



Building buses up in Bracknell Forest

Bus Service
Improvement Plan for
Bracknell Forest

October 2021



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Executive summary

The National Bus Strategy provides a welcome boost to bus networks and in encouraging bus use across the country. The requirement to develop a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for Bracknell Forest has given a real opportunity for the Council to come together with its local bus operators to collectively consider the current bus service offer to residents and how it can be enhanced. The formation of a Bus Partnership that meets regularly has been a useful forum to highlight issues, discuss ideas and put forward potential solutions.

High car ownership and use, coupled with dispersed journey patterns, make for challenging conditions for bus services in Bracknell Forest. The bus is not viewed as an attractive option for those with a choice. Residents who don't use buses say that services are not frequent enough and don't run at the times they need them. However, for those who rely on buses, services are well regarded, albeit that any enhancements would still be welcomed.

Despite the challenges, Bracknell Forest has a relatively stable network of commercial and supported bus services run by four operators. Buses are well presented and services are promoted by operators. This has helped to attract users back to buses after the pandemic, with recovery better than some parts of the country. Therefore, this is a strong foundation on which to build up the network. The Bus Partnership agreed early on that the starting point needed to be a focus on commercial services – those that already carried a large proportion of passengers. These offer the best opportunity to attract more use through modest frequency and other enhancements. This will in turn increase revenue and allow operators to invest in further improvements; therefore, establishing a virtuous cycle of growth and improvement.

This approach is captured in the vision **“to develop a viable and stable bus network that supports the local economy, provides better choice and improves quality of life in a safe and healthy environment”**. This is underpinned by objectives of service development and improvement, operational efficiency and better passenger experience.

Four workstreams are envisaged to deliver the aspirations of the BSIP:

- **Building up the network** – enhancing and developing services
- **Building efficiency** – by tackling delays and pinchpoints
- **Building value** – through easier ticketing and fares discounts
- **Building up confidence** – by improved information and passenger infrastructure

Within each of these are a series of measures and schemes that, if supported with additional Government funding, will introduce improvements that will make buses significantly more attractive.

Alongside enhanced frequencies and extended times of operation of some commercial services, these routes will be the focus for improved bus stops and information, as well as targeted fares promotions and discounted travel for young people up to the age of 25. Pinchpoints that impact on smooth bus operation, highlighted by operators and their drivers, will be tackled to speed up journeys.

In parallel, attention will also be given to supported services. The dual aims of this will be to try and make some of these commercially viable and also to develop their role in supporting the existing commercial network. With neighbouring authorities, there is a desire to try demand responsive transport in the area, to understand how it can contribute to the overall service network. This might be in terms of serving areas that have little or no bus service, or in tapping into new markets, such as providing direct links to employment areas or railway stations. Equally, semi-scheduled responsive services could connect people into the main fixed route bus services.

The Bracknell Forest Bus Partnership has provided the focus for collaborative working and will form the basis of the Enhanced Partnership required to be in place by April 2022. This will in turn facilitate the successful implementation of the planned measures, once levels of funding secured from Government are known.

With a relatively modest injection of funds that are being bid for through this BSIP (summarised in the table below), significant improvements can be made to the bus network in Bracknell Forest. More buses, running to more places at more times, with cheaper fares and quicker journey times, will improve the image of buses and increase their contribution towards the better economic, social and environmental well-being of Bracknell Forest’s residents.

Funding sought from the DfT to achieve BSIP ambitions			
Year	Revenue	Capital	Total
2022/23	£1.42m	£0.55m	£1.97m
2023/24	£1.30m	£0.75m	£2.05m
2024/25	£1.06m	£0.76m	£1.82m
Total	£3.76m	£2.06m	£5.84m

Robert Williams, CEO Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses:

“Our mission is to connect people and places every day with an amazing team, and our vision is to be the local transport of choice by constantly refreshing our services, skills and technology. We hope that this BSIP will help us to deliver just that.”

1. Overview

Introduction

- 1.1 Government published its **National Bus Strategy: Bus Back Better** in March 2021, which has an ambitious vision for significant improvements to bus services to return usage to pre-COVID levels and then to build patronage further. It wants to see services that are:
 - **More frequent**, with turn-up-and-go services on major routes and feeder or demand-responsive services to lower-density places.
 - **Faster and more reliable**, with bus priority wherever necessary and where there is room.
 - **Cheaper**, with more low, flat fares in towns and cities, lower point-to-point fares elsewhere, and more daily price capping everywhere.
 - **More comprehensive**, with overprovision on a few corridors reduced to boost provision elsewhere and better services in the evenings and weekends, not necessarily with conventional buses.
 - **Easier to understand**, with simpler routes, common numbering, co-ordinated timetable change dates, good publicity, and comprehensive information online.
 - **Easier to use**, with common tickets, passes and daily capping across all operators, simpler fares, contactless payment and protection of bus stations.
 - **Better integrated** with other modes and each other, including more bus-rail interchange and integration and inter-bus transfers.
- 1.2 To be eligible for Government funding announced as part of the National Bus Strategy, local authorities are required to produce a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and develop an Enhanced Partnership to facilitate the delivery of proposed improvements in collaboration with bus operators.
- 1.3 The overall aim of the BSIP is to provide a focus and framework for working with operators to develop the bus network and improve its performance, both in terms of:
 - Increasing the viability of commercial services (enabling sustained growth, development, investment)

- Ensuring that those services run with financial support from Bracknell Forest Council continue to effectively meet the needs of communities.

Bracknell Forest's Bus Service Improvement Plan

Vision:

"To develop a viable and stable bus network that supports the local economy, provides better choice and improves quality of life in a safe and healthy environment."

SIP Objectives:

The vision will be achieved by addressing the following objectives, to:

- Maintain and develop the bus network and its use.
- Focus on the main commercial services as the ones with greatest potential to grow, thus improving viability and enabling investment and improvement.
- Ensure appropriate supported services meet identified needs not served by commercial services.
- Create more of a single network view.
- Improve the efficiency of bus operations.
- Improve all aspects of passenger experience - information; fares; bus stops; service levels; journey times.

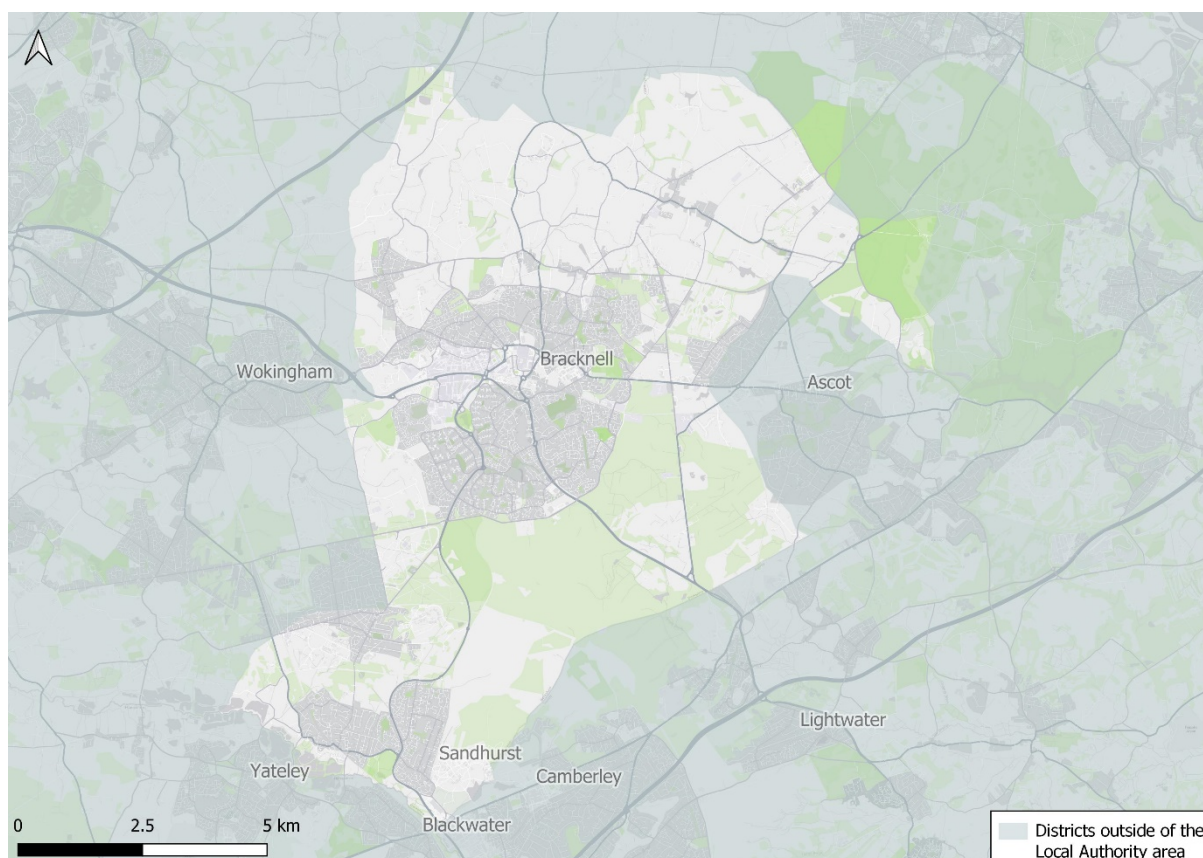
Development of the BSIP

- 1.4 In response to the publication of the National Bus Strategy in March 2021 and, following individual discussions about it with each of the bus operators, it was agreed to establish a Bracknell Forest Bus Partnership Group. This has overseen the development of the Bus Service Improvement Plan and will continue to formulate the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme(s), in line with the Department for Transport's (DfT) guidance. The Group consists of local authority officers and representatives of each of the operators that provide local bus services in the area and is independently chaired. Terms of reference were agreed and, since June 2021, the Group has met monthly to discuss ways that bus services can be improved and to provide inputs to the BSIP document. BSIP objectives and project priorities were agreed at a meeting of the Group in September and a draft of the BSIP document agreed at a meeting in October.
- 1.5 The Council published a notice of intent to develop an Enhanced Partnership on 27 June 2021. The BSIP will form the basis of the EP Plan to be in place by April 2022. Sitting as part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP), the BSIP will be a live document, continually refreshed and updated, aimed at driving improvements to bus services

through the implementation of a series of projects and schemes. It will be reviewed annually and performance against targets will be reported every 6 months.

- 1.6 The Plan covers the Bracknell Forest Council area. It considers all bus services wholly within the area, together with those that radiate out to neighbouring areas. During the development of the BSIP, there have been ongoing discussions with neighbouring authorities, to ensure plans are aligned and complementary. Also, some joint project proposals have been developed. Whilst there has been a sharing of ideas, all authorities wished to develop their own BSIP documents, in order to reflect the particular issues and opportunities of their individual areas.

Figure 1-1 Bracknell Forest

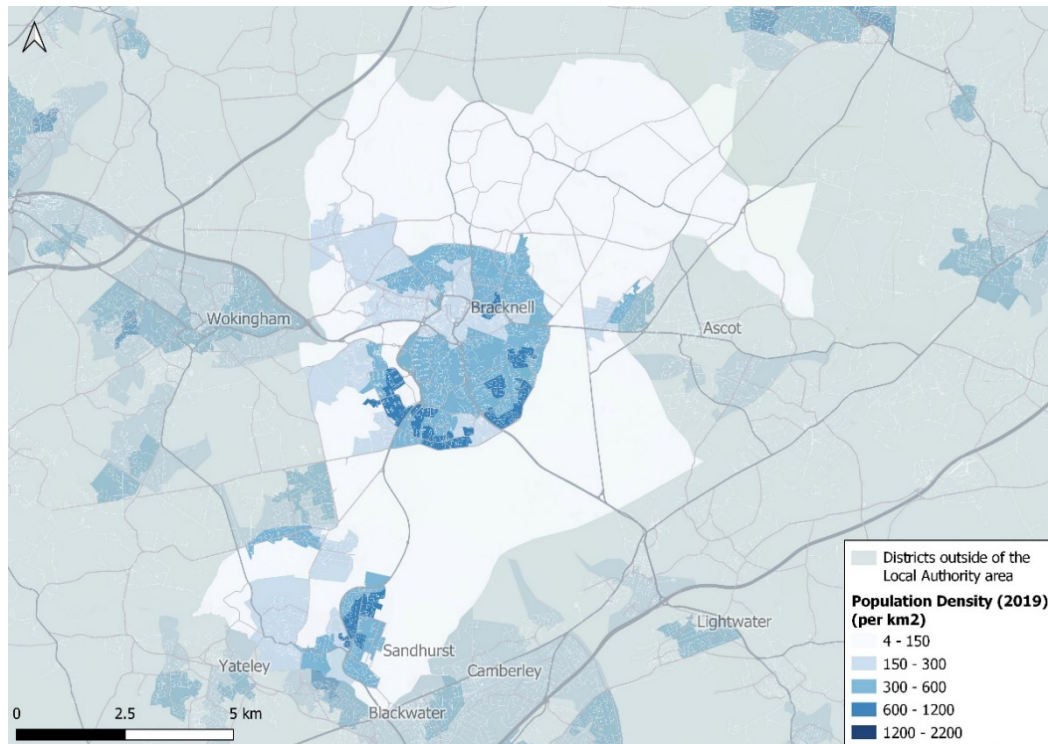


Characteristics of the area

- 1.7 Bracknell Forest is located at the heart of the Thames Valley, just 40 kilometres to the west of London in the South East of England within the county of Berkshire.
- 1.8 Covering an area of 110 km², Bracknell Forest has a population of 124,165.

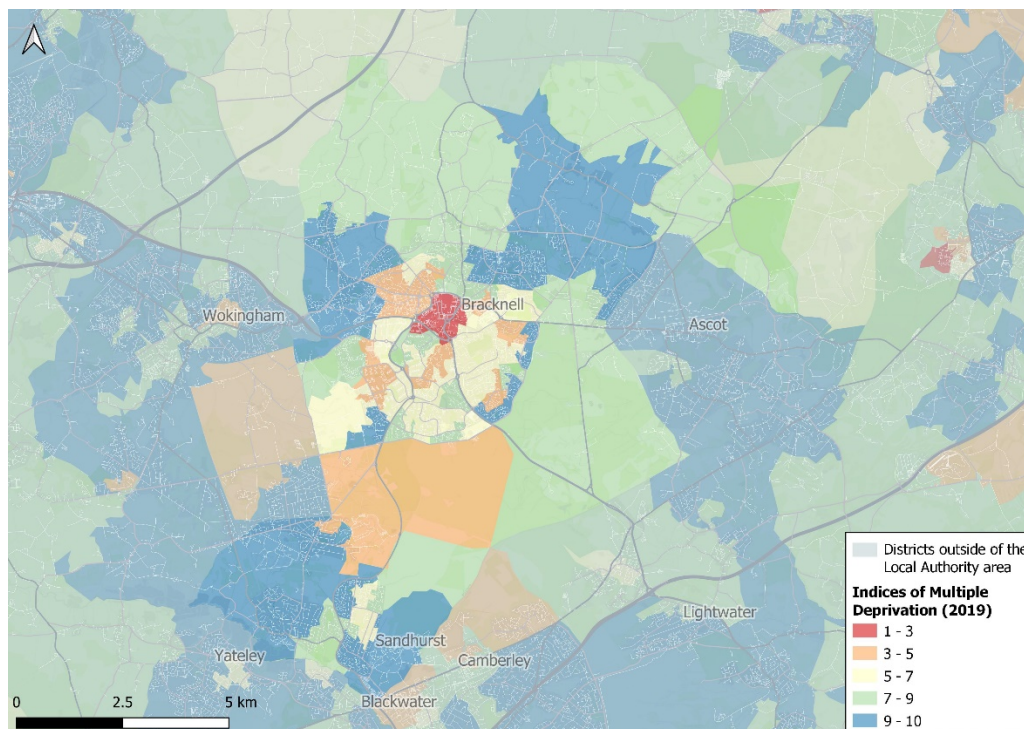
- 1.9 As a post-war new town, Bracknell was developed on the principle of satellite neighbourhoods. The main urban area of Bracknell lies at the centre of the Borough, and contains large residential, commercial and industrial areas and the major retail and service facilities. The residential areas in the south of the town have the highest population density.
- 1.10 The southern part of the area contains the settlements of Crowthorne and Sandhurst. To the north lie the settlements of Binfield, Warfield and Winkfield, whilst North Ascot lies to the east.
- 1.11 A number of settlements cross boundaries with other authorities, in particular Crowthorne with Wokingham Borough Council and North Ascot with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Sandhurst, although wholly within the Borough, has strong connections to Camberley in Surrey.
- 1.12 The population has a median age of 39.8 years, slightly below the UK average of 40.4 years. 15% of the population is aged 65+, slightly lower than for England as a whole, whilst 64.3% of the population is aged 16-64 years, slightly higher than for England as whole.
- 1.13 90.6% of the population is white, which is in line with the average for South East England.
- 1.14 The significant residential areas in south Bracknell have a higher density of housing (Figure 2 2), giving greater demand to support bus provision than the areas in the north of the town.

Figure 1-2 Population Density



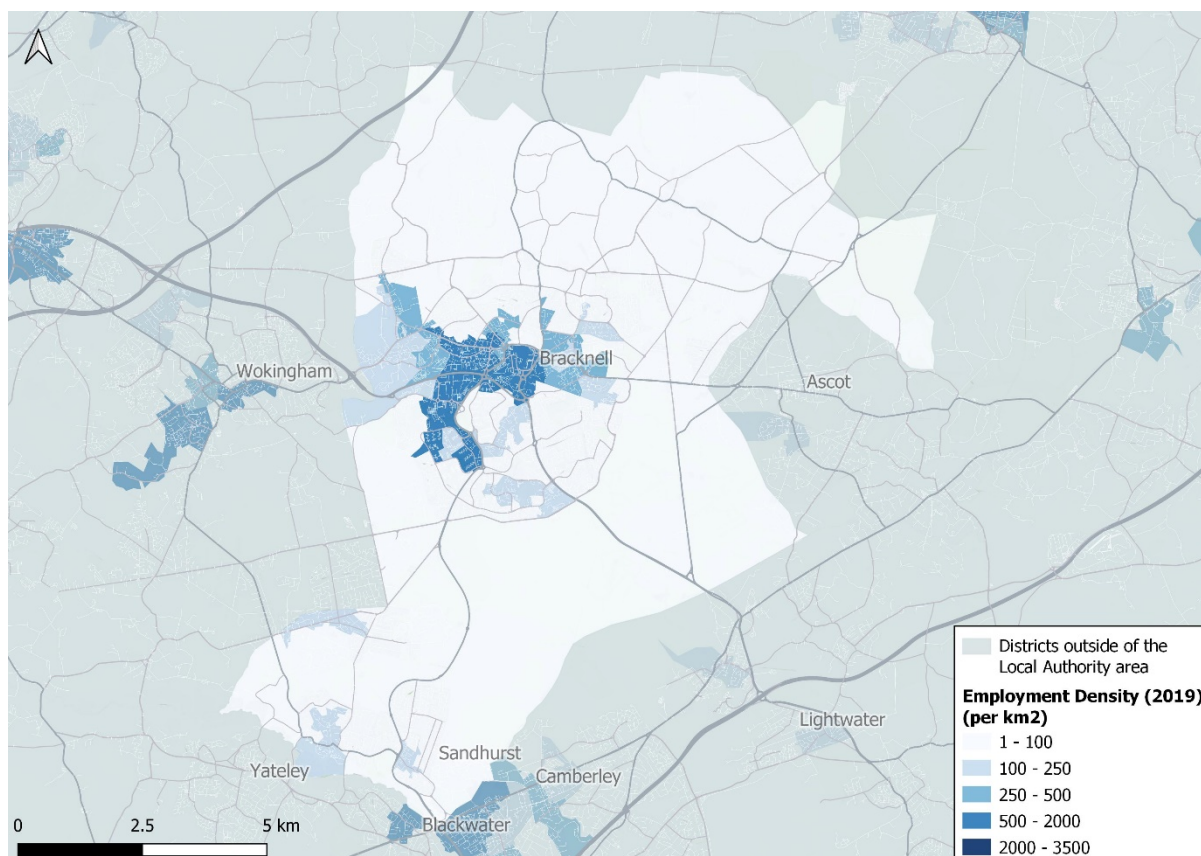
1.15 Overall, levels of deprivation are lower than average. Just one Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), Bracknell Centre, is within the lowest 20% of LSOAs in England (Figure 1-3).

Figure 1-3 Indices of Multiple Deprivation



- 1.16 Bracknell itself is a centre for several national and international businesses and is home to the European headquarters for certain multi-national corporations. The southern industrial estate and the town centre have the highest density of employment in the borough (up to 3500 jobs per km²). Employment density according to the 2019 Business Register and Employment Survey is shown in Figure 1-4.

Figure 1-4 Employment Density



Policy context

- 1.17 The BSIP forms a Bus Strategy document that sits with the Bracknell Forest Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3 Core Strategy and Implementation Plan 2011-2026, which sets out aims and objectives to address issues surrounding transport and climate change, with the aim to create economic, environmental and health improvements throughout Bracknell Forest.
- 1.18 The LTP recognises that transport systems play a huge role in '*facilitating a high quality of life, by meeting the needs of the individual and remaining responsive to the changing needs of business*'.

1.19 Policy TP3 looks specifically at buses, with the aim of **increasing the use and availability of buses, and to continue improving passenger satisfaction and bus punctuality** through:

- Encouraging and securing high quality, readily accessible bus services that focus on local communities and Bracknell Town Centre.
- Continuing to ensure good access to community facilities, such as community hubs and health centres.
- Where feasible, procuring services that are not provided by the free market.
- Partnership working with bus operators and other interested parties.
- Improving infrastructure and priority measures where real benefits can be achieved.
- Maintaining access to the highway network for buses throughout the year.
- Active dialogue with developers to ensure bus services are effectively provided in new development.
- Promoting bus travel and making up-to-date information including real time information available.
- Promoting easy and efficient ticketing for bus use.
- Seeking to improve connections between bus and train services.
- Encouraging bus operators to use alternative fuels and greener buses.
- Facilitating and providing concessionary travel where appropriate.

2. Current offer to passengers

Bus services

2.1 The bus services operating across Bracknell Forest are provided by 4 operators:

- Thames Valley Buses (part of Reading Buses)
- Reading Buses
- White Bus
- Stagecoach South

2.2 Most of the network, including all contracted services supported by Bracknell Forest Council, is operated by Thames Valley Buses and parent company Reading Buses.

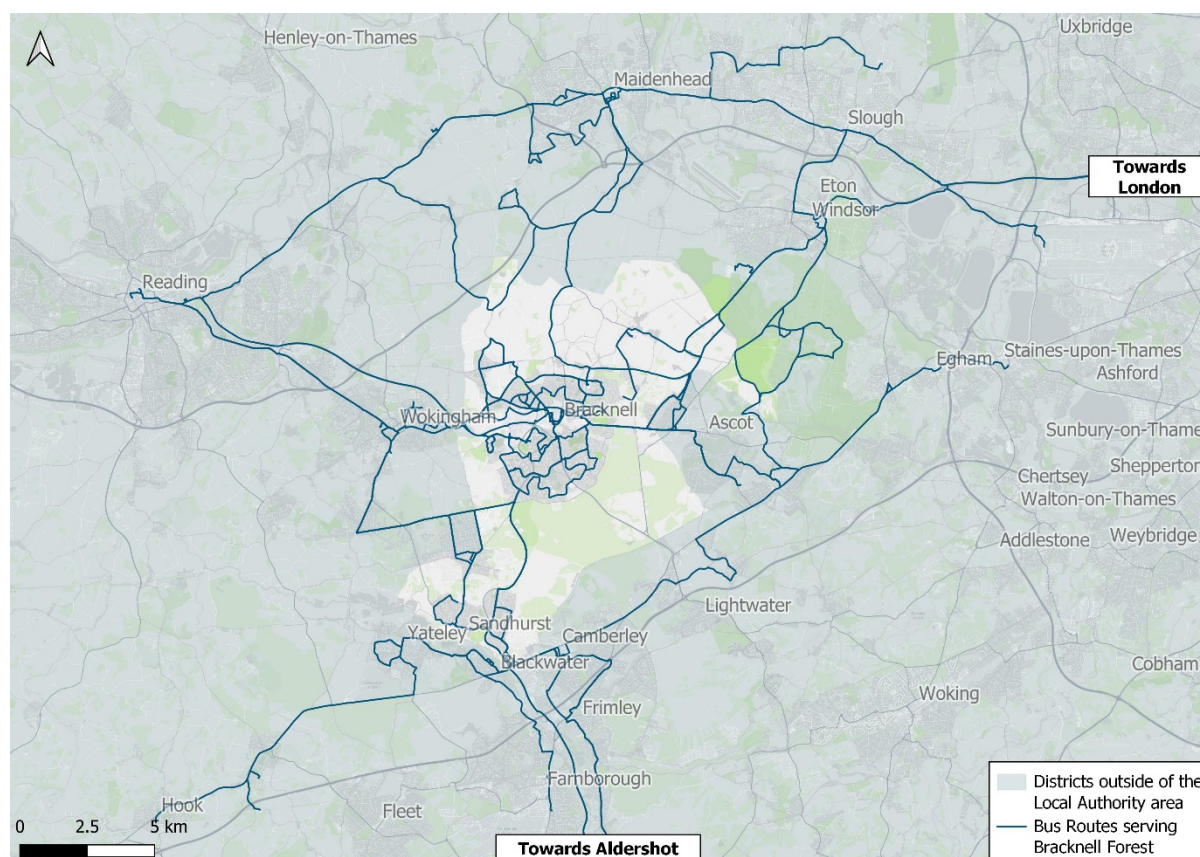
Table 1 Bus services operating in Bracknell Forest

Service		Days of operation	Frequency (mins)			Commercial or supported
			Daytime	Late evening	Sunday	
Thames Valley Buses						
53	Bracknell – Maidenhead – Wexham Park Hospital	Mon - Sat	60	-	-	Supported
108	Bracknell – Jennetts Park	Mon - Sun	40	-	90	Supported
150	Bracknell – Binfield	Mon - Sun	30	-	90	Supported
151A	Bracknell – Binfield – Emmbrook School/Wokingham	Mon - Sat	5 journeys	-	-	Supported
156	Bracknell – Harmons Water	Mon - Sat	60	-	-	Supported
157/158	North Bracknell estates circular (clockwise/anti-clockwise)	Mon - Sat	60 each direction	-	-	Supported
171/172	South Bracknell estates circular (clockwise/anti-clockwise)	Mon - Sun	30 each direction	60 each direction	60 each direction	Commercial
194	Bracknell – Crowthorne – Sandhurst – Camberley	Mon - Sun	30	60	60	Commercial
299	Bracknell – Winkfield	MWF	5 journeys	-	-	Supported
598	Little Sandhurst – Camberley	TuTh	1 journey	-	-	Supported
N1	Bracknell – North Bracknell estates	Mon - Sat	-	1 journey	-	Supported
Reading Buses						
4/X4 Lion	Bracknell – Wokingham - Reading	Mon - Sun	15	60	30	Commercial
702	Reading – Bracknell – Legoland – London	Mon - Fri	2 journeys	-	-	Commercial
703	Bracknell – Windsor – Heathrow Airport (5 journeys via Winkfield)	Mon - Sun	60-80	90	60	Commercial

White Bus						
01	Ascot – Woodside – Windsor	Mon - Sat	7 or 8 journeys	-	-	Supported (RBWM)
X94	Ascot – Bracknell – Camberley – Frimley Park Hospital	Mon - Fri	5 journeys	-	-	Commercial
Stagecoach						
3	Aldershot – Camberley – The Meadows – Yateley	Mon - Sun	15	-	90	Commercial

2.3 The context of the network is shown in Figure 2-1. There are a number of town services operating within Bracknell itself. Those to the southern parts of the town operate commercially, whilst the northern residential areas rely entirely on supported services. A number of other services provide links to neighbouring areas, including Wokingham, Reading, Camberley, Windsor, Heathrow Airport, Maidenhead and Slough. Two cross-boundary services are financially supported jointly with other authorities.

Figure 2-1 Bracknell Forest bus services in the wider regional context



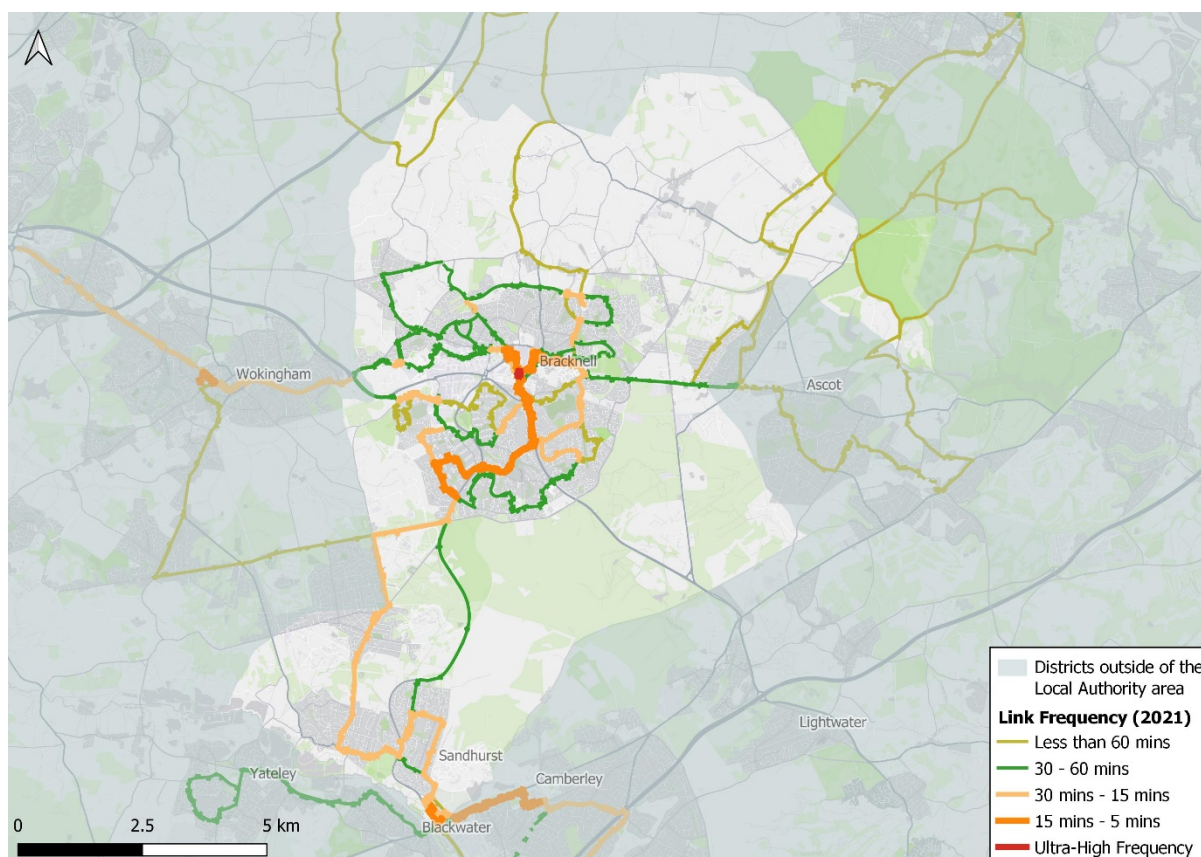
2.4 A community transport scheme, Keep Mobile, provides door-to-door transport for mainly elderly and disabled residents who are unable to use public transport services, and Crowthorne Community Minibus provides a similar service exclusively for

Crowthorne residents. There are also a number of voluntary car schemes operating in the borough.

Service levels

- 2.5 Most services operate half hourly or hourly, except for service 4/X4 between Bracknell, Wokingham and Reading, and the 171/172 clockwise and anti-clockwise loops of the southern residential areas of the town that each operate half-hourly, creating an overall frequency of 15 minutes. There are clear inconsistencies in the levels of service provided to different parts of the town, with frequencies for parts of the north of the town half those of services in the south.
- 2.6 Figure 2-2 shows overall levels of provision across the area, expressed as link frequency. Link Frequency shows the number of buses running along a road, regardless of service number or operator.

Figure 2-2 Link Frequency



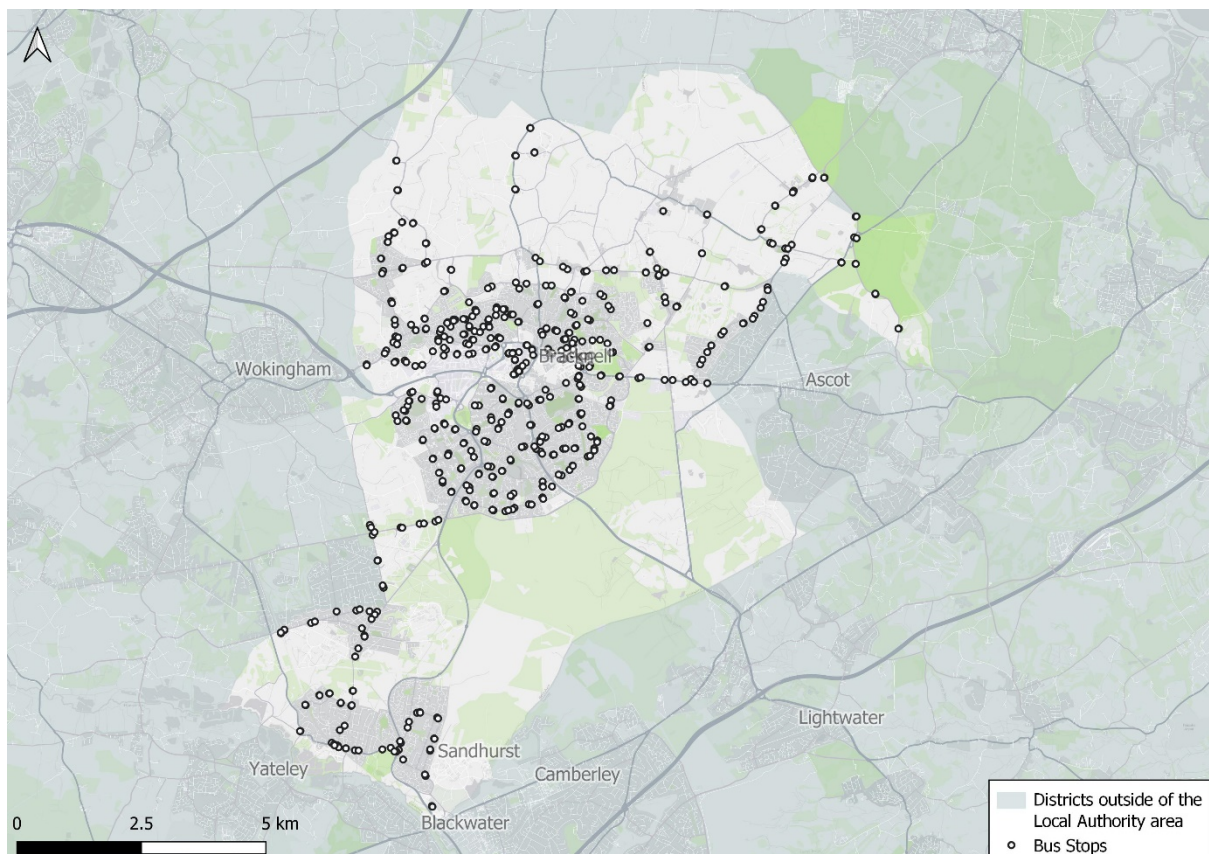
- 2.7 There are limited Sunday buses, and many services only operate until mid-evening Monday to Saturday. Later evening services are provided on the 4/X4, 171/172 and 194,

servicing the south of Bracknell and there is one late evening service (N1) servicing the north of Bracknell.

Bus Stops

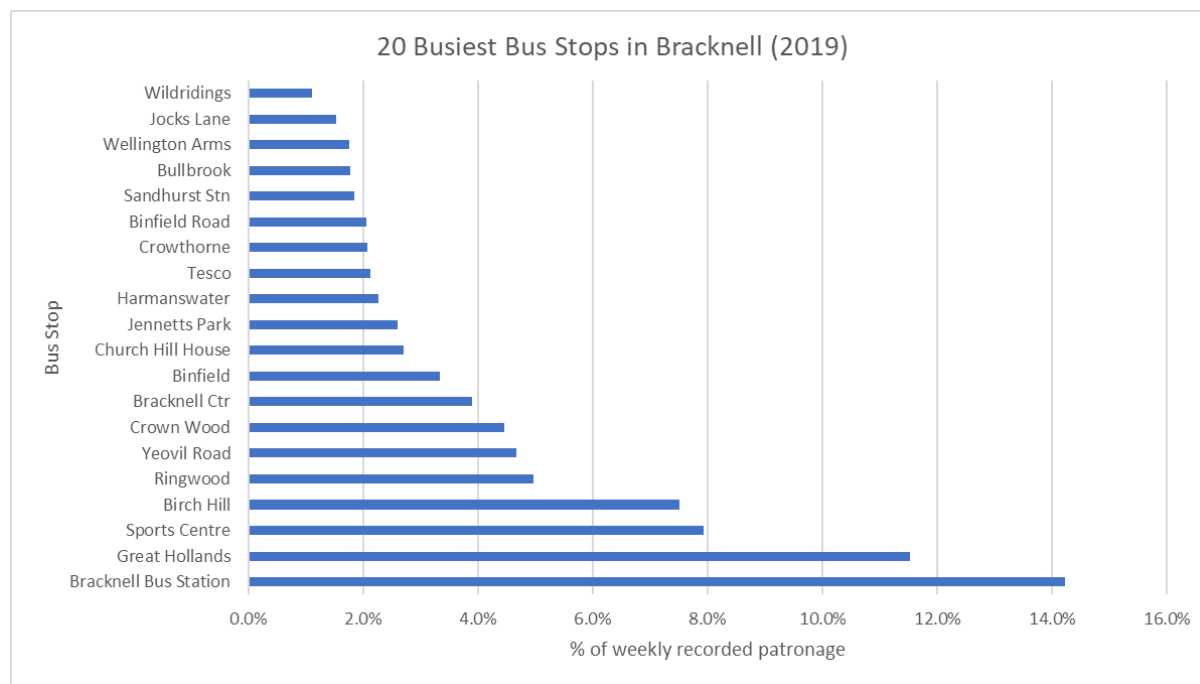
- 2.8 There are 544 bus stops. However, some of these are not currently served or are only used by school services. Figure 2-3 shows the location of bus stops.

Figure 2-3 Bus Stops



- 2.9 Not all stops have a bus shelter. There are around 160 bus shelters in the borough, with two thirds of these supplied and maintained by Clear Channel in return for the right to place adverts in the shelters, and the remainder are maintained by Town and Parish Councils.
- 2.10 Based on an analysis of bus boardings for the morning peak (2019), the 20 places seeing most use are shown below:

Figure 2-4 20 busiest bus stops in Bracknell Forest



Patronage levels

2.11 The following table sets out overall patronage totals for Bracknell Forest taken from the DfT’s Bus Statistics (extracts from tables Bus0109a, Bus0113, Bus0110a).

Table 2 Bus patronage in Bracknell Forest

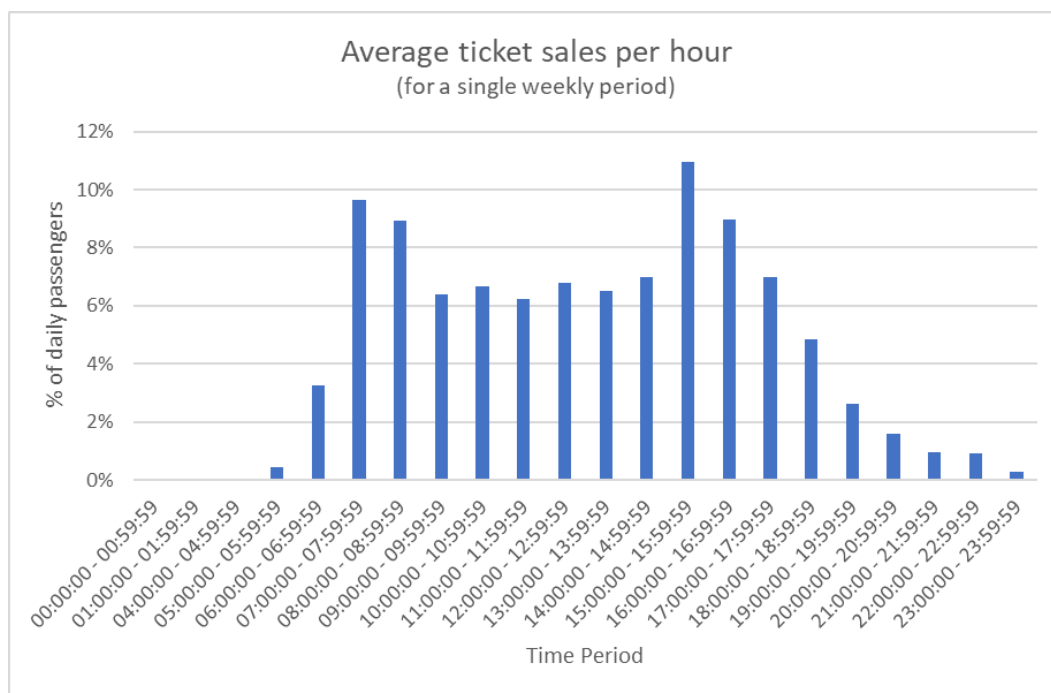
Year	Total passenger journeys on local bus services (million)	Number of journeys by elderly or disabled concessionary pass holders	% of overall journeys made by elderly or disabled concessionary pass holders	Passenger journeys on local bus services per head of population
2009/10	2.1	0.8	41%	18.5
2010/11	2.1	0.9	45%	18.2
2011/12	1.9	0.9	45%	17.0
2012/13	1.7	0.8	44%	14.8
2013/14	1.9	0.8	41%	16.1
2014/15	2.3	0.9	40%	19.1
2015/16	2.1	0.8	39%	17.9
2016/17	2.1	0.9	37%	17.3
2017/18	1.8	0.7	39%	14.8
2018/19	1.8	0.7	40%	14.8

2.12 Between 2009/10 and 2018/19 bus passenger journeys fell by 14% and concessionary passenger journeys dropped by 12.5%, indicating a greater fall in fare-paying

passengers. Over that same period, passenger journeys by local bus service per head of population fell 20% from 18.5 to 14.8. This latter measure was below the South East average of 38.0, and in line with neighbouring authorities Wokingham (16.9) and Windsor & Maidenhead (9.3).

- 2.13 A relatively high proportion (40%) of overall passenger journeys are made by elderly and disabled concessionary pass holders, compared with the average across England of 22%.
- 2.14 80% of overall patronage is accounted for by the 3 main commercial services:
 - Bracknell – Wokingham – Reading (4/X4)
 - Bracknell – Bracknell southern estates (171/172)
 - Bracknell – Camberley (194)
- 2.15 Ticket sales data from October 2019 shows the profile of usage on all services across the day. The two busiest times were between 07:00 and 08:00 (9% of sales) and 15:00 and 16:00 (11% of sales). This data is visualised in Figure 2-5.

Figure 2-5 Average ticket sales per hour

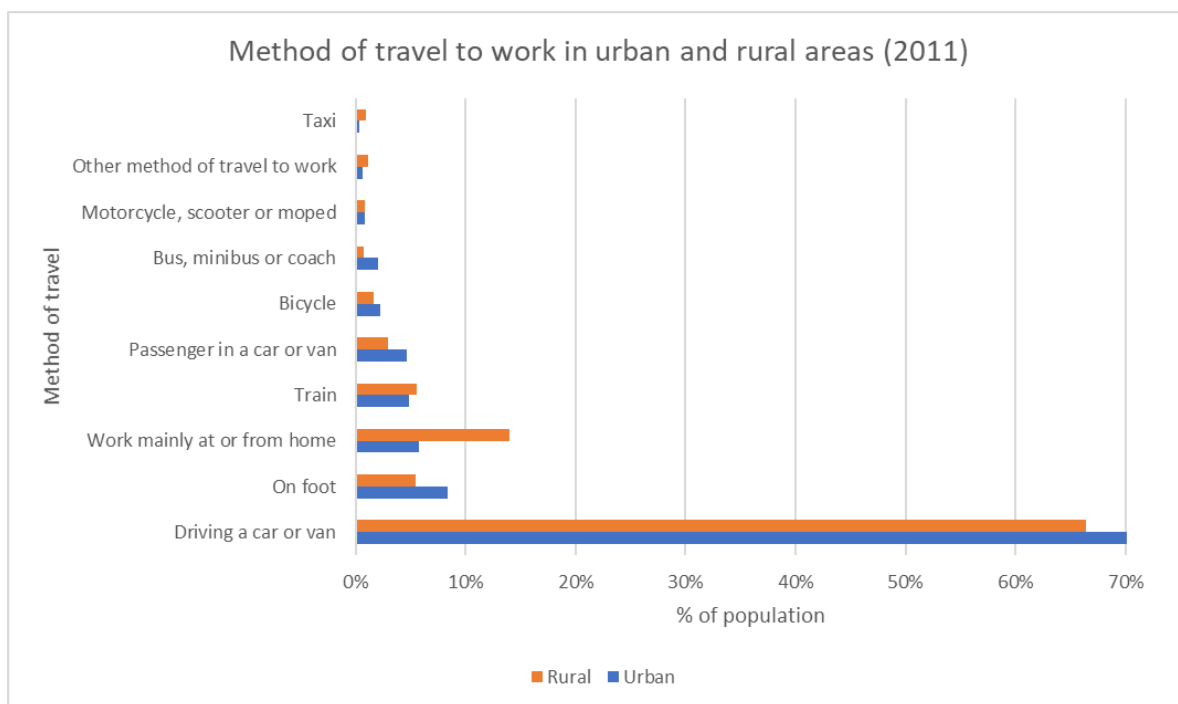


- 2.16 With regards to fare types, concessionary passes were the single largest group, accounting for 40%. Adult ticket sales were next at 35%.
- 2.17 28% of ticket sales were either single or returns.

Bus modal share

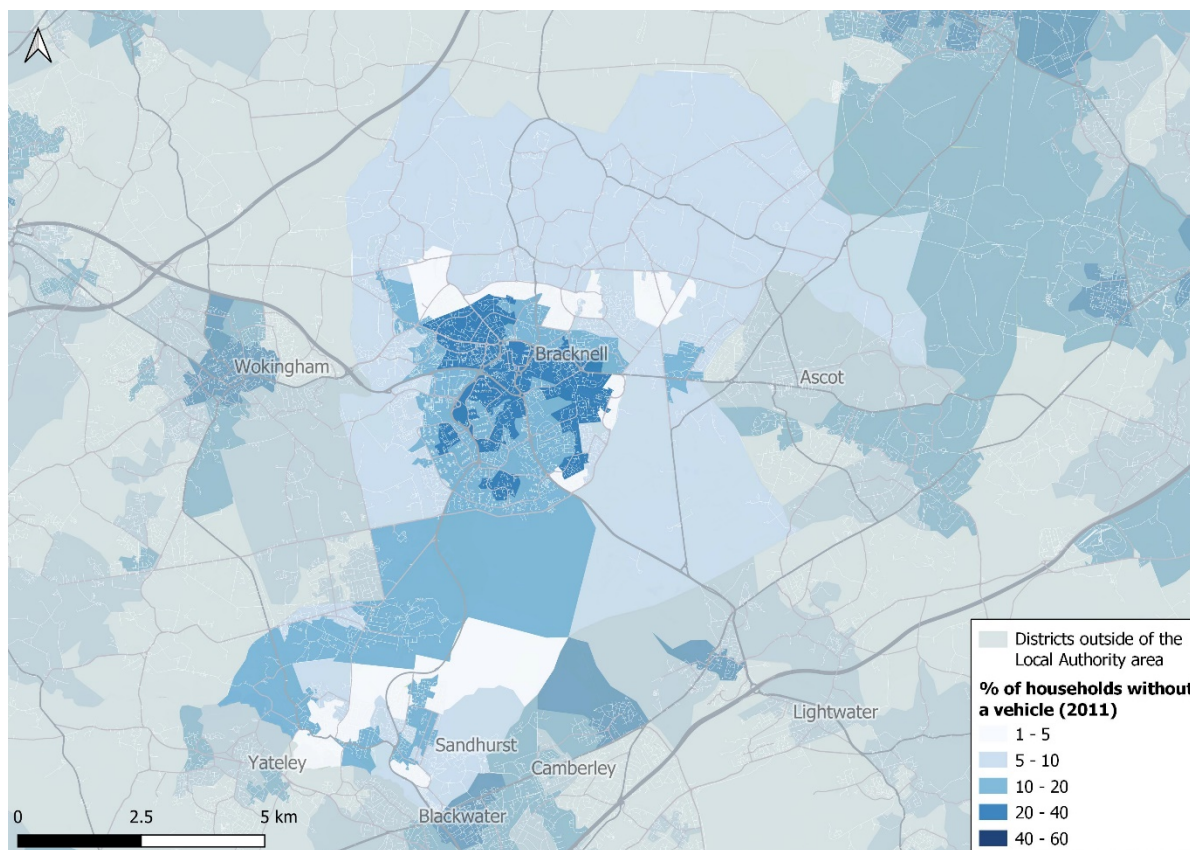
2.18 Census data (2011) indicates that 68% of all journeys to work were undertaken using the car (66% in urban areas, 70% in rural areas). Bus travel accounted for just 1.5% of journeys. The full modal share for urban and rural areas is shown in Figure 2-6.

Figure 2-6 Method of travel to work in urban and rural areas



2.19 85% of households in Bracknell have a car, significantly higher than the average for England of 74%. Figure 2-7 shows the percentage of households without a vehicle for each LSOA.

Figure 2-7 Households without a vehicle



Bus service density

2.20 82% of the population is within 400 metres of an hourly bus service. Only 34% of people are served by a frequent bus service, defined as a bus every 15 minutes or better.

Table 3 Population within 400m of a bus route

Service frequency (morning peak)	Population within 400m of bus route (2019)	As a percentage of Bracknell Forest population (2019)
15 minutes or less	41,600	34%
30 minutes or less	84,575	69%
60 minutes or less	100,750	82%
All fixed services	102,542	84%
All Bus Stops	113,980	93%

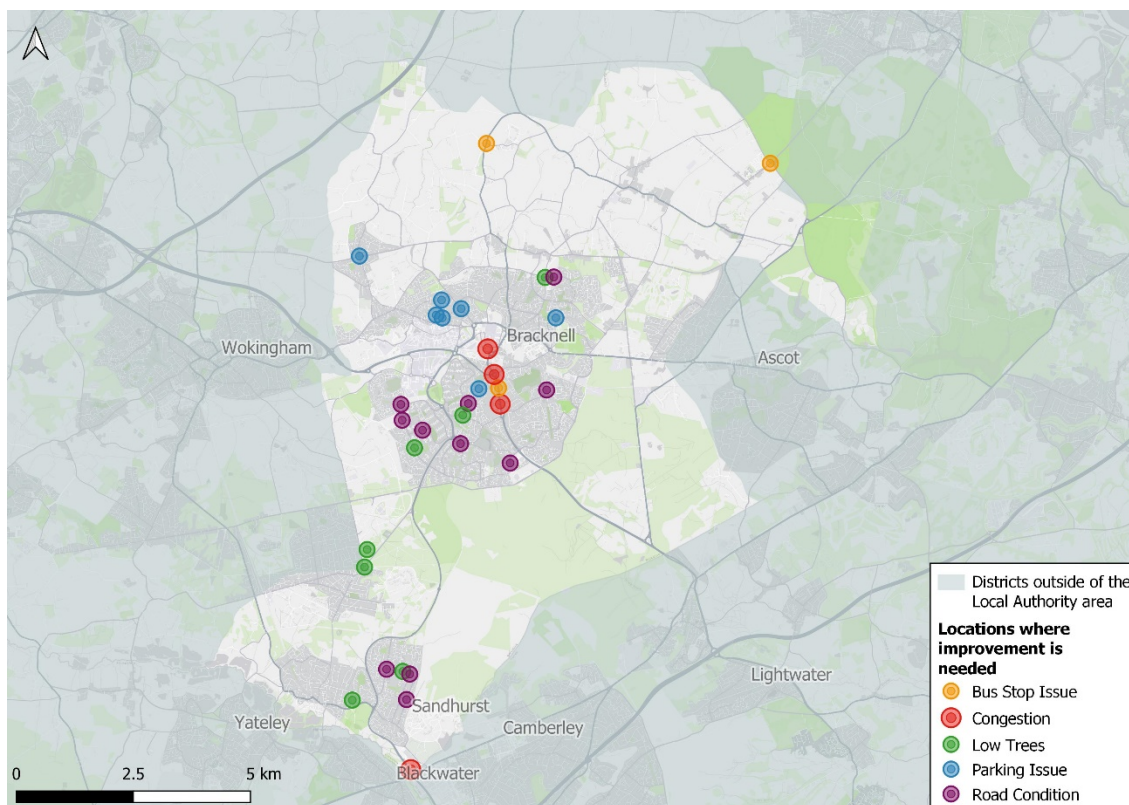
Bus priority

- 2.21 There are no bus lanes which run alongside general traffic. However, there are four sections of bus-only roads which total 605m and provide priority to buses travelling between housing areas and business areas. Although these sections of bus priority are relatively short in length, they represent significant time and distance savings compared to the route other vehicular road users must take.
- 2.22 There are a further six bus priority junctions, although only three are currently on active bus routes.
- 2.23 Most of the major junctions in the borough are controlled by traffic signals and the main traffic corridors are carefully managed by Urban Traffic Control systems. This represents an opportunity for developing further bus priority by giving priority to late running buses at signalised junctions.

Congestion and delays

- 2.24 Operators have assessed where there are issues that cause delay to services, including congestion hotspots, pinchpoints and obstructive parking. These are categorised in Figure 2-8.

Figure 2-8 Locations where improvement is needed



Average bus speeds

- 2.25 Taking the route length of each service and applying the end-to-end journey times from published timetables, average bus speed for the morning peak was calculated as 15.7mph (25.3km/h), rising to 16.7mph (27km/h) between peak times.

Punctuality

- 2.26 In 2019, 91.4% of services were recorded as running to time (defined by the DfT as between one minute early and five minutes fifty-nine seconds late), which was above the South East as a whole (81.8%) and England (83.0).

Availability of information

- 2.27 Many bus stops are equipped with timetable display cases and operators are responsible for updating the information in them.
- 2.28 Some stops, including Bracknell bus station, are equipped with real time information displays. The system is maintained and funded by the authority.
- 2.29 Bus operators each have full information about service timetables, fares and tickets on their websites. Operators also have smartphone apps allowing passengers to track buses in real time and purchase mobile tickets.

Bus Fleet

- 2.30 Across the 4 operators, a total of 38 vehicles are required to provide services across Bracknell Forest, including cross boundary routes. 75% of those deployed on these services are between 5 and 10 years old. 55% of buses meet Euro VI emission standards. There are no zero emission buses currently operating in Bracknell Forest.
- 2.31 Two operators have indicated that they have new vehicles on order that will be deployed on Bracknell services from later this year and early next. Currently, operators do not consider it appropriate to move to electric buses in Bracknell for a number of reasons. Many of the existing vehicles are not due for renewal, local depot facilities cannot accommodate electric charging infrastructure, and such a move would not be viable without support towards the additional vehicle purchase costs. This position will be reviewed each year when the BSIP is updated.

Figure 2-9 Vehicle Age

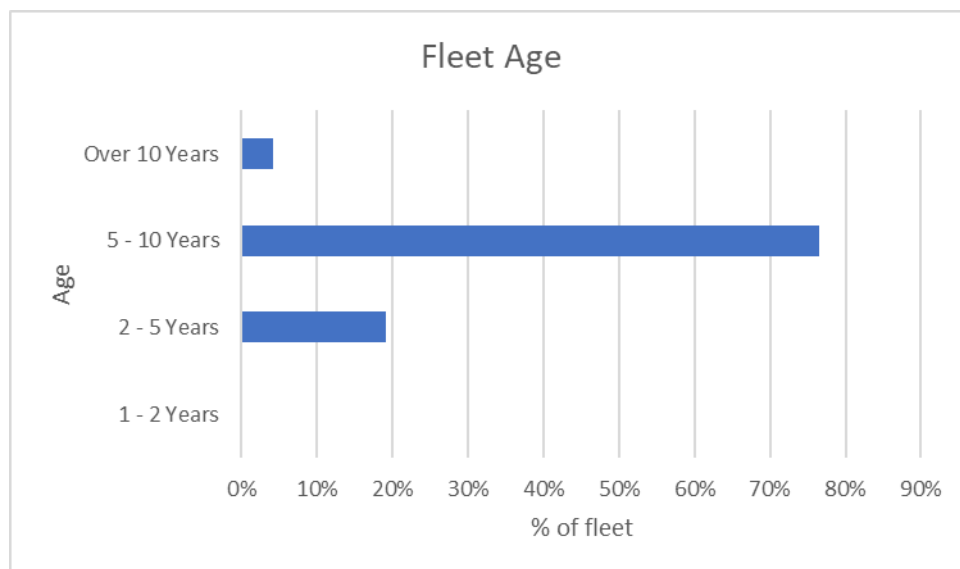
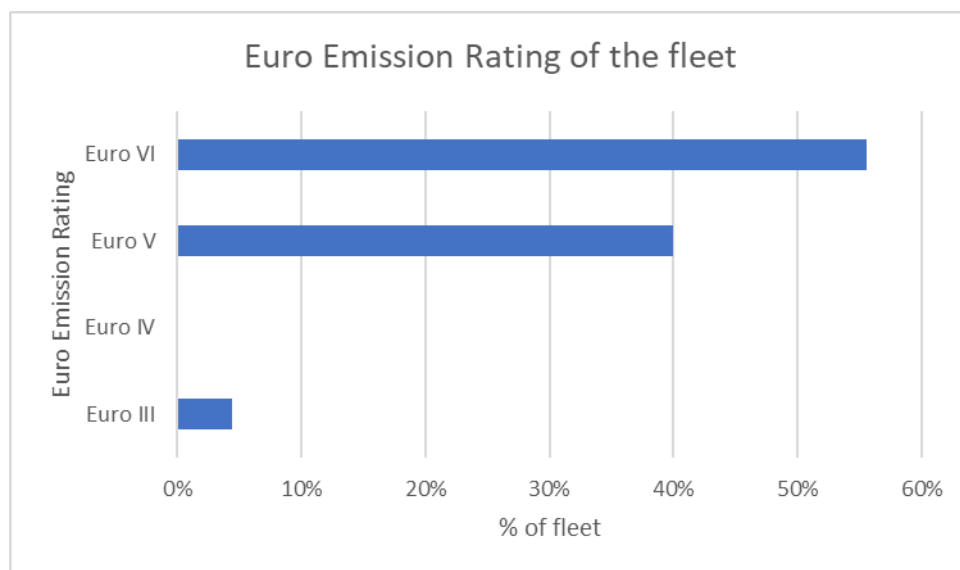


Figure 2-10 Euro emission rating



Fares and ticketing

- 2.32 Operators offer a range of tickets, including different day and season tickets covering parts of the network and their entire network. There is interoperability between Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses, which covers much of the network. However, there is no ticket available for use across all operators.
- 2.33 A flat fare of £2.50 single and £3.20 return applies on journeys within Bracknell town. This means that shorter journeys are considerably more costly per mile than longer

ones, as illustrated in the table below. Return fares offer a good level of discount on two singles. A Bracknell town day ticket is also available for £4.30.

Table 3 Fares per distance

Journey from Bracknell Bus Station to...	Distance (miles)	Single fare	Return fare	Cost/mile (single)	Cost/mile (return)
Bullbrook	1.3 miles	£2.50	£3.20	£1.92	£1.23
Warfield Tesco	2.4 miles	£2.50	£3.20	£1.04	£0.78
Great Hollands	2.4 miles	£2.50	£3.20	£1.04	£0.78
Binfield	2.7 miles	£2.50	£3.20	£0.93	£0.59
Jennett’s Park	2.8 miles	£2.50	£3.20	£0.89	£0.57
Crowthorne	4.8 miles	£3.60	£4.30	£0.75	£0.45
The Meadows	7.5 miles	£4.30	£5.80	£0.57	£0.39

- 2.34 Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses offer ‘Boost’ discounted fares for children and young people. Those aged 16-18 gain a discount without ID. Boost extends to students 19-21, who are required to have an ID card to gain the discount. Rates of discount vary, depending on the type of ticket. A single journey in Bracknell town costs £1.30 with Boost (instead of £2.50). A 30% discount applies on a day ticket.
- 2.35 A PlusBus ticket is available as an add-on to a rail ticket, offering travel on buses across Bracknell town for the day for £3.10.

What do people think about local bus services?

- 2.36 A telephone survey of residents was undertaken in June/July 2021. 524 people were interviewed, chosen to be representative of the overall population. 80% of respondents were non-bus users, whilst 7% used a bus at least once per week. Over half of those who used a bus regularly travelled only on 1 or 2 days per week. A higher proportion (26%) of younger people (18-34) were bus users than other age groups. Residents in Bracknell town used the bus more than those outside.
- 2.37 About half of non-users indicated that they could have made their trips for shopping or to visit friends and family by bus.
- 2.38 The main reason for not using the bus was the preference for using a car. 72% of non-users and 24% of users indicated this. 11% of respondents said the main reason was that buses didn’t go where they needed to go.
- 2.39 In considering the impact of the pandemic, 35% of bus users said they were less likely to use a bus than before the pandemic. However, 49% said that they had not changed

their use of the bus, which indicates their reliance on the bus for their day-to-day needs.

2.40 82% of bus users were satisfied overall with bus services, whilst only 42% of non-users were satisfied. Generally, there was more satisfaction amongst those residents without a car and those holding concessionary travel passes with free travel.

2.41 The proportion of bus users who were satisfied with various attributes of bus services was as follows (in decreasing order):

Table 4 Bus user satisfaction

Attribute	% of bus users who were satisfied
Standard of driving	93%
Comfort whilst travelling	87%
Ease of working out bus times	85%
Ease of finding bus times	83%
Cleanliness	83%
Choice of destination	81%
Length of journey	81%
Ease of paying	77%
Running on time	76%
Condition of stop	76%
Customer service	73%
Information at stops	69%
Frequency of service	63%
Value for money	60%
When buses available	57%
Facilities at stop	51%
Ease of working out cost	48%

2.42 When asked what sorts of things might lead them to use the bus more, people cited cheaper bus fares, a ticket to use across different operators, more frequent buses, increased times of operation (early morning and evening) and more destinations served. Non-users said they may be encouraged to use the bus if fares were cheaper, or service availability and frequency were improved. 50% of those non-users who prefer to use the car said that nothing would encourage them to use bus rather than car, unless motoring became significantly more expensive.

2.43 Bracknell Forest is not included in the Transport Focus National Bus Passenger Survey. However, Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses were included. In 2019, the overall satisfaction with journeys on their services was at 92% and 94% respectively, amongst the best in the country. Satisfaction with value for money stood at 67% and 62% respectively, again reasonable performance against other operators.

Local authority support

- 2.44 As shown in Table 1 earlier, about half of bus services in Bracknell Forest are operated on a commercial basis. The remaining services require a level of financial support from the Council. Routes and timetables are defined by the Council and tenders sought from operators to operate the services under contract. The annual cost of these supported services, together with the reimbursement to operators for journeys made by concessionary pass holders, is in the region of £1.5 million per year.
- 2.45 Management of the supported bus contracts, reimbursement of concessionary fares, the bus shelter contract and other public transport-related matters sits within the Transport Strategy team in the Council’s Highways and Transportation service area.

Parking management and provision

- 2.46 Bracknell Forest Council’s Enforcement and Parking Management Strategy 2019-2024 highlights that the area is one of the least deprived in the country, where property prices and car ownership are higher than the national average.
- 2.47 The objectives of the strategy are to:
- Enforce parking regulations fairly and efficiently
 - Encourage off-street parking
 - Encourage best use of the parking space available
- 2.48 There is significant car parking provision in Bracknell town centre, with a total of 5,200 spaces, of which 3,350 are in Council operated car parks. There are variable message signs on the approach to the town centre, indicating levels of availability. Cashless payment is available at all car parks. Charges (October 2021) are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Cost of car parking in Bracknell Forest

Parking duration	BFC car parks	Lexicon car park
1 hr	£1.60	£1.00
2 hr	£2.80	£2.00
3 hr	£3.60	£3.00
4 hr	£4.30	£3.50
8 hr	£8.00	£7.00

- 2.49 Car parking management and enforcement is outsourced. In 2018/19, total expenditure on car parking was £2.05 million and income was £3.09 million, of which £52,000 came from fines and penalties.

Summary of issues affecting bus service provision

2.50 The following summary provides an analysis of factors that influence bus service provision in Bracknell Forest. Clearly, the BSIP needs to focus on building on the strengths and opportunities and introducing measures to address the weaknesses and threats.

Table 6 Strengths and weaknesses of bus service provision in Bracknell Forest

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some strong commercial services on which to build • Authority continues to financially support a number of bus services to areas that would otherwise be unserved • Good levels of satisfaction amongst bus users • Operators focused on providing good services • Good bus/rail interchange in Bracknell town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High proportion of concession usage • High car ownership and use • Plenty of reasonably priced car parking in Bracknell centre • Parking available at many businesses • Many businesses located away from Bracknell town centre and operate their own employee shuttle transport • Some services not frequent enough to attract new users • Poor evening and Sunday provision • Difficult to serve rural areas with small population • Variable levels of service, with supported ones generally more limited • No single source of information • No single ticket valid across all services • Layout/land use make effective bus provision difficult in places • Obstructive parking hinders bus operation
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth • New model for securing developer contributions from residential developments to promote bus services • New travel patterns and behaviours post-pandemic • Provision of employee shuttles indicates demand for transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising traffic levels and greater congestion • Reductions in levels of financial support • Patronage fails to recover to pre-pandemic levels

3. Headline targets

3.1 General targets for the year 2024/25 have been set to monitor the overall success of the BSIP. These cover four main themes and are for all services operating in the borough:

- Journey times
- Reliability (for LTA and larger cities/towns)
- Passenger growth
- Customer satisfaction

3.2 Setting targets for 2024/25, given the current uncertainty regarding travel and working habits following the Covid pandemic, is very difficult. As the BSIP is updated, and circumstances change, it may be necessary to refine some targets.

Table 7 Targets for journey time, reliability, passenger growth and customer satisfaction

Theme	Data source	2018/19 figure	2019/20 figure	2020/2021	2024/25 target
Journey time	Scheduled start and end times for services divided by route length	unavailable	unavailable	15.7mph (peak) 16.7mph (off-peak)	15.7mph (peak) 16.7mph (off-peak)
Reliability	DfT Bus statistics table BUS0902: Non-frequent bus services running on time	86%	unavailable	unavailable	90%
Passenger growth	DfT Bus statistics table BUS0109: Passenger journeys on local bus services by local authority	1.8m	1.9m	unavailable	2.1m
	DfT Bus statistics table BUS0110: Passenger journeys on local bus services per head of population	14.8	15.5	unavailable	16
Customer satisfaction	National Highways and Transport Survey	61%	60%	59%	64%

- 3.3 Where funding is secured to deliver particular measures, specific additional targets will be set. These supplementary targets may be based on particular services or corridors and will monitor specific outcomes.
- 3.4 For some targets, such as journey time, appropriate data has not previously been collected.
- 3.5 For other targets, such as reliability and customer satisfaction, there is a reliance on traditional datasets which may be superseded. Therefore, it is possible that these targets may be revised and updated in future versions of the BSIP.
- 3.6 It is the intention to monitor the progress of the BSIP on a six-monthly basis. However, most of the targets outlined above are monitored using annual datasets, so it is unlikely the broad headline targets will change in the intervening period. It is the intention to transition towards more specific, more meaningful targets which can be monitored more frequently.

4. Delivering bus service improvements

Impact of pandemic on usage

- 4.1 Whilst bus patronage is recovering, it remains below pre-pandemic levels. Levels vary between different routes, but Bracknell's position is quite challenging because of the high proportion of concession users, which appear to be amongst those slowest to return to using the bus. Commercial services are currently (end of September 2021) seeing between 55% and 86% pre-pandemic levels of use. Supported services are averaging at about 68% of pre-pandemic patronage levels.
- 4.2 Operators are running services at pre-Covid levels and have been taking steps to try and encourage usage. Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses have undertaken a few initiatives, including introduction of a DaySaver 5 product, offering 5 one-day tickets that can be used over any period of time. There has been a good take up of this.
- 4.3 Reading Buses has also had a marketing campaign to encourage app subscriptions, with an offer a free ticket to travel anywhere on the network during September 2021. It undertook a campaign via social media and paid for a promotional cover wrap on the Metro newspaper.
- 4.4 Bracknell Forest Council supported the making of a number of promotional videos, aimed at encouraging more sustainable travel behaviours. One of these was to encourage bus use, particularly amongst people who didn't use the bus, showing how easy it was to travel by bus in Bracknell. This can be viewed at [This can be viewed on the Buses page of the Council's website.](#)

Workstreams

- 4.5 It is intended to deliver the BSIP improvements through 4 main workstreams:
 - **Building up the network** – enhancing and developing services
 - **Building efficiency** – by tacking delays and pinchpoints
 - **Building value** – through easier ticketing and fares discounts
 - **Building up confidence** – by improved information and passenger infrastructure
- 4.6 Details of the measures and schemes proposed as part of these workstreams are set out below. It should be noted that delivery of these workstreams will be largely subject to funding awards from the Department for Transport.

Building up the network		
<p>Why it is important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the public survey, for both users and non-users, the areas of least satisfaction were the hours of operation and frequency of bus services. • The most cited reason for using the car instead of bus was the lack of availability of suitable bus services and the inadequate frequency of services. • The perception of reliability is influenced by service frequency. • Operators want to ensure a good commercial foundation for the network on which to build. There is a need to increase use of services by fare paying passengers. • Operators remain concerned that patronage will not fully recover to pre-pandemic levels. 		
<p>The ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive and coordinated bus network • More consistent levels of service • More evening and Sunday services • Services that are increasingly commercially viable 		
<p>What is already being done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bracknell Forest Council financially supports the provision of a number of bus services at a cost of approximately £600,000 p.a. • Operators continue to provide services at pre-pandemic levels and carry out initiatives to encourage users back to the network. • A relatively stable network has been maintained over recent years, providing confidence to users. • Removal of overlaps and increased integration with Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses routes in south Bracknell took place in January 2020. 		
<p>Bracknell BSIP objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and develop the network • Commercial service growth • Ensure appropriate supported services • Single network 	<p>National Bus objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequent buses • More comprehensive • Easier to use • Better integrated 	<p>Transport Focus top 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses running more often • Buses going to more places
Projects and schemes		
BSIP Measure	Description	
Building a foundation	<p>Network balancing - Whilst usage of buses has risen recently it is unlikely to have fully returned to pre-pandemic levels by April 2022 when central Government funding support ceases. However, it will be vital to retain the current levels of service as this will provide a firm foundation for the introduction of other improvements to the network. Therefore, funding will be used to tender for elements of commercial services which operators no longer deem viable but which the authority deems necessary. The Enhanced Partnership process will be used to ensure hybrid commercial and supported routes are operated with equal headway, ticket interoperability and for the general benefit of bus users.</p> <p><i>Timescale: 2022/23</i></p>	
Building services up	<p>Commercial service enhancements - Responding to users' requests, some 'kickstart' funding will be made available to enable operators of the main commercial services to introduce enhancements to provision, where operators feel there is potential demand to justify this and achieve full commercial viability within 2 years. Operators have indicated</p>	

	<p>several opportunities, including additional journeys to meet the needs of shift workers and possible service extensions.</p> <p>Timescale: 2022/23 onwards</p>
	<p>Boosting supported services – To inform the future review of supported bus services, and with a view to greater consistency across the network, Thames Valley Buses will be offered the opportunity of ‘kickstart’ funding (using deminimis arrangements) to develop one of the supported town services to become commercially viable (with a commitment to maintain the service for a period as part of an EP Scheme). The operator will agree with the Council which are the most appropriate enhancements and/or promotional measures for the chosen service, which may include increased frequency or amended routing.</p> <p>Timescale: 2022/23 – 2024/25</p>
<p>Building new services</p>	<p>Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) – Working with neighbouring authorities of Wokingham and Windsor & Maidenhead, it is intended to trial a form of DRT service. In Bracknell Forest this will be targeted at areas that are not well served by bus (feeding into the main bus network) and providing links to Crowthorne railway station. Similar provision will be used to serve rural areas to the north. Opportunities for improving access to the Western and Southern business areas will also be investigated. Design and operation of DRT will ensure that it does not abstract from fixed bus services. Performance of the trial service will also inform the review of supported services.</p> <p>Timescale: design/procurement 2022/23; implementation 2023/24</p>
<p>Building understanding</p>	<p>Review of supported bus services – It will be important to reevaluate these in the light of other BSIP measures having had some impact, including trials of enhanced frequencies and DRT services. The opportunity will be taken to see whether, in conjunction with operators, a new approach can be taken towards making elements of these services a commercial proposition. Route numbering will be rationalised.</p> <p>Timescale: 2022/23</p>
<p>Building new corridors</p>	<p>BRT feasibility studies – Bracknell Forest Council will contribute to the commissioning of a feasibility study to look at Bus Rapid Transport options for the Bracknell/Wokingham corridor. Transport for South East will also investigate options for BRT on the Bracknell/Blackwater Valley corridor as part of the Inner Orbital Area study.</p> <p>Timescale: 2022/23</p>

Building efficiency		
<p>Why it is important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operators want to ensure a good commercial foundation for the network on which to build. There is a need to encourage greater use of bus services. Pinchpoints, obstructive parking and traffic calming features can hinder bus operations, with a culminative impact of reducing efficiency and levels of service offered. 		
<p>The ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buses can travel with fewer hindrances that delay them Journey times for users are improved Services are increasingly commercially viable 		
<p>What is already being done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancements being made to junctions to facilitate better control by our Urban Traffic Control Systems Requests from bus drivers for specific road resurfacing / patching (to improve ride comfort) and trimming of trees and vegetation have been fed into existing maintenance programmes. 		
<p>Bracknell BSIP objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial service growth Improve efficiency 	<p>National Bus objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster and more reliable buses 	<p>Transport Focus top 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More buses on time at stop More bus journeys on time
Projects and schemes		
BSIP Measure	Description	
Keeping buses moving	<p>Addressing pinchpoints – operators have highlighted some issues where delays can occur, including highway layout, junctions and obstructive parking. An assessment of these will be carried out to consider ways of overcoming the issues, with a programme of schemes taken forward.</p> <p>Timescale: 2022/23 onwards</p>	
	<p>Traffic signal priority – following an outline assessment of the feasibility of introducing priority at signals, more detailed work will be undertaken to assess the likely benefit for buses. Funding is sought for feasibility and implementation.</p> <p>Timescale: 2022/23</p>	

Building value		
<p>Why it is important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of bus travel is seen by some as a barrier to using the bus. • People cite that they would use the bus more if fares were cheaper. • Viability of bus services is reliant on more fare-paying passengers using them. • Fares and ticketing are important elements of providing easier travel. 		
<p>The ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage is promoted through targeted discounts or free travel. • Tickets that are valid across all operators to promote an integrated network. 		
<p>What is already being done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses offer Boost tickets, providing discounted travel for young people up to 21 years. • Inter-operability of tickets already applies between Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses. • Operators have all agreed that they will accept one another's tickets on common sections of route, once ticketing equipment is upgraded to recognise all tickets. 		
<p>Bracknell BSIP objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial service growth • Single network • Improve passenger experience 	<p>National Bus objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheaper • Easier to use • Better integrated 	<p>Transport Focus top 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better value for money
Projects and schemes		
BSIP Measure	Description	
Encouraging usage	<p>Young people's discounted travel – building on the existing Boost product, it is the intention to increase the offer to young people up to 25 years, based on ID, and to include all operators' services in Bracknell Forest.</p> <p><i>Timescale: introduction October 2023</i></p>	
Enticing new users	<p>Targeted free or discounted travel – these will be specific initiatives at certain times or in particular areas, with the aim of encouraging people to try the bus. This might include free travel at the same times as free car parking is offered in Bracknell town centre pre-Christmas, or to encourage use of new or improved evening and Sunday buses.</p> <p><i>Timescale: 2022/23 – 2024/25</i></p>	
Easier travel	<p>Inter-operable tickets – the position of Bracknell within wider bus networks beyond its boundary make it difficult to develop and promote a Bracknell-specific multi-operator ticket. Therefore, the intention is to work with operators to get agreement on accepting one another's tickets for travel within the Bracknell Forest area.</p> <p><i>Timescale: 2022/23</i></p>	

Building up confidence		
<p>Why it is important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People want to have easy access to information about bus services. • People need to know what is available. 		
<p>The ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The image of bus travel is improved. • Comprehensive information is available from a single point and via different media. • Real time information is promoted, including QR codes at stops that do not have real time displays. 		
<p>What is already being done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real time information provision • Bus information panels are provided at bus stops and operators provide and update the information. 		
<p>Bracknell BSIP objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve passenger experience 	<p>National Bus objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier to understand • Easier to use • Better integrated 	<p>Transport Focus top 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effort to tackle anti-social behaviour • More stops with next bus displays • Better information at stops
Projects and schemes		
BSIP Measure	Description	
Comprehensive information	<p>My Journey portal – BFC will introduce a portal providing information on travel by all sustainable travel modes. It will signpost to operators’ websites for details of bus timetables and fares.</p> <p><i>Timescale: 2022/23</i></p>	
Better waiting places	<p>Bus stop and shelter improvement programme – the intention is to introduce an on-going programme of bus stop improvements, providing consistent facilities (standardised bus stop pole, flag and information display) with shelter (including lighting and seating) where appropriate and protected with bus stop clearways. QR codes will be provided at stops without real-time information. There will be a rolling programme of improvements, commencing with those stops on the 3 main commercial routes. Operators will work together to provide combined information displays at bus stops.</p> <p><i>Timescale: 2022/23 onwards</i></p>	
Building perceptions	<p>Bus Passenger Charter – a draft charter has been devised and discussed by the Bus Partnership. This will be agreed later in 2021 and incorporated within the commitments given in the Enhanced Partnership Scheme to be introduced from April 2022. The Charter will be reviewed annually.</p> <p><i>Timescale: 2021/22</i></p>	

5. Reporting

- 5.1 The BSIP will be reviewed and updated annually in October.
- 5.2 There will be continuous monitoring of progress towards targets and performance reports will be published 6-monthly by Bracknell Forest Council and made available on the Buses page of the Council's website. This will cover updates on all quantitative targets, except levels of satisfaction that will be measured annually via the National Highways and Transportation Survey, in line with a number of other authorities.

6. Overview table

Name of authority	Bracknell Forest Council
Franchising or Enhanced Partnership	Enhanced Partnership
Date of publication	October 2021
Date of next annual update	October 2022
URL of published report	https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/travel-and-public-transport/buses

Targets	2018/19	2019/20	Target for 2024/25	Description of how each will be measured (max 50 words)
Journey time	N/A	N/A	15.7 mph (peak)	Scheduled start and end times for services divided by route length
Reliability	86%	N/A	90%	DfT Bus statistics table BUS0902: Non-frequent bus services running on time
Passenger numbers	1.8m	1.9m	2.1m	DfT Bus statistics table BUS0109: Passenger journeys on local bus services by local authority
Average passenger satisfaction	61%	60%	64%	Annual National Highways and Transport Survey including bus and non-bus users

Delivery - Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/No	Explanation (max 50 words)
Make improvements to bus services and planning		
More frequent and reliable services		
Review service frequency	Yes	Network will be reviewed in the light of recovery and implications for remodelling accordingly. Measures include enhancing levels of service, both on commercial and supported services.
Increase bus priority measures	Yes	Pinchpoints have been identified and actions taken to tackle these through a mix of interventions.
Increase demand responsive services	Yes	Measures include trialling DRT to understand the part it might play in the overall network and in opening up new markets.
Consideration of bus rapid transport networks	Yes	Consideration is being given to BRT across the South East region by Transport for the South East (TfSE).

Improvements to planning / integration with other modes		
Integrate services with other transport modes	Yes	DRT will connect with mainline bus services and will provide direct links to/from Crowthorne and Martins Heron railway stations.
Simplify services	Yes	Overall network review will look to simplify services, particularly the review of supported services.
Review socially necessary services	Yes	A review of socially necessary services will occur early on to help identify potential enhancements and to prepare for re-procurement of services in 2023.
Invest in Superbus networks	Yes	Whilst not directly applicable, some of the aspirations reflect elements of a Superbus network, in terms of enhancements and targeted fares discounts.
Improvements to fares and ticketing		
Lower fares	Yes	Special fares promotions are seen as being a way of encouraging more people to try the bus. Cheaper travel will be extended to young people aged 21-25.
Simplify fares	Yes	This will be achieved through discounts and inter-operability.
Integrate ticketing between operators and transport modes	Yes	Operators are willing to promote inter-operability and accept one another's tickets, ultimately providing multi-operator ticketing.
Make improvements to bus passenger experience		
Higher specification buses		
Invest in improved bus specifications	Yes	Euro VI standards will be included in future specifications. Opportunities for electric buses will be further investigated to consider how barriers are overcome.
Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services	Yes	Bus stop improvements will take account of accessibility requirements. The DRT service will offer a personalised service to those who require additional assistance.
Protect personal safety of bus passengers	Yes	Bus stop improvements will take account of passenger safety, with lighting provided where necessary.
Improve buses for tourists	No	Not specifically, but service enhancements will help visitors as well as residents.
Invest in decarbonisation	Yes	Euro VI standards will be included in future specifications. Opportunities for electric buses will be further investigated to consider how barriers are overcome.

Improvements to passenger engagement		
Passenger charter	Yes	A draft Charter has been discussed by the Bus Partnership and will be finalised later this year.
Strengthen network identity	Yes	The co-ordinated approach to developing the network and inter-operable ticketing will help the network to be seen as a whole.
Improve bus information	Yes	Information provided at bus stops will be coordinated by operators. The My Journey app will provide additional signposting of public transport information.
Other		
Other		

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Letters of support from bus operators and Transport for South East

Philip Burke
Bracknell Forest Council

26 October 2021

To whom it may concern,

Bracknell Forest Council Bus Service Improvement Plan

I write to confirm that we have been involved in discussions around the Bus Service Improvement Plan with Bracknell Forest Council, attending various project meetings, and putting forward various suggestions that would help support the provision of improved bus services in the area.

The proposals for bus priority will be a welcome contribution to making buses quicker and more reliable, as will the authorities' willingness to review road conditions to rectify small-scale changes to help buses. The proposed improvements to passenger information, both static and real-time, will increase the overall quality of experience, making bus services both more attractive and easier to use.

Coupled with the proposals for tap on tap off ticketing, and the opportunity to develop services with pump prime funding, the plan will promote easier access to employment, health, education and leisure opportunities, and modal shift from private vehicles.

We look forward to working with the Council to deliver the plan through the proposed Enhanced Partnership, and hope that the Department for Transport will look favourably on the proposals under the National Bus Strategy, the levelling up agenda, and the decarbonisation agenda.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Williams
Chief Executive Officer



Phillip Burke
Bracknell Forest Council
Time Square
Market St
Bracknell
RG12 1JD

20th October 2021

Dear Phillip,

Letter of Support for the Bracknell Forest Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

Stagecoach South are delighted to provide this letter of support for the Bracknell Forest BSIP. We have been involved closely in the preparation of the BSIP through close and regular dialogue and regular meetings with Bracknell Forest Council as the BSIP has been drafted, and we appreciate this high level of engagement and openness with bus operators.

We are pleased that the BSIP shows a high level of ambition for how Bracknell Forest Council and local bus operators will work together over the coming years to deliver a step-change in the quality and reliability of bus services. Such a step-change can best be achieved through sustained investment as part of the planned Enhanced Partnership, being developed by the end of March 2022 and continued close partnership working.

We are looking forward to working with Bracknell Forest Council to build upon our existing highly successful voluntary partnership arrangements which have served us so well up to this point, as we develop the Enhanced Partnership together. We are confident that the Bracknell Forest BSIP and EP will help to enable us to deliver achieve a virtuous cycle of sustained bus passenger growth and improving customer satisfaction.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Vince", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rob Vince
Stagecoach South

21 October 2021

Tatum Houlston
Senior Consultant
ITP World
Charles House
148 Great Charles Street
Birmingham
B3 3HT

Dear Tatum

Bracknell Forest Bus Service Improvement Plan

As requested, please accept this as confirmation that we have fully engaged with yourselves, Bracknell Forest Council and other operators to help formulate the authority's BSIP.

Following a number of initial meetings, we have met monthly to enable this document to be developed to its current form.

We are happy to support the document as prepared in draft at this stage.

Kind regards

Simon Fisher
General Manager

C E JEATT & SONS LTD T/A WHITE BUS SERVICES

North Street Garage, North Street, Winkfield, Windsor. SL4 4TF | +44 (0) 1344 882612 | office@whitebus.co.uk

Mr Phillip Burke
Senior Transport Co-ordinator
Planning, Transport and Countryside
Environment, Culture & Communities
Bracknell Forest Council
Time Square,
Market Street,
Bracknell,
RG12 1JD

18th October 2021

Subject – Bracknell Forest Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

Dear Mr Burke,

I can confirm that C E Jeatt & Sons Ltd trading as White Bus are fully supportive of the BSIP. We have attended the monthly meetings with Bracknell Forest Council, bus operators and appointed consultants, and remain committed in the development of the BSIP document, and the enhanced partnership that follows.

Yours sincerely,



Simon Rowland
Chief Executive Officer
Rowgate Group

Stuart Jefferies
Transport Strategy Manager
Bracknell Forest Council
Town Square
Market Street
Bracknell
RG12 1JD

By email to: Stuart.Jefferies@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

26 October 2021

Dear Stuart

Bus Service Improvement Plan submission

I am writing to you in your role as the council's representative on the TfSE Senior Officer Group to support the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) that your Council has produced.

As you are aware, Transport for the South East (TfSE) is a partnership of 16 local transport authorities (LTAs). Following the approval of our transport strategy in summer 2020, we have been developing a series of area and thematic studies to identify the specific interventions that will be needed to implement the strategy on the ground. This work will culminate in the publication of a draft Strategic Investment Plan for public consultation in June 2022.

TfSE has identified that buses will have a vital role to play in delivering the 2050 vision set out in the transport strategy and in particular the target of achieving net zero carbon emissions from transport by 2050, at the latest. The delivery of BSIPs will have a critical role to play in helping us to achieve our 2050 vision.

TfSE will be providing further Bus Back Better support to all our 16 LTAs through technical work we already have underway to develop an evidence base that will identify the future ambition for buses across the region. We have also recently submitted a joint proposal with England's Economic Heartlands and Transport East to the DfT's additional workstreams for 2021/22 to support the LTAs in our area with the delivery of their BSIPs.

0300 3309474

tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk

transportforthesoutheast.org.uk

Transport for the South East, County Hall,
St. Anne's Crescent, Lewes, BN7 1UE



The successful delivery of our transport strategy and our constituent authorities' Local Transport Plans will be dependent upon a significant improvement in bus service provision to encourage passengers back onto buses. I therefore commend your BSIP as a vital first step in setting out your ambition to improve bus services in your area.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rupert Clubb', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rupert Clubb
Lead Officer, Transport for the South East

Cc Phillip Burke

Appendix 2 – Findings of household telephone survey

Bracknell Forest Council: Bus Survey

Report: June 2021



Research
Evaluation
Community Engagement
Strategy Development

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Bracknell Forest Council: Bus Survey 2021

Executive Summary

Introduction and background to the research

1. Bracknell Forest Council commissioned a survey of residents around their use of local bus services. The council is required to produce a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The council are commissioning this survey to inform that plan and establish a baseline.

Aims of the research

2. The survey covers the following key issues:
 - Levels of bus use.
 - Satisfaction with bus services.
 - Barriers to using local bus services and ways to encourage bus use.
 - The impact of the pandemic on travel and bus use.

Approach to the research

3. The research was conducted via a telephone survey of 524 residents living in Bracknell Forest. The survey took place over a 2-week period between the end of June and the start of July 2021.
4. A questionnaire was developed in conjunction with the council to capture information to answer the aims and objectives of the research (see the Appendix for a copy of the questionnaire). The questionnaire was informed by a previous local bus survey conducted in 2007. The questionnaire was tested with a small number of residents prior to its full implementation to ensure it would work effectively in practice.
5. Quotas were set based on the latest population data available to help ensure that the survey sample was demographically representative of the local population. Quotas were set by gender, age, ethnicity and location.
6. Interviews were conducted at different times of the day and different days of the week, including evenings and weekends, to ensure that working age residents were interviewed. Only one person per household was interviewed.
7. With 524 respondents, the survey provides for robust data. At this number of respondents, the sample error or accuracy of the survey results is +/- 4.3% at a 95% confidence level.¹ This means that we can be 95% confident that the “real” result for any given question would be within 4.3 percentage points of those stated within the survey findings. This provides for robust data when analysed at a headline level and when different questions are cross-referenced against each other. It also allows for reliable comparison over time and nationally, where appropriate and where the data is available.

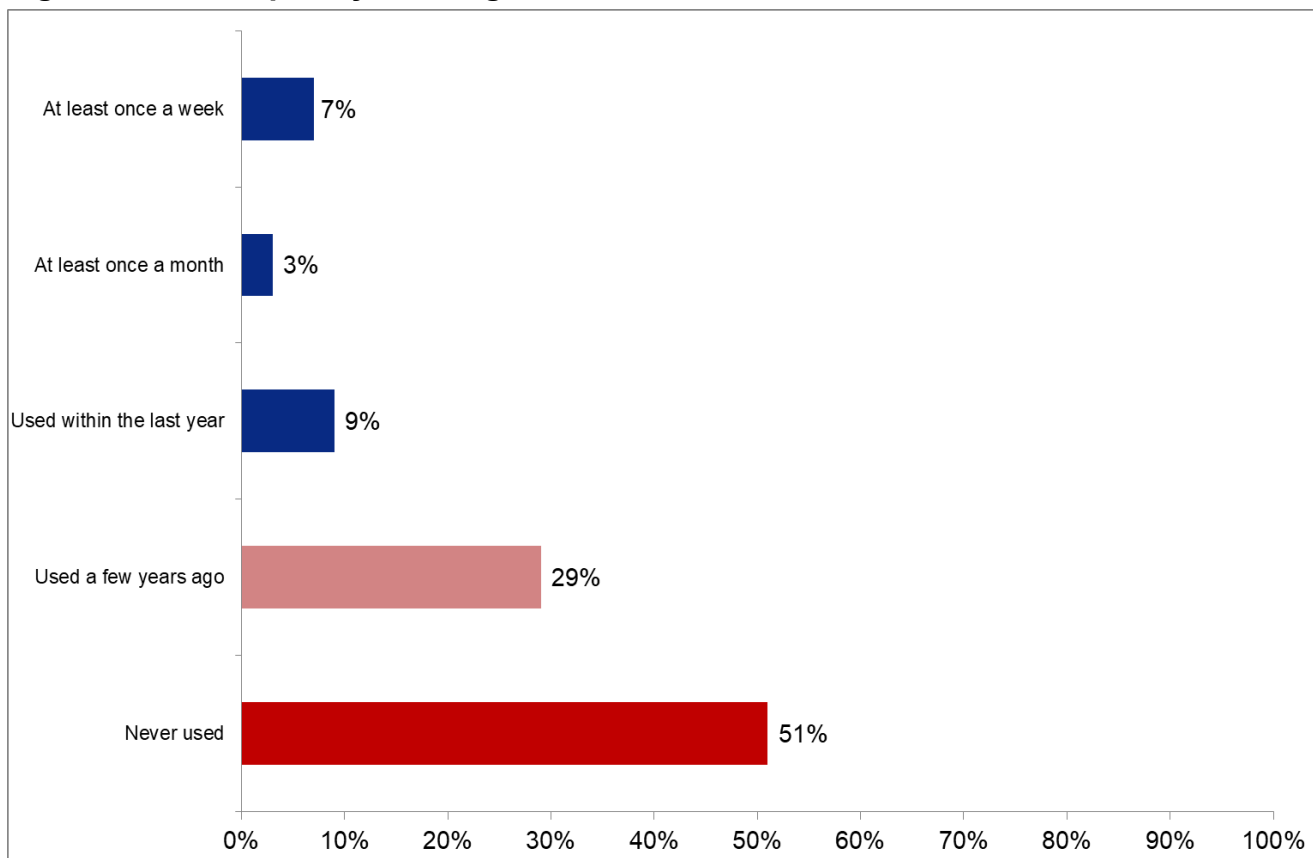
¹ Sampling error exists because even when surveying as robustly as has been the case with this survey, only a proportion of the population has been interviewed. Sampling error, therefore, is the measure of accuracy between the survey results and those that would have been obtained if all residents in the area had been surveyed i.e. a census conducted.

Key findings

Bus use

8. Half of residents never use the local bus service (just 7% said they use the bus once a week and 3% once a month). This compares to the 2007 survey whereby 13% used the bus once a week, 8% once a month, and a further 22% within the last year, which hints at the decline of bus use in recent years perhaps due to the pandemic.
9. There are demographic differences with men, younger age groups, ethnic minorities, disabled people and people living in and around the Bracknell area more likely to have used the bus.
10. Six-in-ten residents who use the local bus service at least once a week typically use the bus only 1 or 2 days a week.
11. Most bus users are doing all or at least some of their journeys by bus.
12. Around six-in-ten residents who do not use the bus think their shopping journeys (the most common type of journeys) could have been made by bus if they had chosen to do so and a third said they could not have been made by bus, while conversely around four-in-ten think their journeys visiting friends or family (the second most common journey type) could have been made by bus and six-in-ten said they could not have been made by bus.

Figure 1: The frequency of using the local bus service



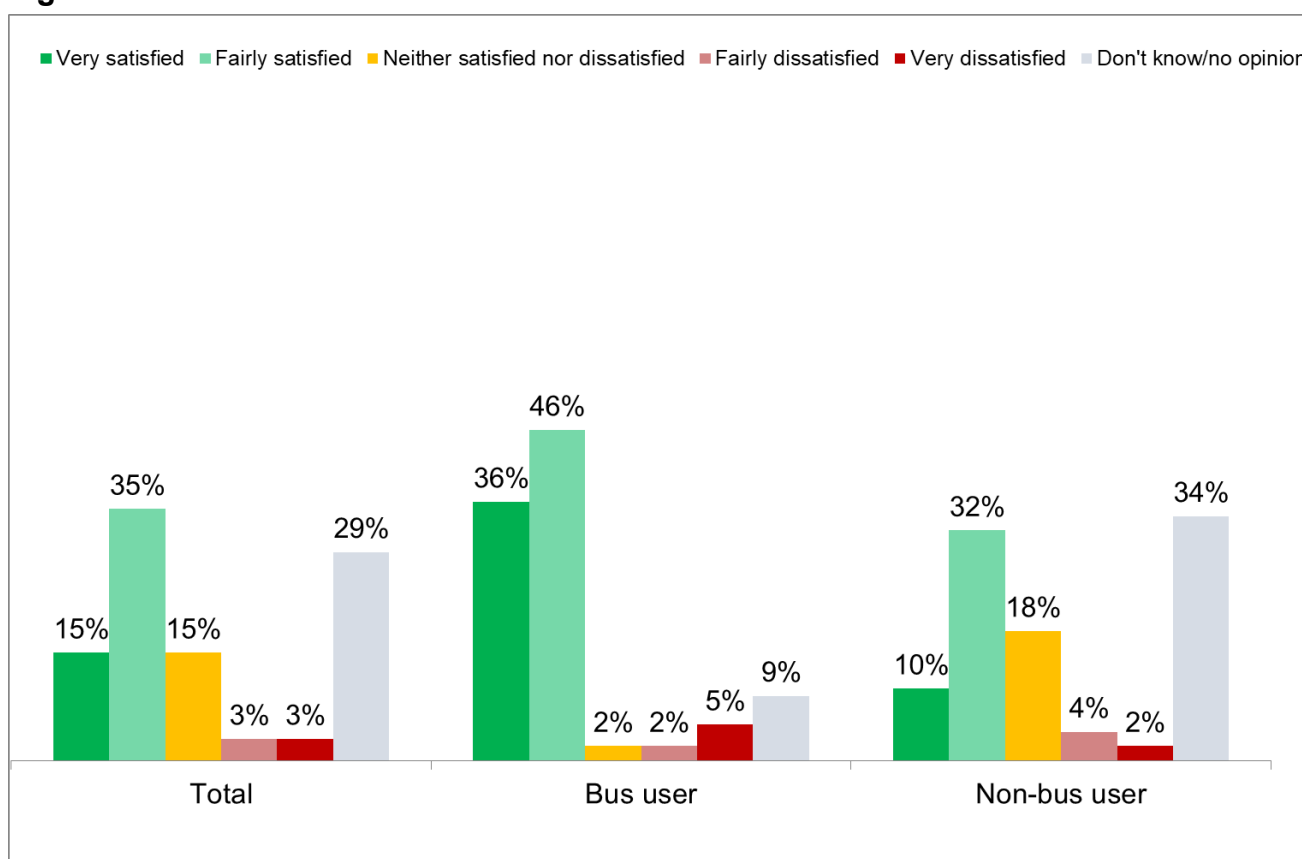
Number of respondents: 524.

Question: Thinking now about using the local bus service, how often, if at all, do you use the local bus service?

Satisfaction with local bus services

13. Overall, 50% of residents were satisfied with the local bus services in Bracknell Forest (15% very satisfied and 35% fairly satisfied). 29% said they do not know or had no opinion.
14. Satisfaction levels among bus users are higher than among non-bus users, where 82% of bus users are satisfied with the local bus services, compared with 42% of non-bus users (albeit with 34% stating 'don't know').
15. This compares favourably with the 2007 survey, where overall 36% of residents were satisfied (62% of bus users satisfied and 22% of non-bus users satisfied).
16. Nonetheless, although satisfaction levels are reasonable, especially amongst bus users, there is scope to increase these. The positive levels of satisfaction amongst bus users compared with non-bus users suggests that some non-bus users may not be fully aware of the benefits of using local bus services, and could therefore benefit from improved awareness, marketing and taster sessions to expose them to the positive aspects of the local bus service. This said, whilst there are some positive levels of satisfaction amongst bus users, there are specific elements of the bus service where there are lower levels of satisfaction and therefore could benefit from change. These include satisfaction with the ease of working out the cost of travel, value for money, facilities (and information) at the bus stop and on the bus, times and frequency of buses, and customer care.

Figure 2: Overall satisfaction with the local bus services



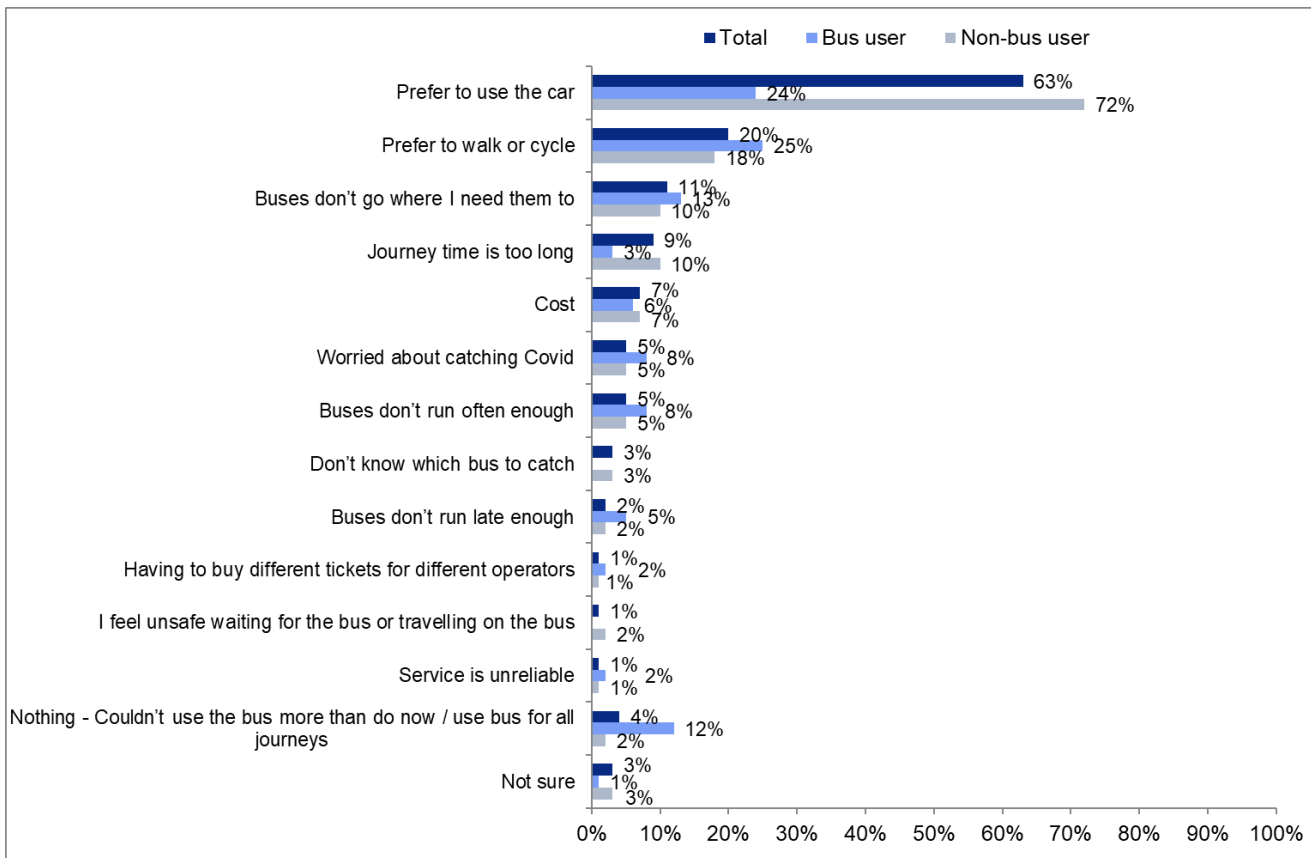
Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with local bus services in Bracknell Forest?

Barriers and encouraging bus use

- 17. 63% of residents said they do not use the bus more often because they prefer to use the car - 24% of bus users and 72% of non-bus users mentioned this reason.
- 18. 20% said they prefer to walk or cycle.
- 19. 11% said buses do not go where they need them to, 9% said the journey time is too long and 7% mentioned the cost.
- 20. Awareness of bus stops and ease of accessing bus stops do not appear to be notable barriers.
- 21. However, 61% of residents who have a disability or live with someone with a disability said that the disability makes it difficult to use the bus service. The difficulties mentioned by these residents include: walking to and from bus stops; getting on and off the bus; bus drivers setting off too soon, before the person is seated safely; lack of space on buses for a wheelchair; and difficulty getting a wheelchair onto the bus, especially if the bus driver does not go to the curb-side.

Figure 3: Reasons for not using the bus more often



Number of respondents: Total - 485, Bus user - 84, Non-bus user - 400.

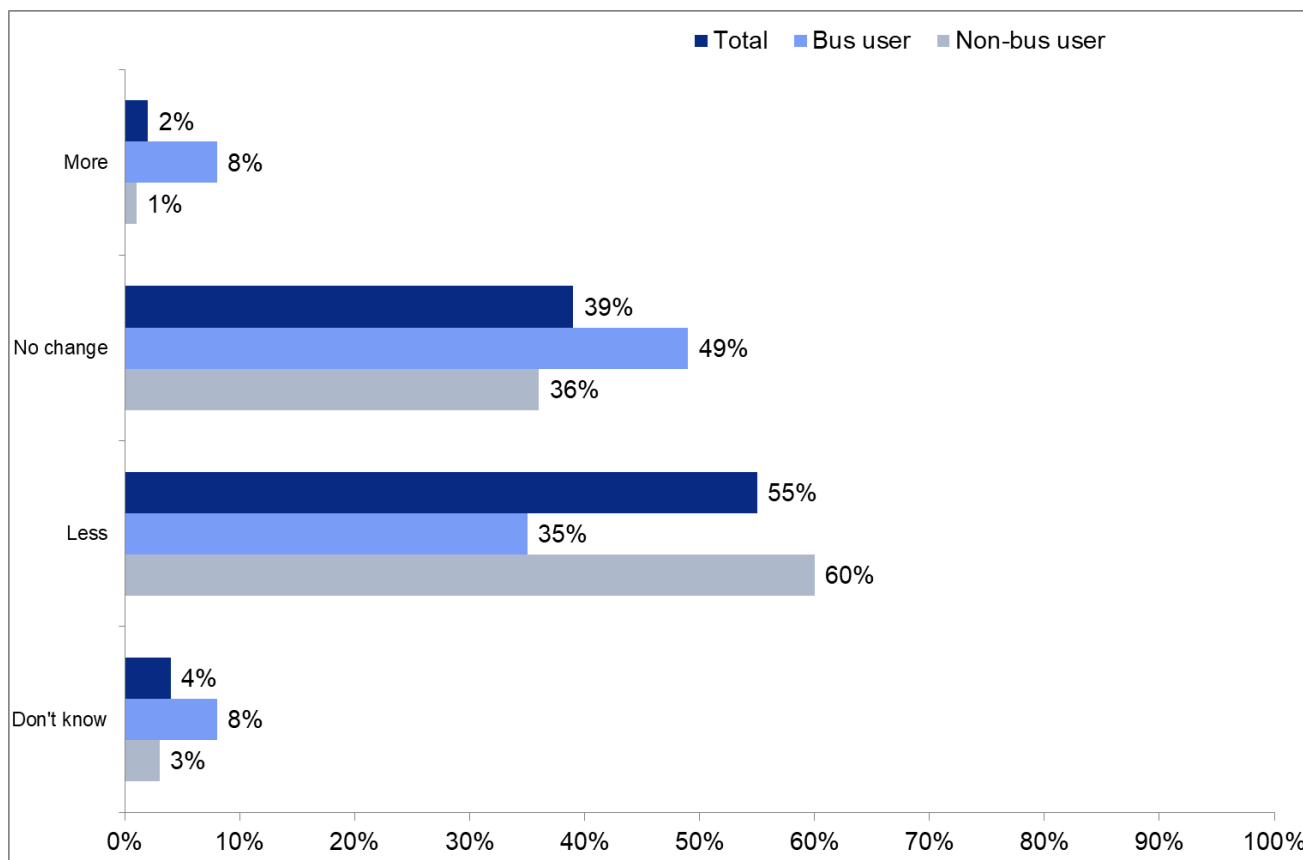
Question: Why do you not use the bus more often than you do now? Note: Respondents could select more than one

The impact of the pandemic

- 22. The pandemic has dampened demand for bus services, in part caused by changing work and travel patterns - 55% of residents said that the pandemic has made them less likely to use the local bus services (35% of bus users and 60% of non-bus users) and 39% said the pandemic has not changed their use of the local bus services (49% of bus users said that the pandemic has not changed their use of the local bus services, while 36% of non-bus users said so).

23. Just 2% said the pandemic has made them more likely to use local bus services (8% of bus users and 1% of non-bus users).

Figure 4: Whether the Coronavirus pandemic has made residents more or less likely to use the local bus services



Number of respondents: Total - 523, Bus users - 102, Non-bus users - 422.

Question: Has the Coronavirus pandemic made you more or less likely to use the local bus services?

In summary, there is clearly potential to increase levels of bus use, which appear to have decreased in part due to the pandemic. The positive levels of satisfaction amongst bus users compared with non-bus users suggests that some non-bus users may not be fully aware of the benefits of using local bus services, and could therefore benefit from improved awareness, marketing and taster sessions to expose them to the positive aspects of the local bus service. The main barrier to bus use is the preference for travelling by car. This requires a mixture of incentives and disincentives to encourage residents out of their cars and on to buses. The incentives mentioned in survey responses include: improvements to elements of the local bus service such as cheaper bus fares (especially relative to car travel), including concessions for younger people and families and integrated bus fares across different routes and providers; and improved routes, including quicker or more direct journey times, routes going to more destinations and more frequent buses, running more often and at different times of day, including early mornings and late evenings to help residents travel to work and back, socialise and recreate. The disincentives mentioned include making travel by car more expensive (especially relative to bus travel) and more difficult through local charges (such as congestion and/or emissions and/or parking charges) and restrictions including around routes, availability of parking and times of day when cars can be used in town centres.

Bracknell Forest Council: Bus Survey 2021

Main Report

Section 1: Introduction

Introduction and background to the research

1.1. Bracknell Forest Council commissioned a survey of residents around their use of local bus services. The council is required to produce a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The council are commissioning this survey to inform that plan and establish a baseline.

Aims of the research

- 1.2. The survey covers the following key issues:
- Levels of bus use.
 - Satisfaction with bus services.
 - Barriers to using local bus services and ways to encourage bus use.
 - The impact of the pandemic on travel and bus use.

Approach to the research

- 1.3. The research was conducted via a telephone survey of 524 residents living in Bracknell Forest. The survey took place over a 2-week period between the end of June and the start of July 2021.
- 1.4. A questionnaire was developed in conjunction with the council to capture information to answer the aims and objectives of the research (see the Appendix for a copy of the questionnaire). The questionnaire was informed by a previous local bus survey conducted in 2007. The questionnaire was tested with a small number of residents prior to its full implementation to ensure it would work effectively in practice.
- 1.5. Quotas were set based on the latest population data available to help ensure that the survey sample was demographically representative of the local population. Quotas were set by gender, age, ethnicity and location.
- 1.6. Interviews were conducted at different times of the day and different days of the week, including evenings and weekends, to ensure that working age residents were interviewed. Only one person per household was interviewed.
- 1.7. With 524 respondents, the survey provides for robust data. At this number of respondents, the sample error or accuracy of the survey results is +/- 4.3% at a 95% confidence level.² This means that we can be 95% confident that the “real” result for any given question would be within 4.3 percentage points of those stated within the survey findings. This provides for robust data when analysed at a headline level and when different questions are cross-

² Sampling error exists because even when surveying as robustly as has been the case with this survey, only a proportion of the population has been interviewed. Sampling error, therefore, is the measure of accuracy between the survey results and those that would have been obtained if all residents in the area had been surveyed i.e. a census conducted.

referenced against each other. It also allows for reliable comparison over time and nationally, where appropriate and where the data is available.

1.8. The following table shows the demographic profile of respondents to the survey:

Demographic	Percentage of interviews
Gender	
Male	50%
Female	50%
Age	
18-34	27%
35-54	39%
55+	34%
Ethnicity	
White British-Irish	80%
Non-white British-Irish	20%

Note: All quotas were achieved within 1-2 percentage points of their target and the results 're-weighted' to be fully in line with the latest local population demographics (these were derived from the ONS mid-year population estimates 2019 and for ethnicity based on the latest school census data – this may slightly over-estimate the size of non-white British-Irish in the adult population, but it was considered important to ensure good representation of minority ethnic groups and reflect future trends in the population).

Reporting

1.9. The main report summarises the key findings from the research. Each relevant question has been analysed against a set of key demographic and conceptual variables to identify any relevant patterns, trends, similarities or differences by different types of respondents. Commentary is only provided where significant or meaningful findings are identified. The variables include:

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Location
- Work status
- Access to a car
- Access to concessionary bus pass
- Bus usage levels

1.10. The main thrust of the analysis has sought to understand the results by different levels of bus usage.

1.11. Only very light-touch comparison has been made against the 2007 survey, given that it was conducted almost 15 years ago and the recent pandemic makes comparison problematic.

1.12. The report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 2: Bus use
- Section 3: Satisfaction with bus services
- Section 4: Barriers to using buses and encouraging bus use
- Section 5: Impact of the pandemic and the future

Section 2: Bus use

Key issues/findings

- Half of residents never use the local bus service (just 7% said they use the bus once a week and 3% once a month)
- There are demographic differences with men, younger age groups, ethnic minorities, disabled people and people living in the Bracknell area more likely to have used the bus.
- Six-in-ten residents who use the local bus service at least once a week typically use the bus only 1 or 2 days a week.
- The majority of residents went shopping, visited friends or family, went to health appointments, visited pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure and made personal business journeys during the last year, with bus users less likely to make journeys than non-bus users.
- Most bus users are doing all or at least some of their journeys by bus
- Around six-in-ten residents who do not use the bus think their shopping journeys (the most common type of journeys) could have been made by bus if they had chosen to do so and a third said they could not have been made by bus, while conversely around four-in-ten think their journeys visiting friends or family (the second most common journey type) could have been made by bus and six-in-ten said they could not have been made by bus.

Introduction

2.1. This section presents findings about bus use in Bracknell Forest, including:

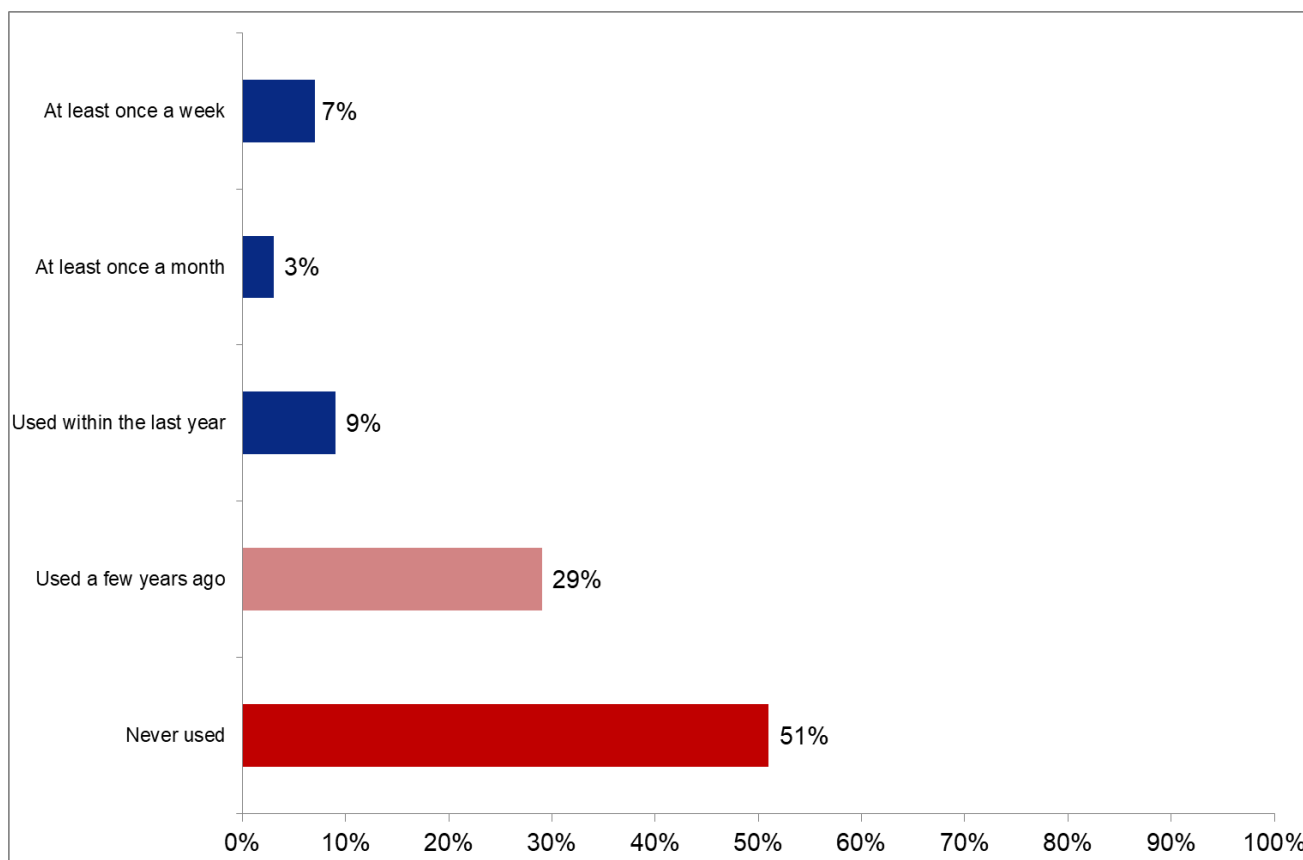
- Frequency of using the local bus service.
- Types of journeys made during the last year, and how many of them were made by bus (most/some/none).
- Whether any of the journeys could have been made by bus.

Frequency of using the local bus service

Half of residents never use the local bus service, with just 1-in-10 using the bus at least once a month

- 2.2. Overall, 51% of residents said they had never used the local bus service and 29% said they had used it a few years ago.
- 2.3. Just 7% said they use the bus once a week and 3% once a month.
- 2.4. This compares to the 2007 survey whereby 13% used the bus once a week, 8% once a month, and a further 22% within the last year, which hints at the decline of bus use in recent years perhaps due to the pandemic.

Figure 2.1: The frequency of using the local bus service



Number of respondents: 524.

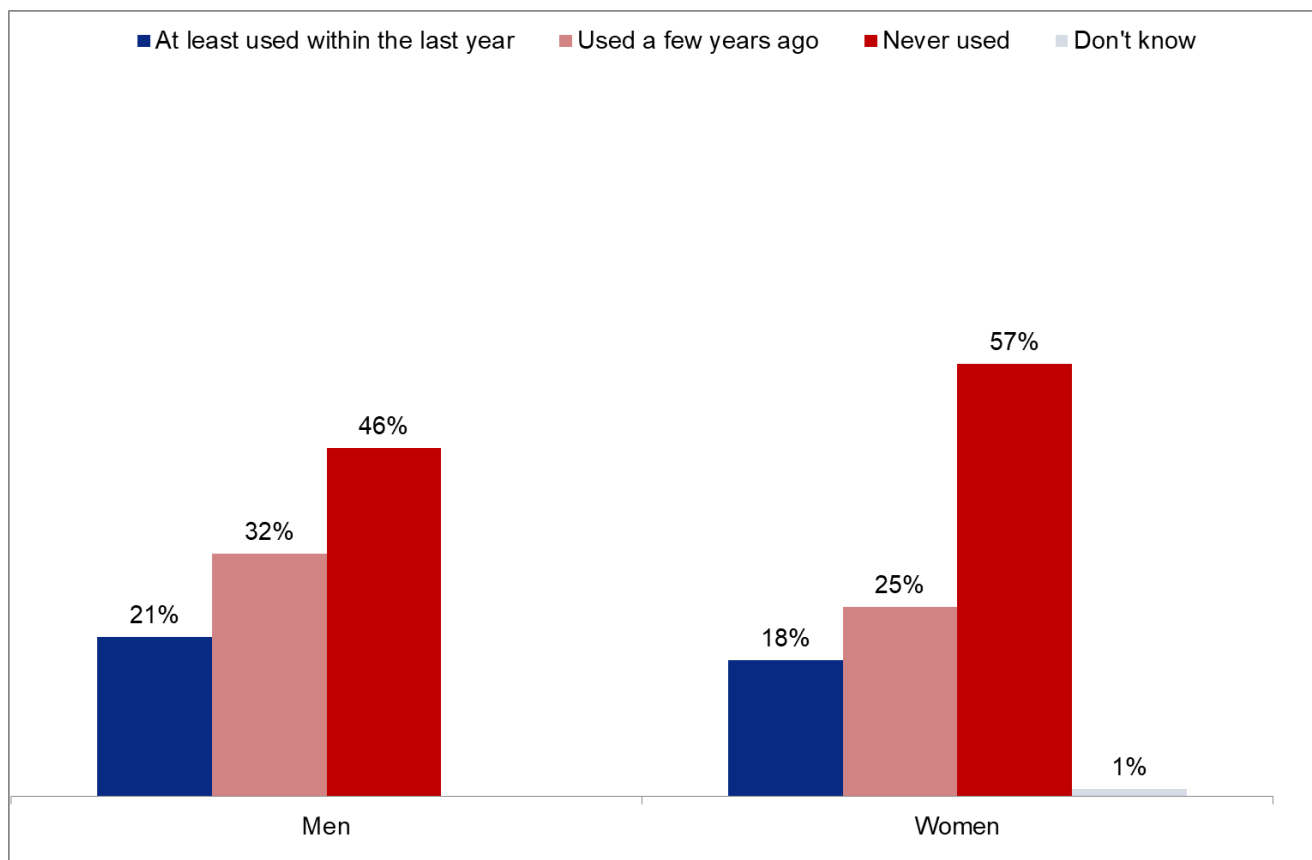
Question: Thinking now about using the local bus service, how often, if at all, do you use the local bus service?

- 2.5. The following differences are of note:
 - **Those that do not work use the bus more than those that do work:** 26% of residents that do not work use the bus at least within the last year, compared with 17% of residents that work.
 - **Residents without cars use the bus more than those with cars:** 66% of residents without a car use the bus at least within the last year, compared with 12% with a car.
 - **Residents with a concessionary bus pass are more likely to use the bus than residents without:** 48% of residents with a concessionary bus pass use the bus at least within the last year, compared with 15% of residents without a concessionary bus pass.

2.6. The frequency of using the local bus service is different across different demographic groups. The following are key demographic differences to note:

- **Women are more likely than men to say they had never used the local bus service:** 57% said they never use the bus, compared with 46% of men.
- **Younger residents are more likely to use the local bus service:** For example, 26% of residents aged 18-34 have used the local bus service at least within the last year compared with 17% and 18% of residents aged 35-54 and those aged 55+, respectively.
- **Non-white British-Irish residents are more likely to use the local bus service:** 24% used the bus within the last year compared with 18% of White British-Irish residents.
- **Disabled residents are more likely to use the local bus service:** For example, 42% of disabled residents have used the local bus service at least within the last year compared with 18% of non-disabled residents.
- **Residents who live outside Bracknell Town area are more likely than other residents to say they had never used the local bus service:** For example, 63% of residents who live outside Bracknell Town area had never used the local bus service, compared with 48% that live in or near Bracknell Town.

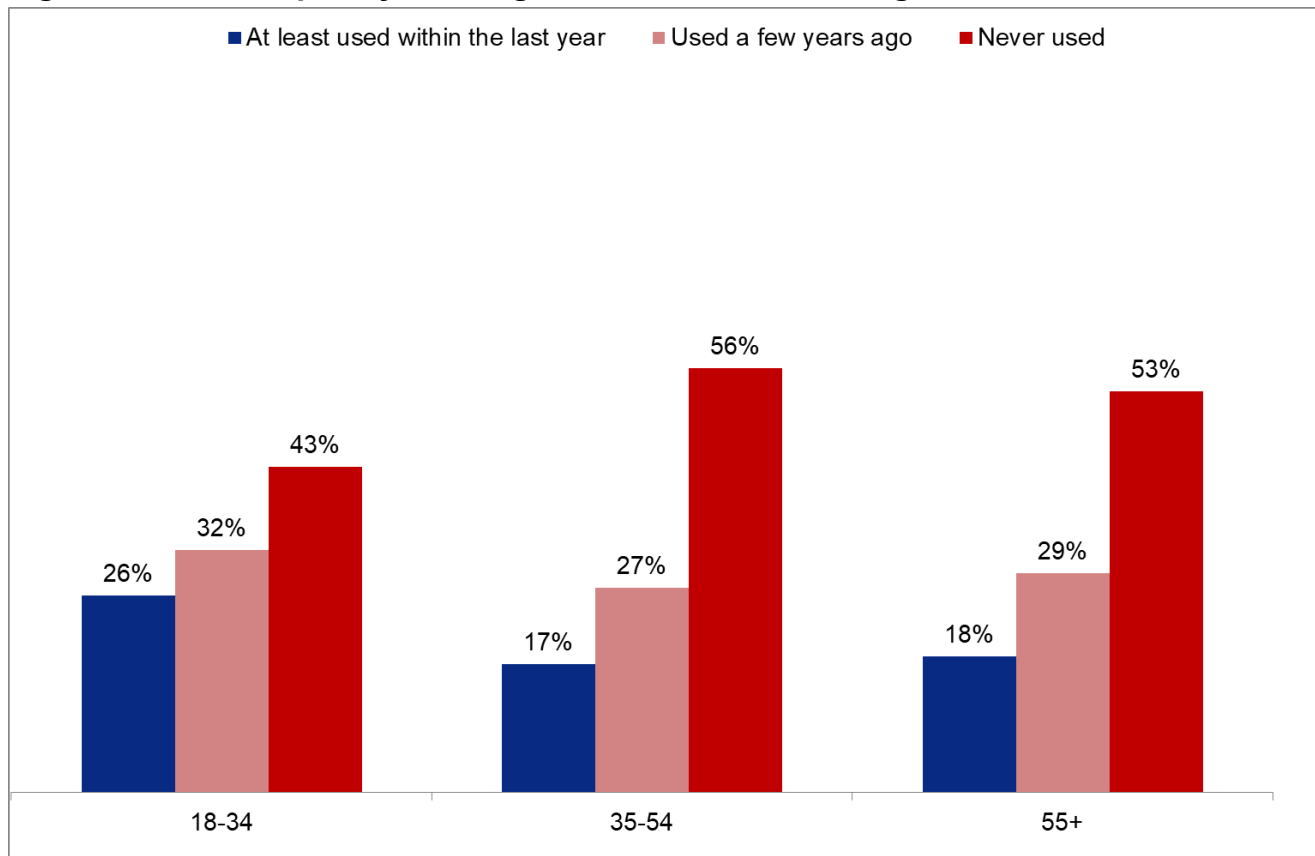
Figure 2.2: The frequency of using the local bus service: gender



Number of respondents: Men - 270, Women - 254.

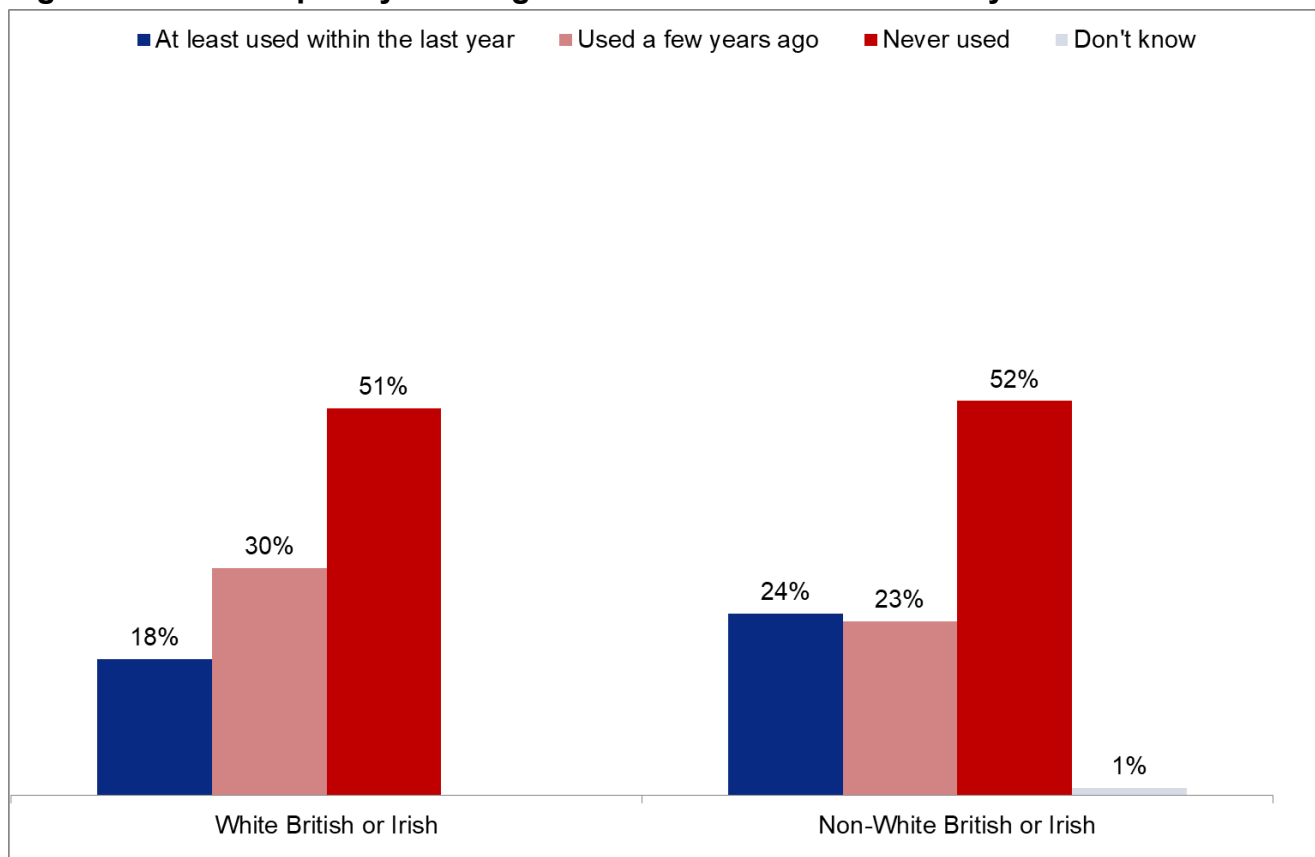
Question: Thinking now about using the local bus service, how often, if at all, do you use the local bus service?

Figure 2.3: The frequency of using the local bus service: age



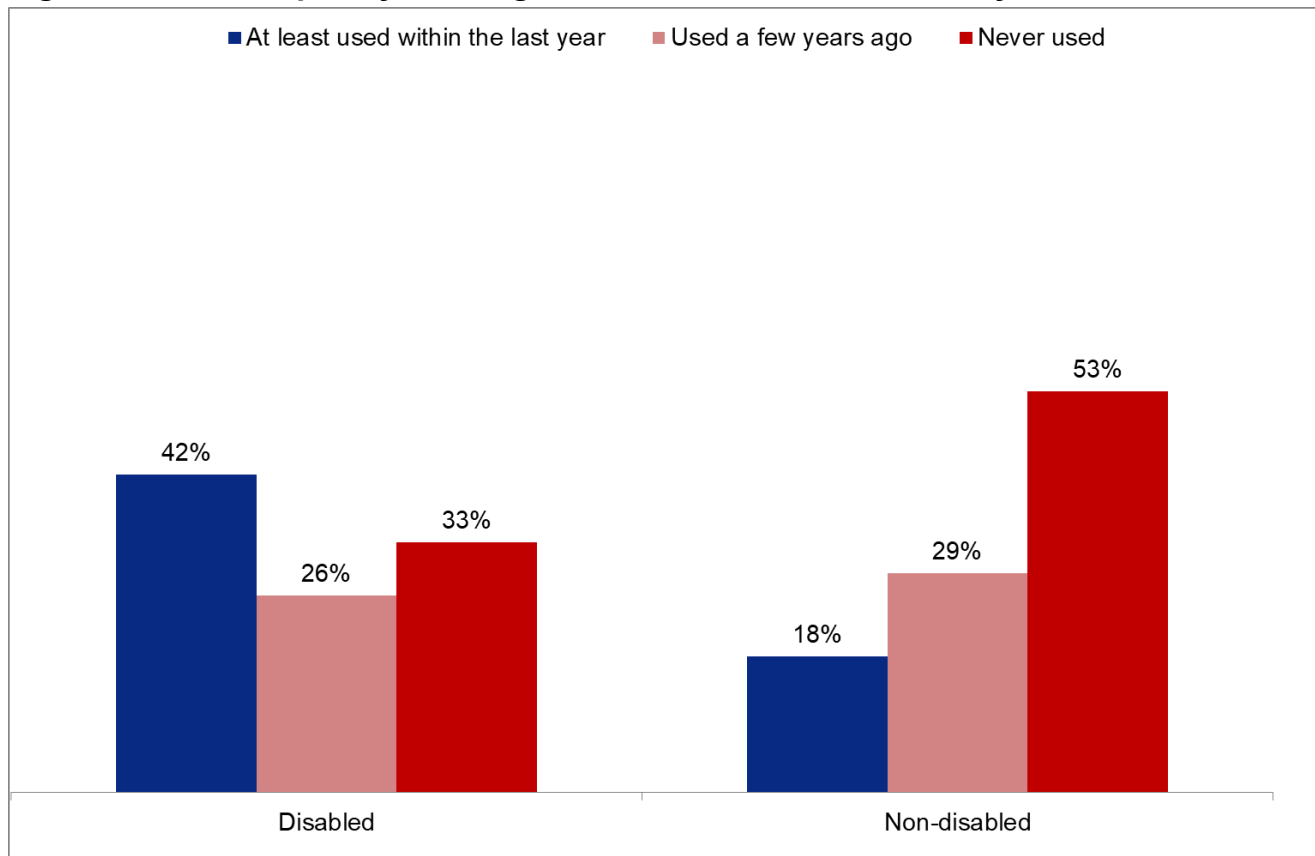
Number of respondents: 18-34 - 141, 35-54 - 254, 55+ - 178. Question: Thinking now about using the local bus service, how often, if at all, do you use the local bus service?

Figure 2.4: The frequency of using the local bus service: ethnicity



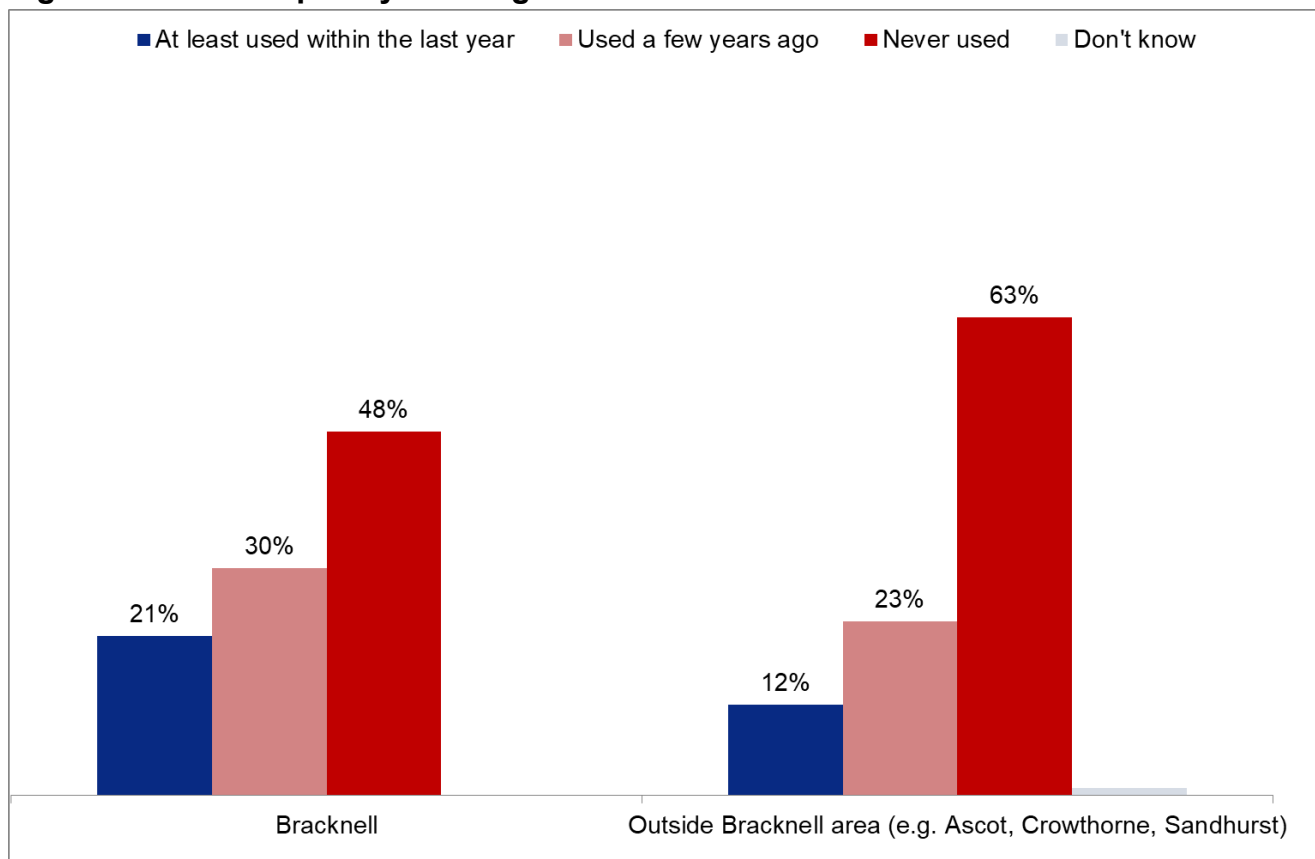
Number of respondents: White British or Irish - 412, Non-White British or Irish - 111. Question: Thinking now about using the local bus service, how often, if at all, do you use the local bus service?

Figure 2.5: The frequency of using the local bus service: disability



Number of respondents: Disabled - 48, Non-disabled - 450. Question: Thinking now about using the local bus service, how often, if at all, do you use the local bus service?

Figure 2.6: The frequency of using the local bus service: town

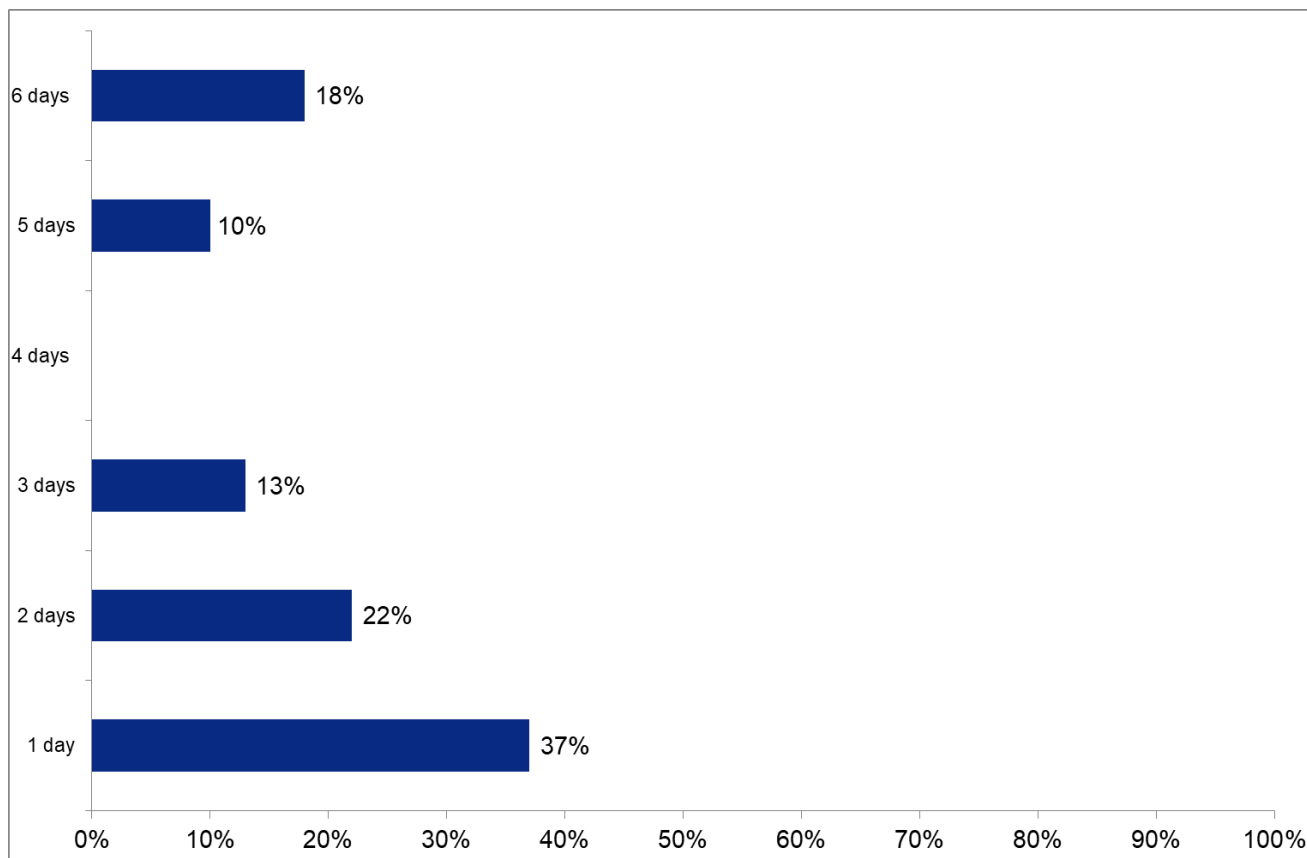


Number of respondents: Bracknell - 404, Outside Bracknell area - 120. Question: Thinking now about using the local bus service, how often, if at all, do you use the local bus service?

Six-in-ten residents who use the local bus service at least once a week typically use the bus only 1 or 2 days a week

2.7. Overall, 37% of residents who use the local bus service at least once a week said they typically use the bus 1 day a week and 22% said they use it 2 days.

Figure 2.7: The number of days in a week residents use the bus



Number of respondents: 38 (as question only asked to those who use the local bus service at least once a week).

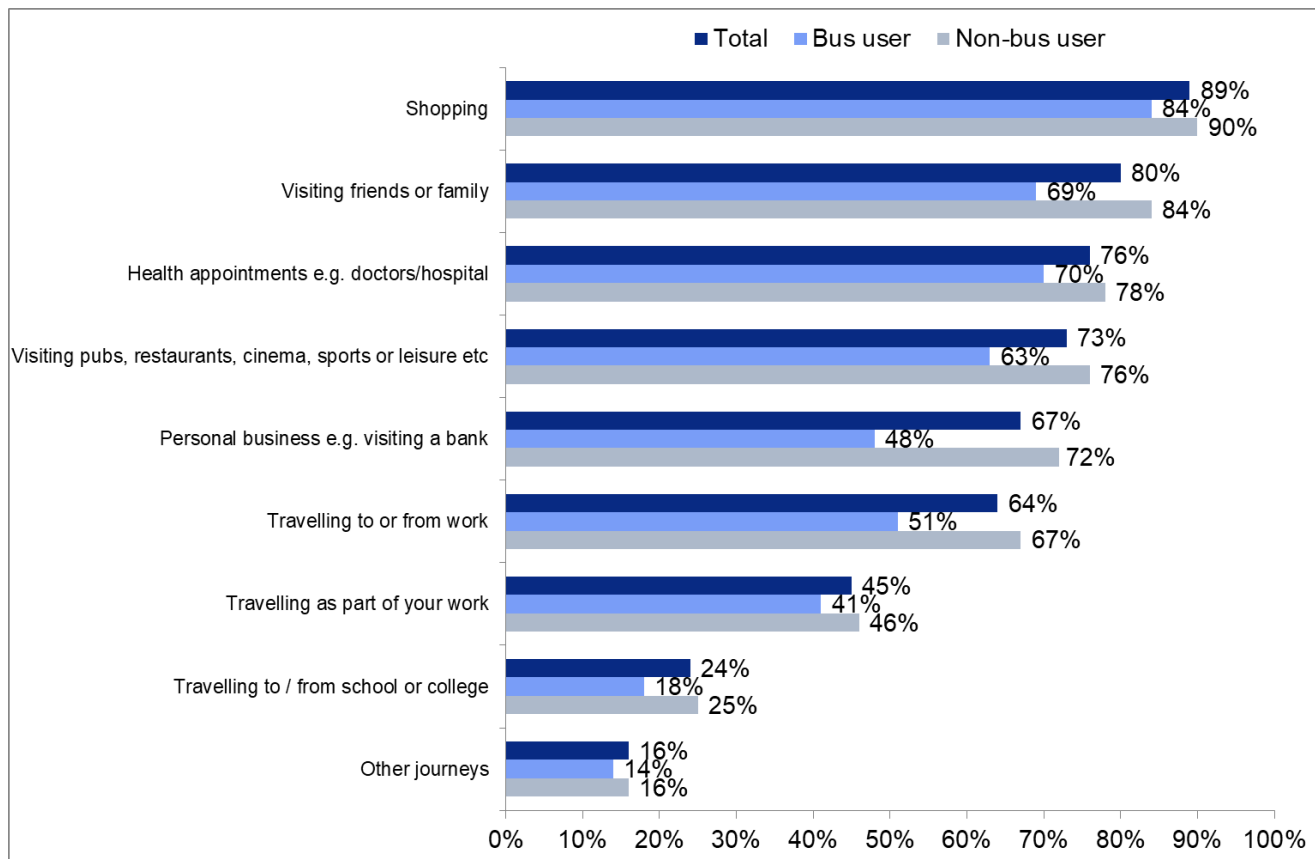
Question: In a typical week, how many days do you use the bus?

Types of journeys made during the last year

The majority of residents went shopping, visited friends or family, went to health appointments, visited pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure and made personal business journeys during the last year, with bus users less likely to make journeys than non-bus users

- 2.8. 89% of residents said they went shopping during the last year, 80% visited friends or family and 76% went to health appointments like doctors or hospitals. 73% visited pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure and 67% made personal business journeys like visiting a bank.
- 2.9. Bus users tend to generally make less journeys than non-bus users, especially personal business journeys (48% of bus users compared with 72% of non-bus users), travelling to or from work (51% of bus users compared with 67% of non-bus users), visiting friends or family (69% of bus users compared with 84% of non-bus users) and leisure journeys (63% of bus users compared with 76% of non-bus users).
- 2.10. The most common 'other journey type' mentioned was travelling to holiday or the airport, cited by approximately 5% of respondents.
- 2.11. Women are less likely to travel as part of their work, 35% did so, compared with 54% of men.
- 2.12. As may be expected due to retirement or the nature of work, residents aged 55 and above are less likely to travel to or from work, 42% did so, compared with 73% and 76% of residents aged 18-34 and those aged 35-54 respectively.
- 2.13. Non-White British or Irish residents are more likely to travel to or from work, 81% did so, compared with 59% of White British or Irish residents.
- 2.14. Disabled residents are less likely to travel to or from work, 19% did so, compared with 69% of non-disabled residents.
- 2.15. Residents who do not have access to a car are less likely to travel to or from school or college, 0% did so, compared with 27% of residents with access to a car.
- 2.16. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass are less likely to make visits to pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure, 41% did so, compared with 78% of residents who do not hold a concessionary bus pass.
- 2.17. Residents living outside Bracknell area are more likely to visit friends or family, 89% did so, compared with 78% of residents living in Bracknell.

Figure 2.8: Types of journeys made during the last year using any form of transport



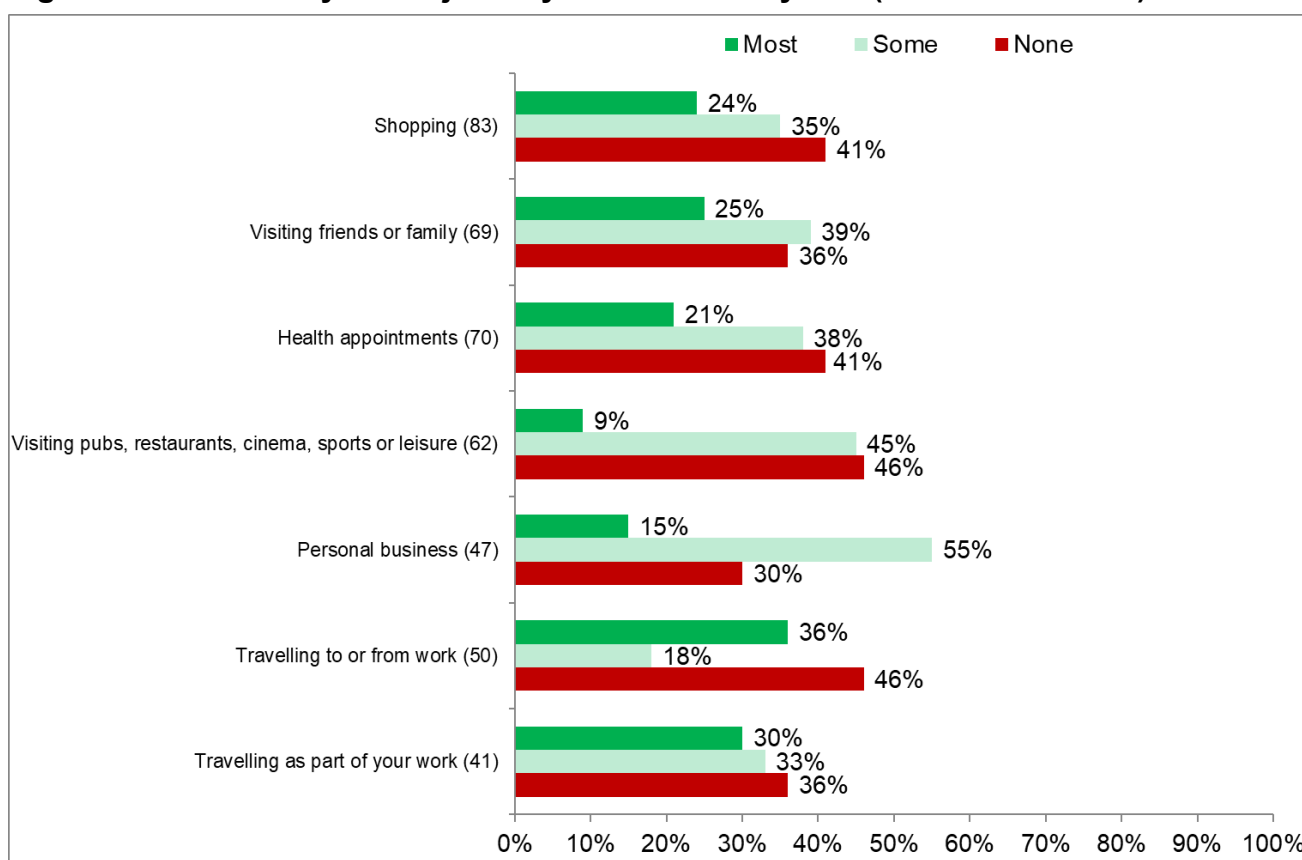
Number of respondents: Total - 486, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 384

Question: Thinking now about types of journeys, which of the following types of journeys have you made during the last year using ANY form of transport?

Most bus users are doing all or at least some of their journeys by bus

- 2.18. 24% of residents who have used buses within the last year said they had made most of their shopping journeys by bus, 35% said they had made some of their shopping journeys by bus and 41% said they did not use the bus for any of their shopping journeys. Similarly, 25% of residents who have used buses within the last year said they had used the bus for most of their journeys visiting friends or family, 39% said they had used the bus for some of their journeys visiting friends or family and 36% said they did not use the bus for any of those journeys.
- 2.19. 21% of residents who have used buses within the last year said they had gone to most of their health appointments by bus, 38% said some of their health appointments were made by bus and 41% said none of those journeys were made by bus.
- 2.20. On average, across all journeys, 24% said they take journeys by bus most of the time, 36% some of the time and 40% none of the time.

Figure 2.9: How many of the journeys were made by bus (most/some/none)



Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each question (only asked to those who have used buses within the last year and where they indicated the journey type was made in the previous question).

Questions: And how many of these journeys did you make by bus for each of the journeys made - most, some, none?

2.21. The following table shows the journeys bus users have made for which they have not used the bus and think they could have been made by bus if they had chosen to do so:

Journeys	No. that said they could have used the bus	Percentages that said they could have used the bus
Shopping (34)	17	51%
Visiting friends or family (25)	12	48%
Health appointments (29)	17	58%
Visiting pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure (29)	21	72%
Personal business (14)	5	33%
Travelling to or from work (23)	6	27%
Travelling as part of your work (15)	9	57%
Travelling to / from school or college (6)	2	25%

Note: These results should be treated with caution due to the low sample sizes.

Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each question.

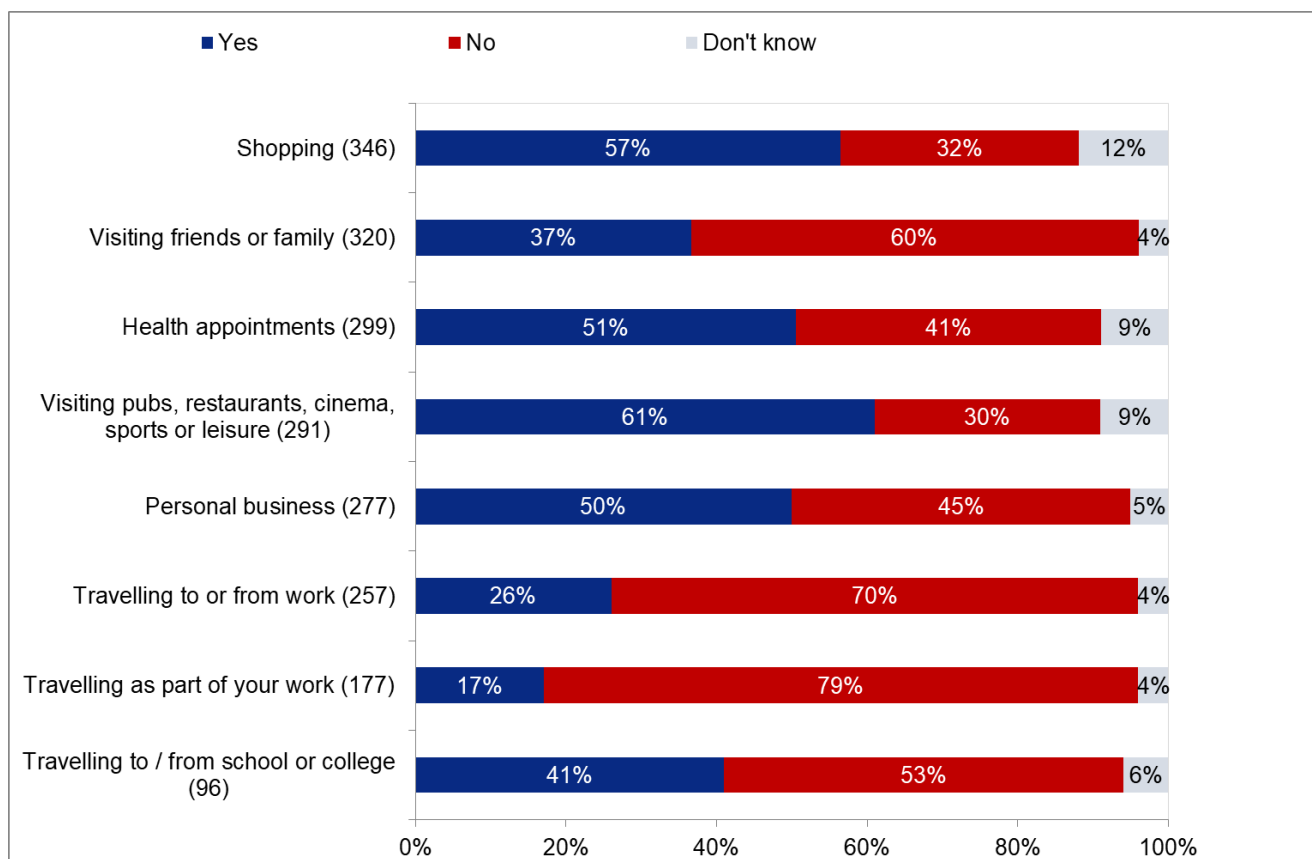
Question asked: Thinking now about those types of journeys you have made, but for which you have not used the bus, could any of these journeys have been made by bus if you had chosen to do so?

Whether any of the journeys made by bus non-users could have been made by bus

Around six-in-ten residents who do not use the bus think their shopping journeys (the most common type of journeys) could have been made by bus if they had chosen to do so and a third said they could not have been made by bus, while conversely around four-in-ten think their journeys visiting friends or family could have been made by bus and six-in-ten said they could not have been made by bus

- 2.22. Overall, 57% of residents who do not use the bus said their shopping journeys could have been made by bus, if they had chosen to do so. 32% of residents said their shopping journeys could not have been made by bus, if they had chosen to do so.
- 2.23. 37% said their friend or family visits could have been made by bus, if they had chosen to do so and 60% said they could not have been made by bus. 51% said their health appointments could have been made by bus and 41% said they could not.
- 2.24. 61% said their journeys visiting pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure could have been made by bus and 30% said they could not. 50% said their personal business journeys could have been made by bus if they had chosen to do so and 45% said they could not.
- 2.25. On average, across all journeys, 44% said they could have made the journey by bus, 49% said they couldn't and 7% said they didn't know.

Figure 2.10: Whether or not journeys could have been made by bus



Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each question (only asked to non-bus users).

Question: Could any of these journeys have been made by bus, if you had chosen to do so?

Section 3: Satisfaction with bus services

Key issues/findings

- The standard of driving of the buses is the top-rated element of the local bus service, with six-in-ten residents satisfied, followed by ease of finding bus times, condition of the bus stop and comfort of travel where half of residents are satisfied with each.
- The lower levels of satisfaction include ease of working out cost of travel, value for money, facilities (and information) at the bus stop and on the bus, times and frequency of buses, and customer care.
- Half of residents are satisfied with the local bus services, where satisfaction levels are higher among bus users with around four-fifths of bus users satisfied, compared with two-fifths of non-bus users.

Introduction

- 3.1. This section presents findings about satisfaction of residents with bus services, including:
- Satisfaction with elements of the local bus service.
 - Overall satisfaction with local bus services.

Satisfaction with elements of the local bus service

The standard of driving of the buses is the top-rated element of the local bus service, with six-in-ten residents satisfied, followed by ease of finding bus times, condition of the bus stop and comfort of travel where half of residents are satisfied with each

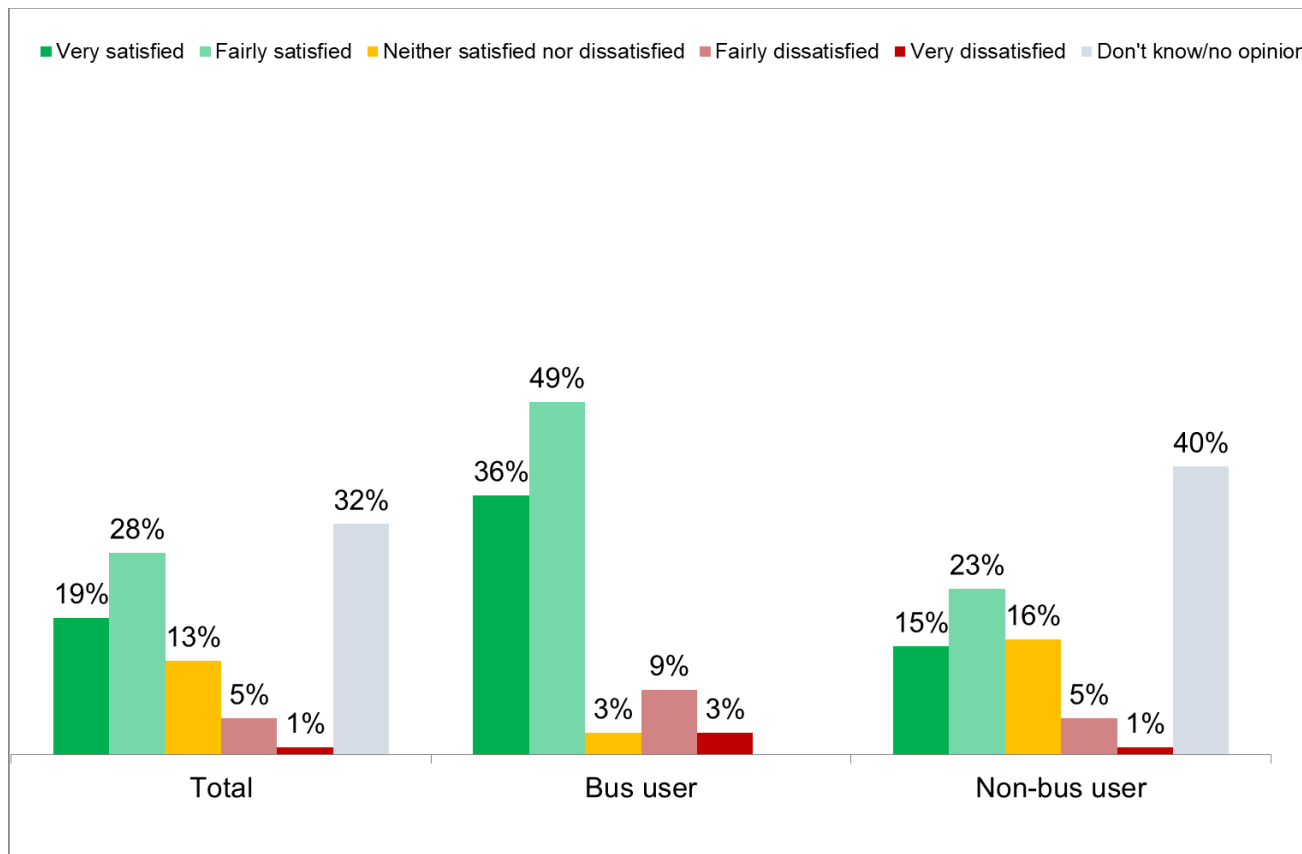
The lower levels of satisfaction include ease of working out cost of travel, value for money, facilities (and information) at the bus stop and on the bus, times and frequency of buses, and customer care

Figure 3.1: Satisfaction by bus service elements – overview (organised by the order they appeared in the questionnaire)

Element of local bus service	Overall satisfaction
Ease of working out where buses go from and to	47%
Ease of finding bus times	51%
Ease of working out cost of travel	28%
Ease of paying for ticket	45%
Value for money	32%
Information provided at the bus stop	36%
Condition of the bus stop	50%
Facilities provided at the bus stop	34%
Choice of destinations available	46%
Times when buses are available (e.g. evenings/Sundays)	34%
How often the buses run	39%
Buses running on time	41%
How long the journey takes	44%
Customer care	35%
Standard of driving of the buses	62%
Comfort of travel	49%
Facilities on the bus	33%
Cleanliness of the buses	47%

- 3.2. Overall, 47% of residents were satisfied with the **ease of working out where buses go from and to**.
- 3.3. Satisfaction levels among bus users are higher than among non-bus users, where 85% of bus users are satisfied with the ease of working out where buses go from and to, compared with 38% of non-bus users (albeit with high levels of don't know, as is the case with most indicators and non-bus users).

Figure 3.2: Ease of working out where buses go from and to



Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

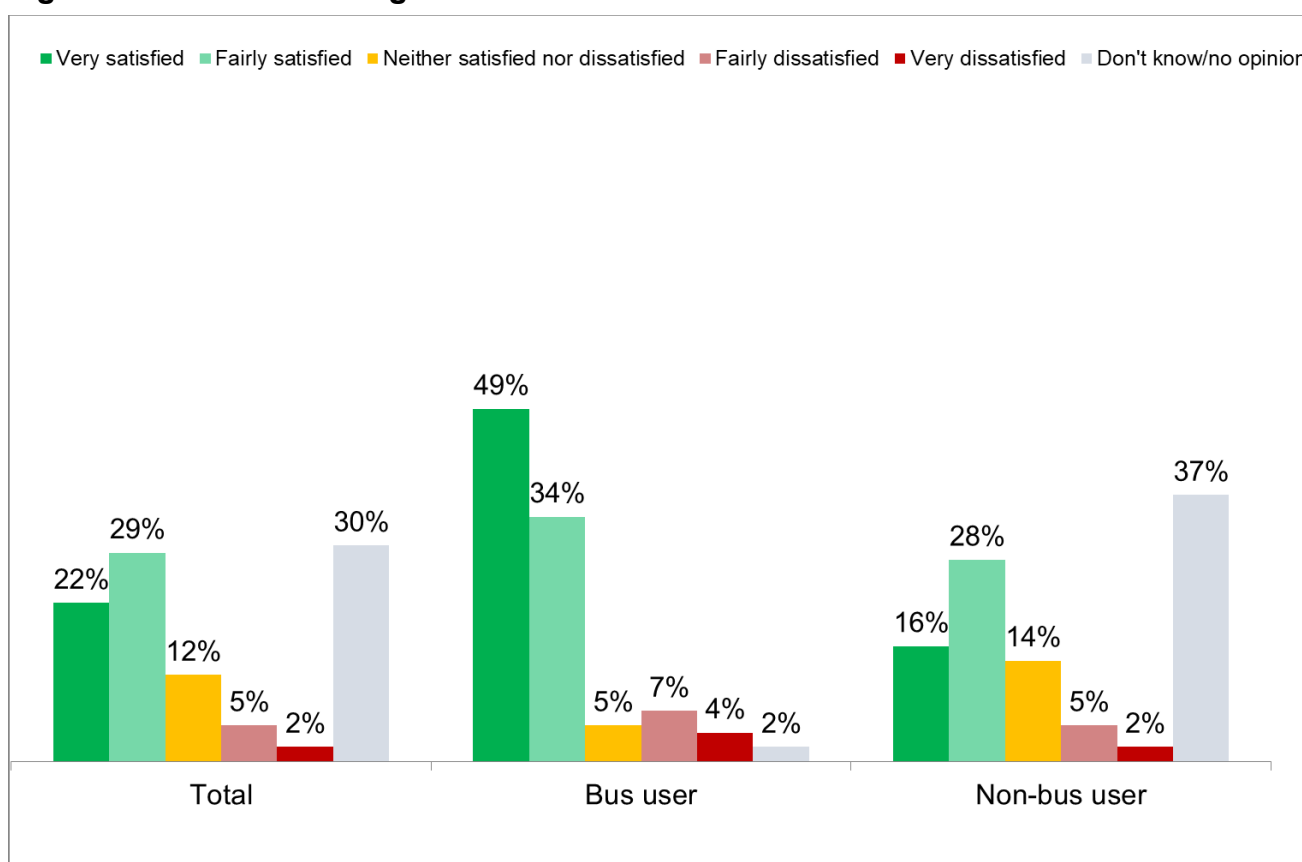
- 3.4. The findings are broadly consistent across demographic groups except for the following differences (which are generally explained by higher bus usage amongst the more satisfied groups – and this is the case for all or most of the differences identified in this section for the various indicators):
- **Men are more likely than women to be satisfied with ease of working out where buses go from and to:** 58% of men were satisfied, compared with 37% of women (which matches the earlier finding that women are more likely to have never used the bus).
 - **Residents aged 18-34 are more likely than other age groups to be satisfied with ease of working out where buses go from and to:** 64% of residents aged 18-34 were satisfied, compared with 44% of 35-54 year olds and 40% of residents aged 55 or over.
 - **Residents who do not have access to a car are more likely than other residents to be satisfied with ease of working out where buses go from and to:** 78% of residents

who do not have access to a car said they were satisfied compared to 43% of residents who have access to a car.

- **Residents that hold a concessionary bus pass are more likely than other residents to be satisfied with ease of working out where buses go from and to:** For example, 64% of residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were satisfied compared with 47% of residents overall.

- 3.5. 51% of residents said they were satisfied with the **ease of finding bus times**, while 30% said they do not know or have no opinion. 83% of bus users were satisfied, whereas 44% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.6. Residents aged 18-34 are more likely than other residents to say that they were satisfied with the ease of finding bus times, 67% did so, compared with 46% of residents aged 35-54 and 43% of residents aged 55 and above.
- 3.7. Residents who do not have access to a car are more likely to say they were satisfied (76%).
- 3.8. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass are more likely to say they were satisfied with the ease of finding bus times, 69% said so, compared with 48% of residents who do not hold a concessionary bus pass.
- 3.9. Residents who live outside Bracknell area are less likely to say they were satisfied with the ease of finding bus times, 41% said so, compared with 54% of residents in Bracknell.

Figure 3.3: Ease of finding bus times

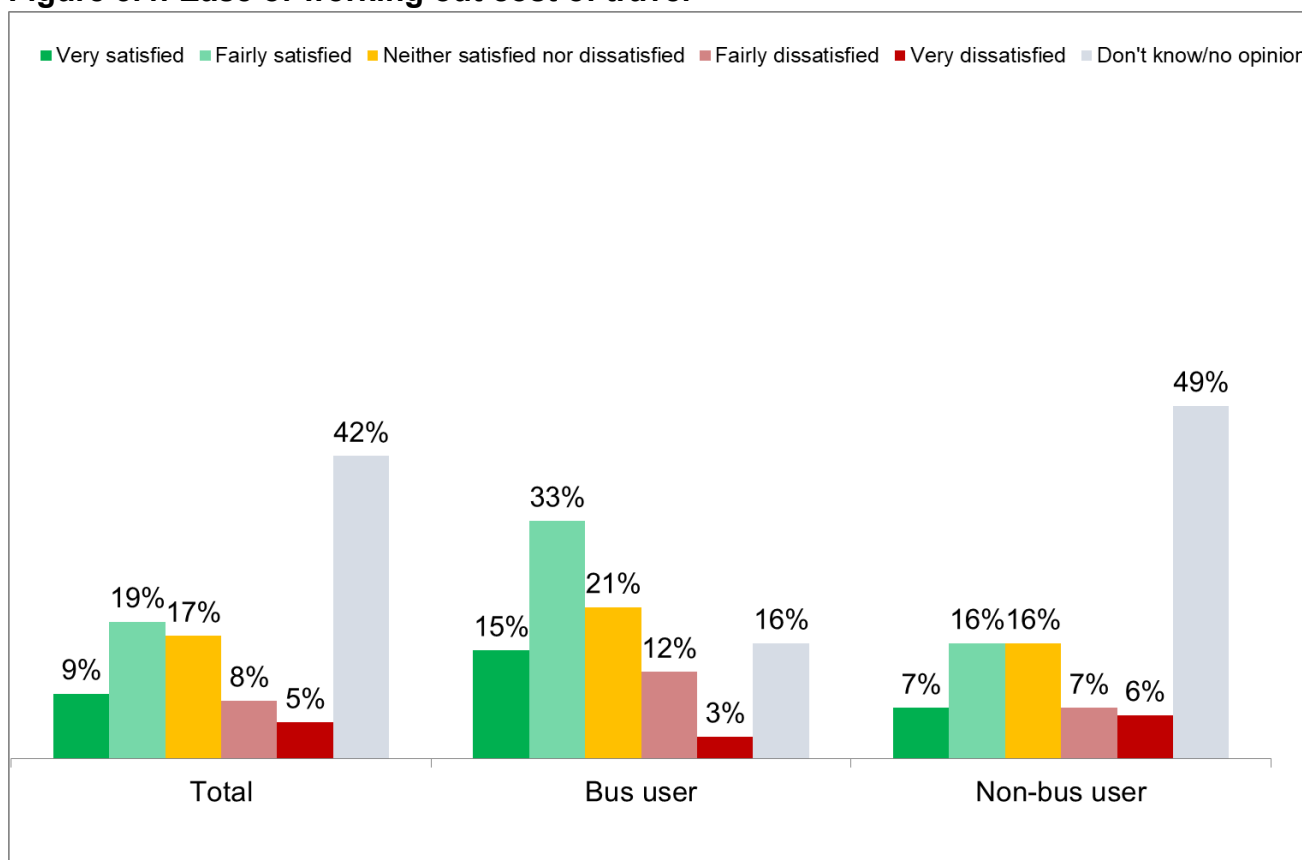


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.10. 28% of residents said they were satisfied with the **ease of working out cost of travel**, while 42% said they do not know or had no opinion.
- 3.11. 48% of bus users said they were satisfied with the ease of working out cost of travel, whereas 23% of non-bus users said they were satisfied.
- 3.12. Women are less likely than men to say that they were satisfied with the ease of working out cost of travel, 20% said so, compared with 35% of men.
- 3.13. Residents aged 18-34 are more likely than other residents to say that they were satisfied with the ease of working out cost of travel, 42% did so, compared with 24% of residents aged 35-54 and 22% of residents aged 55 and above.
- 3.14. Residents who do not have access to a car are more likely to say they were satisfied with the ease of working out cost of travel (65%).

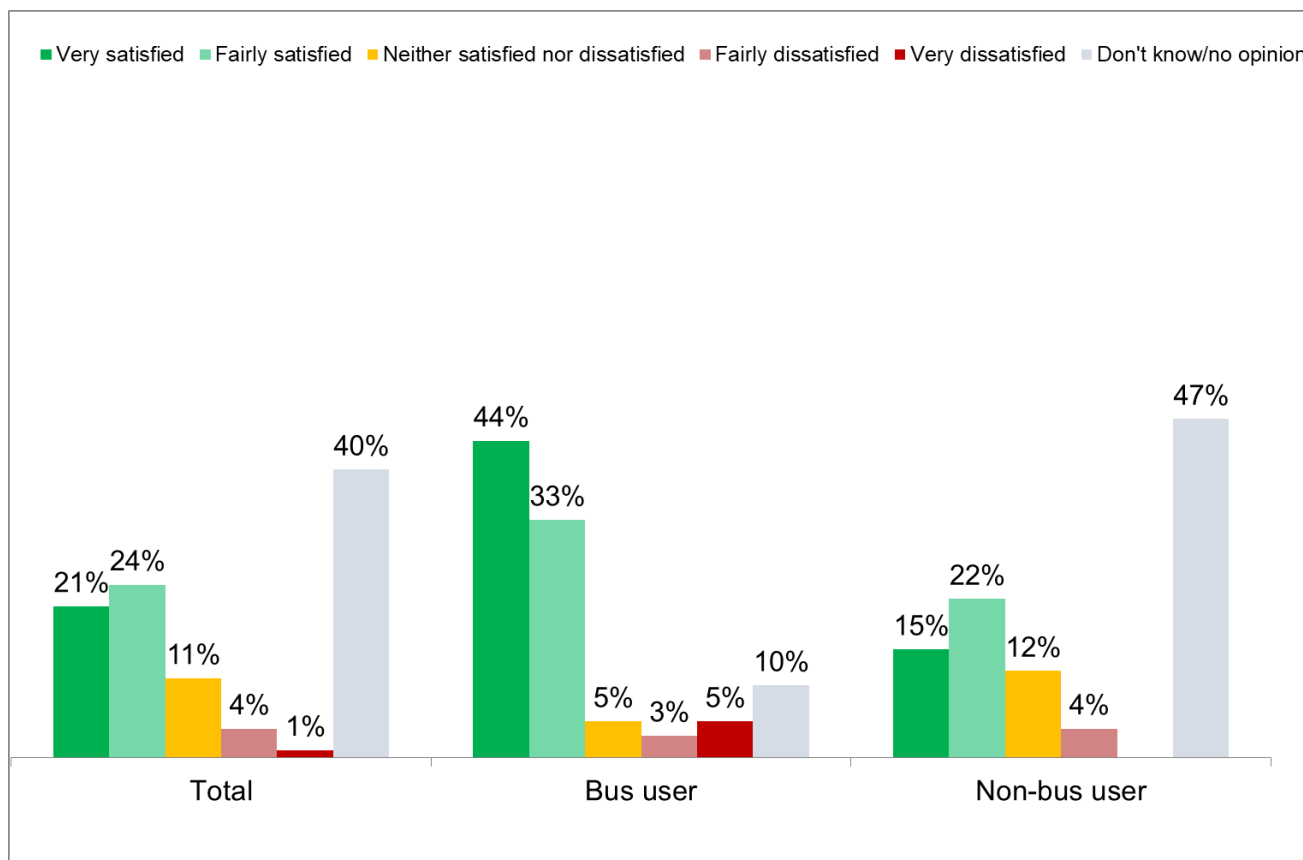
Figure 3.4: Ease of working out cost of travel



Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422. Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.15. Overall, 45% of residents were satisfied with the **ease of paying for ticket**, while 40% did not know or had no opinion and 5% were unsatisfied. 77% of bus users were satisfied with the ease of paying for ticket, whereas 37% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.16. Women were less likely to say that they were satisfied with the ease of paying for ticket, 38% said so.
- 3.17. Residents aged 18-34 were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the ease of paying for ticket, 62% said so.
- 3.18. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the ease of paying for ticket, 74% said so.
- 3.19. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the ease of paying for ticket, 58% said so.

Figure 3.5: Ease of paying for ticket

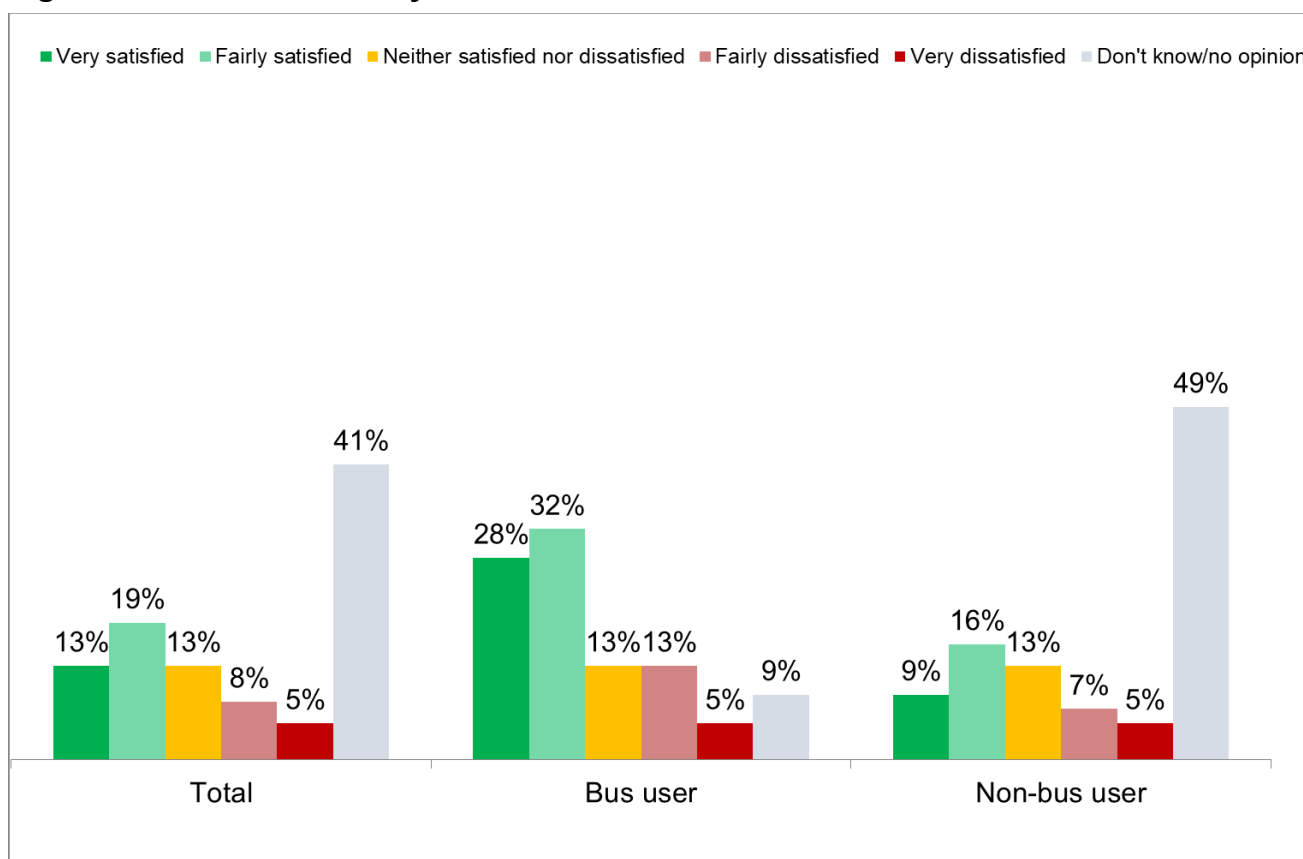


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.20. Overall, 32% of residents said they were satisfied with **value for money of the local bus service** and 41% said they do not know or had no opinion. 60% of bus users were satisfied with value for money, while 25% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.21. Women were less likely to say that they were satisfied with value for money, 23% said so.
- 3.22. Residents aged 18-34 were more likely to say that they were satisfied with value for money, 41% said so.
- 3.23. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied, 53% said so.
- 3.24. Residents that hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with value for money, 58% said so.

Figure 3.6: Value for money

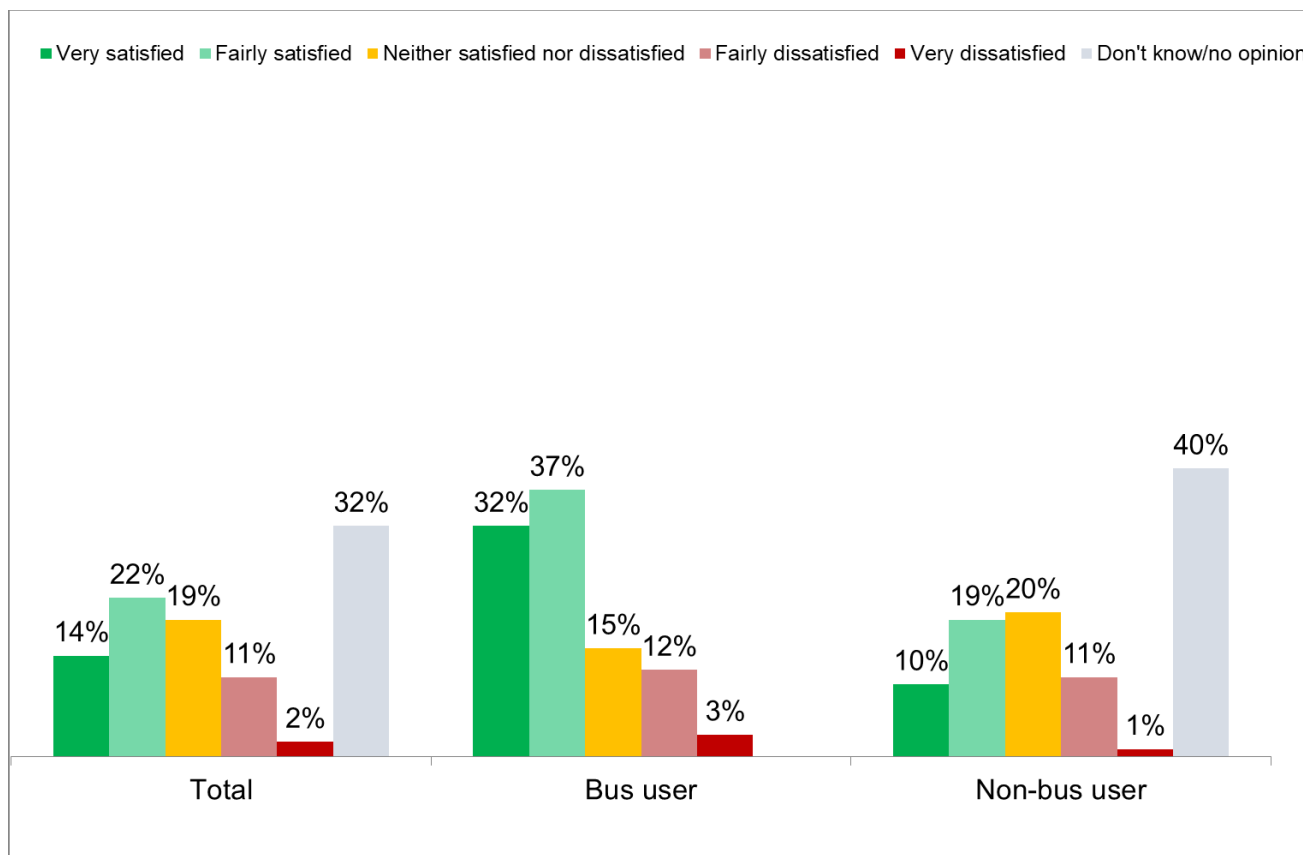


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.25. Overall, 36% of residents said they were satisfied with the **information provided at the bus stop** and 32% said they do not know or had no opinion. 69% of bus users were satisfied with information provided at the bus stop, while 29% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.26. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the information provided at the bus stop, 61% said so.
- 3.27. Residents that hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with information provided at the bus stop, 54% said so.

Figure 3.7: Information provided at the bus stop

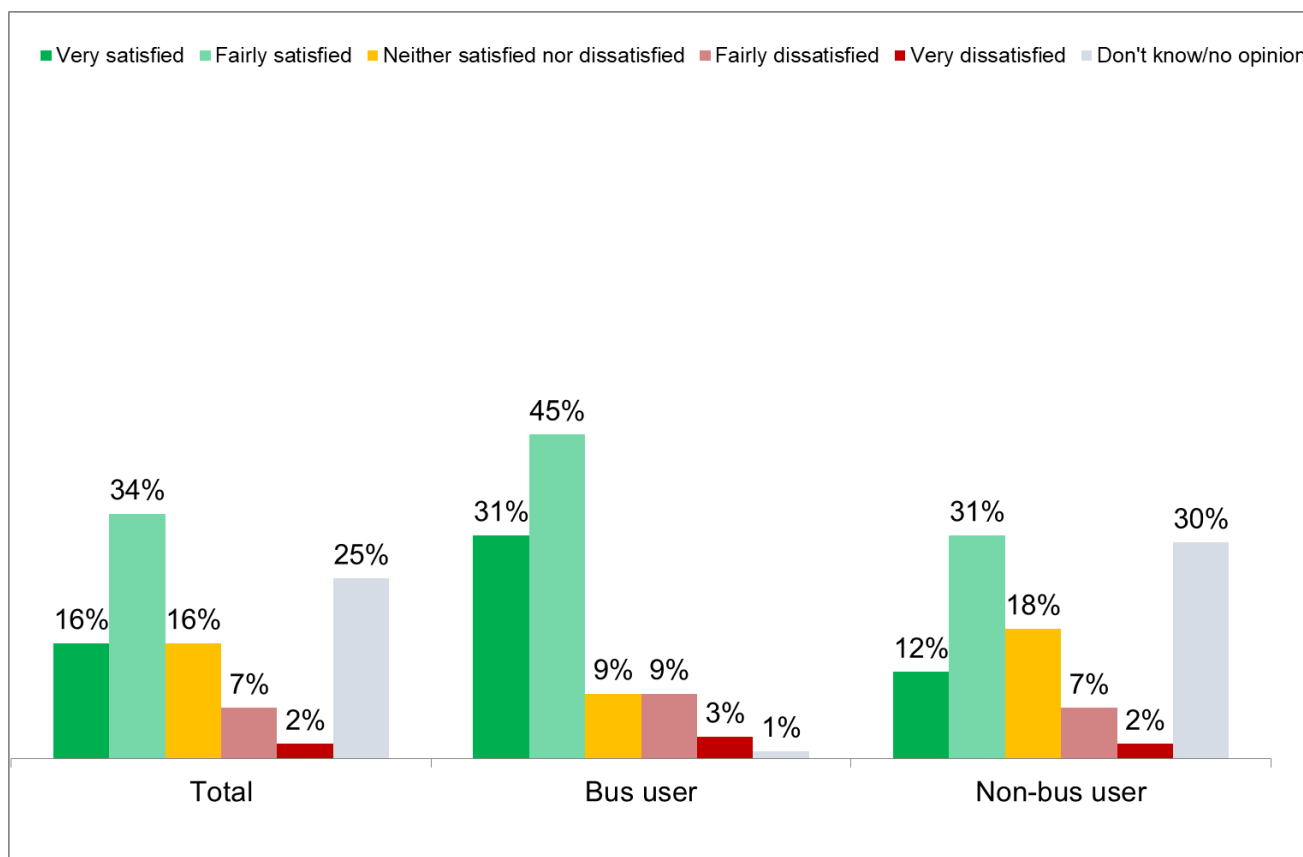


Number of respondents: Total - 523, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.28. Overall, 50% of residents said they were satisfied with the **condition of the bus stop** and 25% said they do not know or had no opinion. 76% of bus users were satisfied with the condition of the bus stop, while 43% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.29. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the condition of the bus stop, 73% said so.
- 3.30. Residents that hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the condition of the bus stop, 62% said so.
- 3.31. Residents that live outside Bracknell area were less likely to say that they were satisfied with the condition of the bus stop, 40% said so.

Figure 3.8: Condition of the bus stop

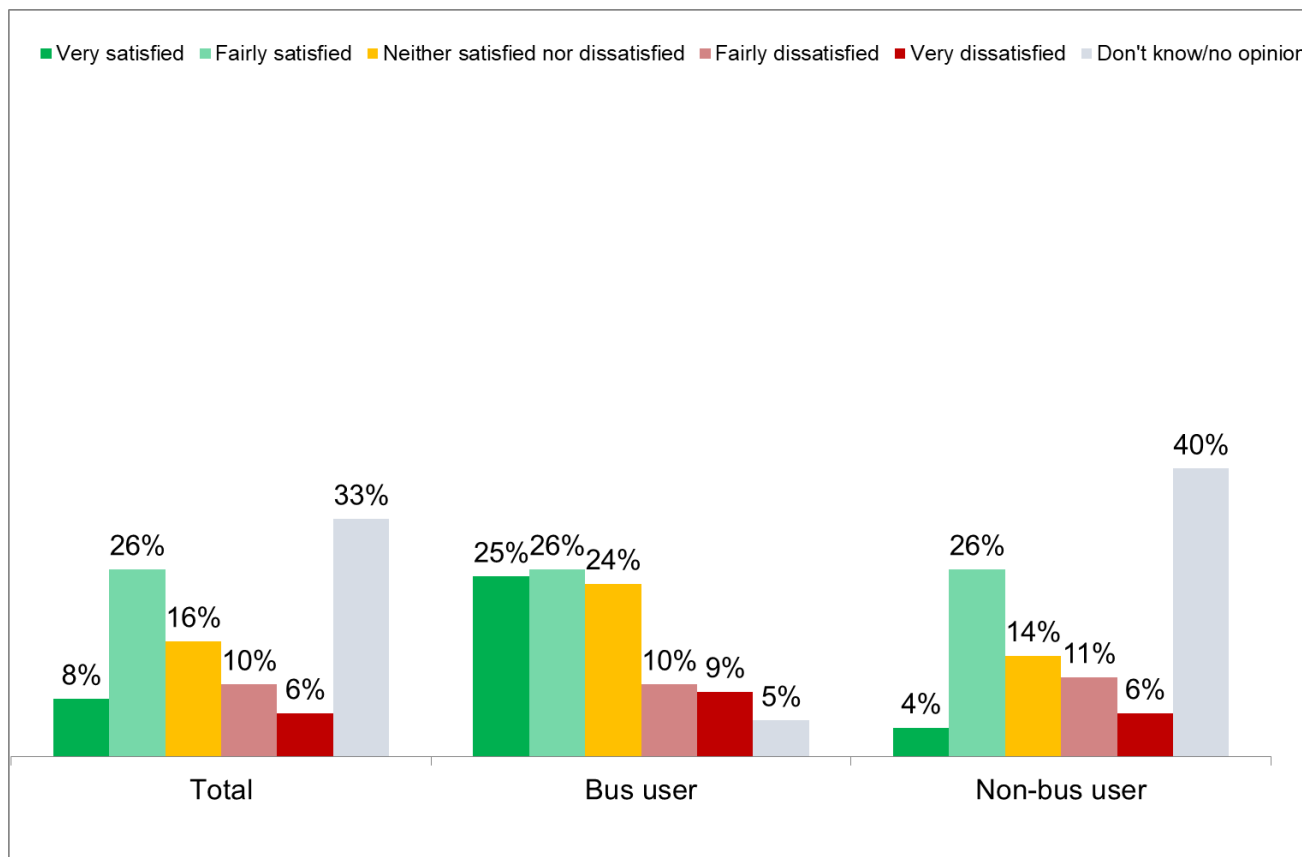


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.32. Overall, 34% of residents said they were satisfied with the **facilities provided at the bus stop** and 33% said they do not know or had no opinion. 51% of bus users were satisfied with the facilities provided at the bus stop, while 30% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.33. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the facilities provided at the bus stop, 58% said so.
- 3.34. Residents that live outside Bracknell area were less likely to say that they were satisfied with the facilities provided at the bus stop, 24% said so.

Figure 3.9: Facilities provided at the bus stop

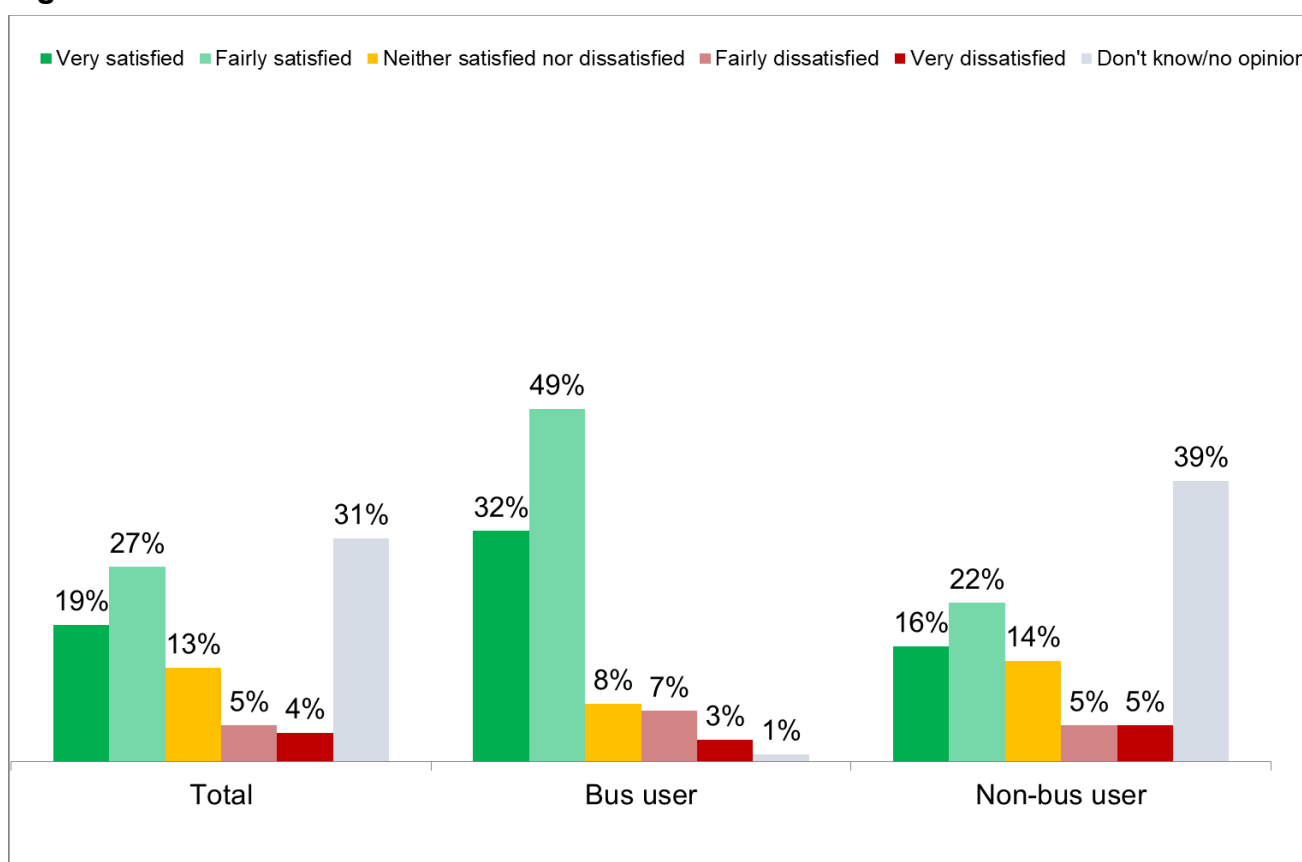


Number of respondents: Total - 522, Bus user - 100, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.35. Overall, 46% of residents said they were satisfied with the **choice of destinations available** and 31% said they do not know or had no opinion. 81% of bus users were satisfied with the choice of destinations available, while 38% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.36. Men were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the choice of destinations available, 55% said so.
- 3.37. Residents aged 18-34 were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the choice of destinations available, 62% said so.
- 3.38. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the choice of destinations available, 71% said so.
- 3.39. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the choice of destinations available, 59% said so.

Figure 3.10: Choice of destinations available

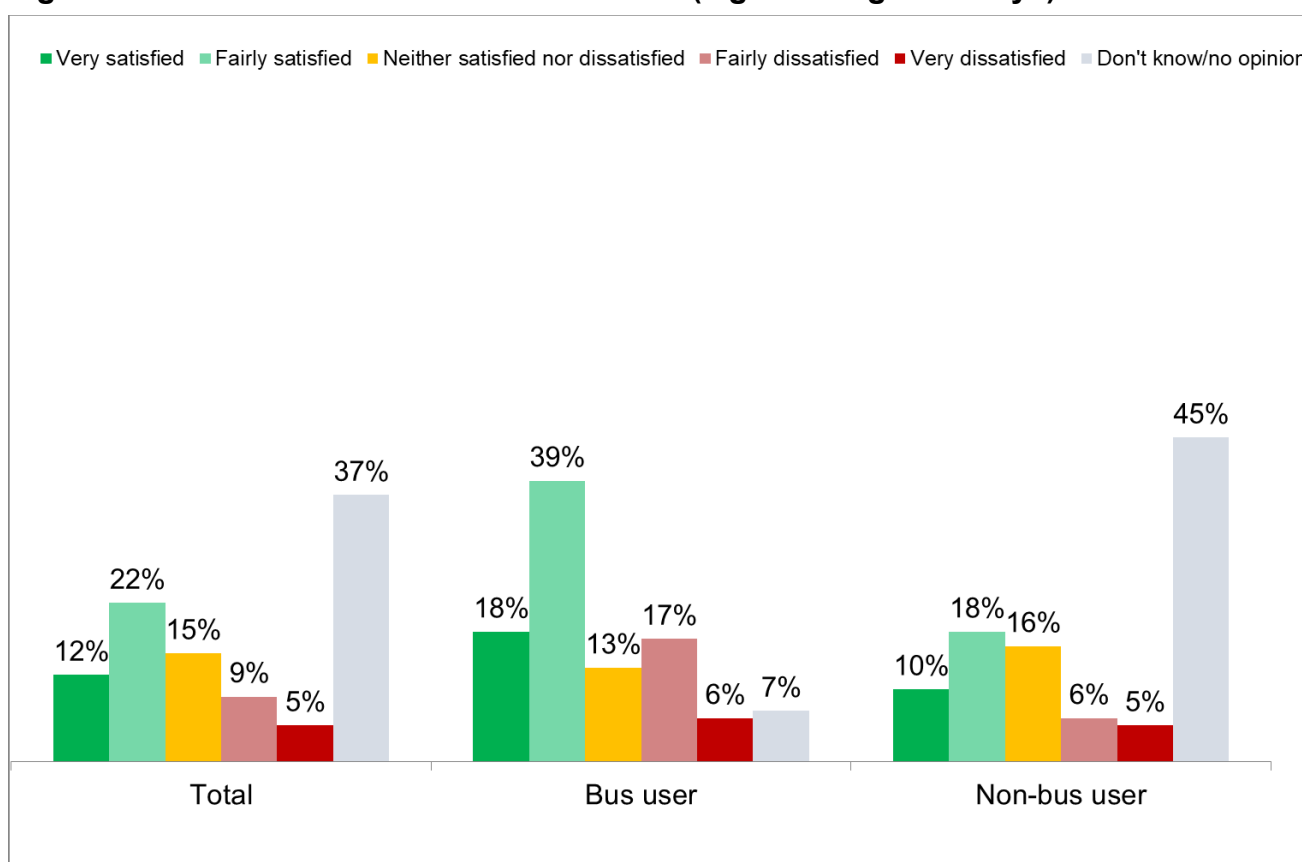


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.40. Overall, 34% of residents said they were satisfied with **the times when buses are available (like evenings or Sundays)** and 37% said they do not know or had no opinion. 57% of bus users were satisfied with the times when buses are available, while 28% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.41. Women were less likely to say that they were satisfied with the times when buses are available, 27% said so.
- 3.42. Disabled residents were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the times when buses are available, 53% said so.
- 3.43. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the times when buses are available, 68% said so.
- 3.44. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the times when buses are available, 55% said so.

Figure 3.11: Times when buses are available (e.g. evenings/Sundays)

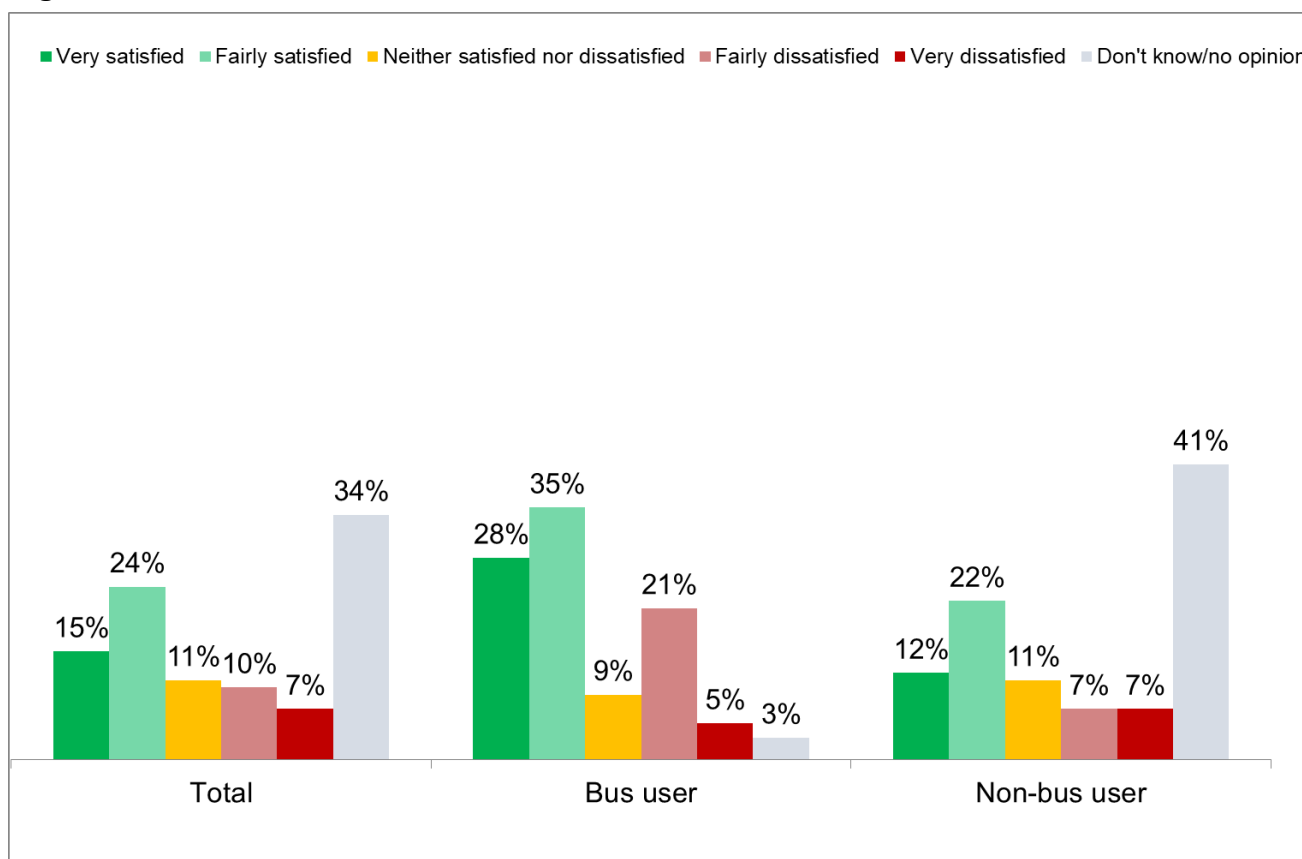


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.45. Overall, 39% of residents said they were satisfied with **how often the buses run** and 34% said they do not know or had no opinion. 63% of bus users were satisfied how often the buses run, while 34% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.46. Non-White British or Irish residents were less likely to say that they were satisfied with how often the buses run, 30% said so.
- 3.47. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with how often the buses run, 63% said so.
- 3.48. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with how often the buses run, 61% said so.
- 3.49. Residents who live outside Bracknell area were less likely to say that they were satisfied with how often the buses run, 23% said so.

Figure 3.12: How often the buses run

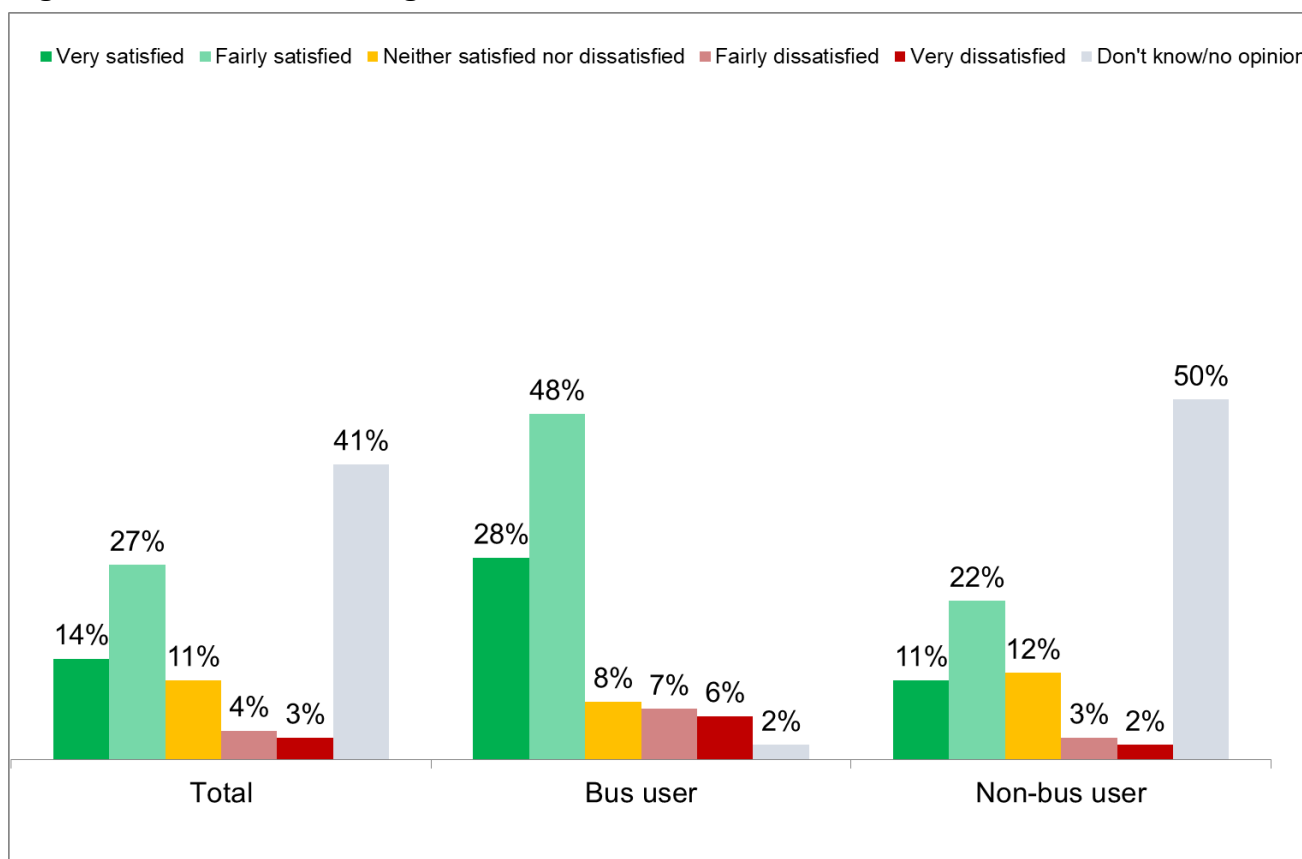


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.50. Overall, 41% of residents said they were satisfied with **buses running on time** and 41% said they do not know or had no opinion. 76% of bus users were satisfied with buses running on time, while 33% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.51. Women were less likely to say that they were satisfied with buses running on time, 35% said so.
- 3.52. Residents aged 18-34 were more likely to say that they were satisfied with buses running on time, 56% said so.
- 3.53. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with buses running on time, 67% said so.
- 3.54. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with buses running on time, 58% said so.

Figure 3.13: Buses running on time

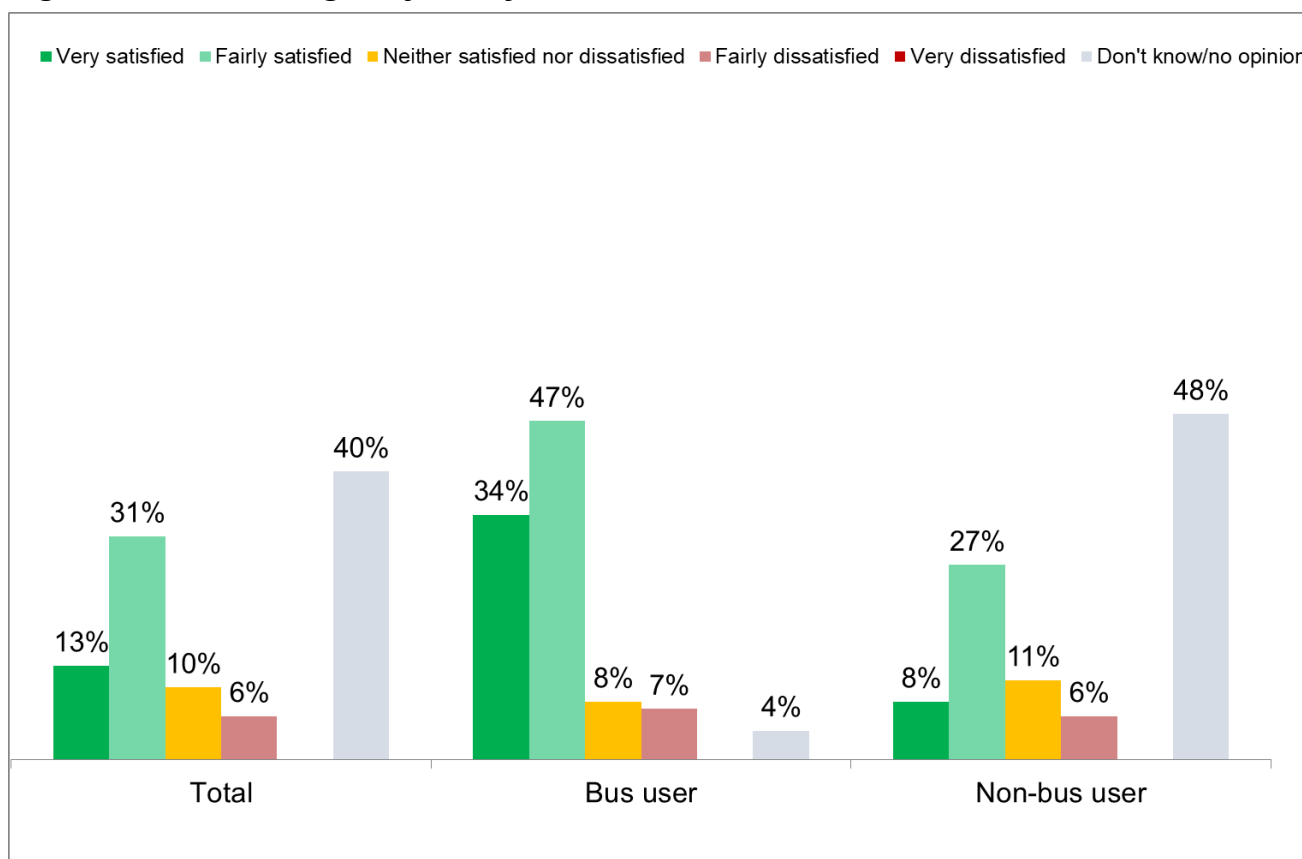


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.55. Overall, 44% of residents said they were satisfied with **the length of the journey** and 40% said they do not know or had no opinion. 81% of bus users were satisfied with the length of the journey, while 35% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.56. Residents aged 18-34 were more likely to say that they were satisfied with how long the journey takes, 60% said so.
- 3.57. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with how long the journey takes, 83% said so.
- 3.58. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with how long the journey takes, 59% said so.
- 3.59. Residents who live outside Bracknell area were less likely to say that they were satisfied with how long the journey takes, 29% said so.

Figure 3.14: How long the journey takes

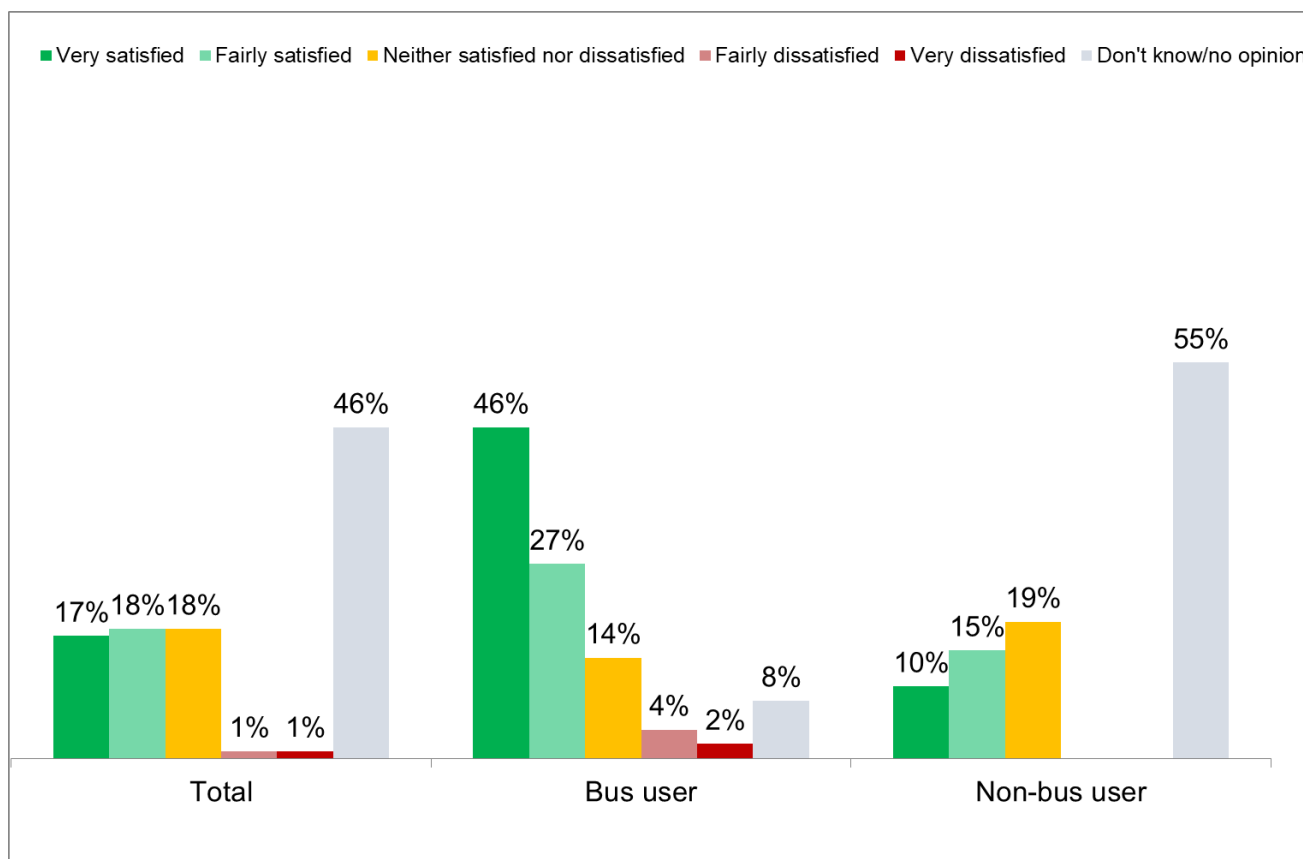


Number of respondents: Total - 523, Bus user - 101, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.60. Overall, 35% of residents said they were satisfied with **customer care** and 46% said they do not know or had no opinion. 73% of bus users were satisfied with customer care, while 25% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.61. Respondents were also asked if there was anything else in particular that they are satisfied about and approximately 5% of respondents spontaneously mentioned that bus drivers tend to be polite, friendly and helpful – essentially “an important part of the community”, as one respondent mentioned.
- 3.62. Disabled residents were more likely to say that they were satisfied with customer care, 53% said so.
- 3.63. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with customer care, 62% said so.
- 3.64. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with customer care, 61% said so.
- 3.65. Residents who live outside Bracknell area were less likely to say that they were satisfied with customer care, 26% said so.

Figure 3.15: Customer care

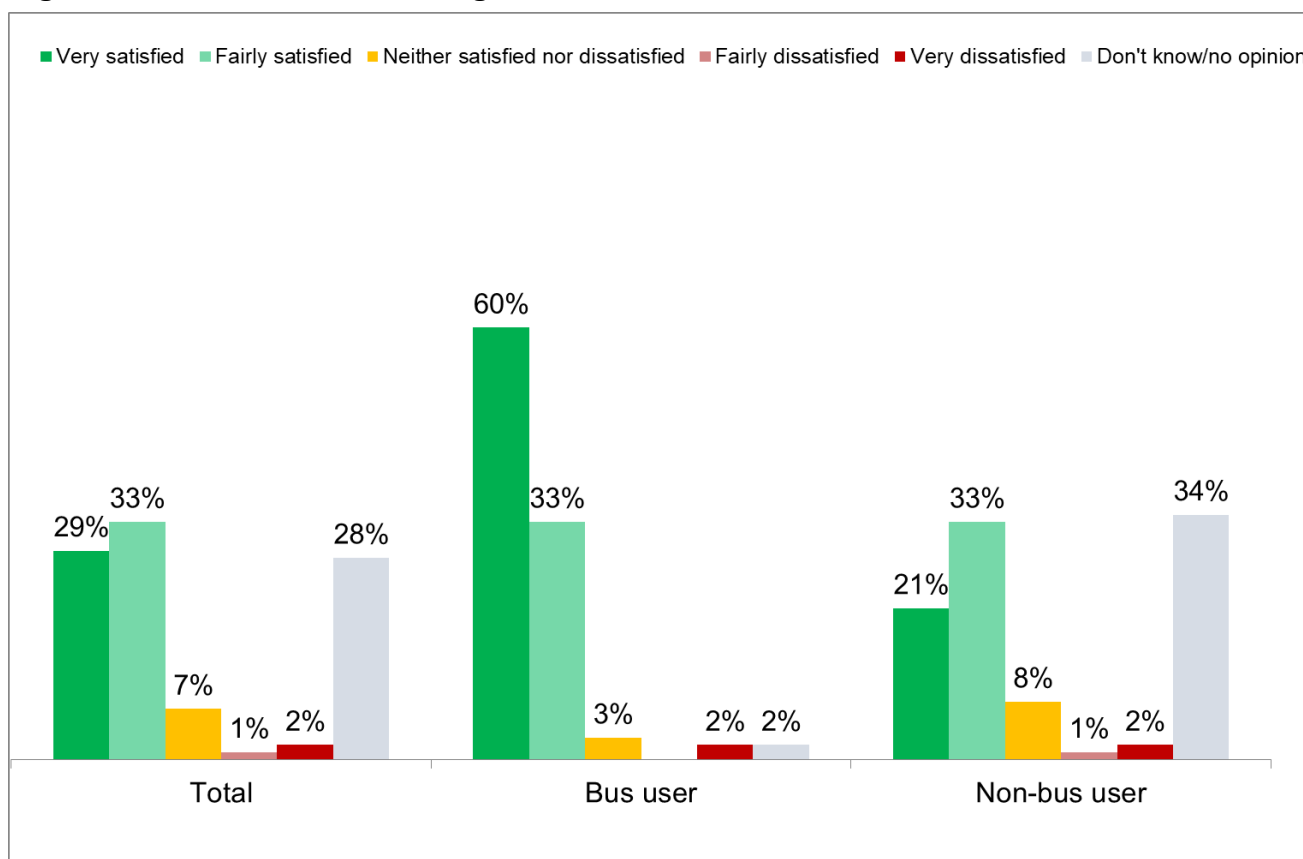


Number of respondents: Total - 523, Bus user - 101, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.66. Overall, 62% of residents said they were satisfied with the **standard of driving of the buses** and 28% said they do not know or had no opinion. 93% of bus users were satisfied with the standard of driving of the buses, while 54% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.67. Men were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the standard of driving, 69% said so.
- 3.68. Residents aged 18-34 were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the standard of driving of the buses, 75% said so.
- 3.69. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the standard of driving of the buses, 90% said so.
- 3.70. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the standard of driving, 73% said so.

Figure 3.16: Standard of driving of the buses

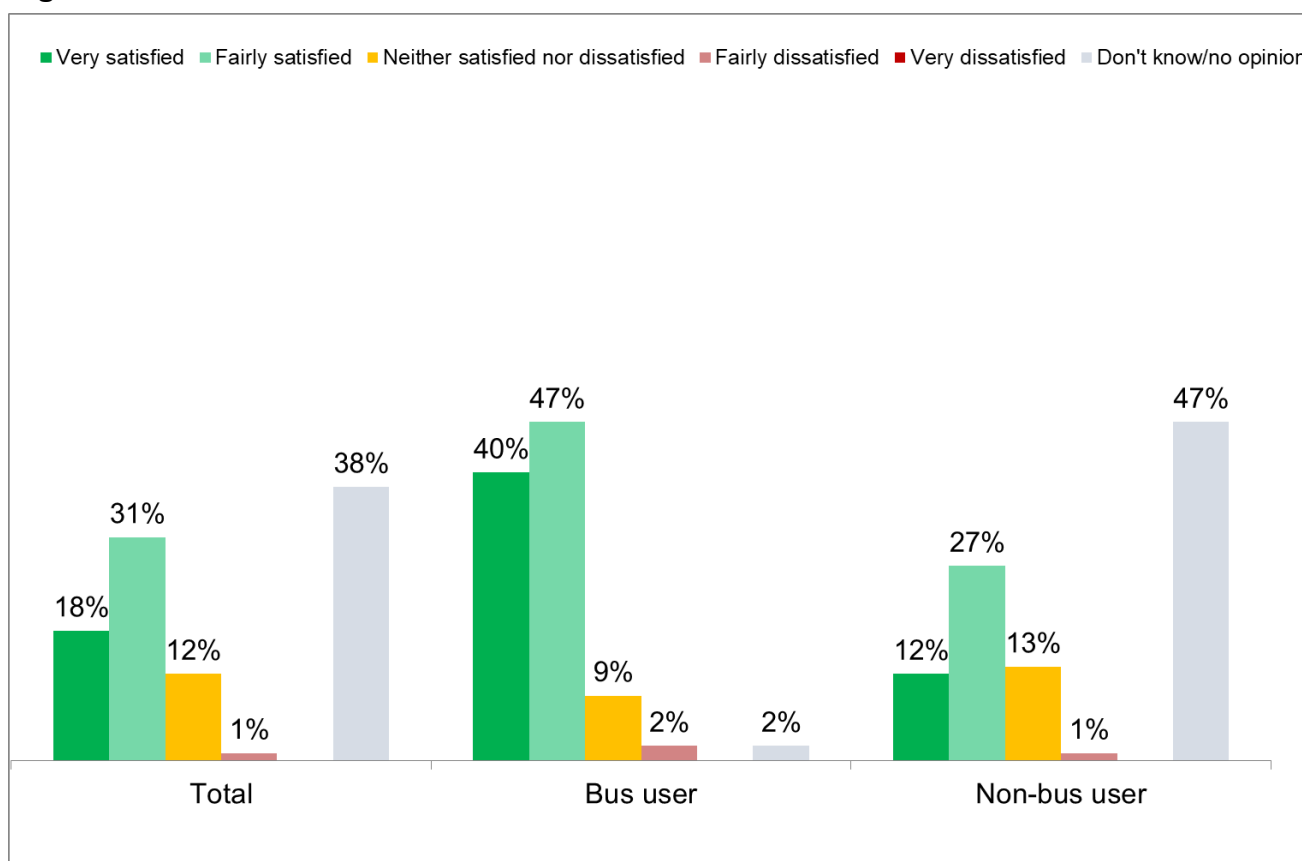


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.71. Overall, 49% of residents said they were satisfied with the **comfort of travel** and 38% said they do not know or had no opinion. 87% of bus users were satisfied with the comfort of travel, while 39% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.72. Residents aged 18-34 were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the comfort of travel, 61% said so.
- 3.73. Disabled residents were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the comfort of travel, 68% said so.
- 3.74. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the comfort of travel, 74% said so.
- 3.75. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the comfort of travel, 67% said so.
- 3.76. Residents who live outside Bracknell area were less likely to say that they were satisfied with the comfort of travel, 35% said so.

Figure 3.17: Comfort of travel

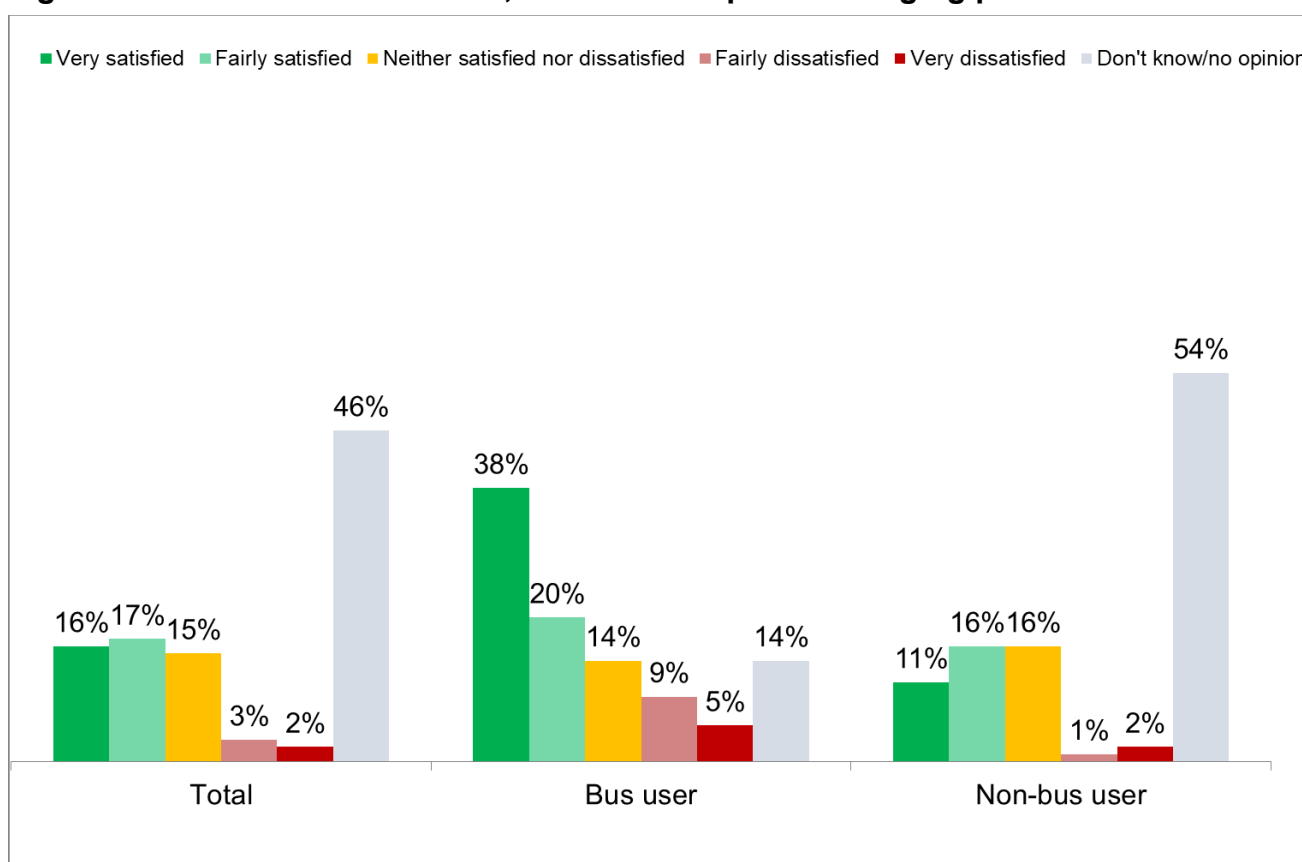


Number of respondents: Total - 523, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 421.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.77. Overall, 33% of residents said they were satisfied with **the facilities on the bus**, such as WiFi/phone charging points and 46% said they do not know or had no opinion. 58% of bus users were satisfied with the facilities on the bus, while 27% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.78. Disabled residents were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the facilities on the bus, 50% said so.
- 3.79. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the facilities on the bus, 60% said so.
- 3.80. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the facilities on the bus, 54% said so.
- 3.81. Residents who live outside Bracknell area were less likely to say that they were satisfied with the facilities on the bus, 23% said so.

Figure 3.18: Facilities on the bus, such as WiFi/phone charging points

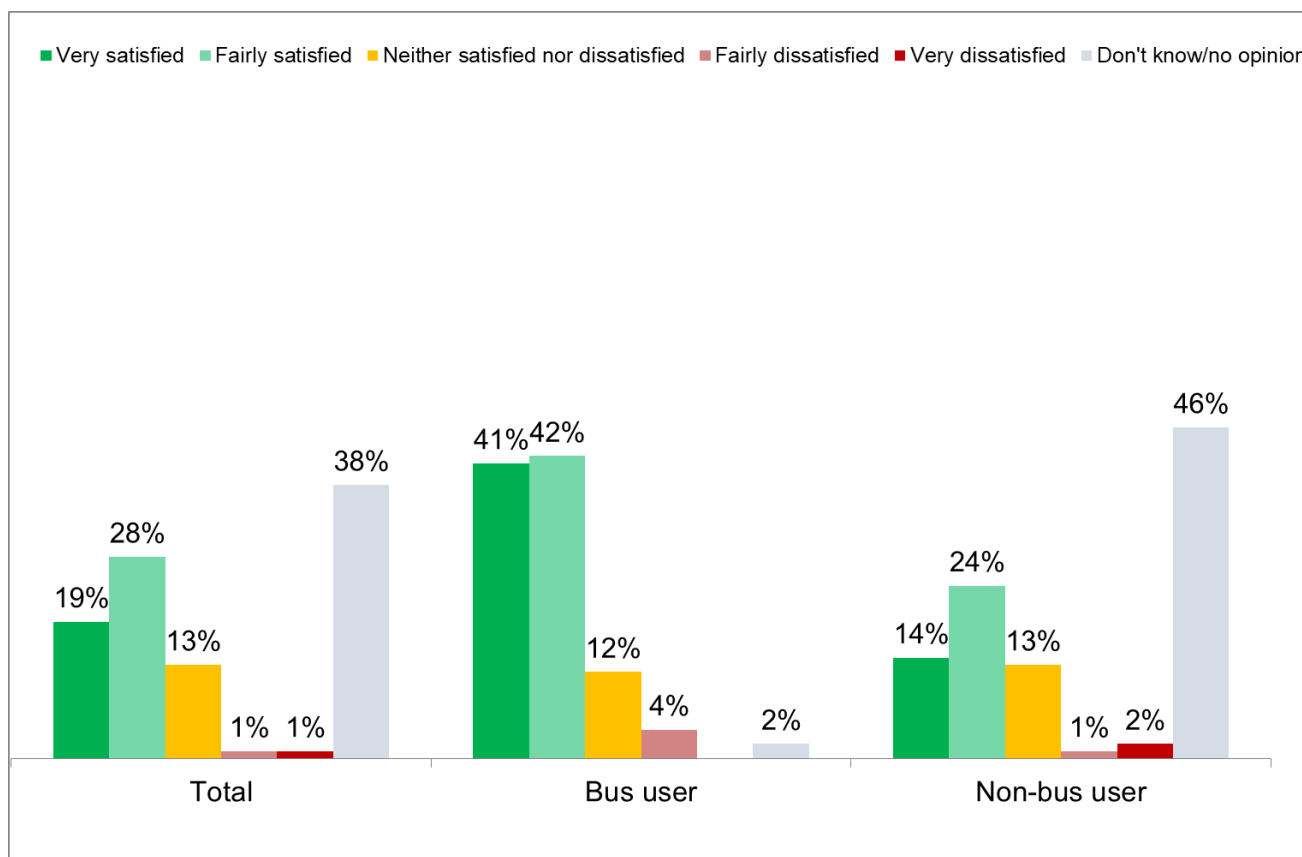


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

- 3.82. Overall, 47% of residents said they were satisfied with the **cleanliness of the buses** and 38% said they do not know or had no opinion. 83% of bus users were satisfied with the cleanliness of the buses, while 38% of non-bus users were satisfied.
- 3.83. Residents who do not have access to a car were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the cleanliness of the buses, 62% said so.
- 3.84. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the cleanliness of the buses, 64% said so.
- 3.85. Residents who do not work were more likely to say that they were satisfied with the cleanliness of the buses, 55% said so.

Figure 3.19: Cleanliness of the buses



Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

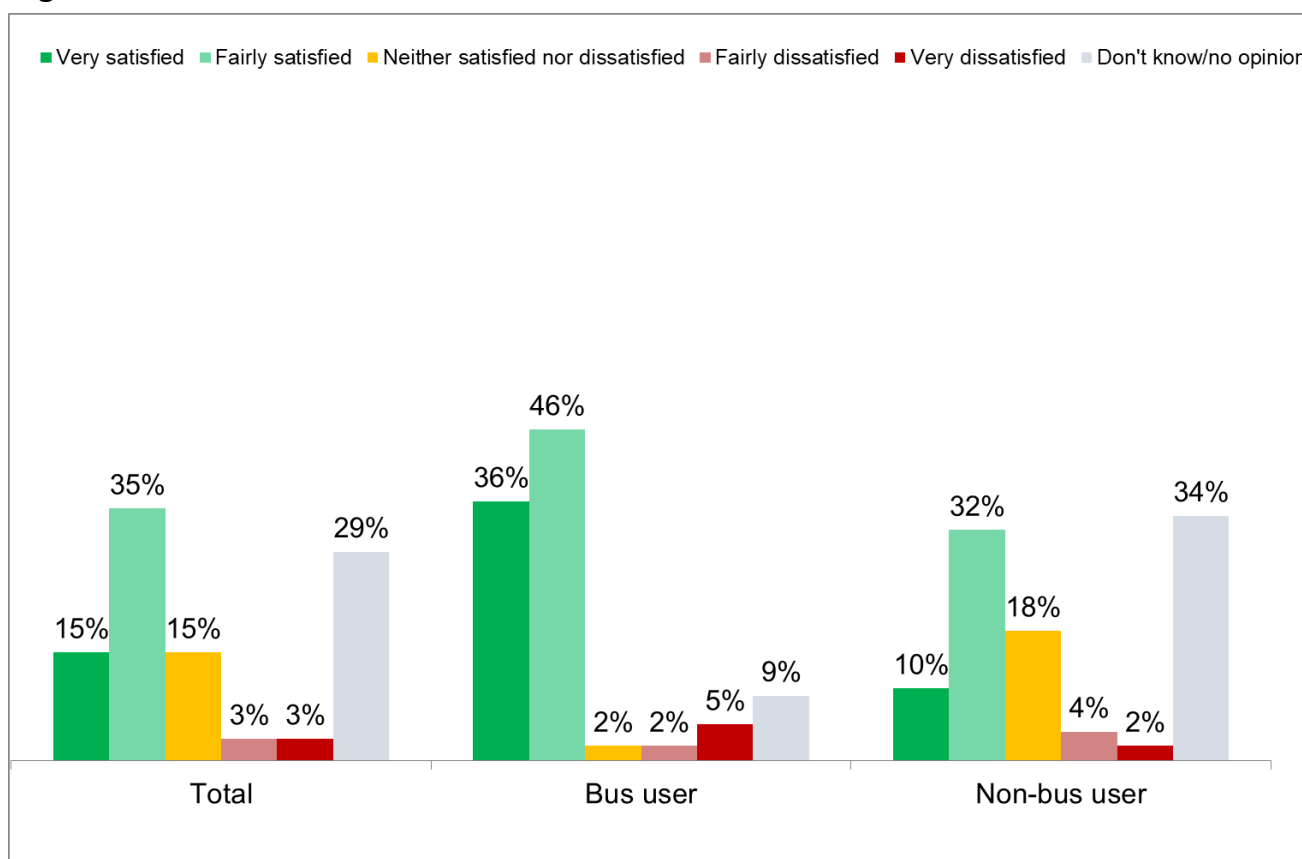
Question: First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?

Overall satisfaction with the local bus services in Bracknell Forest

Half of residents are satisfied with the local bus services, where satisfaction levels are higher among bus users with around four-fifths of bus users satisfied, compared with two-fifths of non-bus users

- 3.86. Overall, 50% of residents were satisfied with the local bus services in Bracknell Forest (15% very satisfied and 35% fairly satisfied). 29% said they do not know or had no opinion.
- 3.87. Satisfaction levels among bus users are higher than among non-bus users, where 82% of bus users are satisfied with the local bus services, compared with 42% of non-bus users (albeit with 34% stating 'don't know').
- 3.88. This compares favourably with the 2007 survey, where overall 36% of residents were satisfied (62% of bus users satisfied and 22% of non-bus users satisfied).

Figure 3.20: Overall satisfaction with the local bus services



Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with local bus services in Bracknell Forest?

- 3.89. The findings are broadly consistent across demographic groups except for the following differences (which are generally explained by higher bus usage amongst the more satisfied groups – and this is the case for all or most of the differences identified in this section for the various indicators):
- **Men are more likely than women to be satisfied with the local bus services:** 57% of men were satisfied, compared with 43% of women (which again matches the earlier finding that women are more likely to have never used the bus).

- **Residents aged 18-34 are more likely than other age groups to be satisfied with the local bus services:** 64% of residents aged 18-34 were satisfied, compared with 48% of 35-54 year olds and 41% of residents aged 55 or over.
- **Residents who do not have access to a car are more likely than other residents to be satisfied with the local bus services:** 82% of residents who do not have access to a car said they were satisfied compared to 46% of residents who have access to a car.
- **Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass are more likely than other residents to be satisfied with local bus services:** 56% are satisfied compared with 49% of residents that do not have a concessionary bus pass.
- **Residents who live outside the Bracknell area are less likely than other residents to be satisfied with the local bus services:** For example, 41% of residents who live outside Bracknell area were satisfied compared with 50% of residents overall.

Section 4: Barriers to using buses and encouraging bus use

Key issues/findings

- Almost all residents know where the nearest bus stop to their home is.
- In addition, almost all residents who know where the nearest bus stop to their home is said that this bus stop is easy enough to walk to from their home.
- The majority of residents in this survey do not have a disability, although bus users are more likely to have a disability.
- The most common reason for not using the bus more often is preferring to use the car, which is naturally more likely to be mentioned by non-bus users.

Introduction

- 4.1. This section presents findings about barriers of using the bus, covering:
- Knowing where the nearest bus stop is and whether it is easy enough to walk to from home.
 - Having a disability and the nature of the disability.
 - Whether the disability makes it difficult to use the bus service.
 - Reasons for not using the bus more often.

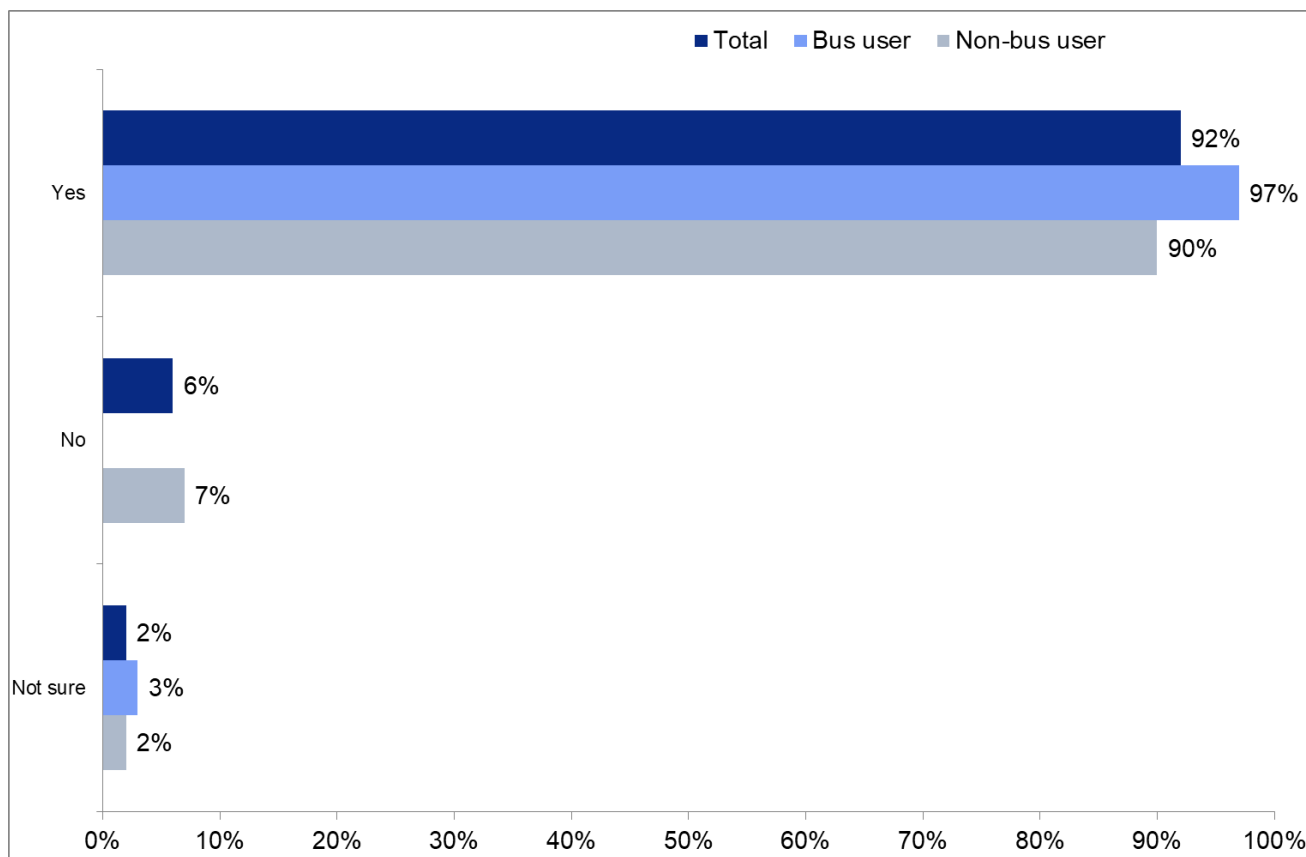
Knowing where the nearest bus stop to home is

Almost all residents know where the nearest bus stop to their home is, in addition almost all residents who know where the nearest bus stop to their home is said that this bus stop is easy enough to walk to from their home

4.2. Overall, 92% of residents know where the nearest bus stop to their home is - 97% of bus users and 90% of non-bus users know where the nearest bus stop is.

4.3. Residents who hold a concessionary bus pass are more likely to know where the nearest bus stop to their home is, 100% said they know where the nearest bus stop is.

Figure 4.1: Knowing where the nearest bus stop to home is

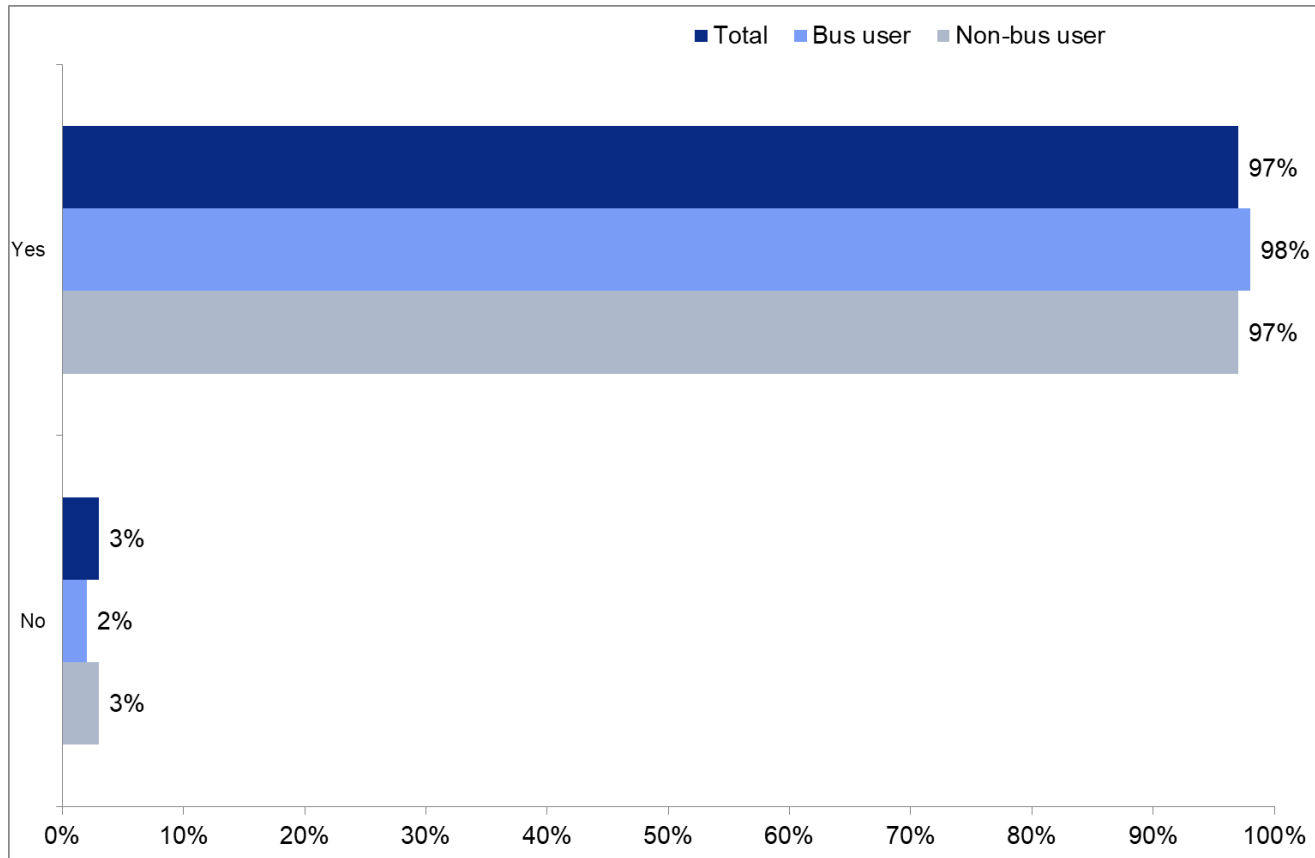


Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422.

Question: Thinking now about where to catch the bus, do you know where the nearest bus stop to your home is?

4.4. 97% of residents who know where the nearest bus stop to their home is said that this bus stop is easy enough to walk to from home.

Figure 4.2: Whether the nearest bus stop is easy enough to walk to from home



Number of respondents: Total - 481, Bus user - 99, Non-bus user - 382 (only asked to those who know where the nearest bus stop to their home is).

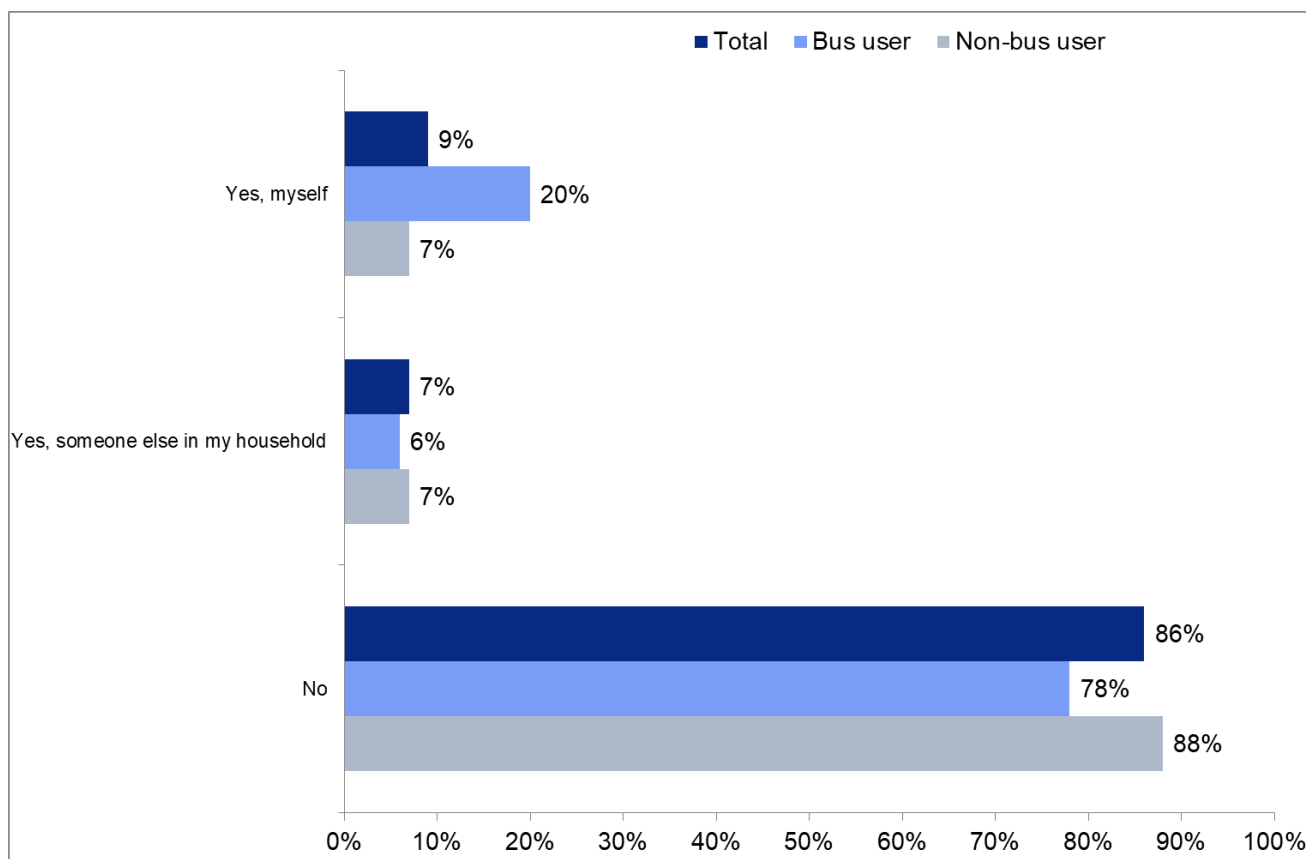
Question: Is this bus stop easy enough to walk to from home?

Having a disability

The majority of residents in this survey do not have a disability, although bus users are more likely to have a disability

- 4.5. 86% of residents do not have a disability whether personal or of a household member - 78% of bus users and 88% of non-bus users do not have a disability.
- 4.6. Women are more likely to say they have a disability. For example, 80% of women said they do not have a disability compared with 92% of men.
- 4.7. Perhaps not surprisingly, disability is related to age, with younger residents less likely to have a disability than older residents. For example, 93% of residents aged 18-34 said they do not have a disability compared with 79% of residents aged 55 and over.
- 4.8. 28% of residents who do not have access to a car are personally disabled, compared with 6% of residents who have access to a car.
- 4.9. 33% of residents who hold a concessionary bus pass are personally disabled, compared with 6% of residents who do not hold a concessionary bus pass.
- 4.10. 23% of residents who do not work are personally disabled, compared with 3% of residents who are working full-time.

Figure 4.3: Having a disability

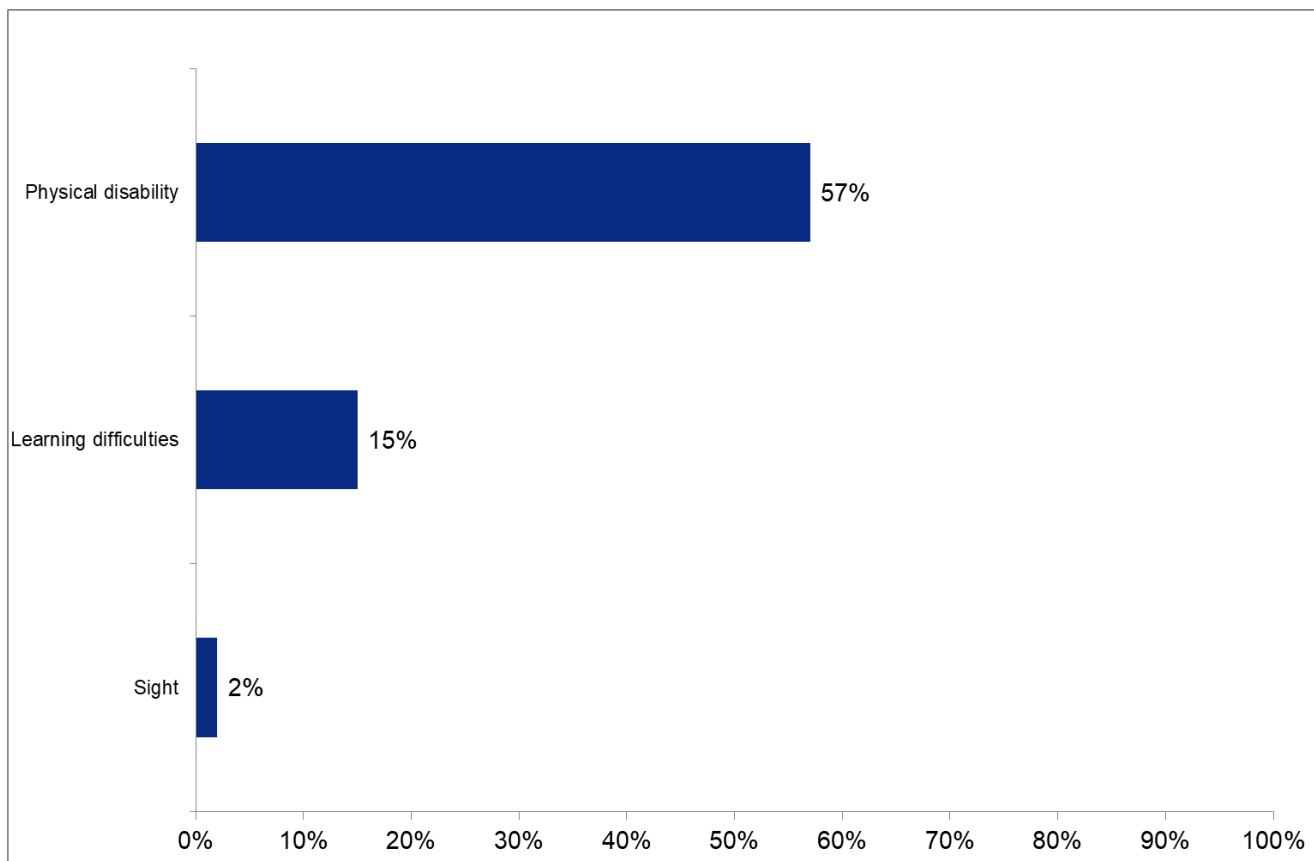


Number of respondents: Total - 523, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 421.

Question: Do you, or does anyone else in your household, have a long standing disability or infirmity which limits activities in any way?

4.11. 57% of residents who have a disability said that it is a physical disability.

Figure 4.4: Nature of the disability



Number of respondents: 71 (only asked to those who have a disability).

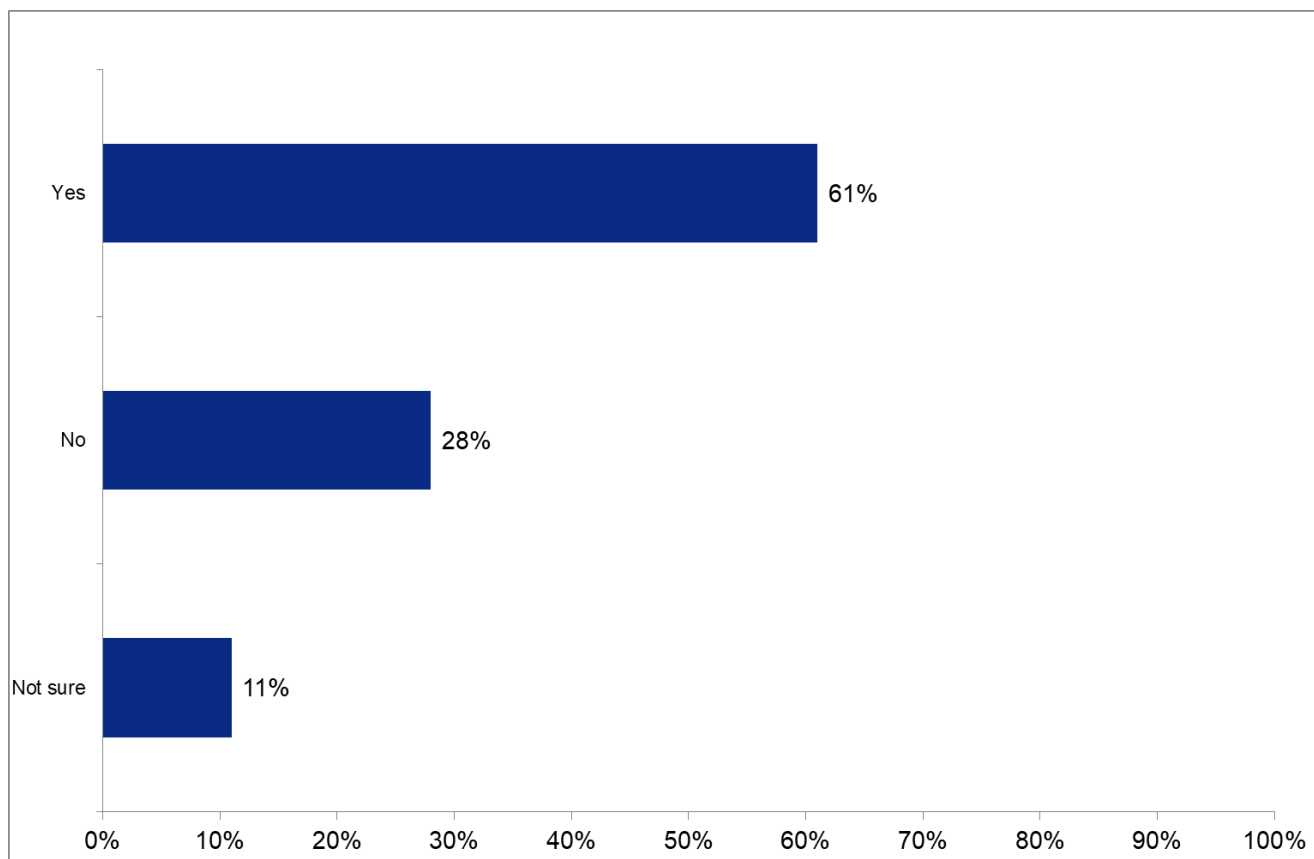
Question: Can you tell me the nature of this disability (these disabilities) please?

4.12. 61% of residents who have a disability said that the disability makes it difficult to use the bus service.

4.13. The difficulties mentioned by these residents include:

- Walking to and from bus stops.
- Getting on and off the bus.
- Bus drivers setting off too soon, before the person is seated safely.
- Lack of space on buses for a wheelchair.
- Difficulty getting a wheelchair onto the bus, especially if the bus driver does not go to the curb-side.

Figure 4.5: Whether the disability makes it difficult to use the bus service



Number of respondents: 73 (only asked to those who have a disability).

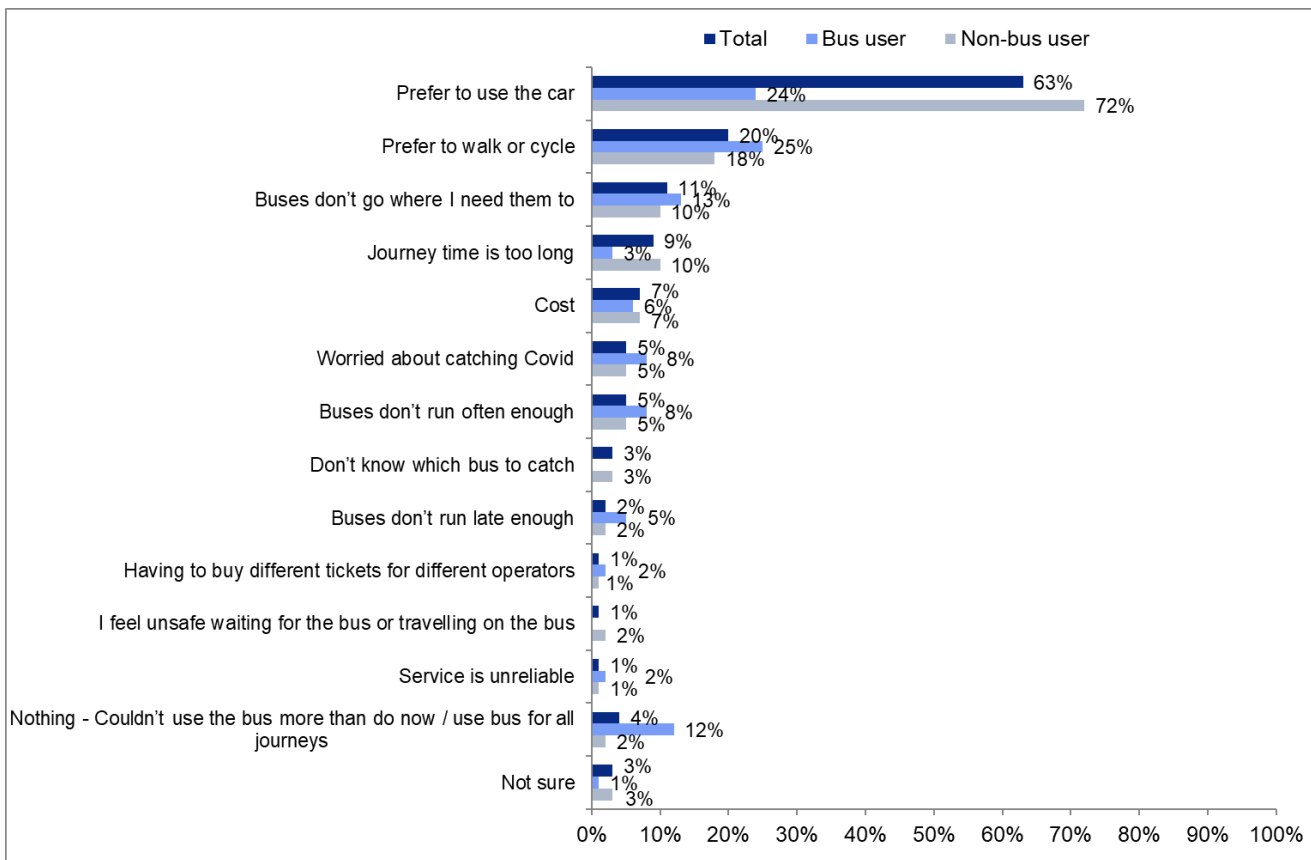
Question: And does this disability (do these disabilities) make it difficult to use the bus service?

Reasons for not using the bus more often

The most common reason for not using the bus more often is preferring to use the car, which is naturally more likely to be mentioned by non-bus users

- 4.14. 63% of residents said they do not use the bus more often because they prefer to use the car - 24% of bus users and 72% of non-bus users mentioned this reason.
- 4.15. 20% said they prefer to walk or cycle.
- 4.16. 11% said buses do not go where they need them to, 9% said the journey time is too long and 7% mentioned the cost.
- 4.17. Approximately 5% of respondents, in the 'other comments', cited 'lack of convenience' in that it is easier and quicker to drive by car and too difficult to walk to and from the bus stop, especially with shopping.

Figure 4.6: Reasons for not using the bus more often



Number of respondents: Total - 485, Bus user - 84, Non-bus user - 400.

Question: Why do you not use the bus more often than you do now? Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

- 4.18. Respondents that said they prefer to use their car, were first asked what would most encourage them to use the bus sometimes instead of their car:
 - Approximately 50% of these respondents said nothing would encourage them to use the bus more than their car.
 - Approximately 20% of these respondents said cheaper or free bus fares, including concessions for younger people and families and integrated bus fares across different routes and providers.

- Approximately 20% said improved routes, including quicker or more direct journey times, routes going to more destinations and more frequent buses, running more often and at different times of day such as early mornings and late evenings to help residents travel to work and back, socialise and recreate.
- Approximately 5% said a service that was door-to-door and/or on-demand.
- Approximately 5% said improved and more accessible information about bus stops, destinations and timetables.
- Approximately 2-3% mentioned making buses more environmentally friendly.

4.19. Respondents that prefer to use their car were then asked what would most discourage them to use their car. Approximately, half said that nothing or very little would discourage them. The remainder said that the only thing that would discourage them is if it became more expensive to use their car (relative to the cost of public transport), such as through increased petrol prices, increased road tax, congestion and/or emission zone charges, or increased parking charges (e.g. some respondents said that it is currently cheaper to pay for parking than it is to get a bus). Similarly, they said that they may be discouraged to use a car if it became more difficult with restrictions to car use including around routes, availability of parking and times of day when cars can be used in town centres.

Section 5: Impact of the pandemic and the future

Key issues/findings

- Just over half of residents mentioned that they would not use a new type of bus service operated by smaller buses that pick them up closer to home and take them closer to their destination, and just over a third of residents mentioned they would use that type of service - similar levels of interest are seen among bus users and non-bus users.
- Just over half of residents mentioned that the pandemic has made them less likely to use the local bus services and two-fifths of residents mentioned that the pandemic has not changed their use of local bus services - bus users were more likely to say that the pandemic has not changed their use of local bus services and non-bus users were more likely to say that the pandemic has made them less likely to use the local bus services.
- Two-thirds of residents who work have not changed their commute to work as a result of the pandemic.

Introduction

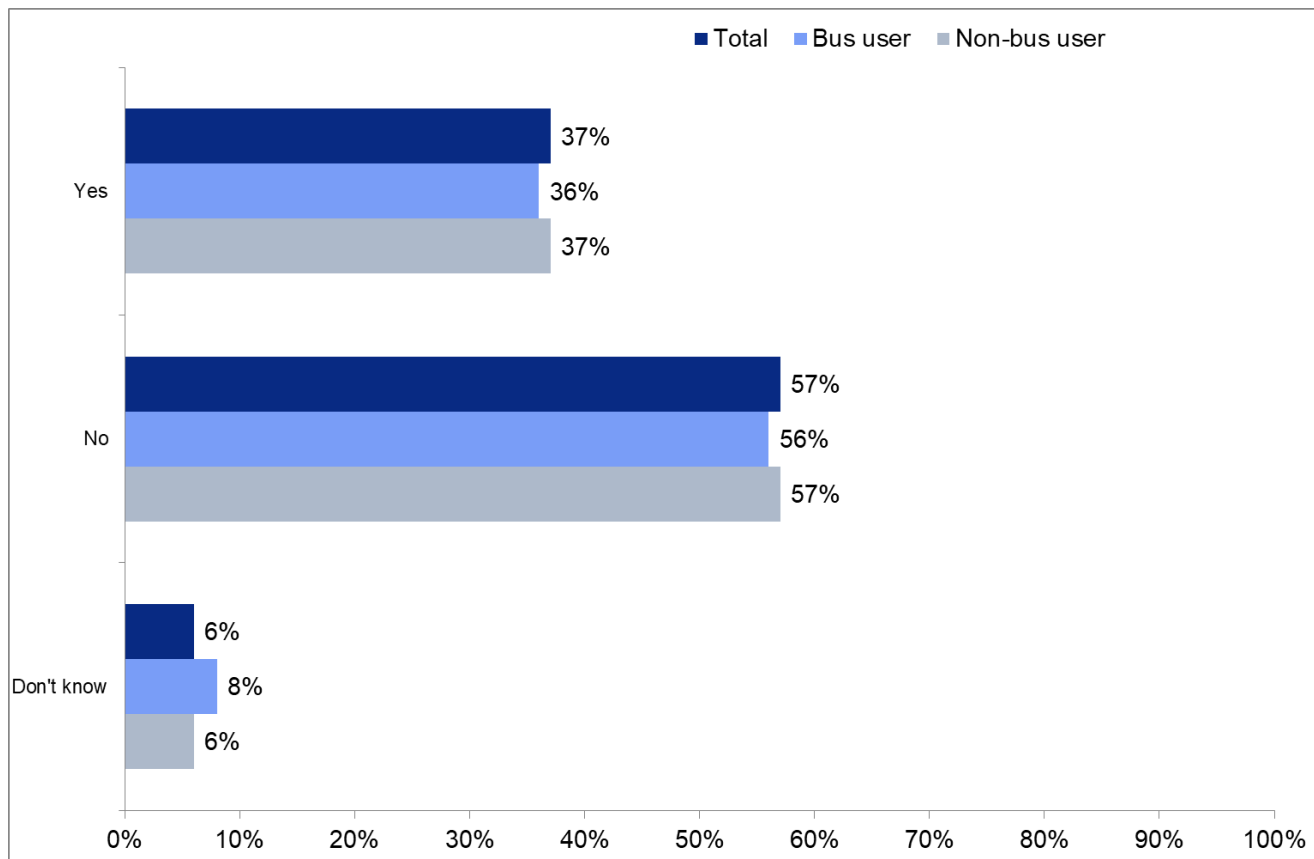
5.1. This section presents findings about the future of the bus service and the impact of the pandemic.

Using a new bus service

Just over half of residents mentioned that they would not use a new type of bus service and just over a third of residents mentioned they would use that type of service - similar levels of interest are seen among bus users and non-bus users

- 5.2. 57% of residents said they would not use a new bus service operated by smaller buses which pick them up closer to home and take them closer to their destination. 56% of bus users said they would not use a new bus service and 57% of non-bus users said that they would not use a new bus service.
- 5.3. 37% said that they would use a new type of bus service and 6% said they do not know. 36% of bus users said they would use a new bus service and 37% of non-bus users said they would use a new bus service.

Figure 5.1: Whether residents would use a new type of bus service



Number of respondents: Total - 524, Bus user - 102, Non-bus user - 422. Question: If there was a new kind of bus service, operated by smaller buses, which picked you up closer to home and took you closer to your destination, but you had to book your seat in advance, and it might be more expensive than a regular bus service, would you use it?

5.4. The following demographic groups are more likely to suggest they would use a new type of bus service:

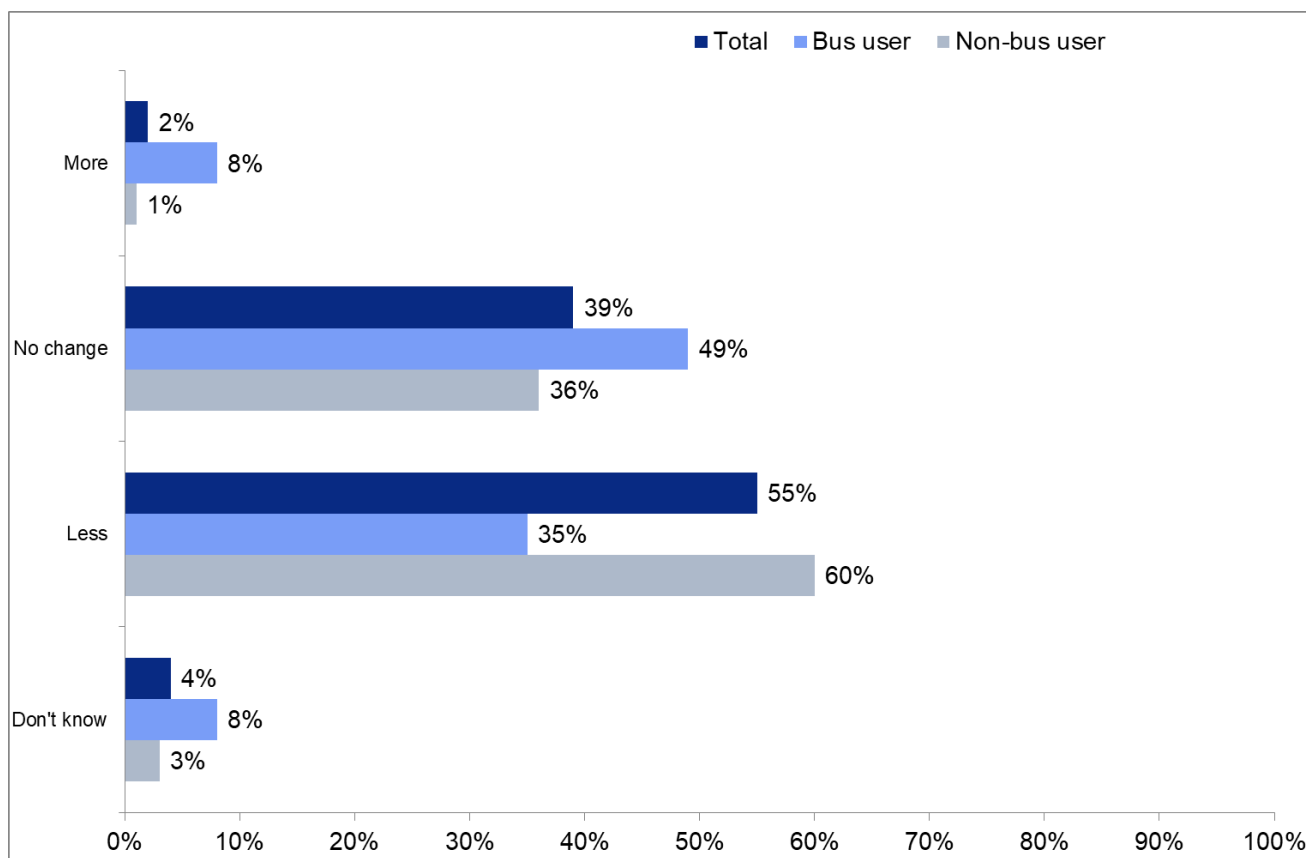
- **Non-White British or Irish residents:** 41% would use a new kind of bus service compared with 36% of White British or Irish residents.
- **Disabled residents:** 52% would use a new kind of bus service compared with 35% of non-disabled residents.
- **Residents who work:** 40% would use a new kind of bus service compared with 31% of people that do not work.
- **Residents in and around the Bracknell area:** 40% would use a new kind of bus service compared with 27% of residents outside the Bracknell area.

Impact of the pandemic on use of the local bus service

Just over half of residents mentioned that the pandemic has made them less likely to use the local bus services and two-fifths of residents mentioned that the pandemic has not changed their use of local bus services - bus users were more likely to say that the pandemic has not changed their use of local bus services and non-bus users were more likely to say that the pandemic has made them less likely to use the local bus services

- 5.5. 55% of residents said that the pandemic has made them less likely to use the local bus services (35% of bus users and 60% of non-bus users) and 39% said the pandemic has not changed their use of the local bus services.
- 5.6. 49% of bus users said that the pandemic has not changed their use of the local bus services, while 36% of non-bus users said so.
- 5.7. Just 2% said the pandemic has made them more likely to use local bus services (8% of bus users and 1% of non-bus users).

Figure 5.2: Whether the Coronavirus pandemic has made residents more or less likely to use the local bus services



Number of respondents: Total - 523, Bus users - 102, Non-bus users - 422.

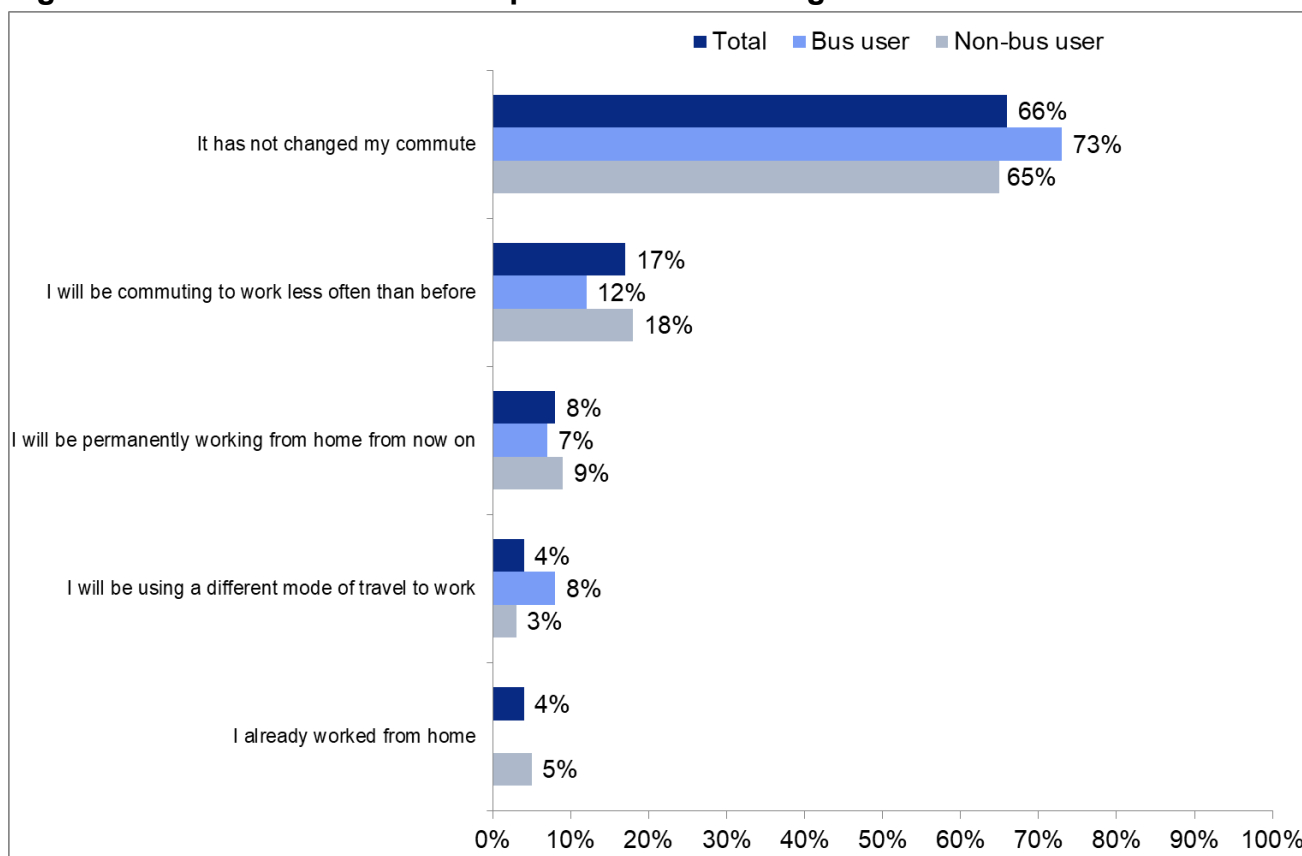
Question: Has the Coronavirus pandemic made you more or less likely to use the local bus services?

Impact of the pandemic on residents' commute to work

Two-thirds of residents who work have not changed their commute to work as a result of the pandemic

- 5.8. Two-thirds of residents who work said they have not changed their commute to work as a result of the pandemic (66%). 73% of bus users and 65% of non-bus users have not changed their commute as a result of the pandemic.
- 5.9. 17% said they will be commuting to work less often than before and 8% will be permanently working from home now on.
- 5.10. Men are more likely than women to say that the pandemic has not changed their commute. For example, 72% of men said the pandemic has not changed their commute compared with 59% of women.
- 5.11. Non-White British or Irish residents are less likely than White British or Irish residents to say that the pandemic has not changed their commute. For example, 52% of Non-White British or Irish residents have not changed their commute compared with 71% of White British or Irish residents.
- 5.12. 86% of residents who do not have access to a car have not changed their commute, compared with 64% of residents who have access to a car.
- 5.13. 6% of part-time workers said they will be commuting to work less often than before, compared with 20% of full-time workers.
- 5.14. Of those that said they will be using a different mode of transport, none mentioned they will be using the bus. The changes were either moving from public transport to a car, or a car to walking/cycling.

Figure 5.3: How the Coronavirus pandemic has changed residents' commute to work



Number of respondents: Total - 388, Bus user - 66, Non-bus user - 322 (only asked to residents who work). Question: As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, how has your commute to work changed, if at all?

Appendix: Questionnaire

Bracknell Forest Council: Local Bus Services Survey 2021

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is . . . and I am calling on behalf of Bracknell Forest Council. We are carrying out a survey about local bus services, to help inform future changes and improvements. The Council is interested in your opinion whether you use the local bus service or not. It will take about five to ten minutes.

Is it convenient for you to answer some questions now, or can I call back at a more convenient time?

(If respondent shows any sign of concern or requires clarification, please offer the following contact number: Public Perspectives: 0800 533 5386).

Section 1: Initial demographic questions

Note to interviewer: Where a question has a "don't know/not applicable/not sure" response option - do not read out to the respondent, unless otherwise stated. Only select it if the respondent is unable to choose a relevant answer.

Note to interviewer: Only select 'other' responses if they do not fit at all into pre-existing response options. Briefly summarise any 'other' responses i.e. do not write long notes.

Note to interviewer - read out: Before we go any further, I'd like to ask you some questions about you. This will help us understand if there are differences in opinion between different groups of people and ensure the survey is representative. We just want to stress that what you say is anonymous and confidential, this means that your responses will not be linked to your name or personal details and no one will be able to identify you from your answers.

Please also let the respondent know that some of the interviews may be recorded for training and quality assurance purposes and that the recording does not go beyond our team and is destroyed once the project is completed.

Q1. **Can I double check that your Local Authority is Bracknell Forest Council?** Note to interviewer: If 'Yes' - please continue, if 'No', ask for their postcode to check it against the one on the database (some people don't always know their Local Authority), if still a 'No', please politely end the interview saying this is a survey for residents of Bracknell Forest Council area only.

- Yes
- No

Q2. **How would you describe yourself?** Note to interviewer: Ask prompted and select one answer only.

- Male
- Female
- Other

Q3. **What was your age on your last birthday?** Note to interviewer: ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

Q4. **How would you describe your ethnic background?** Note to interviewer: ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- White British or Irish
- Other white background
- Asian / Asian British
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
- Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups
- Other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

If 'Other', please specify:

Section 2: Satisfaction with bus services

Note to interviewer: Ask to all respondents, whether they use buses or not.

Q5. **First of all, can you please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following elements of the local bus service?** As I said, the Council is interested in your opinion whether you use the local bus service or not. For each element, please tell me whether you are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. You may also say you have 'no opinion' (note to interviewer: although do not encourage this and only select it if they genuinely do not have an opinion).

Note to interviewer: Read out each element. After each one repeat as necessary the response options if the respondent needs reminding. If 'satisfied', clarify if they are very or fairly satisfied. If 'dissatisfied', clarify if they are very or fairly dissatisfied. Select one answer only for each element.

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know/no opinion
Ease of working out where buses go from and to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ease of finding bus times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ease of working out cost of travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ease of paying for ticket	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value for money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information provided at the bus stop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of the bus stop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities provided at the bus stop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choice of destinations available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Times when buses are available (e.g. evenings/Sundays)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How often the buses run	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buses running on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How long the journey takes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard of driving of the buses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comfort of travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities on the bus, such as WiFi/phone charging points	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness of the buses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q6.a Is there anything else you are particularly satisfied with in relation to the bus service? Note to interviewer: If 'Yes', please summarise succinctly:

Q6.b And is there anything else you are particularly dissatisfied with in relation to the bus service? Note to interviewer: If 'Yes', please summarise succinctly:

Q7. **Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with local bus services in Bracknell Forest?** Note to interviewer: Remind respondent of the response options and clarify for accuracy as required. Select one answer only.

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know/no opinion

Q8. **Thinking now about where to catch the bus, do you know where the nearest bus stop to your home is?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Note to interviewer: If 'Yes', please continue. If 'No' or 'Not sure', please go to Q10. This is automated on-line.

Q9. **Is this bus stop easy enough to walk to from home?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- Yes
- No

Section 3: Bus use

Q10. **Thinking now about using the local bus service, how often, if at all, do you use the local bus service?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted, if required clarify to ensure you select the correct option. Select one answer only.

- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- Used within the last year
- Used a few years ago
- Never used
- Don't know

Note to interviewer: If 'At least once a week', please continue. All other responses, go to Q12. This is automated on-line.

Q11. **In a typical week, how many days do you use the bus?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted, clarify to ensure you select the correct option if required. Select one answer only. If the frequency varies, just ask for an 'average'.

- 7 days/every day
- 6 days
- 5 days
- 4 days
- 3 days
- 2 days
- 1 day
- Not sure - note to interviewer: only select if really doesn't know.

Q12. **Thinking now about types of journeys, which of the following types of journeys have you made during the last year using ANY form of transport?** Note to interviewer: Read out journey type and select all relevant answers.

- Shopping
- Travelling to or from work
- Travelling to / from school or college
- Travelling as part of your work
- Health appointments e.g. doctors/hospital
- Personal business e.g. visiting a bank
- Visiting friends or family
- Visiting pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure etc
- Other journeys

If 'other', please specify:

Q13. **Ask to bus users only i.e. those that have used buses within the last year (this is automated on-line): And how many of these journeys did you make by bus for each of the journeys made - most, some, none?** Note to interviewer: Read out each journey made (these will automatically be presented based on the answers to Q12) and select one option for each journey.

	Most	Some	None
Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling to or from work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling to / from school or college	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling as part of your work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Personal business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visiting friends or family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visiting pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q14. **Ask to bus users only (this is automated on-line):** Thinking now about those types of journeys you have made, but for which you have not used the bus, could any of these journeys have been made by bus if you had chosen to do so? Note to interviewer: Read out each journey made (these will automatically be presented based on the answers to Q13) and select one option for each journey.

	Yes	No	Don't know
Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling to or from work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling to / from school or college	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling as part of your work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visiting friends or family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visiting pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q15. **Ask to non-bus users only (this is automated on-line):** Could any of these journeys have been made by bus, if you had chosen to do so? Note to interviewer: Read out each journey made (these will automatically be presented based on the answers to Q12) and select one option for each journey.

	Yes	No	Don't know
Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling to or from work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling to / from school or college	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling as part of your work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visiting friends or family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visiting pubs, restaurants, cinema, sports or leisure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 4: Disability and bus use

Q16. **Do you, or does anyone else in your household, have a long standing disability or infirmity which limits activities in any way?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.

- Yes, myself
- Yes, someone else in my household
- No

Note to interviewer: If 'Yes', please continue. Otherwise, please go to the next section (this is automated on-line).

Q17. **Can you tell me the nature of this disability (these disabilities) please?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted, clarify for accuracy if required and select all relevant answers.

- Sight
- Hearing
- Physical disability
- Learning difficulties
- Other

If 'other', please specify:

Q18. **And does this disability (do these disabilities) make it difficult to use the bus service?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q19. **If 'Yes', please explain in what way it makes it difficult to use the bus service?** Note to interviewer: Summarise succinctly.

Q19. **Do you have any suggestions as to how these problems could be overcome?** Note to interviewer: Summarise succinctly.

Section 5: Barriers

Q20. **Why do you not use the bus more often than you do now?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted initially, but probe/prompt if required. Select all relevant answers.

- Don't know which bus to catch
- Prefer to use the car
- Prefer to walk or cycle
- Cost
- Poor image of bus travel
- The behaviour of other passengers
- Buses don't run late enough
- Buses don't run often enough
- Journey time is too long
- Buses don't go where I need them to
- Service is unreliable
- I feel unsafe waiting for the bus or travelling on the bus
- Worried about catching Covid

- Having to buy different tickets for different operators
- Any other reason for not using bus service more often
- Not sure
- Nothing - Couldn't use the bus more than do now / use bus for all journeys

If 'other', please specify:

Q21. **If prefer to use the car (this is automated on-line): What do you think would most encourage you to use the bus sometimes instead of your car?** Note to interviewer: Summarise succinctly.

Q21. **If prefer to use the car (this is automated on-line): What do you think would most discourage you to use the car?** Note to interviewer: Summarise succinctly.

Section 6: Final questions

Q22. **If there was a new kind of bus service, operated by smaller buses, which picked you up closer to home and took you closer to your destination, but you had to book your seat in advance, and it might be more expensive than a regular bus service, would you use it?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q23. **Has the Coronavirus pandemic made you more or less likely to use the local bus services?**

Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- More
- No change
- Less
- Don't know

Q23. **Are there any other comments you would like to make about the local bus service?** Note to interviewer: Summarise succinctly.

Section 7: About you

Q24. **Do you have a car available to use?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- Yes
- No

Q25. **Do you hold a concessionary bus pass?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- Yes
- No

Q26. **Are you working or not?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted initially, but clarify whether full-time or part-time. Select one answer only.

- Yes, full-time
- Yes, part-time
- No

Q27. **If work (this is automated on-line): As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, how has your commute to work changed, if at all?** Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted, although clarify or prompt if needed. Select one answer only.

- I already worked from home
- I will be permanently working from home from now on
- I will be commuting to work less often than before
- I will be using a different mode of travel to work
- It has not changed my commute

If 'using a different mode of travel to work', please specify what mode previously used and new mode of travel you will be using to travel to work as a result of the pandemic:

Note to interviewer: Thanks and close - read out: "That is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your time and help - it is very important in helping future local bus services."

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