Sundays.

> Quicker and easier. More reliable than buses, no parking problems or traffic jams.

- Those **who never travel by train**, cite a range of reasons, sometimes personal, sometimes based on past experience or perceptions/reputation

> I don't live near station so would have to drive there. Difficult to park at station. Going from local station may have to change trains. Too expensive. Don't understand ticketing. Strikes, delays

> Not possible or necessary for regular trips (living in Oxford) and we only have good train connectivity to London. (Train is not really an option for going rambling in the Cotswolds or Chilterns, for example.)

- Reasons for not travelling **more often by train** are again around cost, reliability, lack of direct services and other personal reasons

> Because our closest railway station is 25 minutes drive away. The Oxford Tube bus is just 3 miles away and really convenient - very regular buses, 24 hour service, comfortable and good value

> Poor reliability in recent years due to industrial action and regular track maintenance issues

> Cost and lack of direct destinations and overcrowded on some services and a lot of the seating is so uncomfortable now!
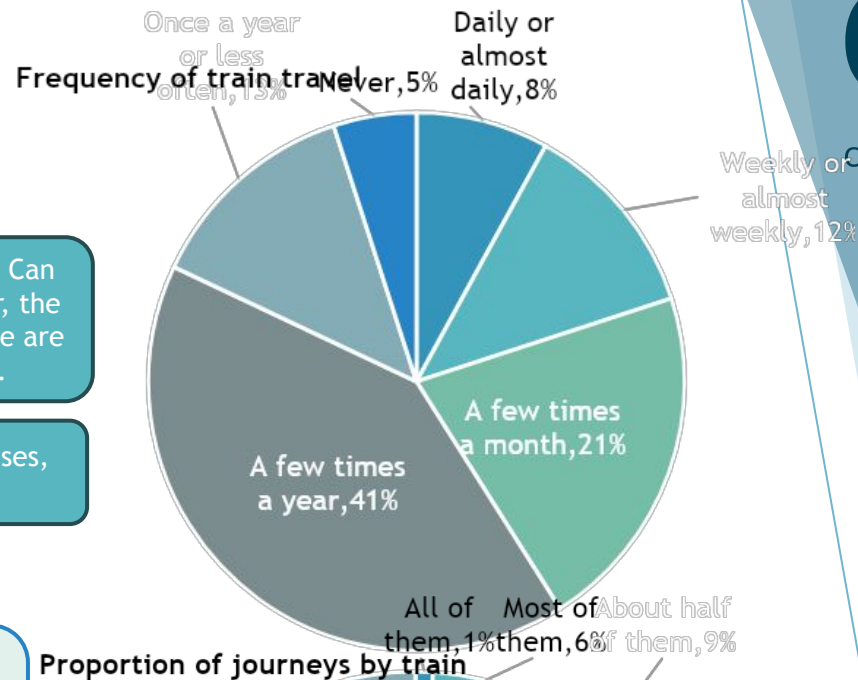
Q4. How often do you travel by train?
Q5. Of all the journeys you make in a typical month, what proportion of them would you say are made by train, rather than other types of transport?
Base: All respondents

Frequency of train travel

- Once a year or less often, 19%
- Never, 5%
- Daily or almost daily, 8%
- Weekly or almost weekly, 12%
- A few times a month, 21%
- A few times a year, 41%

Proportion of journeys by train

- All of them, 1%
- Most of them, 6%
- About half of them, 9%
- None, or almost none, of them, 44%
- A few of them, 40%
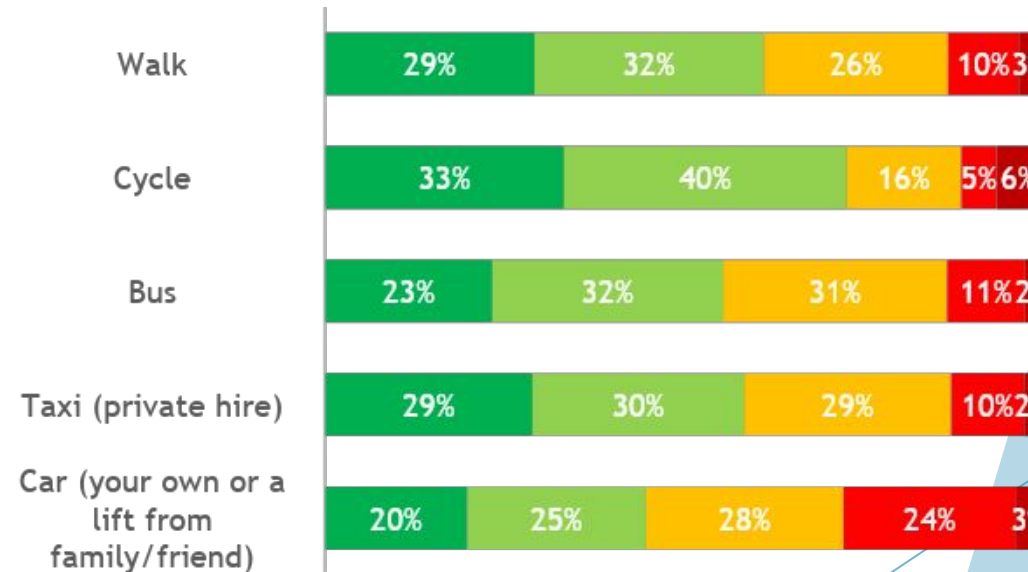
Connected public transport is important in making access to trains easier

- As might be expected it is those for whom getting to the station is very or quite easy are more likely to use the train more.

- People living in cities/towns are most likely to say it is very easy to get to the station (29%) and those living in rural areas least likely (12%)

Ease of getting to the station	Very easy	Quite easy	OK	Quite difficult	Very difficult
	26%	30%	28%	12%	3%

- Those who would cycle to the station are most likely to say it is easy to get to. As soon as other modes of transport are needed, ease of access reduces.

- Those who travel most frequently by train typically walk or cycle to the station, whereas those who travel rarely or never by train would be more reliant on a car to do so

- Frequent train travellers are more likely to say it is easy to get to the station.

- However, a quarter of those who never travel by train and almost half of those who travel yearly or less often say it is easy to get to the station, illustrating that there are other barriers to train travel for these people, typically citing cost as the main one. These people are more likely than others to see flexibility and safety as important considerations around mode of travel.

	Very easy	Quite easy	OK	Quite difficult	Very difficult
Walk	29%	32%	26%	10%	3%
Cycle	33%	40%	16%	5%	6%
Bus	23%	32%	31%	11%	2%
Taxi (private hire)	29%	30%	29%	10%	2%
Car (your own or a lift from family/friend)	20%	25%	28%	24%	3%

Community and Well-being

Community

Most people see multiple positives around living in Oxfordshire, often an amalgamation of several attributes of the county:

► The **county location** and **transport routes in/out of Oxfordshire** are view positively
  ► In particular, access to London is praised, whether for leisure activities or for work
  ► Other destinations are also mentioned including Bristol, Birmingham, the South Coast
  ► Many mentioned the proximity of friends a relatives, either within or beyond the county, suggesting Oxfordshire is seen by many as a good 'central' base from which to access many other areas of the country

► **Integrated transport** is praised within Oxford along with reference to **cycle routes**

► Attitudes towards **transport around the county** are more mixed
  ► While some are positive about the rail routes through the county, others are critical of the lack of coverage (closed stations, limited service etc.)
  ► Outside of Oxford, there is criticism of the lack of integrated transport options, often through loss or absence of connecting buses and/or suitable public transport options for reaching amenities (healthcare, education etc.)
  ► For some the volume of traffic on the roads is a negative, though a few car drivers feel they are being negatively impacted by 'cycle-friendly' policies particularly in and around Oxford

> safe, quiet neighbourhood

> central position within country, access to London, Birmingham and Bristol

> Connectivity of good public transport in Oxford

> It's central in England and is easy to get to most places.

> The contrasts: excellent city amenities in Oxford but not far out to beautiful countryside of the Cotswolds

> Oxford has the cultural and educational resources of a city five times its size, but being able to cycle around it means it feels like a large village in size.

> The concentration of lots of research and innovation means it feels like an exciting place and draws people from all over the world here

> The thriving local communities and incredible educational opportunities and local resources available in Oxfordshire. The libraries are wonderful, as are the natural spaces and projects, museums and other places of interest, along with the local communities for my child and I

> Good walking and cycling access to local amenities for all our family. Access to arts and culture, and university-led events and opportunities

> "Before COVID there was bus No.4 which carried me directly to the train station.
> However, now the bus No.4 has turned to No.15 which caused people around lots of inconvenience.
> If I want to go to the train station, I have to walk 15 minutes to the bus station, and then wait for, I don't know how long, because of the poor traffic situation, and then go to the city centre and walk another 15 minutes to the train station.
> This totally takes around 60-70 minutes in total.
> Before COVID, it took me just 30-40 minutes to get to the train station."

People living in new housing developments and/or those who have recently moved to the county

- Those who are new to the county are more likely to travel frequently
  - More of those who have lived in their community for more than 5 years and/or live in an older house, don't travel by train very often, if at all
- Similarly, those who are new to the county, use the train for a greater proportion of their journeys, reflecting the higher incidence of commuting either into Oxford or from Oxford to London etc.
  - Those in new houses also use trains for more of their journeys, again likely reflecting the profile of these residents (for example, commuters, social connections etc in London and elsewhere)
- More recent residents of Oxford, those who have recently move to their current community and those in new houses are more likely to make use of integrated public transport, using buses to get to train stations. The transition point seems to be at 5 years residency (and house age) rather than 2 years.
  - A similar pattern is seen for walking to the station
  - The inverse is seen for cars, with a greater proportion of long-term residents more reliant on cars to get to the station
- Those new to Oxfordshire are slightly more positive about ease of access to their local station, which may be based on comparison to where they have lived previously (and indeed proximity to public transport may have influenced their decision to move to the area)
- Those who have lived in their community/Oxfordshire for a long time are happier with their accommodation, a place to live and the sense of belonging.
- Those in newer houses are happier with their accommodation and with their access to good jobs and career opportunities, but are less convinced about the value of public transport, perhaps because a greater proportion are reliant on a car to get the station and so the value of public transport is impacted by the need for additional private transport.
- Those who are new to Oxfordshire are more satisfied with education and career opportunities, likely reflecting their motivations to move to the county. They are also more positive about the role of public transport in accessing opportunities particularly in employment
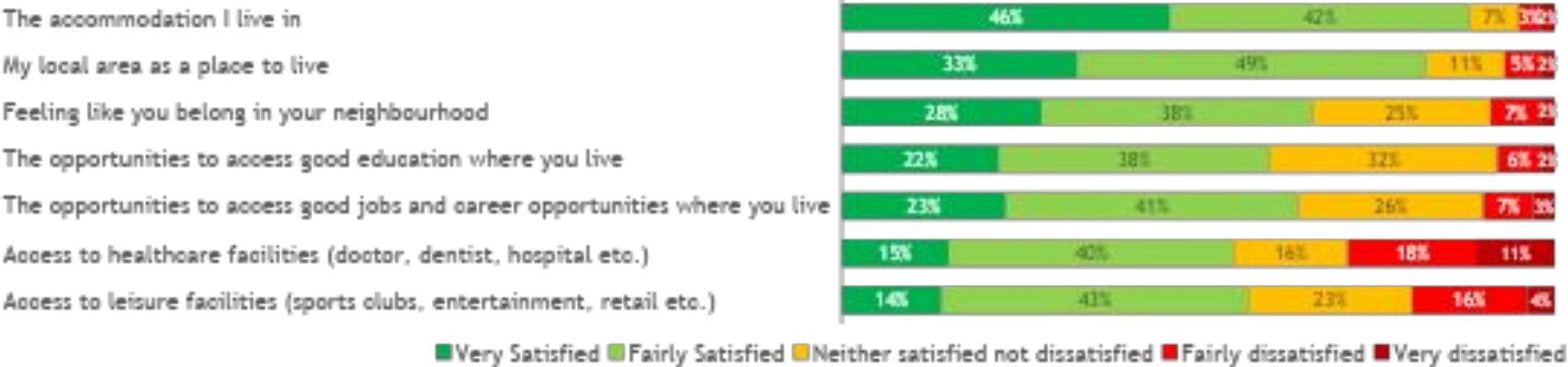
Community Wellbeing

► The three strongest drivers for community well-being are perceived to be:

Facilities

Feeling safe

The environment and how it is cared for

► Satisfaction with their community is generally high, particularly in terms of their accommodation, the local area and their sense of belonging. The two topics that have notably lower levels of satisfaction are access to healthcare and leisure facilities. This may be a combination of either the facilities themselves and the ease of accessing them either through own or public transport.

	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
The accommodation I live in	46%	42%	7%	3%	2%
My local area as a place to live	33%	49%	11%	5%	2%
Feeling like you belong in your neighbourhood	28%	38%	25%	7%	2%
The opportunities to access good education where you live	22%	38%	32%	6%	2%
The opportunities to access good jobs and career opportunities where you live	23%	41%	26%	7%	3%
Access to healthcare facilities (doctor, dentist, hospital etc.)	15%	40%	16%	18%	11%
Access to leisure facilities (sports clubs, entertainment, retail etc.)	14%	43%	23%	16%	4%

■ Very Satisfied ■ Fairly Satisfied ■ Neither satisfied not dissatisfied ■ Fairly dissatisfied ■ Very dissatisfied

► There is a split view as to whether public transport helps or hinders access to opportunities with typically around a third of people saying it helps and just under a third saying it hinders

► Those who travel by train, whether for commuting, leisure or errands are more positive about the contribution public transport makes than those who travel by car. This may reflect varying access to public transport, but also suggests that the access benefits of public transport are not fully understood by non-users

	Helps a lot/little	Hinders a lot/little
Employment opportunities	37%	31%
Leisure opportunities	37%	29%
Access to healthcare	33%	30%
Education opportunities	28%	18%

Q23. Which of these do you think are most important for the well-being of your community?
Q24. Thinking about your community and where you live how satisfied are you with….
Q25. To what extend does the public transport system in your area help or hinder your ability to access these opportunities?
Base: All respondents

Personal Wellbeing

► This analysis is based on the Office for National Statistics Personal Well-being measurement Well-being - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk). The published data shows that on average the residents of Oxfordshire are more positive about their well-being than the UK population overall. Results from the survey, suggest those taking part have a less positive view of their well-being, though this may be impacted by the research method.

► Consistent with national, published data, the OxCRP survey shows that well-being scores vary by age:
   ► The least positive about life satisfaction and feeling worthwhile are those aged 35 – 54
   ► Under 35's are the most anxious and anxiety levels then decrease with age
   ► Those aged 65 and over are typically the happiest
► Various demographic groups score lower than the average:
   ► People with disabilities or health impairments
   ► Those from low income families
   ► People who are not working. Those who are working full-time are less positive about their well-being than those working part-time or retired
   ► Those living in cities/towns tend to have higher anxiety particularly when compared to those living in rural areas (though this may be accentuated by other demographic characteristics such as age, with the rural community taking part in the survey, typically older than the urban respondents)

Life Satisfaction Worthwhile Happiness Anxiety

	Life Satisfaction			Worthwhile			Happiness			Anxiety		
UK Population*	7.5			7.7			7.4			3.2		
Oxfordshire*		7.8			8.0			7.5			3.1	
OxCRP survey			7.1			7.4			7.2			3.8

N.B. Low score is better

*UK Population (YE March 23) Personal well-being in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Focusing on Young People

Young people - community and well-being

► The survey method resulted in only a small number of under 25's taking part (34 in total). Data should therefore be treated with some caution

► 17% are from low-income families and 13% are from single parent families

► The are more urban than the older people taking part with 82% living in cities or towns and only 18% in villages

► The under 25's are more likely to be relatively new to Oxfordshire with 32% having lived in the county for less than a year and 23% 1-2 years. Similarly, 47% have lived in their current community for less than a year and a further 19% 1-2 years. Work is the primary reason for moving to the area, with study mentioned by a minority (reflecting the 77% employed full time and 18% students in the Under 25 age group)

► The appeal of the area is similar to that seen in other age groups and is a mix of both rural and urban appeal as well as the connectivity to other parts of the country

► There are two connected aspects that are more important to community wellbeing for young people, than older people: 'Having their voice heard' and 'Inclusivity for all'

► Levels of satisfaction with their community are similar for the under 25's as for older ages

► While young people are in line with the average scores for life satisfaction and feeling that what they do is worthwhile, their score for happiness is lower. They are also considerably more anxious than people in other age groups

The city is beautiful. Knowing the level of history and knowledge that comes from here.
Loads of young people, I'm 20 so easy to meet people my age.
Generally, not at rough/dangerous as most other cities….

That it's mostly countryside with good nature areas. But also having enough infrastructure to make travelling to other parts of the country fairly pain-free.

Communities in Oxford, ability to walk/cycle to most places within Oxford I want to reach, access to nature, closeness to London and other major forms of transport (LHR, LTN, Birmingham airport)

	All	Under 25's
Having the facilities we need	82%	85%
Feeling safe	71%	79%
The environment and how it is cared for	63%	65%
Having our voice heard	30%	50%
Everyone can be included	25%	41%
Helping or supporting the community	36%	32%
Trust between people	34%	32%
Caring for future generations	29%	32%
Relationships and social support	31%	24%
Feeling that we belong	24%	12%

Young people & transport

► The under 25's are the age group most likely to say that public transport helps employment opportunities a lot (31%).

► A few give examples of where public transport hinders access.

► Young people have less knowledge of the Community Rail Partnerships, but put forward a range of suggestions for the future.

> There is no direct bus service to the local pool, you have to walk/wheel for 20 mins. There is a mile from the Abingdon College to the nearest busy bus stop, and the train station is even further (and inaccessible). This is enough to stop me taking a night class or going swimming as it would take too much energy. My work is now more connected by public transport but only has 5 buses a day and the train station is inaccessible, so I have to get taxis..

> Offer competitive price for travelling on train for the same distance that bus does

> Improve walking and cycling access and promotion to our local stations to ensure they remain well used

> I like to see art projects to brighten stations, they're always nice. And also maybe help 'bridge the gap' between locals and planners/the authority as I feel my voice is often not heard.

Sustainable Transport

► Young people have slightly lower awareness of sustainable transport (59% compared to 69% of the total sample). However, 85% of the Under 24's try to consider or use sustainable transport for at least some of their journeys. This compares to 71% across all survey participants.

► Motivations to use sustainable transport are typically a combination of environmental concerns and more self-serving reasons.

> I am environmentally-conscious and it offers a less stressful and relaxing travel experience than travelling by car, despite occasional delays.

> Reducing my impact on the environment, e.g. from commuting to work by myself in a car – instead, I car share with 2-3 others. Sustainable transport is also often cheaper than the alternative; e.g. cycling costs nothing compared to parking or even taking the bus.

OXCRP
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COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP

Young people & train travel

Train Travel

► **Cost** is the most prevalent factor in travel decisions for young people, followed by **reliability** and **convenience**. This is in contrast to the overall picture where reliability is top, followed by convenience and directness (Cost is only 7th most important overall)

► Over a third of Under 25's taking part in the survey travel by train **at least weekly**, and a **quarter say all or most of their journeys are by train**, both measures considerably higher than for other age groups

► Barriers to travelling by train are similar to those commented on by other age groups: Convenience, Cost, Suitable routes, Station access etc.

> I am travelling to work at places which are most accessible, easiest to travel to and cheapest via train.

> I do not have a car. The train is the only way I can get to work. Most of my friends live in London so I take the train there almost every weekend.

> Trains costs more and takes longer than journeys by car. Also I don't live within walking distance from the nearest train station so would have to drive there anyway

> I find travelling my car more convenient and cheaper. I don't live close enough to a train station to not have to drive there in the first place. Would then have to pay for parking for the day and the cost of the train fare.

► Frequency of train travel is highest among young people and decreases with age

► Share of journeys made by train is much higher among those aged under 25 years than any other age group. Only a quarter of young people never, or almost never, travel by train compared to nearer half across other age groups

How often do you travel by train?

| A few times a year, 32% | A few times a month, 32% | Weekly or almost weekly, 15% | Daily or almost daily, 21% | under 25 |

Share of journeys made by train

| None/almost none, 25% | A few, 38% | About half, 13% | Most, 19% | All, 6% | under 25 |

Of all the journeys you make in a typical month, what proportion of them would you say are made by train, rather than other types of transport?

Focusing on Diversity and Inclusion

Under-represented ethnic groups

- Over a third of Asian, Black and mixed ethnic background people have lived in Oxfordshire for 5 years or less and over half have lived in their current community for less than 5 years. Work and study are the typical reasons for moving into Oxfordshire. Family reasons are more prevalent among white ethnicities.

- Diverse communities, vibrancy and the cultural offer are key positives

- Three-quarters live in cities/towns
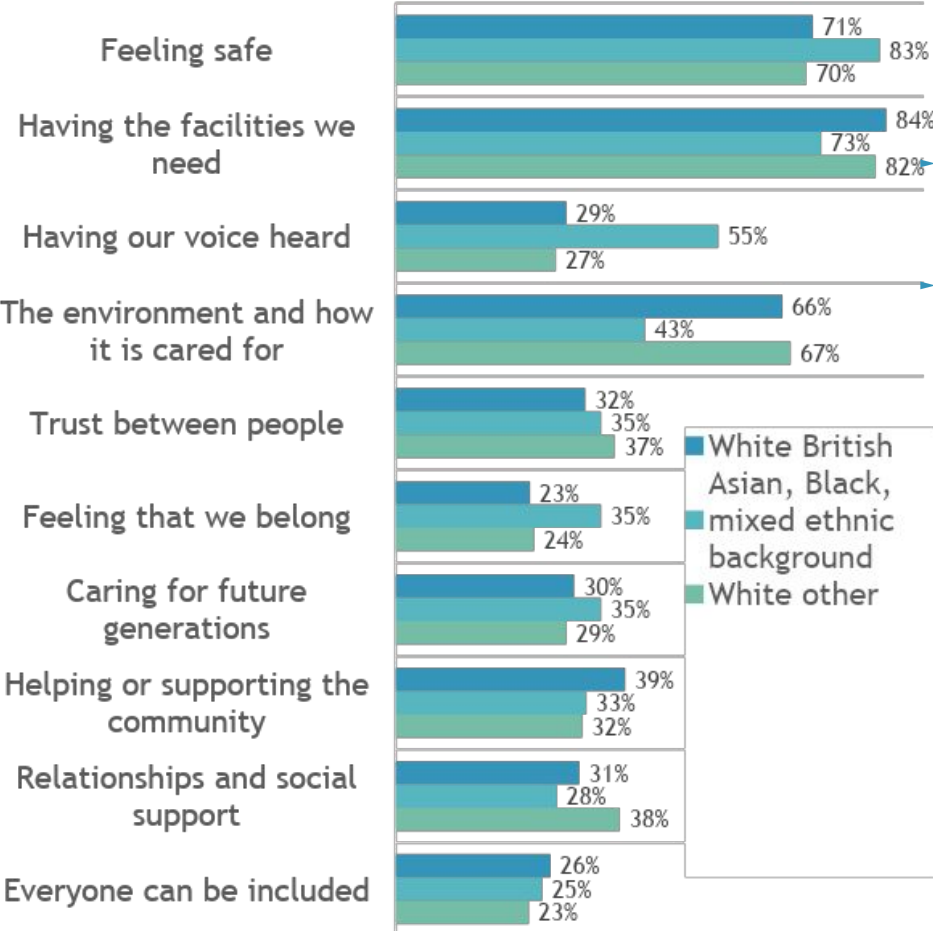
Safety, multi-cultural, science & technology industry, family friendly and small city

Diversity of people, proximity to London, University and nice countryside for dog walks.

Vibrant community mixed with lots of history and culture.

Q24 Which of these do you think are most important for the well-being of your community? (select up to 5)

'Being heard' is considerably more important for community wellbeing among those of Asian. Black and mixed ethnic background. 'The environment and how it is cared for' is notably less important

Personal well-being is lower among those who are Asian, Black, mixed ethnic background, than white British and other white ethnicities
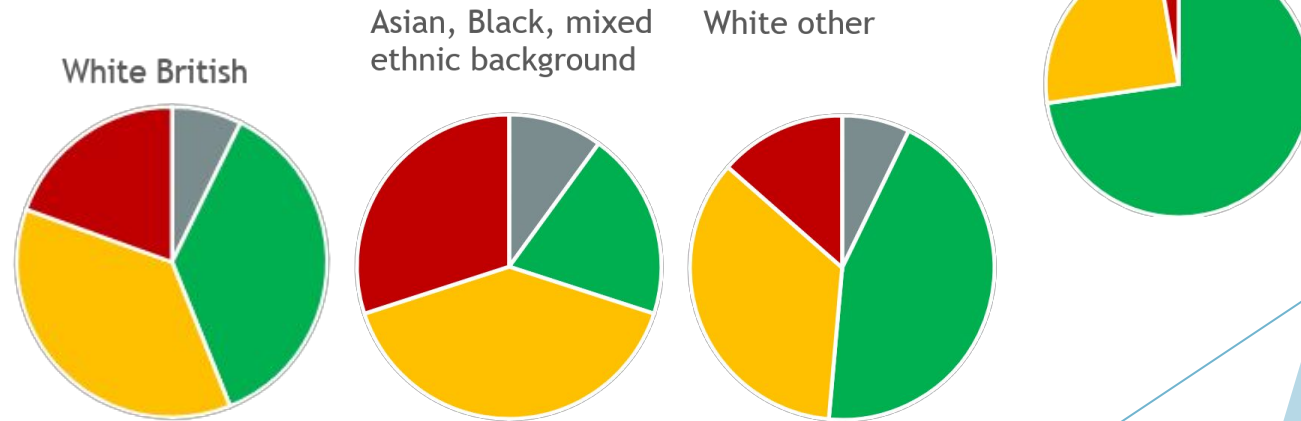
Well-being	White British	Asian, Black, mixed ethnic background	White other
Life Satisfaction	7.2	6.5	7.1
Worthwhile	7.5	7.2	7.5
Happiness	7.2	6.8	7.1
Anxiety	3.9	4.7	4.0

Under-represented ethnic groups

- Survey participants: White British (77%), White Other (11%), Asian, Black, Mixed Ethnic Background (4%)

- Factors that influence travel choices:
  - Compared to White ethnicity, Asian, Black, Mixed Ethnic Background people
    - over-index on cost, convenience, comfort, safety, accessibility, directness
    - does not over-index on reliability, flexibility, environmental impact, lack of alternatives

- There are few significant differences in travel behaviours across ethnic groups

- Asian, Black, mixed ethnic backgrounds, taking part in this research, have less awareness of the sustainable transport concept. This, in turn, leads to a greater level of ambivalence towards actively choosing sustainable transport options

Sustainable Transport Concept Awareness

- Yes, I know a lot about it
- I've heard the term, but don't really know what it means
- No, not heard of it before

White British

Asian, Black, mix background

White other

Sustainable Transport Opinion

- It's not something I ever really think about
- I try to use sustainable transport for as many journeys as possible
- I'm aware of sustainable transport and try to consider using it for some of my journeys
- I'm aware of sustainable transport but it doesn't influence how I travel

White British

Asian, Black, mixed ethnic background

White other

Q16 Are you familiar with the concept of sustainable transport?
Q17 Which of these statements best reflects your opinion of sustainable transport?

Impairments, health conditions & disabilities

Well-being	No disabilities	Disabilities
Life Satisfaction	7.4	6.7
Worthwhile	7.6	7.1
Happiness	7.4	6.8
Anxiety	3.7	4.2

Chart legend: ■ No Impairments ■ Impairments

- Reliability: 79% / 79%
- Convenience: 64% / 59%
- Lack of alternatives: 51% / 58%
- Safety: 47% / 52%
- Directness: 55% / 49%
- Flexibility: 55% / 47%
- Cost: 43% / 45%
- Accessibility: 32% / 40%
- Speed: 42% / 36%
- Environmental impact: 27% / 29%
- Comfort: 22% / 25%

► Reliability is the most important influencer of travel choices

► Those with impairments are more likely to say a lack of alternatives, safety and accessibility drive their decision. Speed, flexibility and directness are less important than for those without impairments

► Those with impairments are less positive about their well-being, reflecting what is seen at a national level

► Satisfaction with their local community and where they live are quite similar for those with and without disabilities, though accommodation, career opportunities and access to leisure facilities are rated lower by those with disabilities
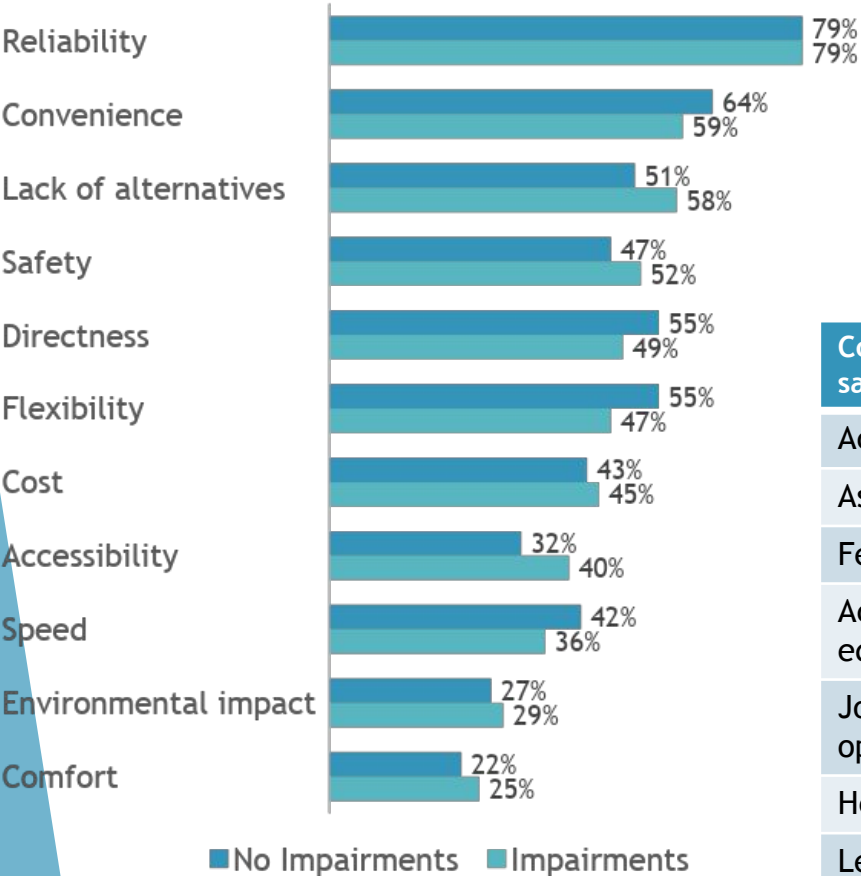
Community (% very satisfied)	No disabilities	Disabilities
Accommodation I live in	49%	40%
As a place to live	35%	31%
Feeling of belonging	27%	28%
Access to good education	24%	20%
Jobs & career opportunities	27%	18%
Healthcare facilities	16%	15%
Leisure facilities	18%	12%

Potential and Possibility 2024: Improving experiences of public transport

"Nearly half of people with complex disabilities felt that their needs weren't supported on public transport."

"Over half of people with complex disabilities found public transport difficult because of the attitudes of other passengers towards disabled people."

"The biggest barriers affecting people with complex disabilities on public transport were overcrowding, unreliable services and cost."
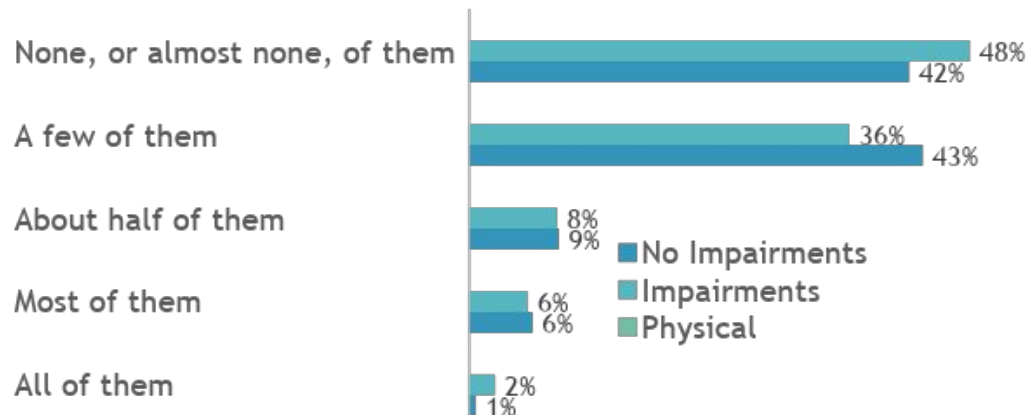
Source: https://www.sense.org.uk/about-us/research/potential-and-possibility-research/potential-and-possibility-2024-improving-experiences-of-public-transport/

Impairments, health conditions & disabilities

- 22% of those with impairments rarely or never travel by train (15% of those with no impairments). This rises to 35% of those with physical disabilities.

- This is reflected in a greater percentage of people with impairments taking a very small proportion, if any, of their journeys by train. However, similar percentages of those with and without impairments take half or more of their journeys by train
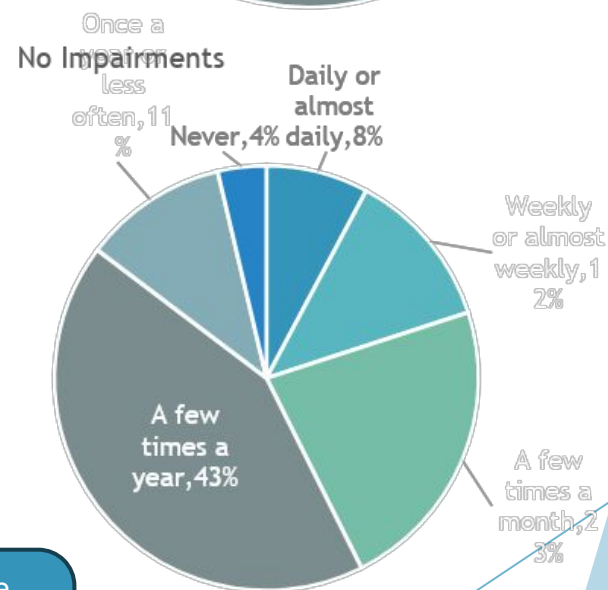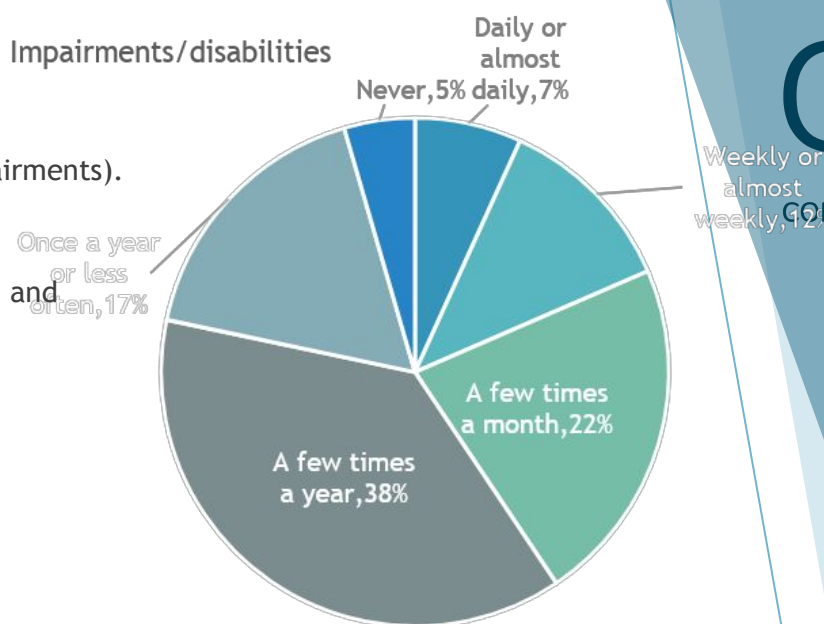
Journeys by train

- None, or almost none, of them: 48% / 42%
- A few of them: 36% / 43%
- About half of them: 8% / 9%
- Most of them: 6% / 6%
- All of them: 2% / 1%

Legend: No Impairments / Impairments / Physical

- Barriers to train travel for those with impairments, mainly mirror those of people without impairments:
  - Availability of service (frequency, routes, night trains etc.)
  - Station access (location, parking etc.)
  - Other public transport (bus service more suitable, connections)
  - Price
  - Strikes

- A minority reference difficulties linked to their impairments

Impairments/disabilities

- Never, 5%
- Daily or almost daily, 7%
- Weekly or almost weekly, 12%
- A few times a month, 22%
- A few times a year, 38%
- Once a year or less often, 17%

No Impairments

- Never, 4%
- Daily or almost daily, 8%
- Weekly or almost weekly, 12%
- A few times a month, 23%
- A few times a year, 43%
- Once a year or less often, 11%

"The train station by my work is not accessible and a long walk and as I am disabled I am not able to use it."

"We need transport with reliable wheelchair access which I do not believe is delivered by trains."

"Trains are inaccessible to all but the tiniest mobility scooters (which aren't capable of getting me to the station). Only people with a car can transport a mobility scooter to the station."
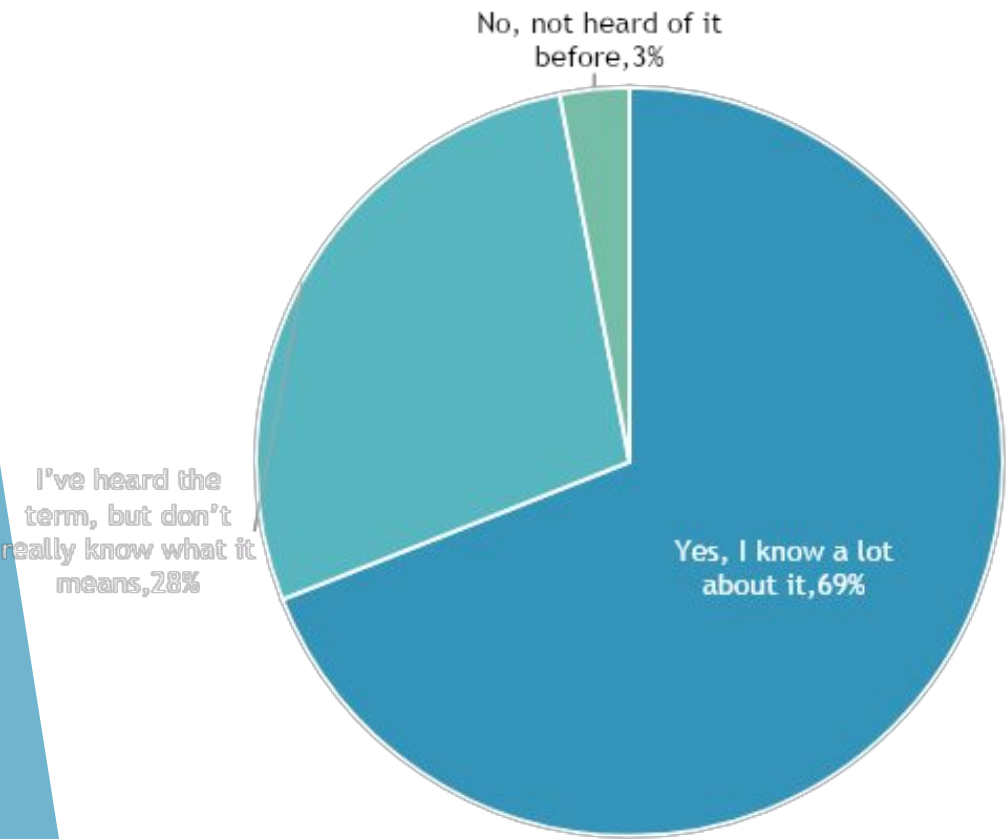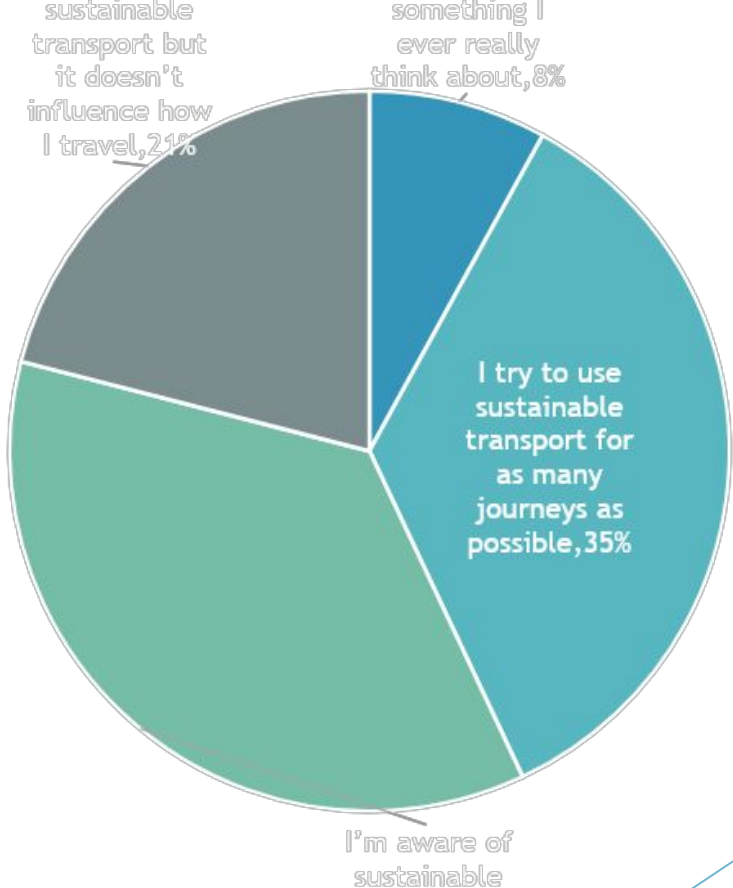
Focusing on Sustainability / Carbon Reduction

Sustainable transport

- Familiarity with the sustainable transport concept is high with over two-thirds claiming to know a lot.

- However, this does not always translate into mode of travel choices. A third claim to try to use sustainable transport options, but almost a third say it doesn't influence how they travel or it is something they do not consider.

Familiar with concept of sustainable transport

No, not heard of it before, 3%

I've heard the term, but don't really know what it means, 28%

Yes, I know a lot about it, 69%

Opinion of sustainable transport

I'm aware of sustainable transport but it doesn't influence how I travel, 21%

something I ever really think about, 8%

I try to use sustainable transport for as many journeys as possible, 35%

I'm aware of sustainable

Q16. Are you familiar with the concept of sustainable transport?
Q17. Which of these statements best reflects your opinion of sustainable transport?
Base: All respondents

Sustainable Transport

► Motivations to use sustainable transport tend to be functional/practical ones, not directly linked to the face the transport mode is more sustainable than others

Cost, Price

> Lower upfront cost of a single vehicle suitable for both long and short trips

> Creating a Railcard to extend 26-30. I would happily pay £60/year for a Railcard that continued to give me 1/3 off rail fair. I am terrified when I become too old next year and my current journey to see my partner goes from £60 to £90.

Availability, Frequency

> Electric buses - I can only get the buses available to me so I can't choose to get electric ones if they don't exist.

> If they were more frequent and reliable, better funded, cheaper, more direct, more choice of routes, more standardised/simpler ticket options. If electric vehicles were more affordable (and if batteries weren't so bad for the environment)

Reliability

> A reliable bus service with a decent timetable

> Get the reliability of the train service running first

> Needs to be much more reliable and actually adhere to a timetable...buses often don't turn up or are cancelled due to build up of traffic leaving passengers stranded and forced to walk home or wait 30-60 minutes to turn up

Connectivity, integration

> Better link up options- sustainable travel often works for one part of the journey. Eg- you can get a train from a-b but you cannot get a bus from your home to the station (in Oxford a lot of the buses stop on the high street or St Aldates) and then at your destination you cannot link up with another bus at a sensible time.

> The fact it is not easy to take a bike on all train routes or you cannot take a bike on a bus limits options. For example, I cycle to the station, I want to take my bike with me, I take it on the train, but then I cannot take it on a bus at the other end
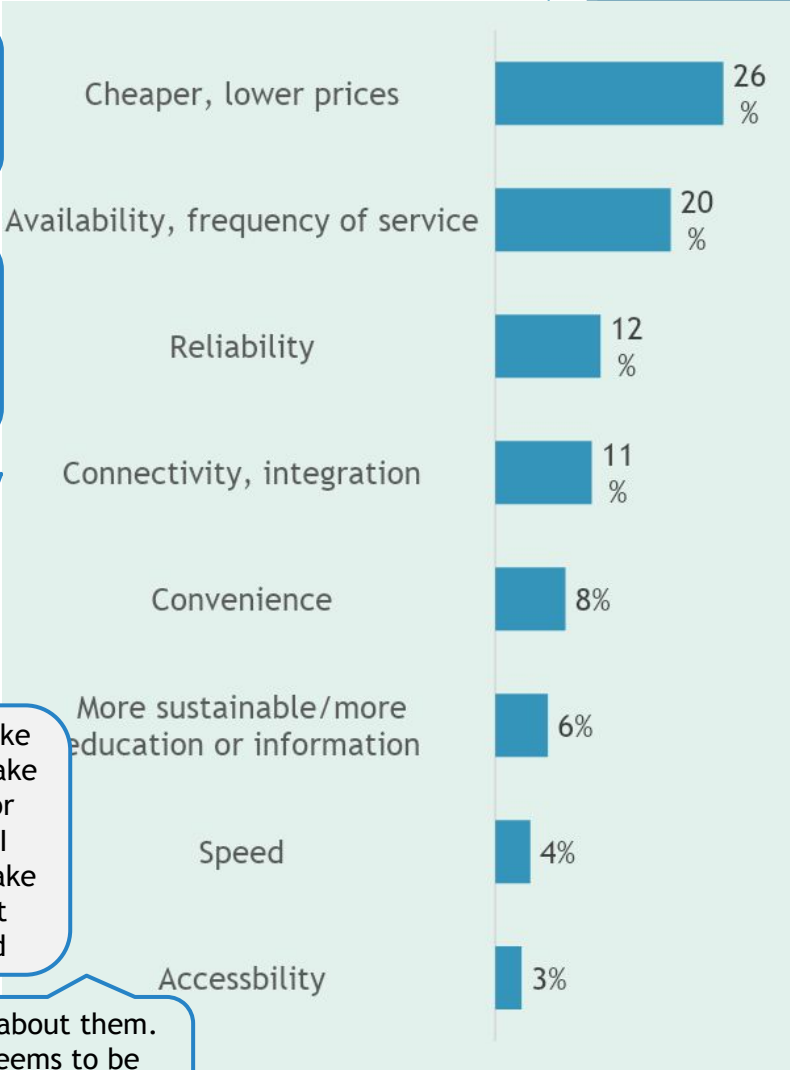
Convenience

> Currently all sustainable transport is inconvenient and not regular enough

More sustainable / Education

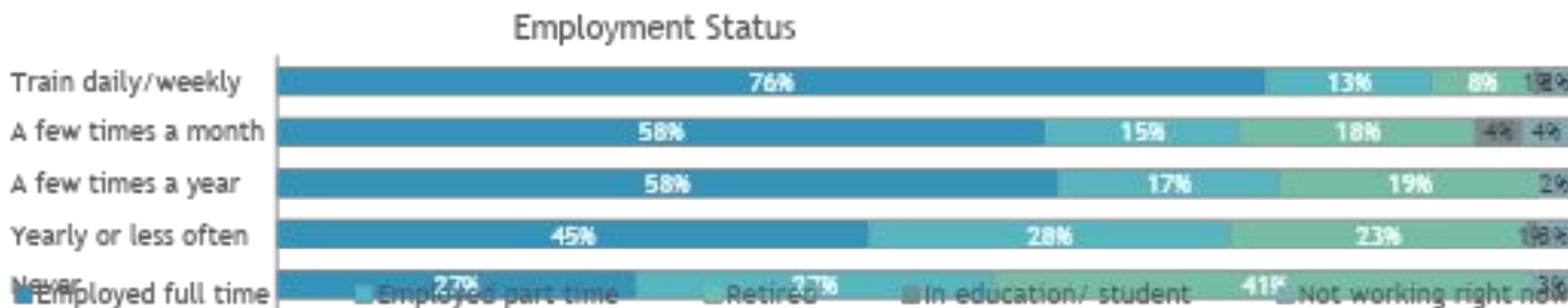> If I knew the footprint of each of my journey choices, then I could compare before I decide which option to go for

> Knowing about them. There seems to be little information and awareness

Category	%
Cheaper, lower prices	26%
Availability, frequency of service	20%
Reliability	12%
Connectivity, integration	11%
Convenience	8%
More sustainable/more education or information	6%
Speed	4%
Accessbility	3%

Train Travel

► In line with data on the age of train travellers, those who travel frequently are more likely to be employed (full- or part-time), while those who rarely or never travel by train are more likely to be retired.
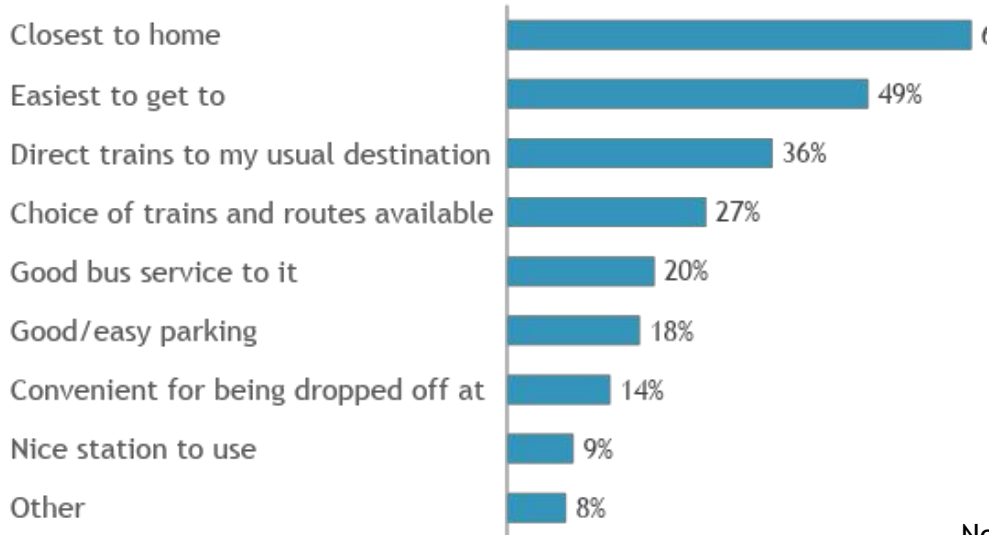
Employment Status

	Employed full time	Employed part time	Retired	In education/ student	Not working right now
Train daily/weekly	76%	13%	8%		1%
A few times a month	58%	15%	18%	4%	4%
A few times a year	58%	17%	19%		2%
Yearly or less often	45%	28%	23%		1%
Never	27%	27%	41%		3%

► Low income families use public transport more than other demographic groups, with bus usage higher particularly for journeys to work and shopping.

► Important factors in transport decisions for low-income families are in line with those of other users, though a greater proportion reference cost than among other demographic groups. Reasons to not travel by train are often linked to cost, but also simply because fewer journeys that might use the train are taken.

► Frequency of travel is similar among low-income families as other demographic groups

► Sustainability features less in travel mode decisions for low-income families

Base: All respondents
Q4. How often do you travel by train?

Stations in Focus

Reason for using particular GWR stations

► Convenience factors of proximity to home and ease of getting to drive choice of station. However, direct trains and choice of routes/trains are also important

► Reasons for using individual stations vary:

   ► Some offer convenience and a wider range of services/direct trains etc. (Didcot Parkway, Oxford), others offer a nicer station environment, often linked with proximity to home

   ► It is notable that two attributes polarise stations – good bus services, rarely mentioned for the more rural stations and parking which is typically better at those more rural stations. See following for details of modes of transport to stations

   ► Profiles vary by station, particularly around age and therefore linked to that employment status vs retired

Didcot Parkway	Charlbury
Choice of trains & routes (39%)	Closest to home (73%)
Direct trains to by usual destination (44%)	Nice station to use (17%)
Convenient to be dropped off at (22%)	Convenient to be dropped off at (22%)
Good bus service (20%)	
	Note: good bus service (0%)
Oxford	**Radley**
Choice of trains & routes (36%)	Nice station to use (19%)
Direct trains to by usual destination (37%)	Closest to home (90%)
Good bus service (35%)	
Note: good/easy parking (2%)	*Note: good bus service (3%)*

Didcot Parkway	Charlbury
Male (42%)	Male (42%)
Under 35 years (24%)	55 – 64 years (27%)
Village (31%)	65 and over (30%)
	Disabilities/long-term conditions (32%)
	Retired (23%)
	Village (37%)
Oxford	**Radley**
Under 35 years (26%)	Under 35 years (23%)
Low-income family (10%)	35 – 54 years (548)
City/Town (81%)	No disabilities/long-term conditions (26%)
	Employed full-time/part-time (87%)

Closest to home —
Easiest to get to — 49%
Direct trains to my usual destination — 36%
Choice of trains and routes available — 27%
Good bus service to it — 20%
Good/easy parking — 18%
Convenient for being dropped off at — 14%
Nice station to use — 9%
Other — 8%

Q12. Why would you choose to travel from this station?
Base: All respondents

Notes
1. 'Easiest to get to' is quite consistent across all stations
2. Base size too small for Charlbury
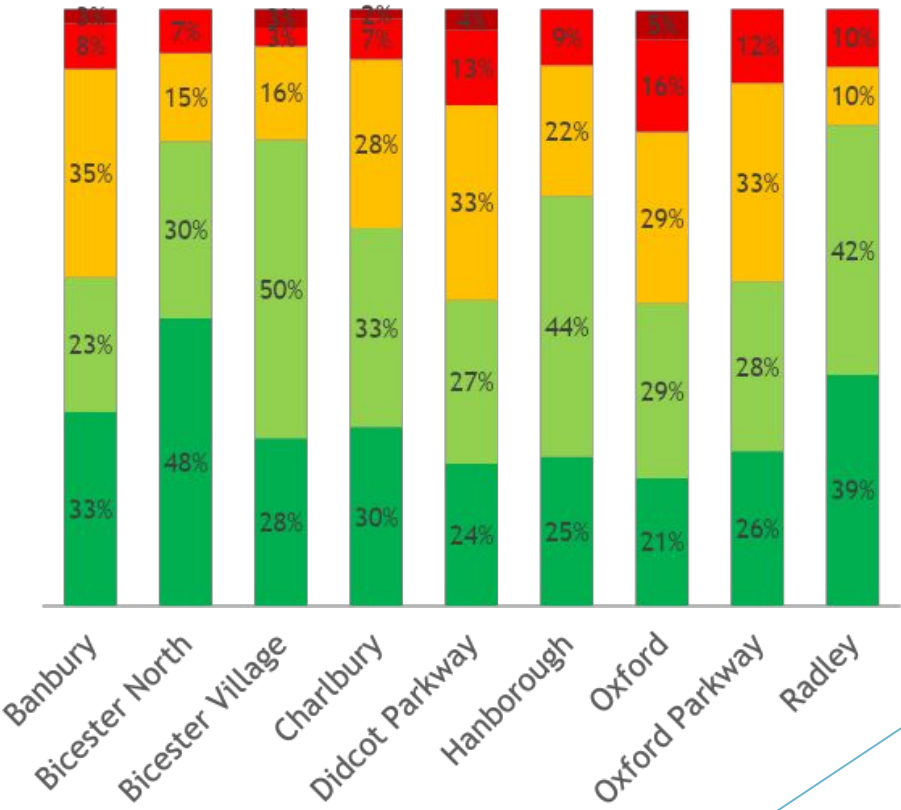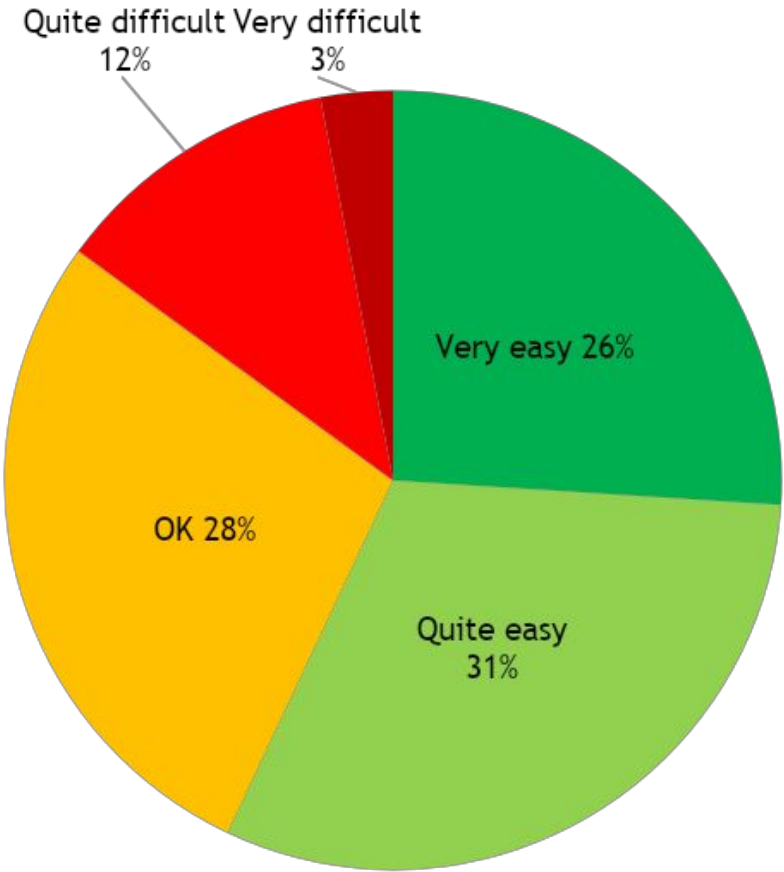
Transport to station

- Overall car is the most popular mode of transport to the station, though just over a third are close enough to walk.

- The data following shows the extent to which this varies by station:

  - Car usage ranges from Hanborough (81%), Oxford Parkway (79%) and Bicester North (70%) to only 16% of travellers from Oxford and 30% of those using Radley

  - Bus is most prevalent for Oxford station (64%). Other stations with notable bus usage are Dicot Parkway (31%), Oxford Parkway (26%) and Radley (23%)

  - Travellers are most likely to walk to Bicester Village (80%), Charlbury (69%) and Banbury (50%)

Mode	%
Car (your own or a lift from family/friend)	45%
Walk	36%
Bus	36%
Cycle	21%
Taxi (private hire)	7%
Other	2%
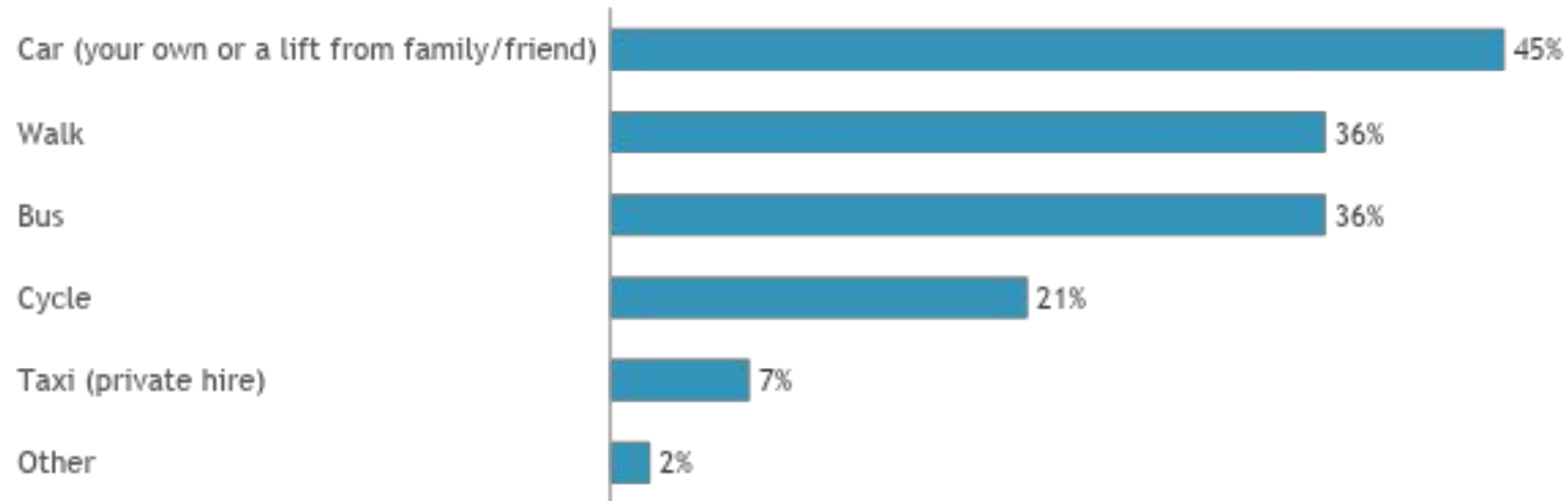
Q13. If you were travelling by train from this station, how would you get there?
Base: All respondents

Ease of access to station

- Overall access to stations is felt to be easy for 57% of people, though it is notable that 15% say it is difficult.

- Ease of access varies by station used, with Bicester North the most likely to be described as 'very easy' to get to (48%) and Oxford the least likely to be described as 'very easy' (21%)

- *Note: Postcode areas that research participants live in are: OX4 (29%) , OX3 (23%) OX2 (19%) and the rest (29%) spread across the county*

Q14. How easy would you say it is for you to get from your home to the station you would travel by train from?
Base: All respondents

Commitment to sustainable transport

- There are varying degrees of awareness and commitment to sustainable transport across the stations, though this is most likely to be reflective of the demographic profiles rather than attributes connected to the stations themselves
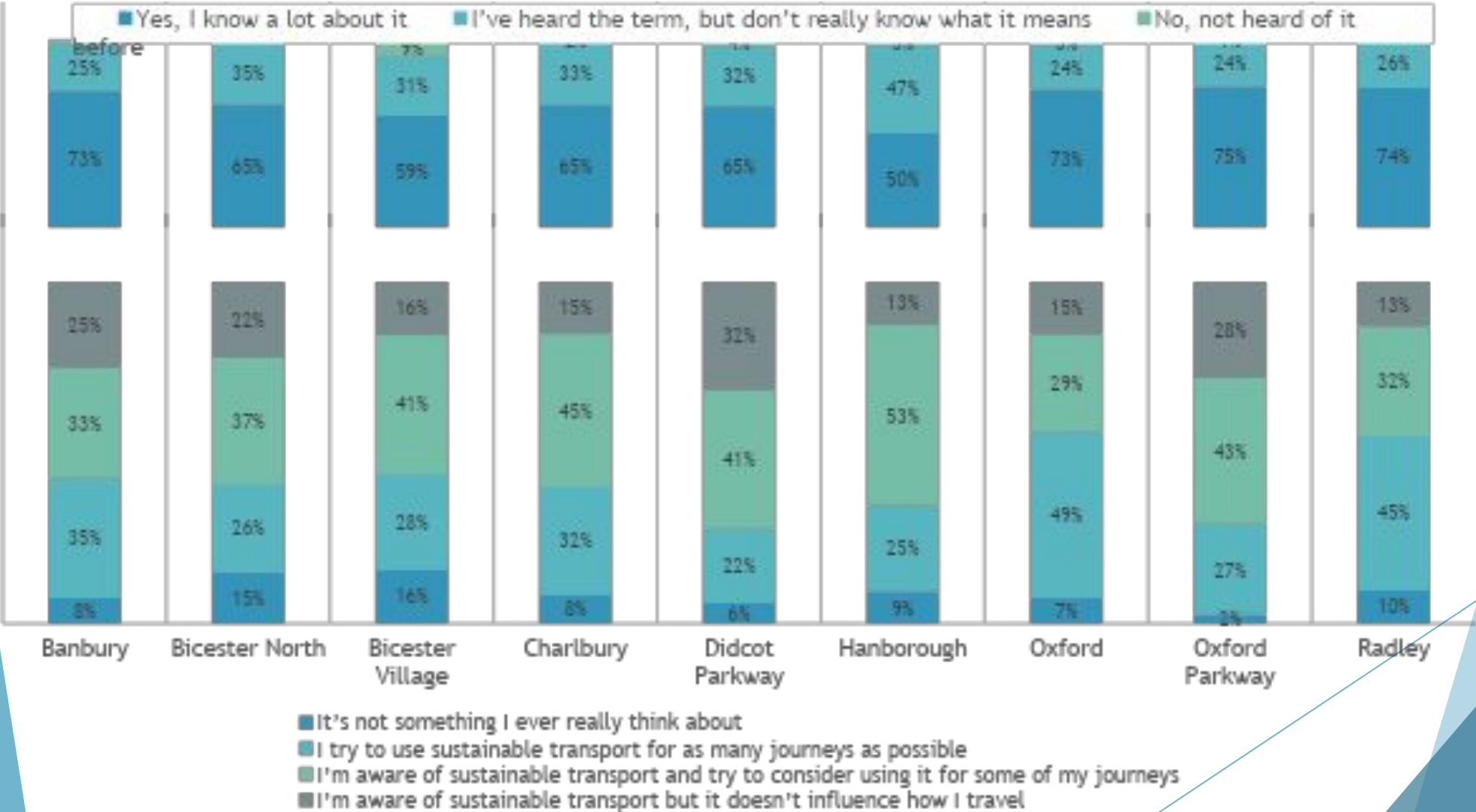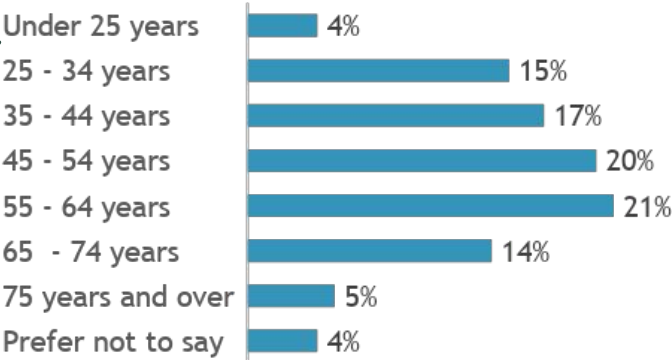
Appendix

Research participation

Demographic profile of those taking part

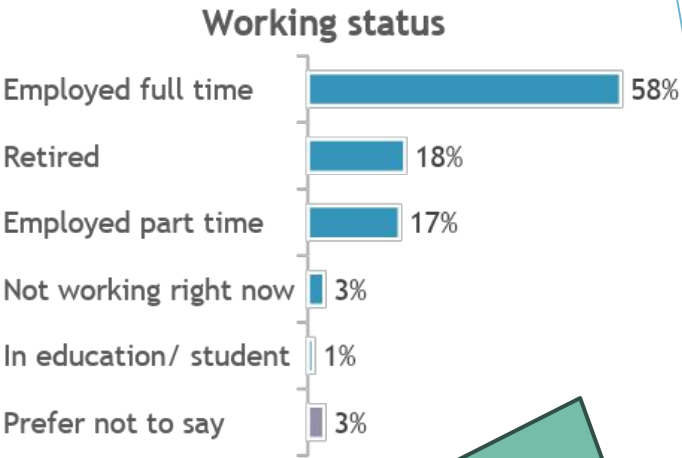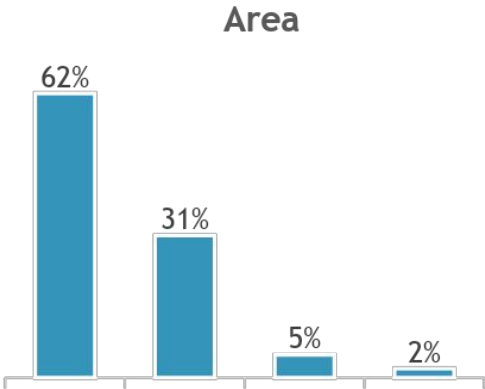More women than men took part, reflecting what is typically seen with surveys of this type

Gender pie chart:
- Non-binary/other 1%
- Prefer not to say 4%
- Male 37%
- Female 58%
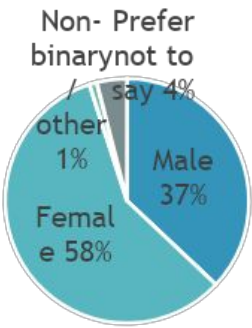
Survey is a little low on those aged under 25 years, something that is often seen in promoted surveys of this kind

Age:
- Under 25 years — 4%
- 25 - 34 years — 15%
- 35 - 44 years — 17%
- 45 - 54 years — 20%
- 55 - 64 years — 21%
- 65 - 74 years — 14%
- 75 years and over — 5%
- Prefer not to say — 4%

In line with the Oxfordshire Population
- 60% Oxford & other main towns
- 40% small towns/ villages/ rural

Area:
- 62%
- 31%
- 5%
- 2%

Working status
- Employed full time — 58%
- Retired — 18%
- Employed part time — 17%
- Not working right now — 3%
- In education/ student — 1%
- Prefer not to say — 3%

Percentage retired is slightly below the national average (22%). Figures for employment are in line with national data and is broadly in line with the split of part-time and full-time
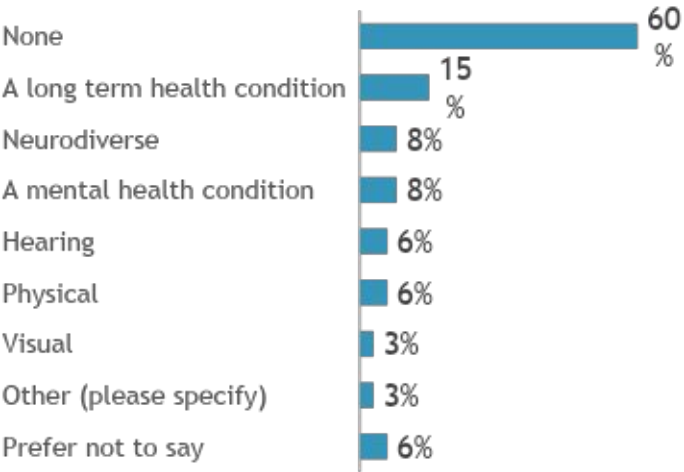
Home life
- From a low income family — 8%
- From a single parent family — 5%
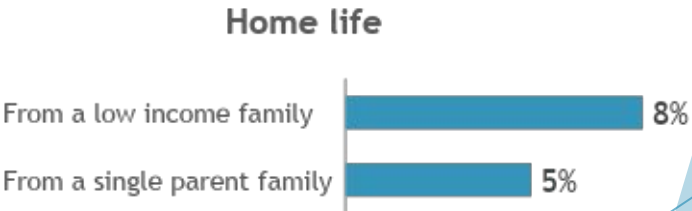
*Sources: Census - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) & Census | Oxfordshire Insight

Demographic profile of those taking part

Disabilities and health conditions

- None — 60%
- A long term health condition — 15%
- Neurodiverse — 8%
- A mental health condition — 8%
- Hearing — 6%
- Physical — 6%
- Visual — 3%
- Other (please specify) — 3%
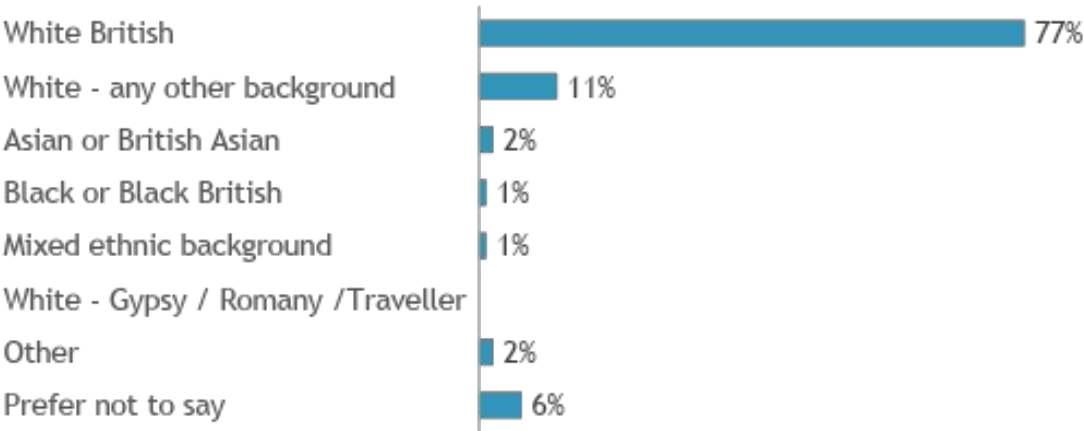- Prefer not to say — 6%

Good representation of those with health conditions and disabilities.

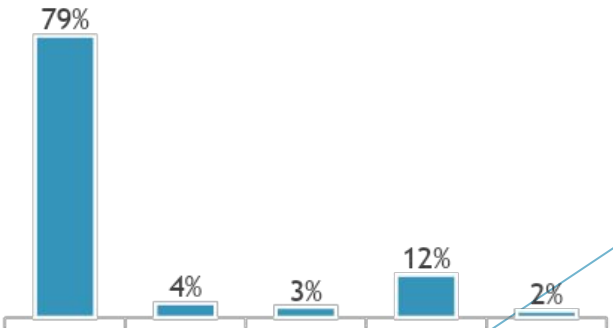Across Oxfordshire 77% of the population are 'white British', though this varies considerably by district, from Oxford at 54% to Vale of the White Horse at 83%*
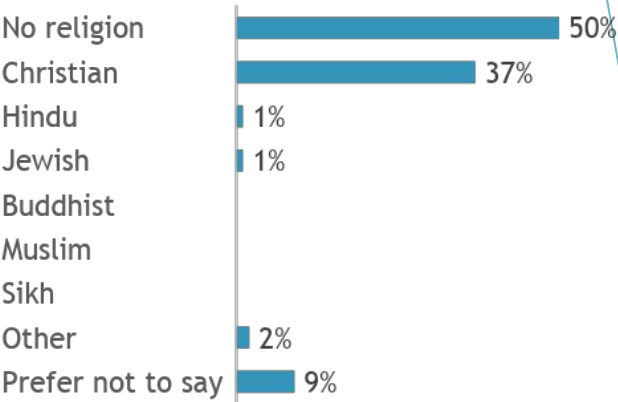
Religion

- No religion — 50%
- Christian — 37%
- Hindu — 1%
- Jewish — 1%
- Buddhist
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Other — 2%
- Prefer not to say — 9%

Ethnicity

- White British — 77%
- White - any other background — 11%
- Asian or British Asian — 2%
- Black or Black British — 1%
- Mixed ethnic background — 1%
- White - Gypsy / Romany /Traveller
- Other — 2%
- Prefer not to say — 6%
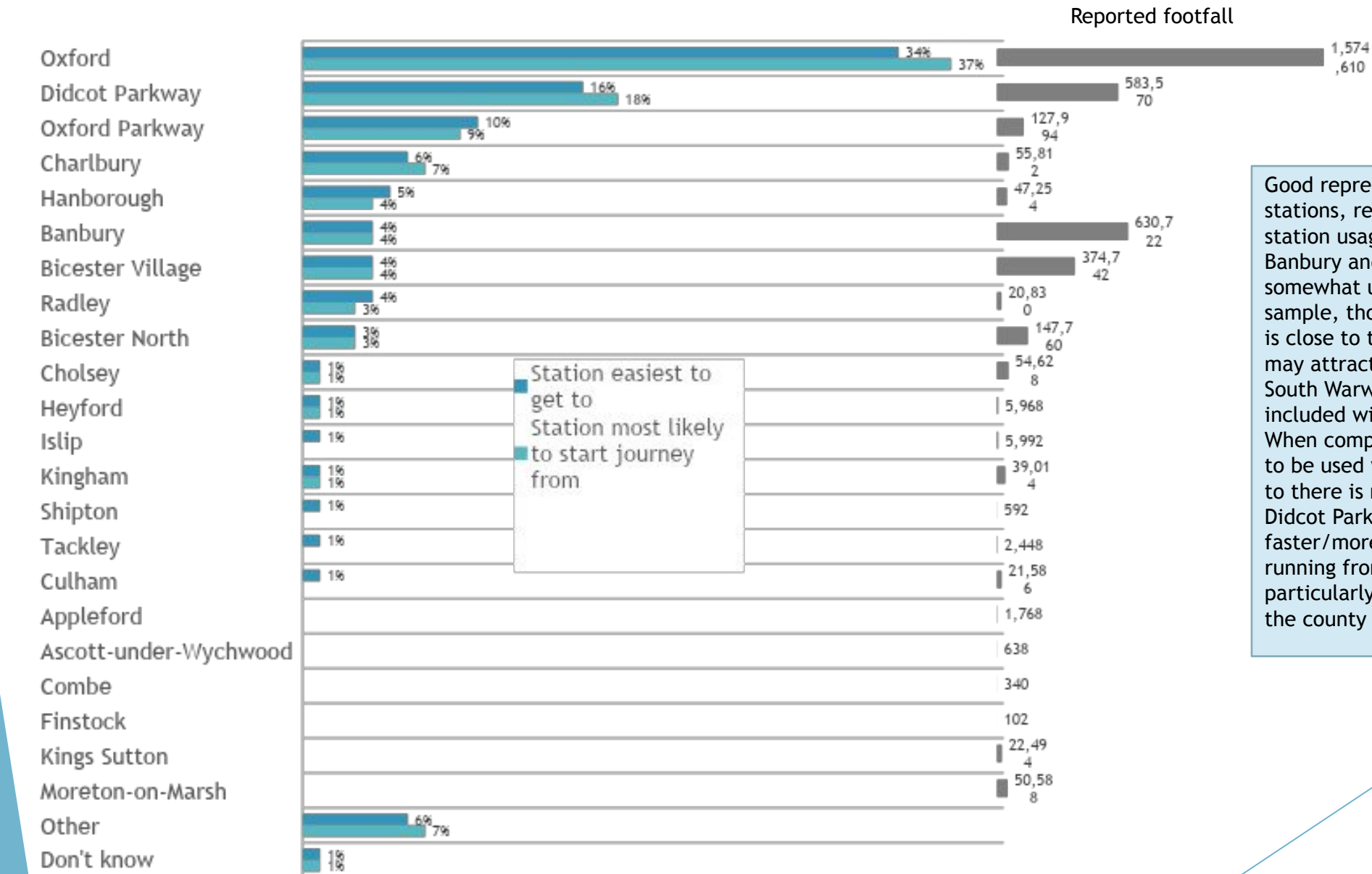
79% 4% 3% 12% 2%

*Source: Census | Oxfordshire Insight

Stations closest to/used

Reported footfall

Good representation across the stations, reflective of the reported station usage.
Banbury and Bicester Village are somewhat under-represented in the sample, though Banbury in particular is close to the county boundary and may attract travellers resident in South Warwickshire, who were not included within this survey.
When comparing station most likely to be used with station easiest to get to there is movement to Oxford and Didcot Parkway, reflecting the faster/more frequent/direct services running from these stations, particularly to destinations beyond the county boundary.

Q10. Which of these stations is the easiest for you to get to? Typically, this is the one you live closest to but sometimes it may be a different one
e.g. better bus service, faster road etc.
Q11. If you were travelling by train, which station would you be most likely to start your journey at?
Base: All respondents

Station Analysis

Base sizes allow analysis of some individual stations*:
Base sizes (travel from/closest to)
Banbury (40/37)
Bicester North (27/27)
Bicester Village (32/32)
Charlbury (60/57)
Didcot Parkway (167/154)
Hanborough (32/49)
Oxford (354/326)
Oxford Parkway (8289)
Radley (31/39)

Combined group: Moreton, Kingham, Shipton, Ascott, Charlbury, Finstock, Combe

Where base size is less than 50, data is directional only
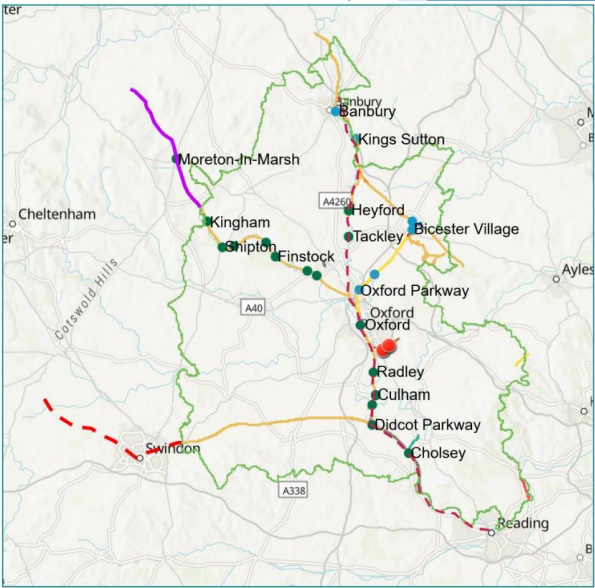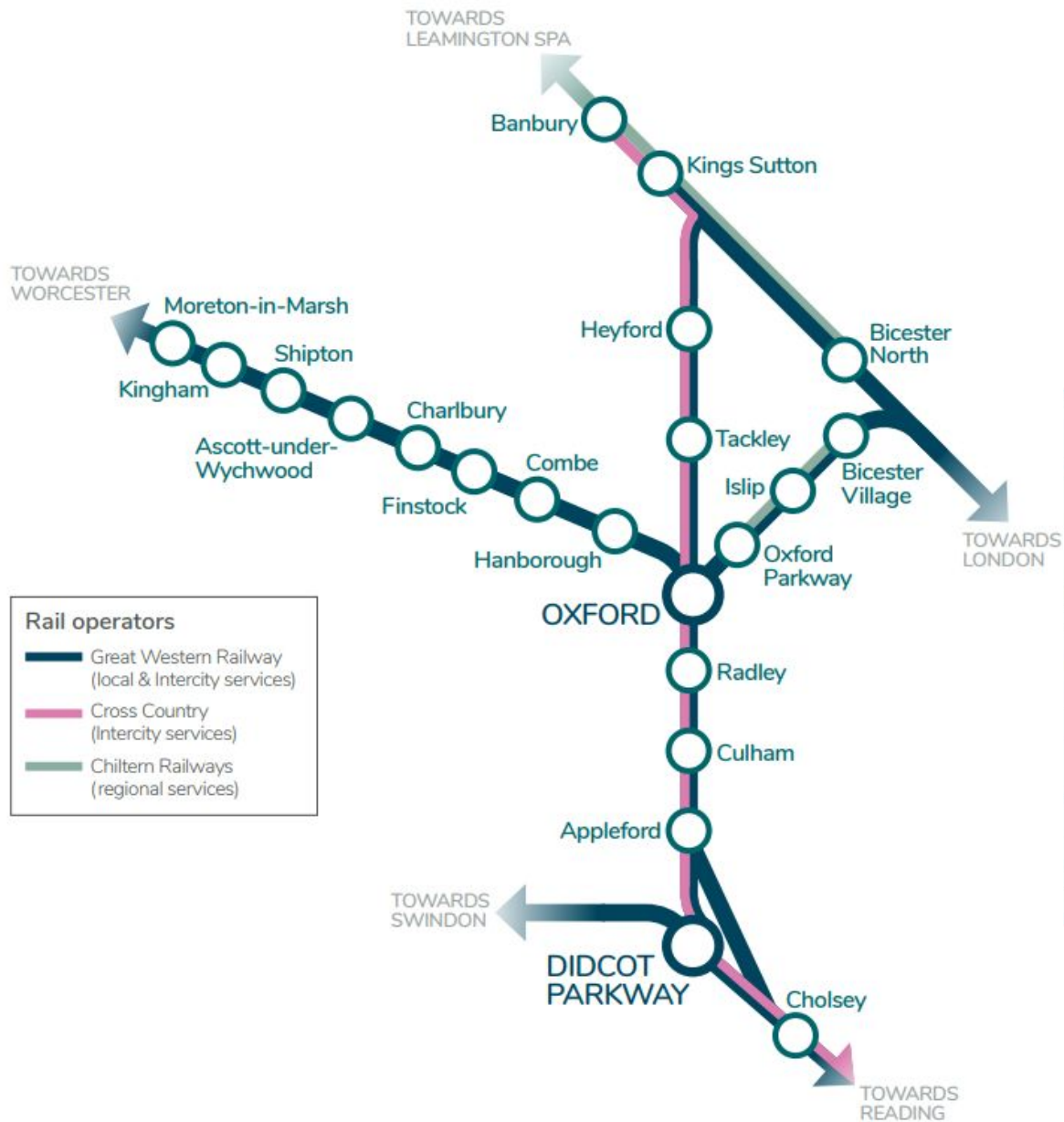
Connecting Communities Project Research Summary Report

Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership

Spring 2024