



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**



Transforming Travel in Watford Consultation Results

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1. Introduction

1.1. Transforming Travel in Watford Consultation

- 1.1.1. Watford faces multiple challenges relating to the impacts transport has on climate change, public health, air quality, economic growth and prosperity, and community vitality, which are all priority issues for Watford Borough Council (Watford Borough Council) and Hertfordshire County Council (Hertfordshire County Council). To react to these challenges, the two councils prepared a draft version of *Transforming Travel in Watford: the strategy for 2021 - 2041* (TTIW). This is a bold and forward-looking plan with a transformational, coherent, long-term programme for change, based on effective sustainable transport infrastructure. It will encourage, and enable, the uptake of sustainable and active travel, in the interests of maintaining the attractiveness and vitality of Watford as a place to live, work and visit. It will thus help meet the Council Plan 2020-24 ambitions of a thriving, diverse and creative town that is healthy and happy and a critical element of the town's plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.
- 1.1.2. A public consultation was run on the TTIW draft in summer 2021. Both the strategy and supporting document were made available to read, and a short survey was provided for people to provide feedback on TTIW. A dedicated email address was available for those who wished to offer further comments beyond that possible in the survey. Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council officers organised workshops with various groups and organisations to receive more specific feedback.

1.2. Purpose of this report

- 1.1.1. This report provides a summary of the responses received and views shared via the consultation, along with recommendations for modifications to TTIW. Analysis of the consultation survey is provided to allow common views and patterns to be identified, with respondent profiles taken into account to understand how views vary across demographics and where people live. The responses received via the dedicated email account and the workshops are also discussed.

2. Notification and Advertisement

- 1.2. The *Transforming Travel in Watford* Consultation ran online, hosted on the Watford Borough Council website, between 18 August 2021 – 13 October 2021. It was promoted via the Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council social media feeds, as well as being distributed via Watford Borough Council email mailing lists. The following were completed to maximise awareness and response rate:
- Paid-for social media advertising campaign and target specific groups with tailored social media advertising and messaging. The campaign message was displayed as a digital advert on websites and/or social media channels and citizens click through to the relevant page on the council's website to view the call to action and more information.
 - Directly posted into resident groups and other relevant local groups on Facebook.
 - Coverage in local publications such as the Watford Observer and MyNewsMag.
 - Press releases sent throughout the consultation, including one for the launch and another mid-way through the survey.

- Awareness raising videos produced and included clear explanations from Elected Mayor Peter Taylor and Councillor Ian Stotesbury.
- Artwork included on 150 bus shelter posters in the town.
- Artwork included on 15 town centre digital advertising boards. It was the sole campaign for the period of the consultation, ensuring it had more air-time.
- Over 1,000 flyers handed out at Watford Junction and in the town centre.
- Article included in council magazine 'About Watford' which goes out to 40,000 households and businesses.
- Campaign shared with members and local partners to help cascade the message.
- Focus groups set up to discuss face-to-face with the relevant organisations.

3. Survey Responses and Analysis

3.1. Survey Structure and Reporting

3.1.1. The survey comprised 21 questions relating to the strategy, with a further 14 relating to respondents' travel behaviour and socio-demographic status. These were broadly divided into four sections:

- Demographics and usual modes of travel
- Overall vision for future travel in Watford
- View of the strategy objectives
- Response to TTIW actions.

3.1.2. The responses are analysed in turn below, with questions grouped by theme, meaning that the order does not exactly reflect the order in which they were asked.

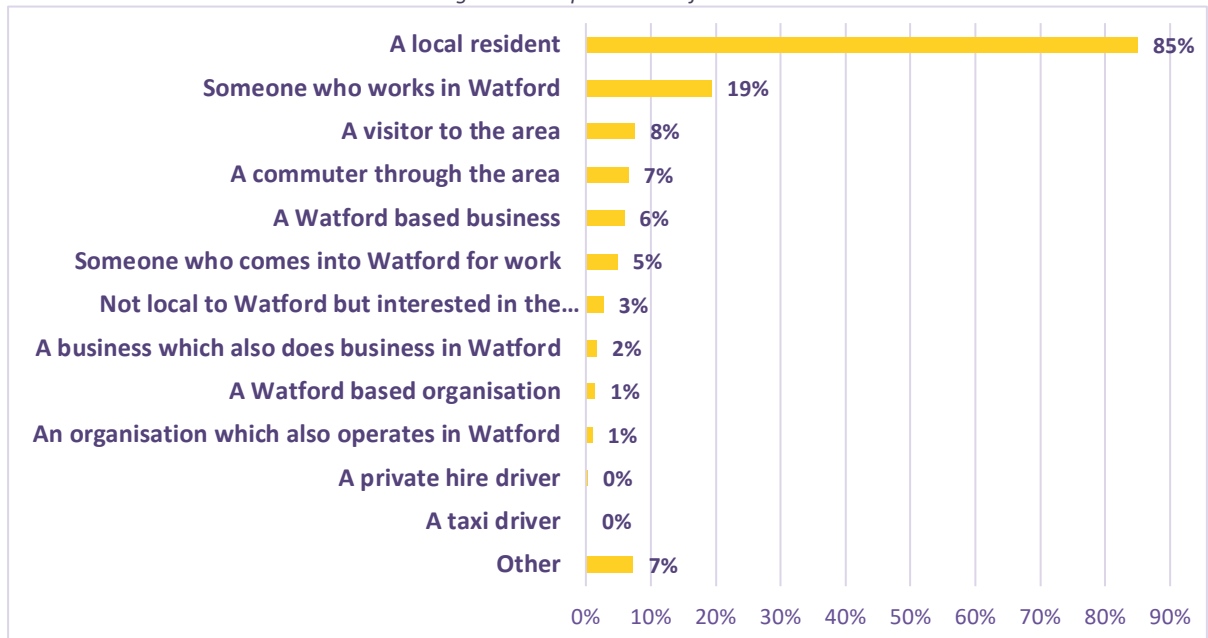
3.1.3. Most questions were closed, meaning respondents could only choose from a fixed set of multiple choice responses. Two questions were open-ended (questions 5 and 21), allowing respondents to write a response with no limit on characters. These written answers were analysed through a coding process. All responses were reviewed and the common themes and opinions identified, for example 'support for new cycle lanes' or 'desire for better bus services'. Each response was then analysed in detail and the sentiments expressed assigned to the appropriate theme. Every sentiment from each answer was coded separately, resulting in a greater number of sentiments than responses, as respondents often expressed opinions on multiple subjects.

3.2. Level of Response, and Demographics

3.2.1. The online survey was completed by 1,099 respondents. Most of the questions received more than 800 responses, with an average of 816 answers per question.

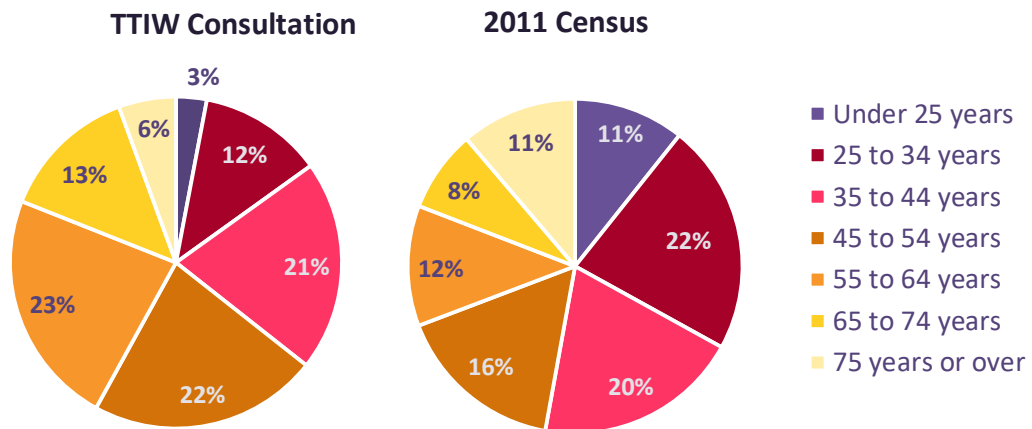
3.2.2. The respondent types are shown below, noting that respondents could select more than one, are shown Figure 1 - Respondent Profiles below. 85% of respondents were local residents, living in or close to Watford (72% were Watford residents), 19% worked in Watford, 8% were visitors, and 7% commuters through the area. The number of businesses or organisations who responded to the survey was limited, however, responses from these were captured via the sustainable travel email account and workshops with officers. Figure 1 - Respondent Profiles.

Figure 1 - Respondent Profiles



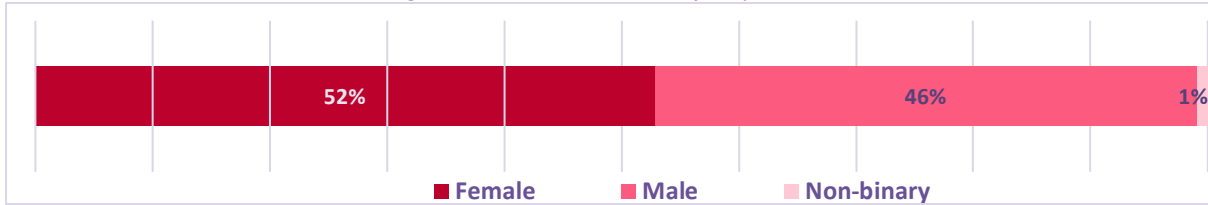
3.2.3. Figure 2 shows the distribution of respondent ages. 42% of respondents were 55 years old or more, with 6% being more than 75 years old. 43% of respondents were between 35 and 54 years old, and 15% were less than 35 years old, with only 3% were less than 25 years old. The distribution of the Watford population according to the 2011 census is shown (excluding those under the age of 17, who would not generally be expected to respond to a consultation). It can be seen that the youngest two ages groups, and to a less extent the oldest, are under-represented, with those of ages 35 – 74 over-represented. People aged 55 – 64 are particularly over-represented, making up 23% of respondents, compared to 12% of the population.

Figure 2 - Respondent Age Distribution, Compared to 2011 Census Figures



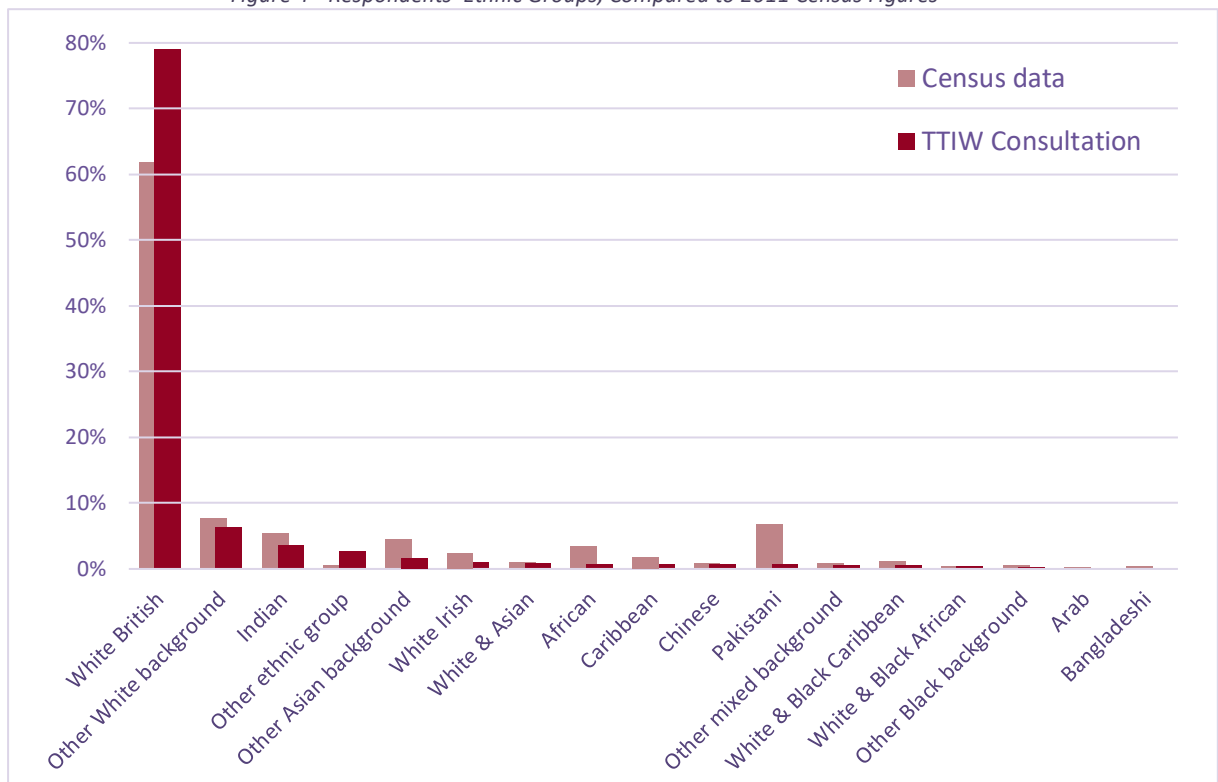
3.2.4. When asked, 19% of respondents declared some form of disability, 6% that limited them a lot, 13% that limited a little. Genders were reasonably equally represented among the respondents, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Gender Distribution of Respondents



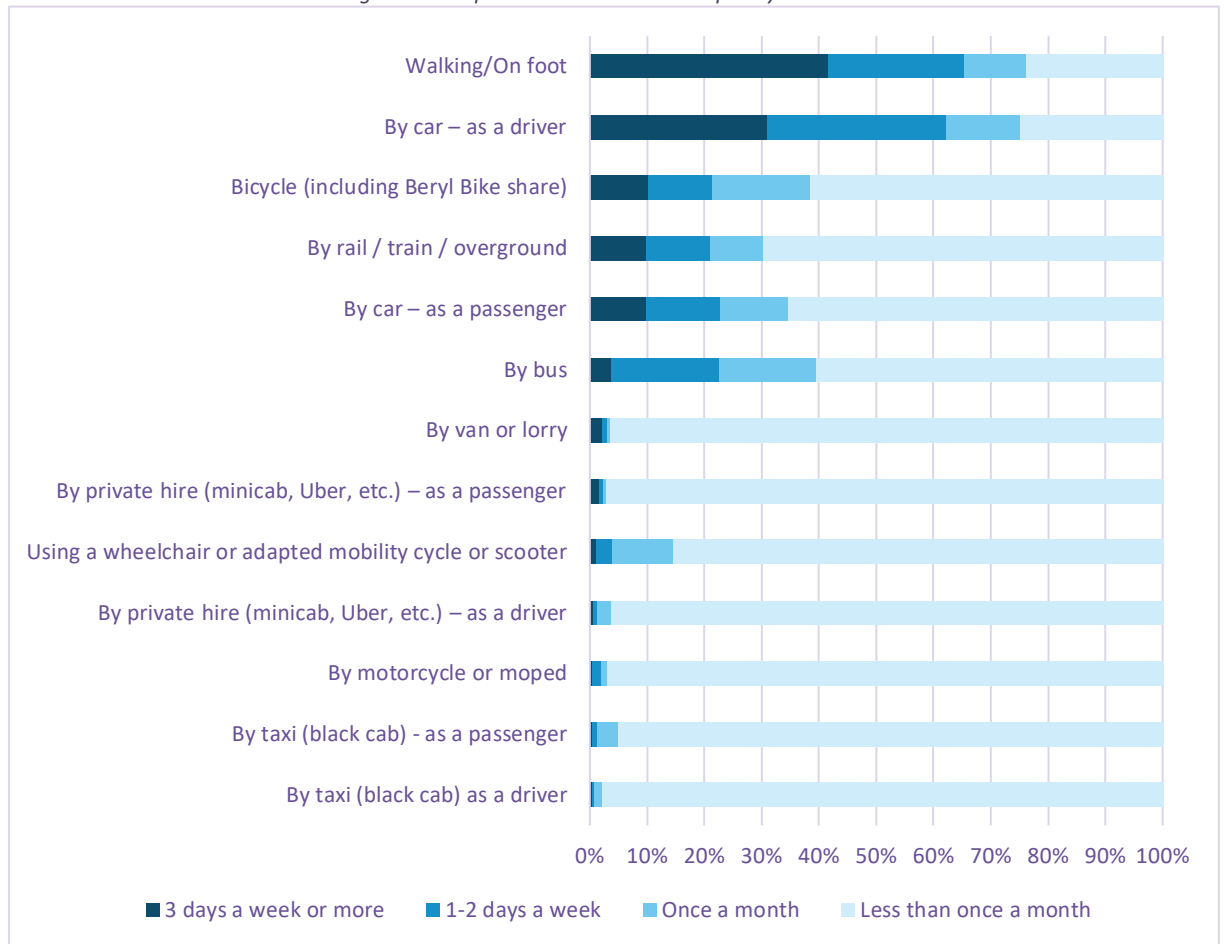
3.2.5. The demographics of those who responded varied from the actual population of Watford, with a greater proportion of white British respondents (79% of respondents) than that of the general population (62%), as shown Figure 4, and consequent slight under-representation of other minority groups.

Figure 4 - Respondents' Ethnic Groups, Compared to 2011 Census Figures



3.2.6. In terms of travel mode use (Figure 5), 42% of respondents indicated that they walked at least three days a week or more, with 64% of people walking at least once a week. 24% of people reported walking journeys less often than once a month. 31% of respondents drove at least three times a week, compared to 12% cycling, 8% taking the train and 5% taking the bus. 62% of respondents drove at least once a week, whilst nearly 40% of respondents cycled at least once a month. 14% of respondent used a wheelchair or other mobility aid for journeys on a least a monthly basis.

Figure 5 - Respondents' Mode Use Frequency



3.3. Demographics - Conclusions and Recommendations

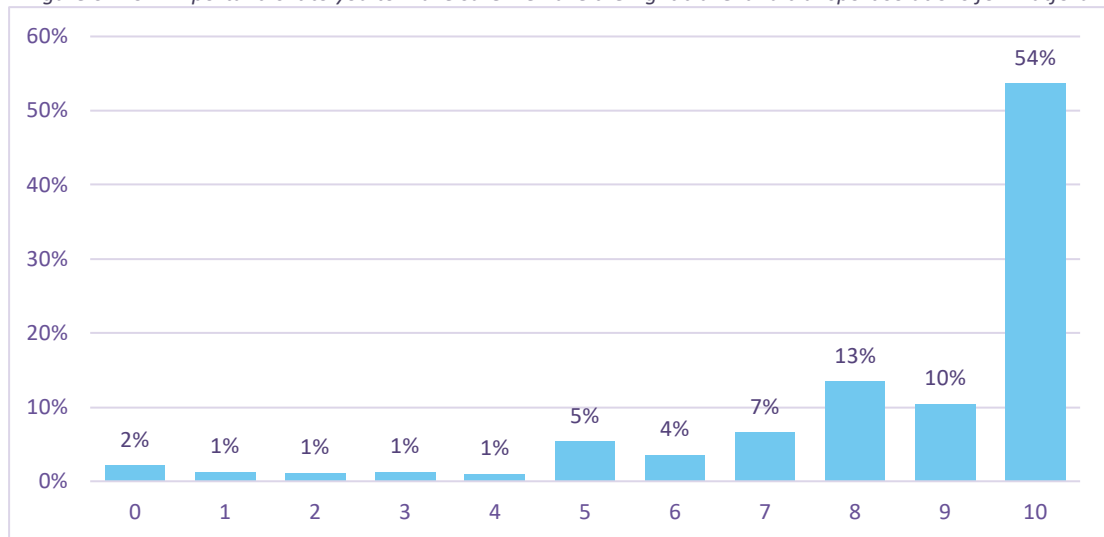
3.3.1. The level of response to the survey was good, with over 1,000 responses received, although representation from organisations or businesses was slightly lower than may have been hoped for. The sample drew from a range of demographics, although some age groups and ethnic minorities were slightly under-represented. Overall, it is considered a strong basis on which to evaluate opinions on TTIW and make changes before publishing a final version of the strategy. This section did not relate to the specifics of the strategy, so does not lead to recommendations for change, but does suggest some key lessons for the delivery of the strategy, notably:

- the approaches taken to raising awareness for the strategy were successful in engaging with and encouraging response from a high number of people;
- a continuing need to consider how best to engage with, and hear the opinions of, the widest range of our community, particularly young people and ethnic minority groups; and
- combined, walking or using a wheelchair or other mobility device are the way people travel most frequently in Watford, adding strength to the travel hierarchy that puts vulnerable road users first, and implies that delivering schemes which enable such travel will benefit the greatest number of people.

3.4. Respondents' Opinions on the Future of Travel in Watford

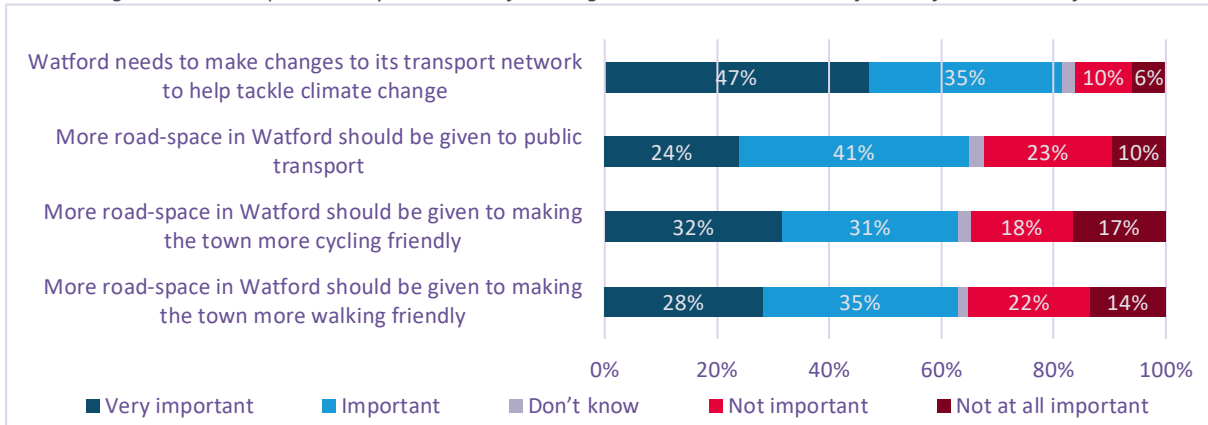
- 3.4.1. This section of the survey was focused on respondents' opinions on their preferred vision for the Future of Travel in Watford.
- 3.4.2. Question 1 asked the respondents to rate from 1 to 10 how important is it to you to make sure we have the right travel and transport solutions for Watford? (1,070 answers)
- 3.4.3. Respondents tended to place a high importance to making sure the travel and transport solutions for Watford are adequate: 84% of respondents gave an answer of 7 or greater, with 54% thinking it is of the highest importance (score of 10), and the average importance was 8.4. Only 6% of respondents rated the importance less than 5. The results are shown Figure 6.

Figure 6: How important is it to you to make sure we have the right travel and transport solutions for Watford



- 3.4.4. The responses to this question suggest that transport is important to nearly all respondents, given how few score less than 5 and very important to many given the high proportion scoring 7 or more. This likely reflects the key role transport plays in people's daily lives, and suggests the importance of TTIW and its successful delivery.
- 3.4.5. For question 2 (1,027 answers) the respondents were asked to rate the importance of several statements about the future of travel in Watford as *Very Important*, *Important*, *Not Important*, *Not At All Important*, or *Don't Know*. The distribution of responses is shown Figure 7 (excluding *Don't Know*).

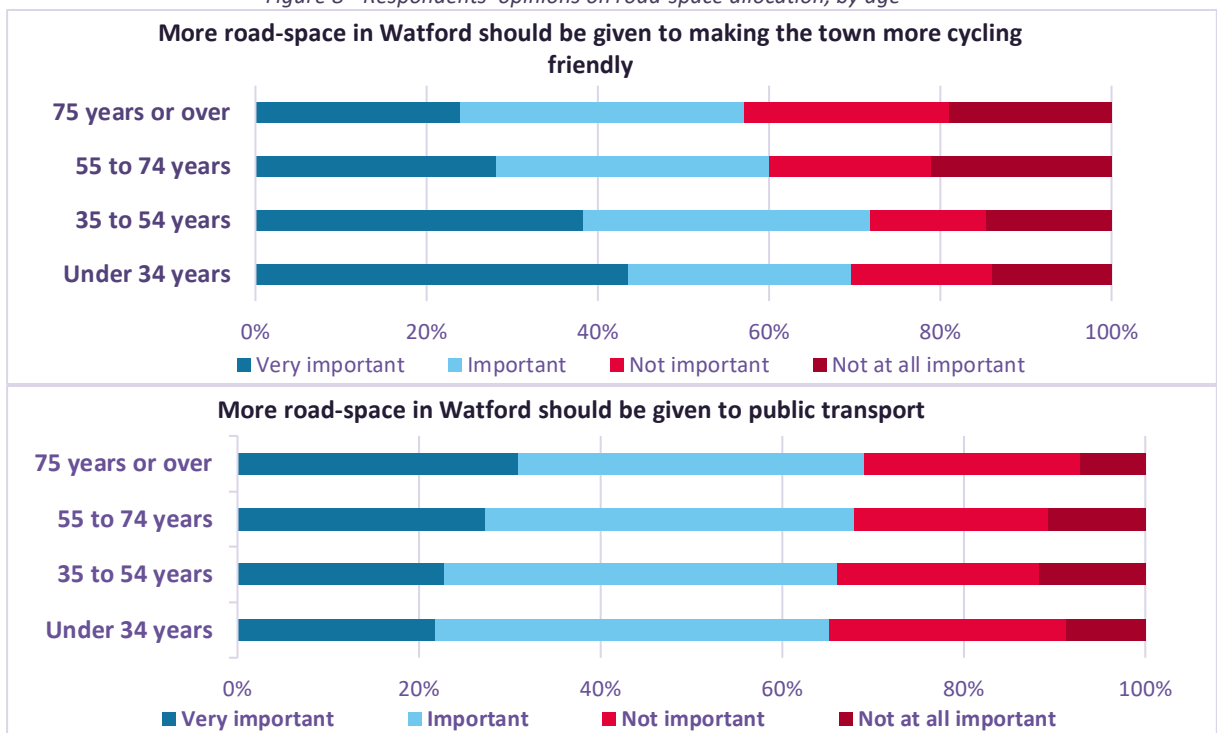
Figure 7 - How important do you think the following statements are about the future of travel in Watford?



3.4.6. More than 80% of respondents believed it was *Important* or *Very Important* that Watford made changes to its transport network to help tackle climate change; only 16% of respondents deemed it *Not Important* or *Not At All Important*. Respondents generally believed (more than 60% deemed as *Important* or *Very Important*) more road-space should be allocated to more sustainable modes, with similar levels of support for public transport, cycling and walking.

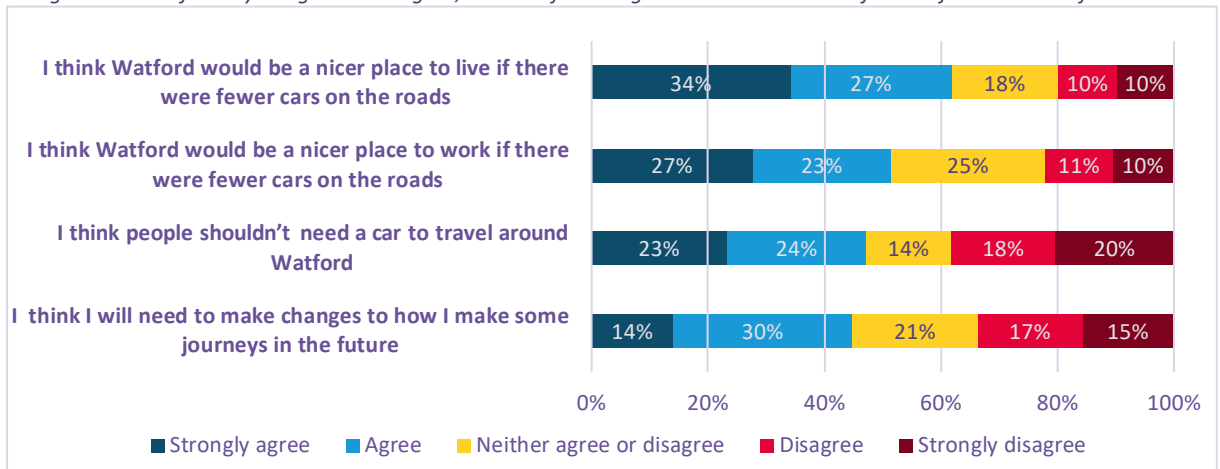
3.4.7. Further analysis of the answers showed that younger respondents placed more importance on facilitating cycling, while older respondents tended to prioritise public transport (Figure 8).

Figure 8 - Respondents' opinions on road-space allocation, by age



3.4.8. Question 3 asked the respondents to rate their level of agreement with several statements as: *Strongly Agree / Agree / Neither Agree Nor Disagree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree / Don't Know* (997 answers). The distribution of responses is shown Figure 9 (excluding *Don't Know*).

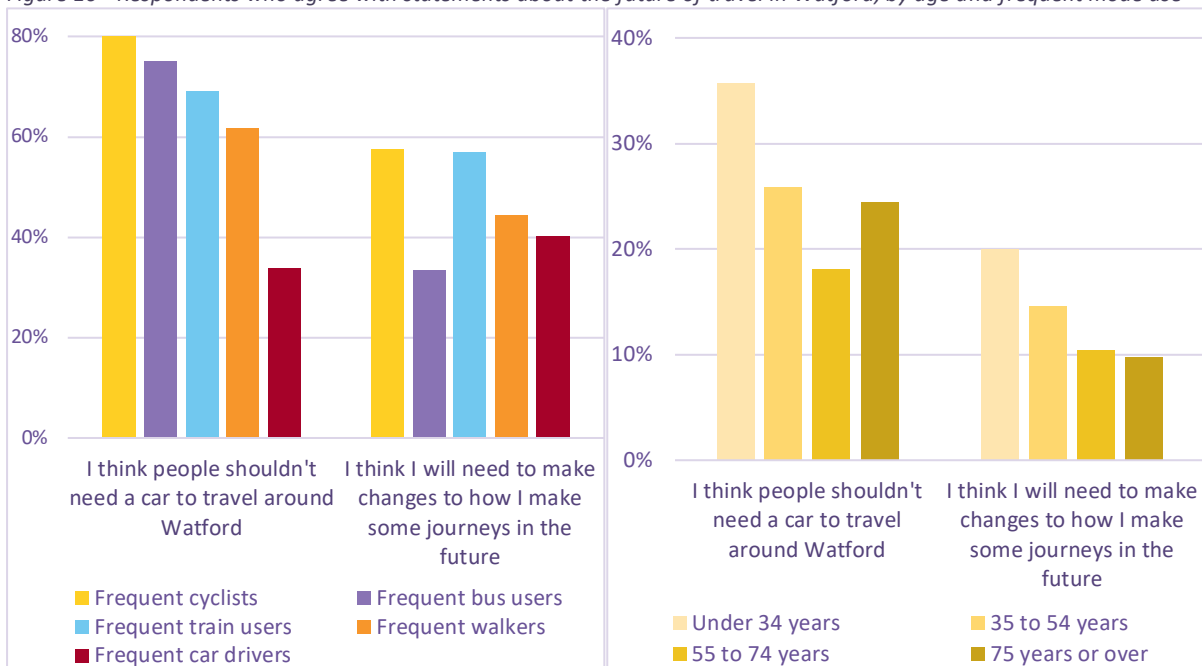
Figure 9 - How far do you agree or disagree, with the following statements about the future of travel in Watford?



3.4.9. The majority of respondents either *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* that Watford would be a better place to live (61% of respondents) and work (50% of respondents) with fewer cars on the road, with only 21% of respondents disagreeing. Respondents are split over the two following statements: 47% of respondents agree that people shouldn't need cars to travel around Watford, while 38% disagree; and only 44% of respondents agree that they will need to make personal changes to how they make some journeys in the future, with 32% disagreeing.

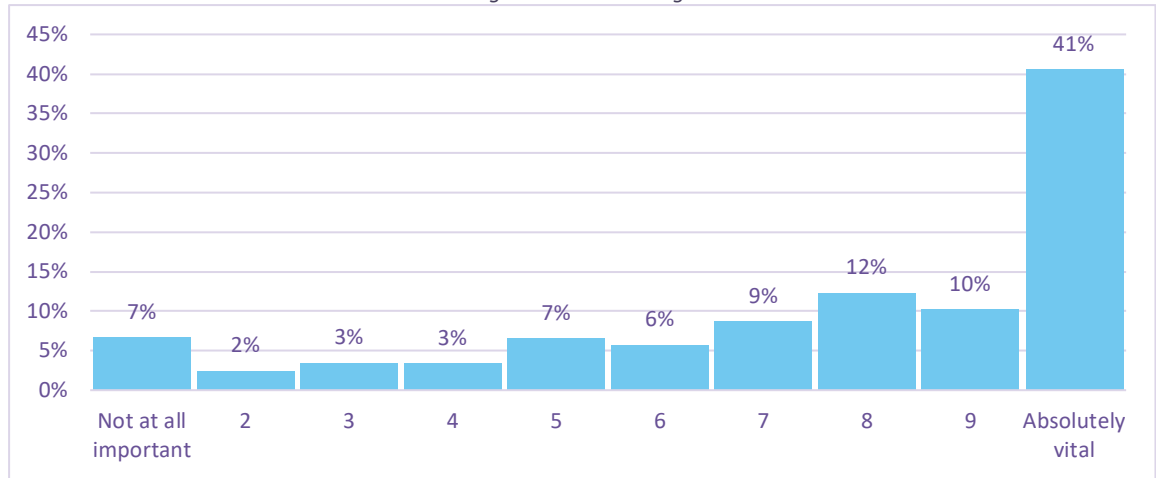
3.4.10. These results show that respondents agree that Watford would be more liveable with less cars, but they appear less committed to personal travel behaviour change. A detailed analysis of the answers showed that respondents who cycle frequently (3 days a week or more) and respondents under 35 years appear the most willing to make changes, while car drivers and older respondents (over 55 years) show less agreement. The results are shown Figure 10.

Figure 10 - Respondents who agree with statements about the future of travel in Watford, by age and frequent mode use



3.4.11. Question 20 asked on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being not at all to 10 being absolutely vital, how important a role do you think greener, more sustainable ways to travel are to tackling global warming and climate change? (781 answers). The responses are shown Figure 11 below.

Figure 11 - How important a role do you think greener, more sustainable ways to travel are to tackling global warming and climate change?



3.4.12. Respondents tend to agree that changing the transport sector is important to help tackle climate change, though a small minority strongly disagree. 72% of respondents rated the importance 7 or higher, and 41% deemed it *Absolutely Vital*; the average score was 7.6. 7% of respondents, however, think changing the transport sector is *Not At All Important* to climate change.

3.5. Future of Travel in Watford - Conclusions and Recommendations

3.5.1. Overall, respondents generally agreed that transport in Watford needs to evolve to tackle climate change, towards fewer cars on the roads and more road-space for alternative and more sustainable transportation means. A minority of respondents however appear more reluctant to change, predominantly frequent car drivers or older respondents. The questions did not relate directly to actions in TTIW, therefore do not lead to recommendations for change, but some key lessons can be drawn as follows:

- there is a strong mandate for transforming the transport network in Watford to make it more sustainable in response to the Climate Change Emergency;
- re-allocating road-space to walking, cycling and public transport has majority support;
- most people believe that Watford would be a nicer place to live with fewer cars; and
- fewer people believe that they personally should change their travel behaviour than support the overall concept of a more sustainable transport network, implying a continued to provide the support required to enable people to re-think how they make some of their journeys.

3.6. Respondents' Opinions on the Objectives

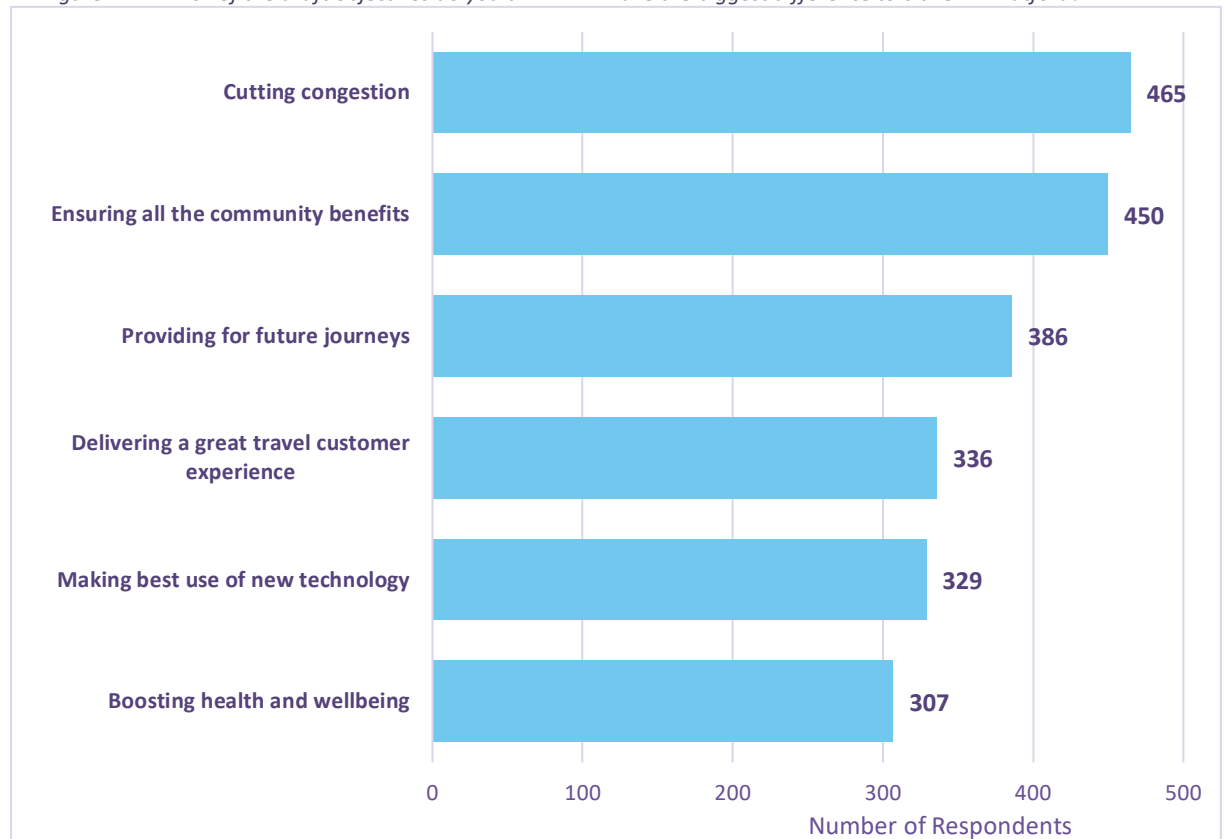
3.6.1. This section aimed to understand respondents' opinions on the Objectives set out within TTIW. Question 4 (938 answers) asked the respondents: *Which of the draft objectives do you*

think will make the biggest difference to travel in Watford? Please choose your top three. The objectives are:

- **Boosting health and wellbeing:** encouraging people to choose healthier ways to travel that keep them fit and active and also improve air quality and make our streets safer.
- **Making best use of new technology:** providing green and environmentally friendly travel solutions.
- **Delivering a great travel customer experience:** promoting high quality, easy to use travel options.
- **Providing for future journeys:** investing in efficient and green ways to travel for both current and future residents and businesses.
- **Ensuring all the community benefits:** making sure no one is left behind in terms of ways to travel and making the most of our town: offering equality of access to transport for all.
- **Cutting congestion:** cutting the number of cars on the roads by making cycling, walking or public transport the first choice for many local trips.

3.6.2. The number of respondents who chose each of the objectives in their top three are shown in the figure below.

Figure 12 - Which of the draft objectives do you think will make the biggest difference to travel in Watford?

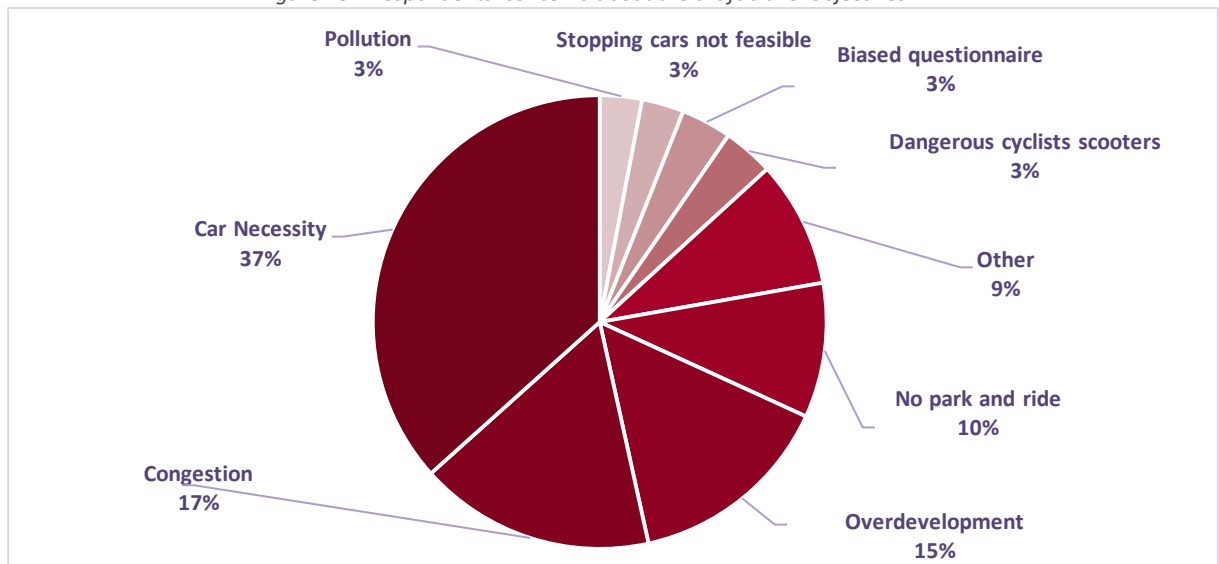


3.6.3. The respondents could choose their preferred three objectives. The results, shown in Figure 12, do not show a significantly marked preference from the respondents, but *Cutting congestion* appears to be the most important priority for respondents (chosen by 465 respondents out of 938), followed by *Ensuring all the community benefits* from the measures

(450 respondents). The respondents gave the least importance to the *Boosting health and wellbeing* objective (307 respondents).

- 3.6.4. The respondents were then asked in question 5: *Do you have any further comments on our draft travel objectives?*
- 3.6.5. Question 5 was open-ended and gave the respondents the option to comment on the objectives. There were 472 recorded answers, coded into 787 separate sentiments. The sentiments were divided into three response types: concerns (42% of sentiments), suggestions (54% of sentiments) and general support (4% of sentiments). Most comments did not relate specifically to the objectives.
- 3.6.6. Among the concerns, the sentiments were divided into several categories, presented in Figure 13: car necessity (37% of concerns), congestion (17%), overdevelopment (15%), park and ride (10%), dangerous cyclists or scooters (3%), biased questionnaire (3%), stopping cars not feasible (3%), and pollution (3%).

Figure 13 - Respondents' concerns about the draft travel objectives



- 3.6.7. 37% of sentiments expressing concerns were linked to the respondents' perceived continued need for cars, which they felt would be hindered by the strategy. In particular, respondents felt disabled or elderly people's needs for cars were not reflected or taken into account by TTIW, or that the lack of alternative public transport options prevented people from eliminating their need for cars. Some were also worried about the lack of support for families with children, for whom alternative means of transport to cars were thought to be impractical or too expensive. Other concerns were linked to shopping needs, work-related travelling or weather.

"we need to remember that disabled people may struggle if they can't easily access the town centre. (...) We risk cutting these people off from the town centre."

“The main reason that I keep using my car in Watford is the bus service is too expensive and infrequent...sort out the buses and I would definitely leave the car at home.”

- 3.6.8. Some respondents were concerned the measures planned in TTIW would increase congestion. This was often linked with the concern that new developments would result in an increase of vehicles on the road network, which respondents felt is already saturated, going against the strategy objectives.

“The reality is you need to make driving easier in Watford. It’s evident that your attempts to get people walking or cycling just causes cars to get stuck in traffic jams for hours, increasing carbon dioxide.”

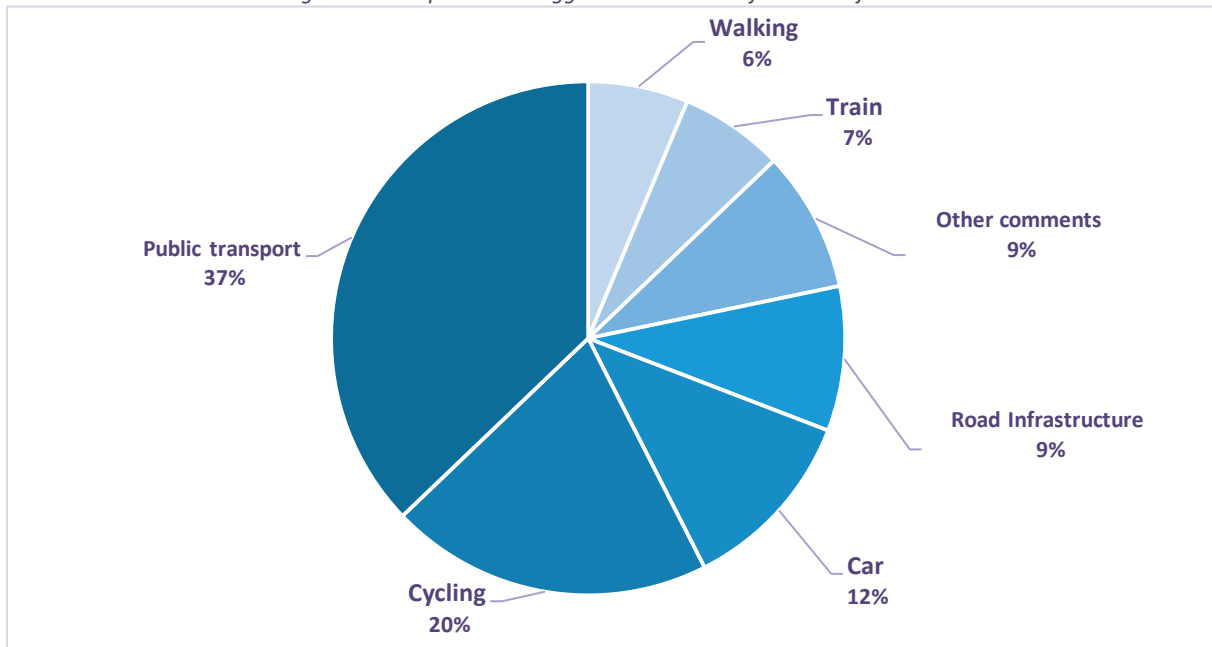
“Endless, large-scale residential developments are only going to make matters worse.”

- 3.6.9. 10% of Concerns were linked to the proposed creation of a Park-and-Ride, mostly because of its impact on neighbouring areas, especially Kings Langley. Respondents felt it would move the congestion issue from Watford to its surroundings, and take up Green Belt land.

“Introducing a park and ride in Kings Langley to service Watford simply moves the congestion and pollution out of Watford into a small neighbouring village which is immoral and a disgusting idea.”

- 3.6.10. The most frequent suggestion types identified in the comments related to improvement to public transport (37% of suggestions), cycling (20%), car infrastructure (12%), road infrastructure (9%), trains (7%), and walking (6%). The results are shown Figure 14.

Figure 14 - Respondents' suggestions on the draft travel objectives



3.6.11. The most frequent transport mode identified for which people made suggestions for improvement was public transport, with 30% of suggestions on public transport focused on reducing cost, and 20% on expanding the network. Respondents also suggested improvements to reliability, frequency and accessibility.

"In order for this to work the public transport needs to be a lot more affordable."

"If you really want to reduce congestion in and around Watford maybe you need something radical like free buses. At the moment buses are costly, slow and infrequent to many parts of the town"

3.6.12. 30% of suggestions regarding cycling requested safer routes. Respondents also suggested creating additional, well-connected cycle lanes, which are segregated, and well maintained. A number of respondents suggested expanding the use of electric scooters, either private or for hire.

"Cycling and pedestrian safety should be prioritised by improving junction layouts as this is where most injuries take place. Cycle routes should include alternative 'back roads or off-road' routes for non-confident cyclists."

"Cycling is a green and healthy solution. We must have safe cycle roads, safe storage, free checks and repair services."

3.6.13. Respondents who made suggestions about cars proposed encouraging electric cars use, by implementing more charging stations. Other suggestions insisted on the need to reduce overall car numbers, for instance with the implementation of car clubs. Suggestions were made on parking, proposing to add parking spaces or ban pavement parking in equal measure, to increase parking charges, or to provide free parking for electric cars.

“You also need to encourage and support people to go electric/hybrid...All new housing developments should be built with charging points. All car parks should have charging points.”

3.6.14. The other modes gathered fewer comments. The majority of suggestions regarding road infrastructure were to improve traffic flows, there were also comments to improve road maintenance or to decrease traffic speeds. Suggestions on trains centred on requests to expand the network, decrease the prices, but mostly to extend the Metropolitan Line to Watford town centre. Respondents commenting about walking suggested increasing pedestrian safety, creating more crossings, improving pavement maintenance and incentivising people to walk more.

“I worry for my kids walking along Bushey mill lane where cars race along at way above the 30mph limit. Can all of Watford be reduced to 20mph, not just the quieter residential streets, and it be enforced?”

“Rather more costly would be to support the Croxley Link, but it might help reduce car usage.”

“please install a set of traffic lights and a safe crossing on Rickmansworth Road, opposite Cassiobury Park entrance, as pedestrians are currently running across a dual carriage way to get to/from the park.”

3.7. Objectives - Conclusions and Recommendations

- 3.7.1. When presented with the objectives, priorities were spread across the six presented, with a reasonably narrow range between the most popular and least popular. Cutting congestion was the most popular objective, with ensuring all the community benefits a close second. Improving health through better transport was the least popular objective.
- 3.7.2. When given the opportunity to comment on the objectives, most respondents gave opinions on the actions within the strategy rather than the objectives. Concerns were mostly related to the fear the actions proposed by the strategy would create more difficulties for travel, in particular by car; and the lack of options proposed for those among the respondents who had no choice but to use cars. Positive suggestions focused on greater improvement to public transport and cycle networks, and the need to develop infrastructure for electric cars.
- 3.7.3. The key lessons that can be drawn from this section, most of which relate to the delivery of the strategy, are:
- cutting congestion and equality of transport provision are the highest priority amongst respondents, which should be taken into account in prioritising the actions for delivery;
 - the health benefits of improving transport are either not a priority or not well recognised, suggesting a need to strengthen messaging around both personal and societal health and wellbeing benefits derived from more active travel;
 - significant concern exists that it is not possible to give up car travel and measures that encourage people to do so will impinge on their quality of life, this emphasises the need to provide alternatives to car-ownership and provide the training, support and information people need to change their behaviour, as set out in the draft strategy; and

- making public transport cheaper and increasing its coverage is seen as key factor for many people in enabling more sustainable travel, which should be picked up in the strategy.

Recommended changes to Transforming Travel in Watford:

- Strengthen the commitment to work with bus providers to offer improved service provision and better value fares.

3.8. Opinions on the Proposed Actions

- 3.8.1. This section of the survey covered respondents' views on the Actions proposed in TTIW. Questions 6 through 18 asked the respondents to *Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree Nor Disagree, Disagree* or *Don't Know* to a list of proposed Actions.
- 3.8.2. The results are presented below in two ways. Figure 14 shows the agreement levels of the respondent, from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*, as percentages, ordered by proportion who stated either *Strongly Agree or Agree*, from greatest to fewest.
- 3.8.3. Table 1 displays a net agreement rating. For each action the responses were scored as follows:
- Strongly Agree: +2
 - Agree: +1
 - Neither Agree Nor Disagree or Don't Know: 0
 - Disagree: -1
 - Strongly Disagree: -2
- 3.8.4. These scores were combined to provide a ranked scoring of the agreement level with the actions, which ranged from +1.14 to -0.35. The percentage of respondents who agreed with the action is also show for comparison.

Figure 15 - How far do you agree or disagree with the following proposals?

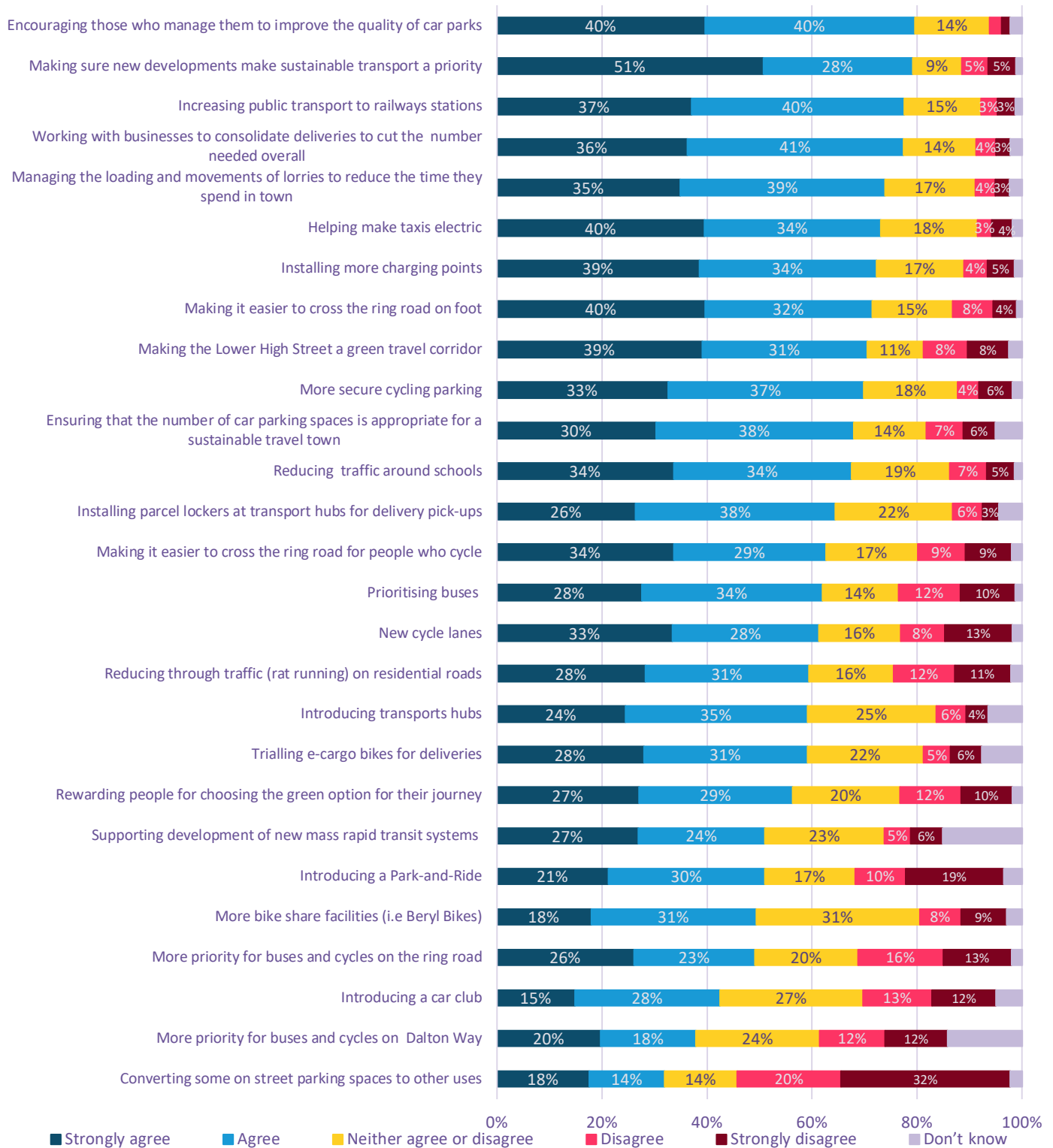
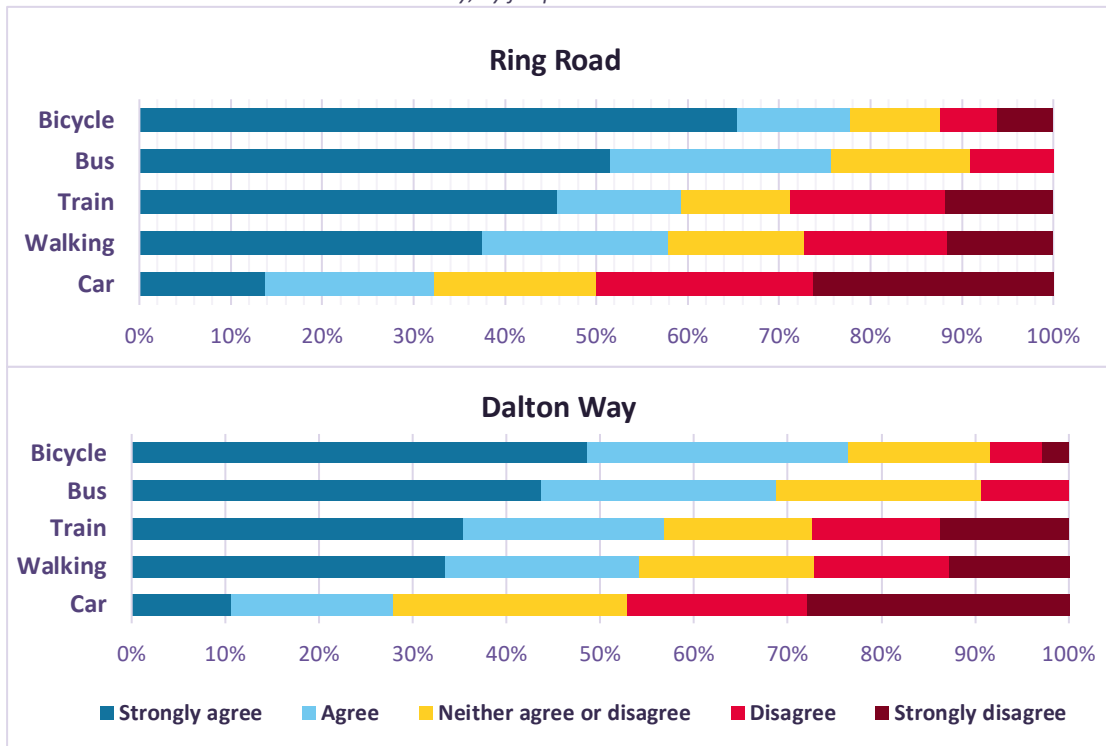


Table 1 - Rating given on the proposed TTIW actions based on the respondents' responses, and total agreement

Proposed Actions	Net Agreement Rank	Net Agreement Place	Total Agreement	Agreement Place
Making sure new developments make sustainable transport a priority	1.14	1	79%	2
Encouraging those who manage them to improve the quality of car parks	1.14	2	80%	1
Increasing public transport to railways stations	1.05	3	78%	3
Working with businesses to consolidate deliveries to cut the number needed overall	1.04	4	77%	4
Helping make taxis electric	1.02	5	73%	6
Managing the loading and movements of lorries to reduce the time they spend in town	1.00	6	74%	5
Installing more charging points	0.96	7	72%	7
Making it easier to cross the ring road on foot	0.95	8	72%	7
More secure cycling parking	0.86	9	70%	10
Making the Lower High Street a green travel corridor primarily for walking, cycling and public transport	0.86	10	71%	9
Reducing traffic around schools	0.84	11	68%	11
Installing parcel lockers at transport hubs for delivery pick-ups	0.79	12	64%	13
Ensuring that the number of car parking spaces is appropriate for a sustainable travel town	0.79	13	68%	11
Trialling e-cargo bikes for deliveries	0.70	14	59%	17
Making it easier to cross the ring road for people who cycle	0.70	15	63%	14
Introducing transports hubs	0.69	16	59%	17
Supporting development of new mass rapid transit systems	0.61	17	51%	21
New cycle lanes	0.61	18	61%	16
Prioritising buses	0.57	19	62%	15
Reducing through traffic (rat running) on residential roads	0.55	20	59%	17
Rewarding people for choosing the green option for their journey	0.52	21	56%	20
More bike share facilities (i.e Beryl Bikes)	0.42	22	49%	23
More priority for buses and cycles on the ring road	0.33	23	49%	23
Introducing a Park and Ride	0.25	24	51%	21
More priority for buses and cycles on Dalton Way	0.21	25	38%	26
Introducing a car club	0.20	26	43%	25
Converting some on street parking spaces to other uses (e.g., for plants /seating / cycle parking)	-0.35	27	32%	27

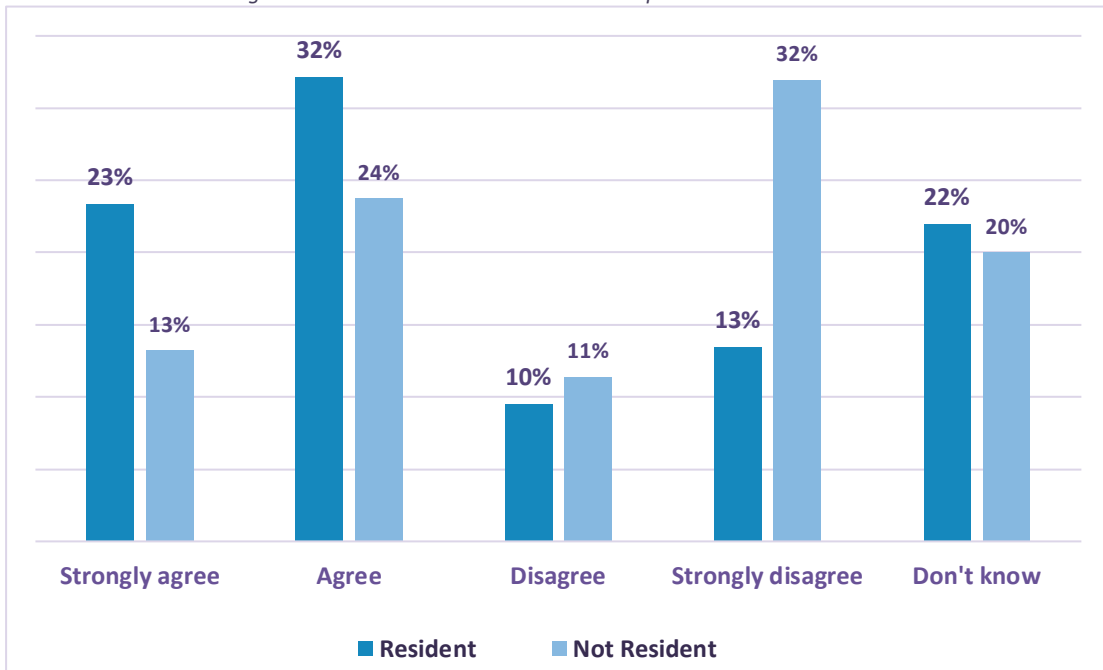
- 3.8.5. At least 50% of respondents agreed (*Agree* or *Strongly Agree*) with all, but five of the proposed actions. All had a positive net agreement score, suggesting more people supporting than opposed. Over half of the action had at least 60% support, with the top 10 all gaining more than 70% support. The top six actions had net agreement scores over one, suggesting strong support.
- 3.8.6. Respondents tended to show the most support for measures that would facilitate personal travel now: *Improving the quality of car parks* (80% agreement), *increasing public transport to railway stations* (78% agreement), and *improving the management of deliveries* (77% and 74% agreement with the first two actions linked with deliveries).
- 3.8.7. Respondents placed a high importance in *making sure new developments make sustainable transport a priority* (79% agreement); this aligns with concerns raised in Question 5 that new development would increase congestion.
- 3.8.8. Respondents liked actions that would encourage electric car use, such as *Installing more charging points* (72% agreement) and *Helping make taxis electric* (73% agreement). Whilst lower down the order, actions that will enable active or sustainable travel have majority agreement; *new cycle lanes*, *prioritising buses*, *making it easier to cross the ring road for people who walk or cycle*, *reducing traffic around schools*, and *reducing through traffic* all had at least 59% support and an agreement rating of 0.55 or greater.
- 3.8.9. Respondents appeared indifferent to a series of specific measures, which gathered average agreement levels (between 49% and 59%) but where more than 30% of respondents were indifferent (*Neither Agree Nor Disagree* or *Don't Know*):
- Introducing transports hubs (31% indifference)
 - Trialling e-cargo bikes for deliveries (30% indifference)
 - Supporting development of new mass rapid transit systems (38% indifference)
 - More bike share facilities (i.e. Beryl Bikes) (34% indifference)
 - Introducing a car club (32% indifference)
 - More priority for buses and cycles on Dalton Way (38% indifference)
- 3.8.10. The five actions that scored less than 50% support were: *converting some on street parking spaces to other uses*, *more priority for buses and cycles on Dalton Way*, *introducing a car club*, *ore priority for buses and cycles on the ring road*, and *more bike share facilities*. Four of these five were in the bottom five on the agreement ranking, which included *introducing park and ride*, but not *more bike share facilities*. *Converting some on street parking spaces to other uses* was the only action to have a negative net agreement score.
- 3.8.11. The respondents' opinions on the actions proposing *More priority for buses and cycles on the ring road and Dalton Way* were cross-analysed with frequent mode use (3 days a week or more). The results are shown Figure 16. Unsurprisingly, frequent car drivers showed the least agreement levels for changes to the ring road: 50% disagreed, and only 32% agreed. Frequent cyclists tended to be most likely to agree (78%), followed by frequent bus users (76%), frequent train users (59%) and frequent walkers (57%). The results were similar for Dalton Way, albeit less marked.

Figure 16 - Respondents' agreement levels to giving more priority for buses and cycles on the Ring Road or Dalton Way, by frequent mode use



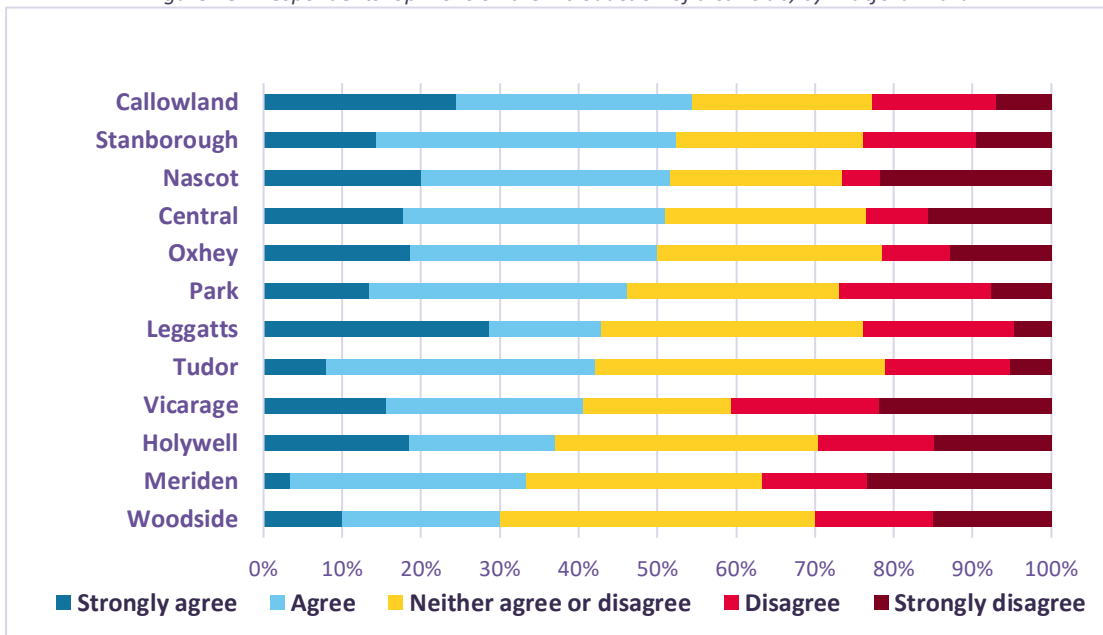
3.8.12. 28% of respondents disagreed with the proposed creation of a park-and-ride, including 19% of respondents who *Strongly Disagree*. A cross-analysis of the answers in Figure 17 shows that non-Watford residents tend to *Strongly Disagree* with the measure (32% compared with 13% of residents), while residents tend to agree with it (55% *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*, against 37% of non-residents). Once again, this sentiment was noted in the answers to Question 5, where many non-Watford residents were concerned that a park-and-ride would increase congestion in the neighbouring areas and take up Green Belt land.

Figure 17 - Residents and Non-Residents' opinions on Park-and-Ride



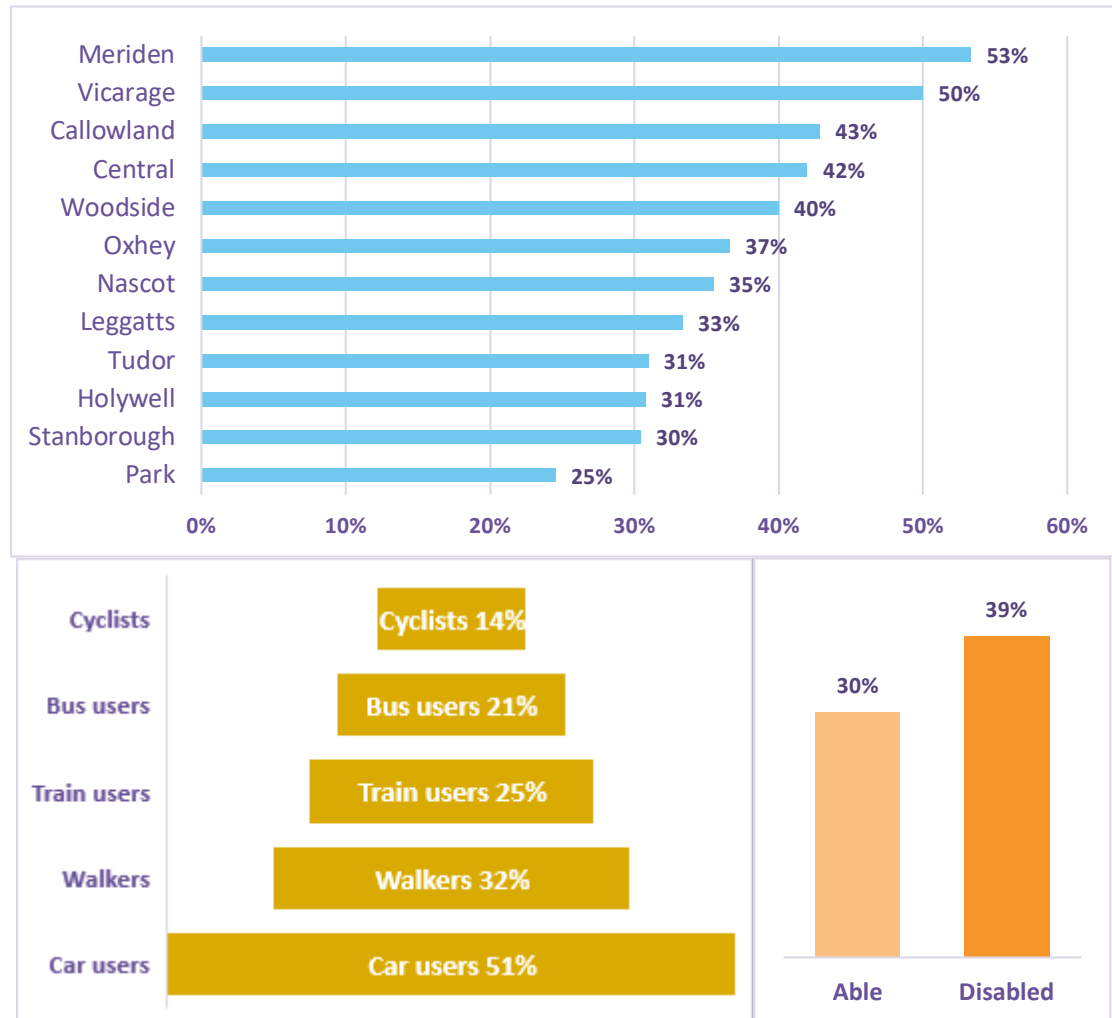
3.8.13. 25% of respondents disagree with the introduction of a car-club in Watford, as shown Figure 18. When considering this question in relation to where respondents indicated they live, it was found that residents of Callowland, Stanborough, Nascot and Central are more in favour of a car-club (between 51% and 54% agreement), as opposed to Vicarage and Meriden residents (41% and 37% disagreement).

Figure 18 - Respondents' opinions on the introduction of a car club, by Watford Ward



3.8.14. The action which received the least support was *Converting on-street parking spaces to other uses*, with 52% of respondents disagreeing, including 32% of respondents who chose *Strongly*

Disagree. Further analysis, presented Figure 19, found that frequent car users were more likely to strongly disagree with the measure: 51% of the respondents who indicated driving three days a week or more *Strongly Disagreed*, against 14% of frequent cyclists, 21% of frequent bus users, 25% of frequent train users and 32% of frequent walkers. Furthermore, disabled respondents were found to be more likely to oppose the action (39% *Strongly Disagreed* against 30% of able-bodied respondents), as well as Watford residents, in particular those from the Meriden or Vicarage wards (53% and 50% *Strongly Disagreed*).



- 3.8.15. This echoes the concerns of the respondents identified in Question 5, where the fear of not being able to use their cars when necessary was marked (in particular amongst elderly or disabled people). The results to this question may suggest people assumed this measure would lead to removal of their parking spaces (which may be in high demand) rather than enabling under-utilised or unnecessary on-street parking to be better used.
- 3.8.16. As a summary of the findings of Questions 6 - 18, respondents tend to prioritise the Actions that would facilitate their current travelling habits, and to disagree with those that could force them to change their behaviour, mostly by making car travel more complicated (prioritising

alternative travel means, converting parking spaces). The respondents' concerns with over-development, congestion, and their continued need for cars in specific instances identified in Question 5, can be seen in their most and least preferred Actions.

3.8.17. Question 20 asked the respondents *Which of the following actions we have set out in the draft Strategy do you think will have the biggest impact on changing how we travel in Watford?* Respondents could select three items from the list shown in Figure 20 (808 answers), where the actions were grouped by theme. The answers are broken down by age, as shown Figure 21.

Figure 20 - Which of the following actions we have set out in the draft Strategy do you think will have the biggest impact on changing how we travel in Watford?

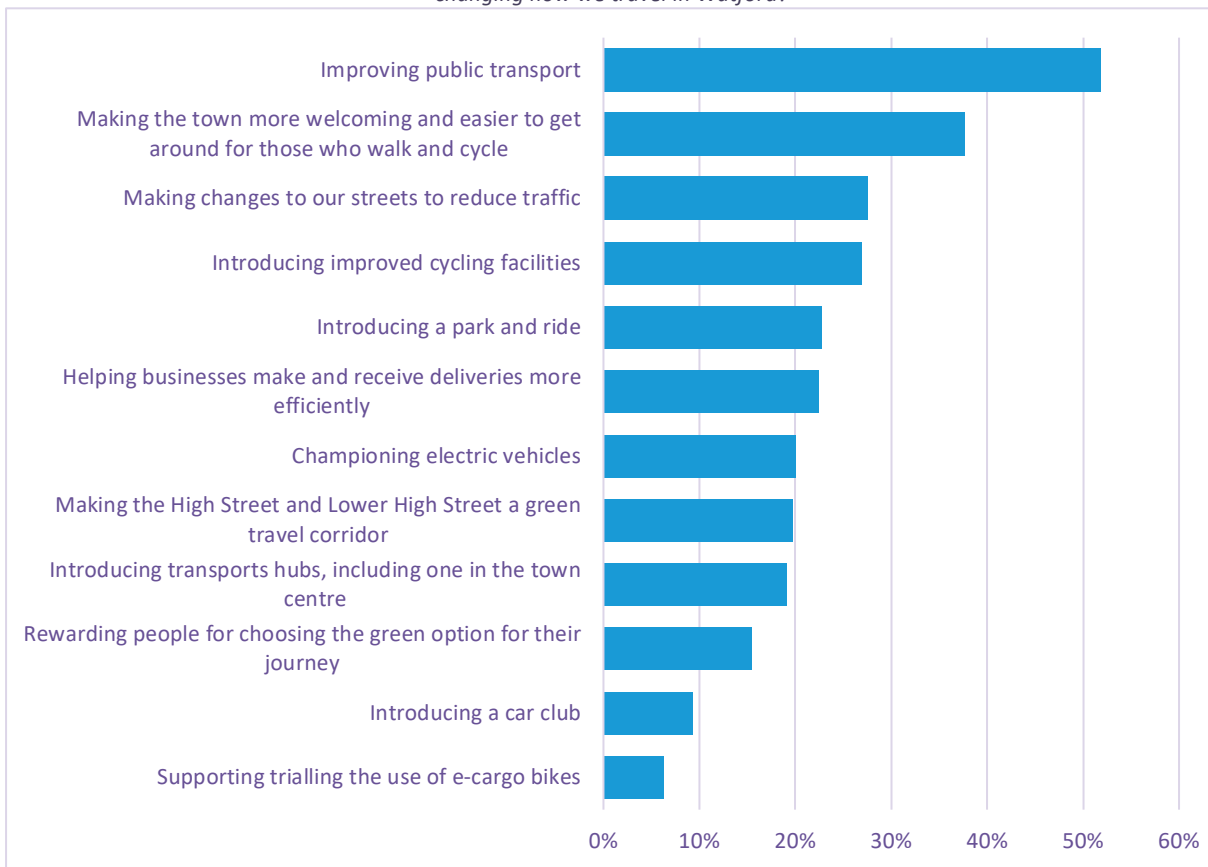
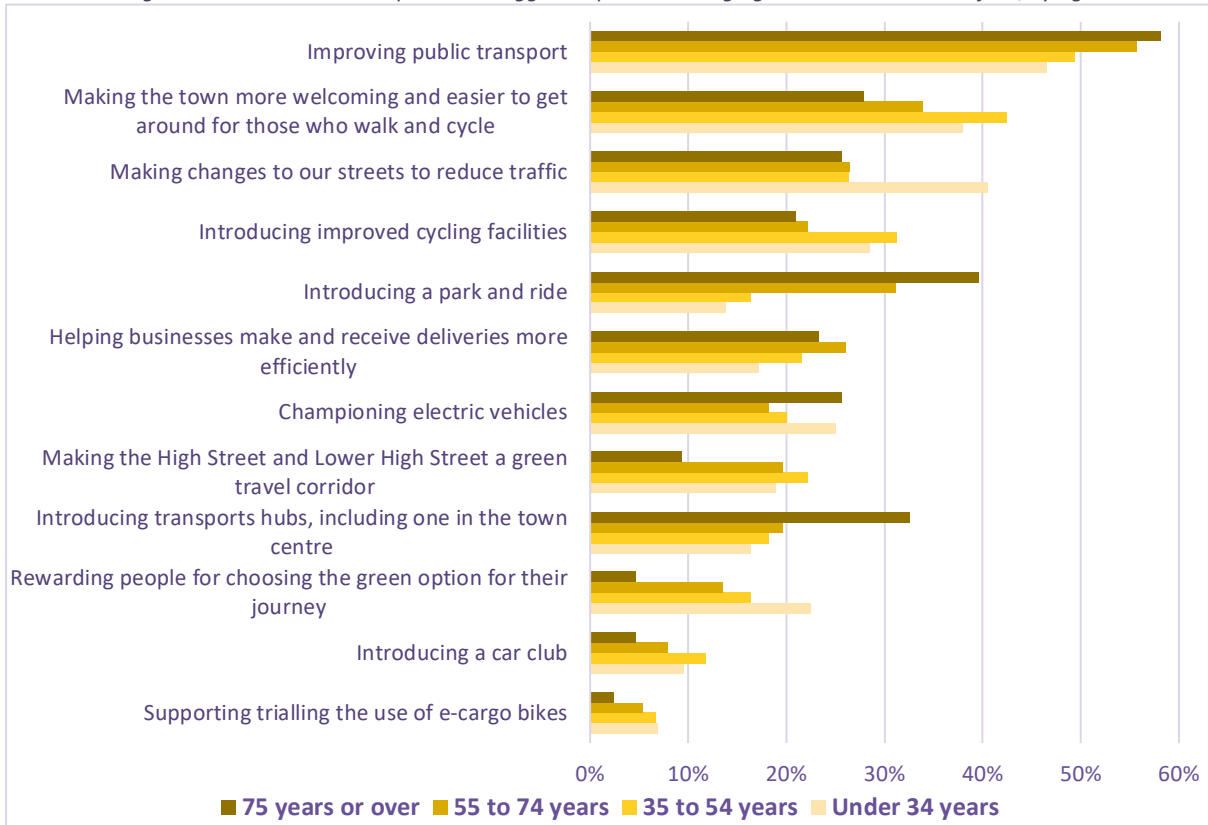


Figure 21 - Actions with the perceived biggest impact on changing how we travel in Watford, by age



3.8.18. The action that was perceived by the respondents as likely to have the biggest impact on their travel habits was *improving public transport* (52% of respondents), followed by *facilitating cycling and walking* (38%), *reducing traffic* was also seen as effective (28%). These themes confirm the respondents' priorities identified in Question 5: public transport and cycling, and concerns about congestion and the continued need for cars. Older respondents were more likely think improved public transport would change how they travel, whilst younger people were more likely to think they would change as a result of facilitating walking and cycling, plus reducing traffic.

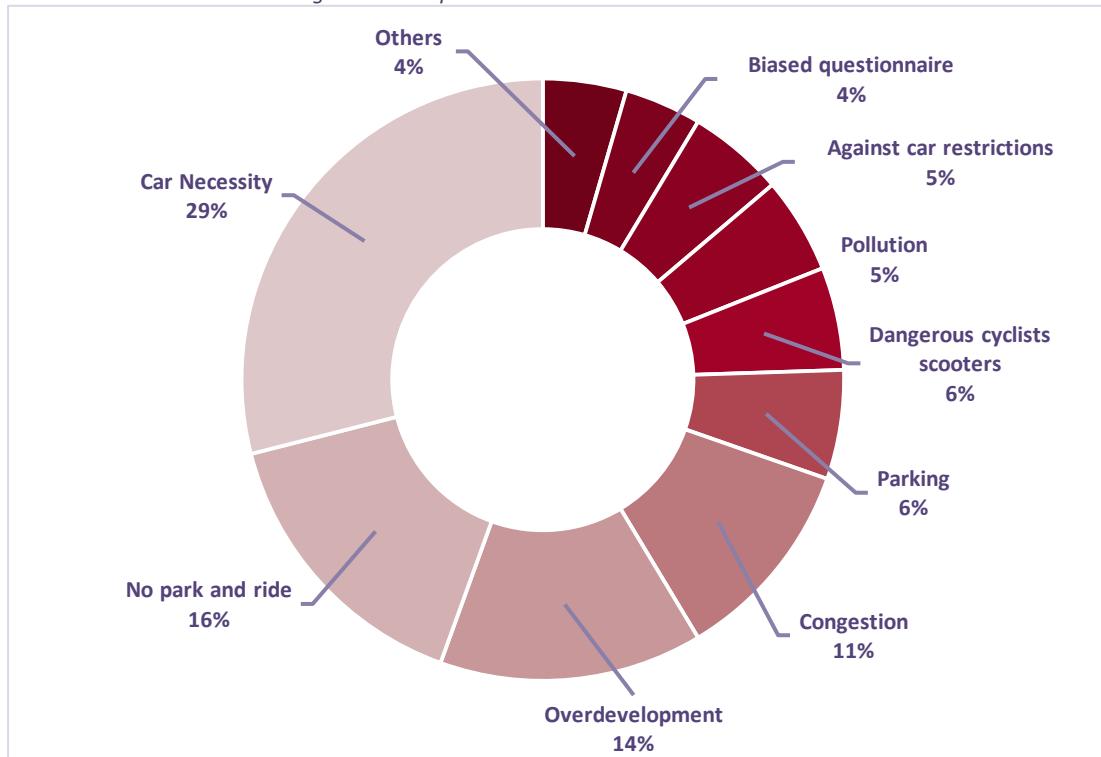
3.8.19. Comparing the results of Questions 6-18 and Question 19 shows that while the respondents agree more with measures that would facilitate their current travel habits (improving car parks, connecting train stations, managing deliveries to cut congestion), they also state that the actions that would help them change their travel habits are improving public transport, cycling and walking infrastructures.

3.8.20. Question 21 was open-ended and gave the respondents the option to comment on the proposed actions, *Do you have any other comments on our proposed actions to deliver our Transforming Travel in Watford Strategy?* There were 481 recorded answers, which have been coded into 817 separate sentiments. The sentiments were, as with for Question 5, divided into three response types: Concerns (35% of sentiments), Suggestions (59% of sentiments) and General Support (6% of sentiments).

3.8.21. The answers recorded for Question 21 are very similar to those recorded in Question 5 in terms of themes and sentiments, even though the proportions vary slightly.

3.8.22. Among the concerns, the sentiments were divided into several categories: car necessity (29% of concerns), park and ride (16%), overdevelopment (14%), congestion (11%), parking (6%), dangerous cyclists or scooters (6%), pollution (5%), against car restrictions (5%), and biased questionnaire (4%). They are shown Figure 22.

Figure 22 - Respondents' concerns on the TTIW Actions



3.8.23. The most frequently cited concern with the actions is a belief in the continued need for cars due to age, disability, families, the lack of alternative, shopping, work or weather, and this will be hindered by the strategy measures.

“The car should still be an option [...] and forcibly hindering drivers would only cause further issues. Cars will still be needed for the foreseeable future and proposed alternatives are not as good.”

“Everything you have proposed is for the fit, relatively young, financially well-funded.”

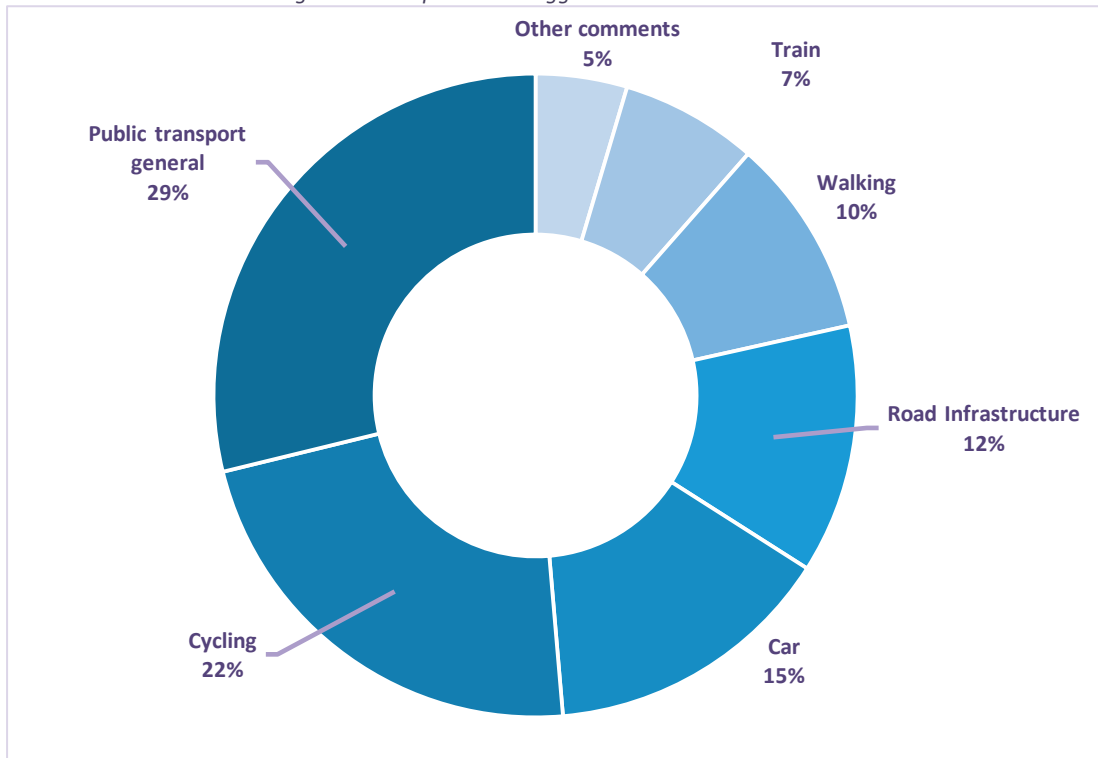
3.8.24. Concerns regarding Park-and-Ride were also clear, with respondents fearing its implementation would increase congestion and pollution, in addition to degrading Green Belt land.

“As a car driver, cyclist and walker I am prepared to accept that we can’t continue with one car per person, not keep sacrificing land to the car. A Park and Ride in Kings Langley would lead to inevitable congestion and is not environmentally sound.”

“This objective may well reduce the number of vehicles travelling into Watford town centre, but shows a total disregard of the impacts on an historic village just outside Watford.”

3.8.25. The most frequent theme of suggestions identified in the comments and shown Figure 23 was Public Transport (29% of suggestions), followed by cycling (22%), car (15%), road infrastructure (12%), walking (10%), and train (7%).

Figure 23 - Respondents' suggestions on the TTIW Actions



3.8.26. Suggestions on public transport focused on its price, reliability, frequency, and connectivity. Regarding cycling, respondents suggested more and safer cycle lanes, better maintained and segregated, as well as requesting improvements and expansions to the Beryl Bike Scheme. Suggestions about cars mentioned encouraging electric cars use, reducing overall car use and adding cycle parking spaces. Suggestions on road infrastructure were mainly to decrease traffic speeds, while safer pedestrian routes and the extension of the Metropolitan line were linking to walking and train infrastructure.

“We need reliable regular transportation and transport hubs in other parts of Watford, not just town centre, to enable customers to get from C to E to G without having to change buses in the town centre”

“Make cycling easier and safer by building proper segregated cycle routes, not painting cycle lanes in the road. Make all one-way residential roads two way for cycles. Where possible, build a cycle path between two cul-de-sacs. Upgrade footpaths and remove all no cycling signs”

“Rephrase the traffic lights to sensor so they can let traffic through at quiet times so vehicles aren't sitting unnecessarily at red lights when there's no other traffic on the road.”

“I would be happy to walk more, but I don't feel safe fear of being attacked or hit by a bike or scooter”

3.9. Opinions on the Actions – Conclusions and Recommendations

3.9.1. This section provided valuable feedback on the perception of the action, with key lessons including:

- there is majority support for nearly all actions proposed by TTIW, with only one action having a net negative agreement value, suggesting a mandate to deliver these actions;
- the greatest support was for actions that might have immediate direct benefits to individuals, such as improving car parks, or were focused on changing things that did not directly relate to their behaviour, for example making sure new development was sustainable, or consolidating deliveries;
- less popular actions were those that suggested significant, and potentially temporarily disruptive, change to the ring road or Dalton Way as well as the suggestion of removing on-street parking, implying that when and how these are delivered should be carefully planned;
- Actions that would prioritise public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure and reduce traffic had majority support and were reported as the ones that would be most likely to change people's behaviour, plus were the focus of comments providing additional suggestions for the strategy, indicating they should be considered a priority for delivery; and
- concerns expressed with the strategy actions generally focused on a belief in the continued necessity of the car for personal travel, park and ride and a distrust of the level of new development planned in Watford, suggesting a need for further engagement and consultation in establishing the feasibility of these.

Recommended changes to Transforming Travel in Watford:

- Strengthen commitment to further engagement and establishing feasibility of park and ride.
- Ensure that major transformational changes to ring road and Dalton Way are long term schemes that follow-on from delivery of other measures that enable sustainable travel.
- Consider geographical focus of re-allocation of on-street car parking.
- Emphasising in communication that individual behaviours will need to change to address the Climate Emergency.
- Ensure that whilst sustainable travel modes are prioritised, those who must drive can continue to do, and can access all areas of the town.

4. Long Form Responses

4.1. Introduction

- 4.1.1. 38 longer responses were received from businesses, organisations or residents sent to the transport strategy email account, directly to officers or the Mayor of Watford, or via extended comments within the online survey. Each of these responses is summarised in turn in the following two sections.

4.2. Organisation Responses

Councils, Public Bodies, National Charities and Transport Operators

Dacorum Borough Council

- 4.2.1. Dacorum Borough Council (Dacorum) indicated overall support for the aims of TTIW, and believe these will have a positive effect in relation to the climate change emergency, health and well-being, and quality of life. Concern is expressed with respect to the potential future delivery of Park and Ride near Kings Langley. This concern relates to:

- impact on local residents;
- requirement for development on Green Belt land;
- conflict with sustainable transport strategy for Hemel Hempstead;
- impact of increased car journeys in the areas, particularly in relation to existing congestion plus air quality issues;
- extent park and ride can facilitate overall modal shift away from private car use; and
- absence of transport modelling or viability testing to date.

- 4.2.2. Dacorum set out a desire to work closely with Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council as TTIW evolves.

Transport for London

- 4.2.3. Transport for London indicated support the proposed actions and targets within TTIW and stated that they aligned with the aims of the London Plan and Mayor's Transport Strategy. They identified potential for collaboration with neighbouring London Boroughs on freight consolidation.

West Midlands Trains / London Northwestern Railways

- 4.2.4. West Midlands Trains were supportive of TTIW. They believed that park and ride would only work as a part of a wider holistic parking and land use policy. They also identified a number of areas that they saw as priorities, namely:

- prioritising buses alongside cycling on major routes;
- focusing on junctions for improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure;
- cycle routes to include quiet or off-road routes for the less confident; and
- electric vehicle charging to be enabled at all rail stations in the borough.

West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust (WHHT)

- 4.2.5. WHHT indicated strong support for TTIW. They felt the objectives of the strategy aligned with their twin challenges of achieving carbon neutrality and improved travel and access to their hospitals. They committed to pro-actively working with Watford Borough Council and

Hertfordshire County Council in delivering TTIW, identifying a several areas for potential collaboration as well as establishing a joint steering group to achieve this.

Hertfordshire Public Health

4.2.6. Hertfordshire Public Health indicated support for the strategy and the objective of improving health and wellbeing. A number of additional suggestions were proposed, focused on embracing wider aims of reducing social and health inequality. These can be summarised as follows:

- additional street improvements such as seating, lighting, accessible waste recycling bins;
- 'Healthy' advertising at key locations / routes to promote active travel;
- support / incentivisation of e-bikes;
- inclusion of bike-ability schemes;
- incentives / support for ancillary cycle equipment such as locks, lights and promotion of all year round cycling; and
- easy to use app(s) which highlights active travel routes.

Canal & River Trust

4.2.7. The Canal & River Trust support the objectives of TTIW. It believes that greater use could be made of the Grand Union Canal in Watford, promoting its use as a walking and cycling route. It believes the canal should have greater prominence in both TTIW and Watford Borough Council / Hertfordshire County Council documentation relating to cycling and walking routes. They expressed support for the expansion of the bike-share scheme to locations adjacent to the canal, noting that they have worked with other providers to ensure retrieval of bikes left on the Trust's land. In summary, they expressed a desire to work with Watford Borough Council to improve links to the towpath to make it part of the strategic walking and cycling network.

Historic England

4.2.8. Historic England did not indicate overall support or objection to TTIW. It was their expectation that Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council will consult with them on new schemes and seek advice as appropriate to assess potential impacts on the historical environment and ensure that new transport infrastructure will be installed in a manner that avoids adverse impacts on the historic environment.

Community Groups

Abfly (the Watford – St Albans Rail User Group)

4.2.9. Abfly indicated overall support for TTIW. However, they listed additions that they felt merited inclusion:

- committing to investing in the Abbey Line, with as a minimum, the restoration of the passing loop at Bricket Wood and promoting the through running of trains on the Abbey Line to Central London;
- setting out the basic requirements for Watford Junction, notably: a second access from the east side of the railway, a cross platform bridge, improved connectivity between the Abbey Line platform and the rest of the station, better cover against inclement weather at platform level, and improved catering/retail offer; and
- promoting the Metropolitan Line Extension as the preferred option for the former Croxley Rail Link.

- 4.2.10. Abfly also expressed general concern about the concept of HERT, across the county and how it would like to Watford, notably the lack of clarity on the proposed route and mode. The extent to which it would provide a more sustainable option than the Abbey Line and a Metropolitan Line Extension was queried.

Watford Rail Users Group

- 4.2.11. The Watford Rail Users Group (WRUG) supports the desire to move to more sustainable travel, and expressed general support for all the actions relating to rail. Various suggestions were made with respect to the longer journeys section of the strategy, which can be summarised as follows:
- the promotion of Watford Junction as a regional and national rail hub as well as maintaining its local role;
 - ensuring that Watford Junction is served by any park and ride service;
 - improvements to access for all modes to Watford Junction, with specific reference to better integration with bus services;
 - improvement to passenger facilities at Watford Junction such as covered waiting areas;
 - better connection of the Abbey Line into Watford Junction, with the provision of through services to London;
 - support for Watford High Street becoming a travel hub, but a desire for the station to be made more accessible, with surrounding public realm improvements;
 - maintain or improve Euston services that stop at Bushey, with accessibility and pedestrian improvements at the station; and
 - a desire to see Metropolitan Line Extension continue to be considered as the preferred option for the former Croxley rail line or otherwise improved services at Watford Met with proper sustainable access to Watford.

Oxhey Village Environment Group

- 4.2.12. Oxhey Village Environment Group (OVEG) indicated support for TTIW, with reference to specific support for the introduction of the cycle share scheme, the principle of Park and Ride services and bus priority routes, the introduction of a car club, and the current 'Click' on-demand transport service. A range of specific points, primarily focused on the area around Oxhey were also made. These can be summarised as follows:
- the widening of footways along main roads in the short term, with a long term focus on new segregated routes;
 - the provision of cycle hangars;
 - the exploration of segregated cycle ways, particularly on the most congested routes;
 - the expansion of the cycle hire scheme across Oxhey, but with consideration of how the bike bays could be improved;
 - further information on how park and ride, and bus priority can benefit Oxhey Village and surrounding areas;
 - the re-commencement of the Watford Metropolitan Line Extension project;
 - significant improvement to Bushey Station to create a transport hub, including improvements to the surrounding urban realm and inclusion of retail and toilet provision;
 - provision of digital information at all local bus stops;
 - rebranding the Grange Road bus stop to reflect its position as a main access point to Oxhey Village; and

- significant improvements to the Watford High Street to Bushey Station route, focused primarily on major enhancements to the footways and pedestrian crossings.

4.2.13. OVEG expressed particular support for the introduction of a car club and wished to engage further with Watford Borough Council on the delivery of this to secure a location in the Oxhey Village Area.

[Environmental Protection Organisation \(name withheld\)](#)

4.2.14. This group did not express support or opposition to the strategy, but questioned the impact of additional development in Watford and its impact on sustainability.

[Cassiobury Residents' Association](#)

4.2.15. The Cassiobury Residents' Association expressed concerns about TTIW, notably that until public transport was significantly improved, they did not believe that the ability to travel by car should be reduced. This was a particular concern they expressed in relation to elderly people for whom cars were seen as a necessity for day to day accessibility. They stated that all schemes should be consulted upon in full, and that the needs of all members of society should be considered in their delivery, such that no sector of society is marginalised.

[Kings Langley & District Residents Association](#)

4.2.16. The Kings Langley & District Residents' Association strongly disagreed with the concept of a park and ride site near the village of Kings Langley. They believed it likely to cause a range of negative impacts such as increased traffic and pollution, and that if a park and ride were to be implemented it should be in a location with more existing road infrastructure.

[Vicarage Village Residents' Association](#)

4.2.17. The Vicarage Village Residents' Association was opposed to TTIW. Their concern focused on the risk to pedestrians as a result of people cycling or using e-scooters. They also questioned how sustainable electric vehicles were depending on the source of electricity.

[Businesses](#)

[Warner Bros](#)

4.2.18. Warner Bros indicated support of TTIW, and stated that they are investigating ways to reduce car travel to the Studios. They were interested in how proposals in TTIW could be linked with their work on sustainability.

[Watford BID](#)

4.2.19. Watford BID were supportive of the aims of TTIW, but wondered whether further consideration could be made of how people travel in and out of Watford and how linkages could be improved to other employment areas. They emphasised that they thought sustainable transport should be integrated into all strategic town planning, and that Highways England should play a role in traffic management.

[CYCLEdude Bike Repair](#)

4.2.20. CYCLEdude's comments focused on the lack of joined up cycle infrastructure at current, and need for better enforcement of traffic laws, both relating to people in motor vehicles impeding cycling infrastructure, and people cycling and using e-scooters in an illegal manner.

[Business \(name withheld\)](#)

4.2.21. This business was supportive of TTIW, but wished to see proposed cycle infrastructure cover greater areas, connecting to all key locations.

Business (name withheld)

- 4.2.22. This business opposed TTIW. They believed that building cycling lanes would increase traffic congestion, which would be detrimental for those who need to vehicles to work, penalising those on lower incomes. It was their view that the strategy outcomes will have highly negative impacts on local businesses, encourage online shopping and be detrimental for lower income families.

4.3. Organisation Responses – Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.3.1. Most organisations that responded to the survey via a written response either expressed support or were neutral with respect to the proposals within TTIW. The key lessons that can be drawn from these responses are:

- the park and ride concept drew concern from those living in or responsible for the proposed locations suggesting a need for closer collaboration with residents and their representatives and further feasibility work;
- new cycle infrastructure and encouraging more people to cycle causes some concern, which need to be understood in developing schemes;
- some organisations expressed a desire to work with Watford Borough Council in delivering TTIW, and this should be welcomed where appropriate; and
- in places, further actions were proposed for consideration, some of which could be included within the strategy.

Recommended changes to Transforming Travel in Watford:

- Strengthen commitment to further engagement, greater collaboration and establishing feasibility of park and ride.
- Extend action on rail to include pushing for better rail services in addition to improving stations.
- Consider additional initiatives that encourage active travel.

4.4. Individual Responses

Watford Resident

- 4.4.1. This resident was supportive of the principle of making walking and cycling easier and safer. However, they indicated strong opposition to this if it meant delays for motor vehicles.

Resident

- 4.4.2. This resident did not indicate opposition or support of the strategy. They stated that they preferred to travel by private modes, and did not find the use of public transport appealing, particularly post COVID. They also questioned the feasibility of using public transport for many groups of people. They questioned whether there would be demand for a park and ride, and whether it should be located outside of Watford, but expressed that it may be a good use of brownfield land.

Kings Langley Resident

- 4.4.3. This resident indicated strong opposition to park and ride at Kings Langley, on the basis of loss of green belt land and a belief that it would merely relocate problems from Watford to another area.

Kings Langley Resident

- 4.4.4. This resident was supportive of the overall aims of the strategy, but indicated strong opposition to park and ride at Kings Langley, which they believed would increase traffic congestion, and would not provide an efficient way of accessing Watford.

Resident

- 4.4.5. This resident indicated strong opposition to park and ride at Kings Langley, believing that promoting greater use of bus services would be more beneficial.

Resident (Local Ambulance Driver)

- 4.4.6. This member of the local ambulance service did not indicate support or opposition to TTIW. They wished to emphasise the need for TTIW to consider emergency service access, stating that their biggest currently obstacle was an excess of parked cars on residential streets surrounding the town centre. They believe that too many parking permits are issued, and that these should be limited to one permit per household in streets where demand is exceeding supply, to both alleviate parking stress and promote sustainable alternatives, and reduce a current situation where they were unable to park near their house after finishing a shift in the middle of the night, which also raised personal security fears.

Resident (Local Ambulance Driver)

- 4.4.7. This resident did not indicate support for or opposition to TTIW. However, they did raise several issues relating to the movement of ambulances around Watford, which could be summarised as follows:

- difficulties accessing the hospital, particularly between Rickmansworth Road and Vicarage Road, suggesting that these would benefit from reduced parking and signage indicating they are key ambulance routes;
- avoiding the use of speed humps where possible; and
- the difficulty in accessing many narrow residential streets around Watford, primarily due to the volume of parked cars, they suggested that fewer permits should be issued, leading to overcrowding.

Resident

- 4.4.8. This resident opposed many aspects of TTIW, and questioned much of the data used within. Concern was raised around a wide range of issues, including:
- the strategy would not assist those with mobility impairments;
 - many of the measures proposed would impede traffic flow and therefore increase congestion and air pollution;
 - a desire for greater investment in public transport, with more roads to be included for bus priority;
 - concern about park and ride being located in a flood risk area;
 - a lack of costing or funding; and
 - a belief that assumptions around mode shares were incorrect and would be undermined by recent development meaning people are increasingly commuting longer distances.

Resident

- 4.4.9. This resident opposed the principle that reducing the number of cars was a good idea. They believe that the solution lay in better traffic management, and introduction of new bypasses around bottlenecks such as Bushey Arches.

Resident

- 4.4.10. This resident did not indicate support for or opposition to TTIW. However, they stated their belief in the need for Watford Borough Council to work with a range other partners, not just with other Councils and Hertfordshire County Council, but also the LEP. They believed that how Watford Borough Council will work with others should be clearly set out within TTIW, and should be an objective in itself. They also believed that linkages to other Council documents should be clearer, particularly alignment with the Local Plan, such that the link to the planning of Watford was made clear, including the need to reduce both the need to travel and the distances people travel.

Resident

- 4.4.11. This resident supported TTIW, but believed that it should be more ambitious both with respect to timescales and actions. Suggested actions included:

- commitment to much more frequent bus services;
- new or improved bus links between Watford General and other hospitals and major populations centres;
- firm strategy for working with neighbouring Councils to improve cross-county travel;
- joining up existing cycle lanes into a coherent network, and developing an off-road circular route; and
- more pedestrian crossings in many places, with various locations highlighted around the town.

- 4.4.12. They emphasised their agreement with the need for the strategy, particularly in light of increasing new residential population.

Resident

- 4.4.13. This resident did not indicate support for or opposition to TTIW. They highlighted a perceived issue around the number of people needing to drive to supermarkets, and suggested that Watford Borough Council worked with supermarkets to manage demand, as well as develop time periods where older residents are afforded priority access. They also wished for improved cycle infrastructure linking to Bushey Station, with greater security for cycle parking at the station.

Resident

- 4.4.14. This resident supported TTIW. They believed it was critical that such sustainable transport was built-in to future development in Watford. They supported the development of a town centre travel hub, and a general focus on public transport, along with exploring shuttle services to/from train stations. They believed that safety and security were an area missing from TTIW, highlighting aspects such as:

- street lighting;
- cyclists / scooter riders on pavements;
- secure cycle parking; and

- re-education of those who have held driving licenses for a long time.

Resident

4.4.15. This resident opposed TTIW. The concerns they listed included:

- cycling being impractical in poor weather;
- cycle lanes and low traffic neighbourhoods causing congestion;
- e-cargo bikes being impractical and a lack of riders for these;
- electric vehicles could solve all pollution problems; and
- a belief that traffic will grind to a halt as a result of the proposals.

4.4.16. They concluded by questioning whether the Council would be leading the way with respect to sustainable transport and thus removing car parking provision from the Town Hall.

Resident

4.4.17. This resident opposed TTIW. They believed that cars were fundamental to the future of Watford. The following concerns were raised:

- motorists were overtaxed, receiving little in return, and removing cars would result in a major financial gap;
- many people, particularly elderly residents, cannot travel by any means other than car;
- taxis are too expensive; and
- low parking development is poor policy.

4.4.18. They concluded by stating that future planning should take into account the needs of motorists, which had not been the case in the previous twenty years.

Resident

4.4.19. This resident opposed TTIW. They believed that re-developing Watford General whilst reducing traffic were not compatible. They specifically opposed the concept of park and ride, and questioned the level of demand for people from outside Watford visiting.

Resident

4.4.20. This resident indicated opposition to the strategy, particularly the concept of installing cycle lanes, believing these to be inappropriate for Watford's streets, and unsuitable for elderly residents.

Watford Resident

4.4.21. This resident opposed the strategy as they felt car ownership was fundamental to their independence, and that the proposed measures would leave to more congestion and increased pollution. They saw the strategy as likely to make life impossible for motorists.

Resident

4.4.22. This resident did not express support or opposition to TTIW, but queried what actions were being taken by Watford Borough Council to reduce the use of cars. They felt that the Council should be setting an example if residents were to be expected to change their travel behaviour.

4.5. Individual Responses – Conclusions and Recommendations

4.5.1. The written responses received from individuals included a mixture of support and opposition to TTIW. A variety of points were raised, key lessons from which can be summarised as follows:

- for many there is a belief in the necessity of cars, and that removing or restricting traffic would have significant negative consequences, emphasising the need for consultation and clear messaging developing schemes;
- there are also fears around the impracticality of cycling due to weather or mobility concerns, suggesting a need for positive examples of the wide range of people who can benefit from cycling;
- the siting of and demand for park and ride is a major concern for some, indicating the need for further engagement and assessments of feasibility;
- the need for Watford Borough Council to work collaboratively with its partners, neighbours, and other supportive organisations was a positive suggestion that could be further endorsed in the strategy;
- respondents made the value suggestion that Watford Borough Council should be setting an example in travelling sustainably; and
- the level of car parking on residential streets is a key concern for ambulance drivers, and should be considered in strategy decisions on relating to on-street car parking management.

Recommended changes to Transforming Travel in Watford:

- Strengthen commitment to further engagement and establishing feasibility of park and ride.
- Include commitment for Hertfordshire County Council and Watford Borough Council to set an example in adopting sustainable travel practices for own staff.
- Ensure that whilst sustainable travel modes are prioritised, those who must drive can continue to do, and can access all areas of the town.
- Consider actions that could reduce impact of on-street car parking on accessibility for emergency services.

5. Workshops

5.1. Introduction

5.1.1. Workshops were held with five groups representing the interests of different aspects of the community as well as specific transport forums. Key points raised during the workshops are summarised below.

5.2. Workshop Responses

Disability Forum

5.2.1. Representatives of the disabled community indicated general support for TTIW, but highlighted concerns around a range of issues regarding how the current proposals would impact on disabled people's ability to travel. They also made recommendations on both the design of TTWI measures and the report. Key points raised included:

- strongly supported the concept of sustainable travel hubs;
- taxi costs being too expensive to discourage car ownership;
- concern over cycle paths reducing space for mobility scooters, and loss of blue badge parking spaces;
- many outstanding issues for disabled people to travel by bus, including slow roll out of accessible bus stops, people being ignored at request bus stops, poor provision of service information at bus stops and on the bus, and a lack of availability of wheelchair parking space;
- noted that the removal of subways (not advocated directly in the strategy, but some have been removed) may be an issue for disabled people;
- recognised that Dalton Way was a very difficult environment for people on foot and needed improving;
- concern that app-based booking systems are not inclusive enough, and that provision should be made for training as part of schemes;
- there should be the possibility to borrow non-standard bikes, not just standard 2-wheel models as part of the bike share scheme;
- ensure that inclusivity is portrayed in both report language and images; and
- not in favour of removing cars from the high street and concerns around the ability of blue badge owners to park within the town centre, including limitations related to the height of multi-storey car parks.

Watford Blind Society

5.2.2. Members of Watford Blind Society indicated overall support for the plans and applauded its sentiment and aims. Members did however raise various issues relating to the experience of visually impaired people travelling in Watford. These included:

- concern that shared spaces are unsafe, with cyclists riding too fast and dangerously, not using infrastructure correctly, greater enforcement and signage were suggested;
- cars parking on pavements, dustbins being left out, and street furniture such as town centre bollards or EV chargers all present issues for people who are partially sighted or those with pushchairs and wheelchairs;
- the cost of taxis being prohibitive, with guide dogs still often turned away;
- bus services being far too unreliable, with insufficient coverage;

- pedestrian signals on some crossings hard to see, with a lack of sound, a particular issue on Beechen Grove;
- could a congestion charge for motor vehicles be considered; and
- whether park and ride was an appropriate solution, and particularly whether Kings Langley was the correct location.

Rail Forum

5.2.3. Abfly and the Watford Rail User Group were represented at this workshop. The views expressed have mostly been captured in the written responses described above. Additional comments that were raised during the workshop included:

- whether the strategy was supported by a maintenance and monitoring plan;
- need to ensure that modes are linked up, for example active travel and public transport, doesn't feel like this is always the case at present in Watford;
- that the current cost of buses is prohibitive to encouraging people to use;
- whether Watford should be considering a workplace parking levy; and
- that there are clear areas where low traffic neighbourhoods could be developed, and would like to see these become a reality in Watford, utilising trials in the manner that has taken place in other location to increase the speed of change.

Intalink Forum

5.2.4. This forum was attended by a mixture of representatives from bus operating companies in Hertfordshire and officers from Hertfordshire County Council's public transport team. The key messages that came from this discussion were:

- any reduction in congestion would be welcomed by bus operators;
- the ability to serve the town centre is key to operators, a sustainable transport hub would be supported is it contributed to this, the quality of the urban environment around bus stops is also important;
- long term the strategy could be used to help encourage switch to lower emission and electric vehicles, but noting that currently it would be hard to serve inter-urban routes with electric buses; and
- speed of service is a key driver of patronage, therefore linked to capital expenditure, so bus prioritisation is most likely to drive improved service provision.

West Herts College

5.2.5. The strategy was discussed with students of West Herts College. They were broadly supportive of the strategy objectives and its aims. Some key themes that emerged from the discussion were:

- a belief that more cycle lanes were needed to make cycling feel safe, and that this should be supported by more bike-share bikes, making sure these were well maintained;
- given priority to buses over general traffic was important, otherwise people would not use them;
- support for the concept of a car club, particularly due to the high cost barrier of entry to driving for young people;
- agreement with the concept of prioritising people walking and cycling, and that the ring road need to be easier to cross;

- ability to travel by walking or cycling was important not just for convenience, but because it offered fresh air and far greater chance of community interactions, public realm spaces like the High Street were fundamental to this, and more of these were required across the town, which would also benefit local businesses since you discover and visit more when you are on foot;
- there is a need for a clear message on the benefits of not driving if people are to change behaviour that leads them to use car just to buy milk;
- rewards would be a key factor in encouraging people to change behaviour, money is such a key aspect to decision making; and
- should engage with young children as can be great ambassadors and influence parents' behaviour.

5.3. Workshop Responses – Conclusions and Recommendations

5.3.1. The workshops drew out a range of the opinions on TTIW. In general participants were supportive, but with specific suggestions in relation to their circumstance or area of interest. Some of the key points that came from the workshops were:

- the challenges posed to many people in using some aspects of current provision such as the bus network or services that rely on smartphone app;
- the importance of pedestrian areas being of high quality, free of obstacles, and the discomfort many people feel in sharing space with people cycling;
- the need to maintain access to all areas of the town for all users, and the implications this has for the provision of parking for blue badge holders;
- the value of reducing congestion and increasing service speed to bus operators in making services economically viable;
- young people agreed with promoting sustainable travel, not just from an environmental perspective, but understood the social and community benefits of spaces that encouraged interactions; and
- that rewards and finding community champions were seen as key to incentivise and encourage change by young people.

Recommended changes to Transforming Travel in Watford:

- Strengthen commitment embedding needs of those with disability in all actions and completing equalities impact assessments on all schemes.
- Ensure that whilst sustainable travel modes are prioritised, those who must drive can continue to do, and can access all areas of the town.
- Emphasise need for high quality pedestrian spaces, which are valued across all groups.
- Clarify need for bus priority to improve speeds if bus services are to be increased.
- Consider how rewards could be targeted at young people.
- Commit to finding young people to champion sustainable travel.

6. Conclusion and Next Steps

- 6.1.1. The consultation exercise on Transforming Travel in Watford was wide reaching and gave residents, businesses and organisations in Watford and neighbouring areas an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft strategy. With over 1,000 survey responses received plus in-depth comments via email and workshops a diverse range of opinions was heard that will be taken into account in the final draft of the strategy.
- 6.1.2. Overall the response to the strategy could be considered positive, with general agreement to the need for changes to the Watford transport network, and that these should be focused on making travel more sustainable in response to the Climate Change Emergency. Most actions gained majority support, and as such significant changes to TTIW are not proposed. However, there are various areas where respondents identified gaps or potential improvements to the strategy, which will be incorporated in final version. These will include commitments to ensuring equality, collaboration and engagement with local and neighbouring communities, and both Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council setting an example in travelling sustainably. There were aspects of the strategy that were less popular, or received strong opposition from certain groups. Whilst no actions will be removed, some will be modified, changing the emphasis or focus, for example those changing the emphasis on parking space re-allocation to be focused outside of areas with high residential parking demand, and clarifying the commitment of Watford Borough Council to engage with neighbouring councils with regard to Park and Ride plus that significant further feasibility work will be completed to identify appropriate sites.
- 6.1.3. *Transforming Travel in Watford* will be updated, based upon the recommendations within this document, and a final version published by Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council. This will then form the basis for decision making on transport in Watford, tying into other key council policies on planning and sustainability.