

Report Title:	Bus Service Improvement Plan
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Clark, Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Digital Connectivity
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet - 28 October 2021
Responsible Officer(s):	Chris Joyce, Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth and Andrew Durrant, Executive Director of Place Services
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY

In March 2021, the Government announced a new national bus strategy 'Bus Back Better'. This was followed by guidance on Bus Service Improvement Plans in May 2021. The strategy and guidance require Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) across the country to produce a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) by October 2021.

The plan has been developed using existing data and new research undertaken with existing bus users and borough residents who currently do not use buses. It sets out an outline of measures for which Government funding will be sought. This includes a full bus network review as well as a series of trials to test new measures across the borough with a view to roll out those which are successful across the rest of the borough as appropriate. It sets out ambitious targets to grow the number of users, improve satisfaction and reliability.

This paper seeks approval to submit the first BSIP to Department for Transport by 31st October in line with the requirements set out in the guidance.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Approves the first Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).**
- ii) Delegates authority to the Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Digital Connectivity, to make the final submission to the Department for Transport and to engage with operators, communities and other key stakeholders on the delivery of measures within the outline plan.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Approve the BSIP and make a submission to DfT	This will enable the Council to explore new funding opportunities for buses being made available by DfT to support delivery of better bus services.
This is the recommended option	
Delay the approval of the BSIP	This would result in a missed opportunity to secure funding from DfT.
This is not the recommended option	

- 2.1 In March 2021, the Government announced a new national bus strategy 'Bus Back Better. This was followed by guidance on Bus Service Improvement Plans in May 2021. The strategy and guidance require Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) across the country to produce a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) by October 2021. Alongside this, the Government announced £3bn of funding available to support bus services.
- 2.2 In June 2021, Cabinet approved the transition to Enhanced Partnerships for buses in the Royal Borough. This will enable the Council to continue to access bus funding support from central Government. The Bus Service Improvement Plan will be used by DfT to assess funding offers to Local Authorities for bus service improvements. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the approach set out in the BSIP is consistent with the approach set out in the National Bus Strategy to enable the potential to access this funding in the future.
- 2.3 The BSIP has been based on a broad evidence base using data from the Council and operators. We have also commissioned original research of existing bus users and non-users, which has helped to inform the measures set out within the BSIP. It provides a framework and principles for improving buses in the Royal Borough, with the detailed implementation and measures subject to further consultation and engagement with communities and operators.
- 2.4 The expectation is for the BSIP to be updated on an annual basis, reporting on progress and setting out measures to support delivery of the targets. Therefore, the document will evolve over time as we learn more about the effectiveness of measures in the context of the Royal Borough. The overall approach advocated in our BSIP is to focus on an immediate full bus network review alongside measures to improve data and evidence to support future investment.
- 2.5 A series of trial measures have been outlined in the BSIP, which will enable us to try new approaches, learn from them and adapt and roll out across the network where they are proven to work. The details of where these will be implemented will be informed by the bus network review and further engagement with communities and operators. Before any measures are introduced, these measures will require consultation with key stakeholders including operators and communities to ensure they are effective.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Currently, bus use within the borough is low with demand being lower per head of population than other surrounding local authority areas. Services are on average more expensive than other surrounding areas and frequencies are generally hourly or less frequent, with many services not operating on a Sunday. The punctuality and performance of bus services in the borough is currently higher than the surrounding area, which is something we are seeking to build on and improve over time.
- 3.2 The submission of the BSIP by 31st October 2021 will ensure that the Council is considered for a share of future new bus service funding available from DfT. The proposals set out in the BSIP are consistent with our corporate priorities, helping to support our ambitions to reduce carbon emissions as well as supporting communities and value for money services.

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Submit BSIP to DfT	Submitted after 31 st October 2021	Submitted by 31 st October	N/A	N/A	N/A

- 3.3 Targets have been set to measure success of the strategy. This includes targets to increase demand, improve satisfaction and maintain high levels of punctuality. Growing demand should help to support affordability of services either through enabling lower fares and/or reducing the need for subsidies from the council. It will also help to support lower carbon emissions by supporting the shift of journeys from cars to buses.
- 3.4 The level of ambition set out in the strategy is subject to financial support from DfT to help fund the proposed measures in the strategy. In particular, being able to pump prime services to support increased frequencies, lower fares and new routes whilst they are established. Achieving the targets is conditional on receiving funding support from DfT, therefore the timescales for delivery and scale of change possible is directly dependent on the level of funding provided.

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 The strategy will be delivered through new funding from DfT. At this stage, the level of funding to be provided to the Council is not known. The BSIP forms the basis of our proposals to Government which will be assessed. Once the details of funding have been announced, this will determine what measures can be taken forward and the targets will need to be reviewed in light of this.
- 4.2 We will seek to provide local funding through appropriate existing and future developer contributions (e.g. S106 and CIL) as well as future bids to the Council's capital programme. The financial implications of any additional capital will need to be considered in the context of the overall affordability of the capital programme for the council and will follow the decision-making framework for allocating capital resources.

- 4.3 As part of the review of the bus network, we will seek to make best possible use of existing revenue funds for supported bus services. As demand grows and new models of delivery (such as demand responsive services) it may be possible to reduce subsidies on certain routes and consider reinvesting that in new trials and measures in other parts of the network.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no significant legal implications in approving the BSIP. Any proposals in the BSIP will be subject to agreement with bus operators, local communities and other key stakeholders.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 There is currently significant uncertainty around the funding being made available by DfT. The other major risk is that there is uncertainty around future travel patterns and use of public transport as a result of covid-19. Given that the proposals rely on partnership with operators and other parties, this also represents a risk. However, the over arching approach set out in the BSIP.

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risk	Level of uncontrolled risk	Controls	Level of controlled risk
Funding from DfT is not forthcoming	Medium	The approach adopted in the BSIP is flexible to respond to the funding that may be awarded.	Low
Demand does not recover from covid-19	Low	Bus use in the borough pre-pandemic was already at low levels and therefore the impacts have not been as pronounced. This will be monitored, and targets can be amended at the annual review to reflect the updated position.	Low
Proposals rely on support from operators	Medium	Significant engagement and discussions have taken place with operators and this dialogue will continue through the development of enhanced partnerships by April 2022	Low

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 Equalities. The EQIA screening has identified no significant impacts on protected characteristics.
- 7.2 Climate change/sustainability. Improving bus services and the outcomes set out in the BSIP will support the objectives of the Council's Environment and Climate Strategy. Increasing demand by bus will reduce carbon emissions from transport.
- 7.3 Data Protection/GDPR. At this stage, we do not envisage the need for personal data to be processed as part of the implementation of the BSIP. This will be kept under review and appropriate actions, such as completing a DPIA, will be completed if required as part of any of the specific measures in the plan.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Existing data sources held by the council and operators have been reviewed to support the development of the BSIP. Original research has been completed to inform the BSIP, which included seeking the views of existing bus users as well as people who currently don't use the bus across the borough. There has also been engagement with bus operators and other stakeholders such as Transport Focus to inform the approach.
- 8.2 More detailed consultation and engagement will take place on specific measures within the BSIP, to ensure communities can set out the priorities in their areas. This will take place between November 2021 and April 2022 to inform the implementation of the framework of measures within the plan.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1 If adopted by Cabinet, the document will be submitted to Government by 31st October 2021. Some of the measures, directly within control of the Council, will be taken forward. The wider measures set out within the plan will be subject to consultation and a response from Government before they are taken forward.

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 This report is supported by two appendices:
- Appendix A – Bus Service Improvement Plan
 - Appendix B – Research report

11. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputy)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	15/10/21	19/10/21
Emma Duncan	Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer	15/10/21	
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	15/10/21	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	15/10/21	
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	15/10/21	
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Duncan Sharkey	Chief Executive	15/10/21	
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	15/10/21	15/10/21
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Children's Services	15/10/21	
Hilary Hall	Executive Director of Adults, Health and Housing	15/10/21	18/10/21

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Key decision	Yes	No
First entered into the Cabinet Forward Plan:	01/10/2021	
Report Author: Chris Joyce, Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth		

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead **Bus Service Improvement Strategy**

www.rbwm.gov.uk



Royal Borough
of Windsor &
Maidenhead



CONTENTS

Foreword	4
INTRODUCTION	5
POLICY CONTEXT	8
VISION	12
CURRENT OFFER	15
SUPPORTED SERVICES	37
TARGETS	45
SUGGESTED MEASURES	49
FUNDING	76
REPORTING	78
APPENDIX A	81
APPENDIX B	86
APPENDIX C	89
APPENDIX D	92
APPENDIX E	95
APPENDIX F	98

FOREWORD

We welcome the new National Bus Strategy, Bus Back Better, published by the Government on 15 March 2021, and its positive and ambitious vision for the future of buses. The Government's ambitions within this Strategy support the Council's own Local Transport Plan and are aligned with the Borough's Environment and Climate Strategy, which was approved by Cabinet in December 2020, which seeks to tackle air quality issues and reduce congestion, thereby improving the local environment for residents.

For many, buses are a lifeline to employment, education, medical appointments and leisure, and are essential to the local economy. We recognise the vital role that buses play, and have ambitions to improve the current offer for existing passengers. This, in turn, will help draw more people towards using the bus. Getting more people on buses will reduce the number of cars on our roads, freeing up road space, and crucially, help improve our air quality.

The opportunity to submit a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) has allowed us to set out our ambitions for the future of our bus network. We have outlined the measures which, if funding is forthcoming, would enable us to achieve our and the Government's objectives within the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

Within our BSIP, we have responded ambitiously and positively to Government, aiming to achieve significant improvements to bus services for our residents. The measures cover a number of key areas, including increasing bus frequencies, reducing fares, improving buses and introducing multi-operator ticketing and more. The BSIP will be a live document, and we will continually review and update it to ensure Government and residents are aware of our priorities.

We look forward to working closely with Government, local bus operators and neighbouring authorities in the coming months and years to improve the bus network and ensure residents have access to a safe, reliable, accessible, and affordable bus network.



Cllr Gerry Clark

Cabinet Member for Transport
and Infrastructure and Steering



INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Background

The National Bus Strategy (Bus Back Better), was published by the Government in March 2021 and sets out an ambitious vision to dramatically improve bus services in England outside London through greater local leadership. Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and local bus operators must work at pace with local communities to plan and deliver a fully integrated service that will grow patronage. The Bus Strategy commits £3 billion of new funding to support this.

Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs) are the document that sets out how the Council, working closely with their local bus operators and local communities, will achieve this – by setting out a vision for delivering the step-change in bus services that is required by the Strategy. A BSIP is the essential first step as it will be the extent of the ambition, delivered through an Enhanced Partnership or franchising, that will be critical when Government decides how and where funding is to be allocated. Our BSIP will be the framework for future delivery and, in part, act as a bidding document for future funding. The BSIP guidance states that the Plans should be high level, strategic documents that include a vision for buses and the measures to deliver it. It will be a live document that is updated regularly to reflect progress made and the content will be revised accordingly.



We know that the average bus trips per head of population in the Borough is 9.3, which is significantly lower than the national average and other Berkshire authorities¹. We have a great opportunity to use the National Bus Strategy, and the associated funding, to make a marked improvement in bus usage in the Borough. Undoubtedly the pandemic had a hugely detrimental impact on bus patronage not just in RBWM, but nationally. The Council has ambitions to bring patronage up to pre-pandemic levels, and build on this to reach higher levels of patronage bringing us up to the levels of other Berkshire authorities and potentially beyond. In the years following the pandemic, the development of our BSIP is a hugely valuable opportunity to improve the bus network in RBWM in line with the National Bus Strategy, contributing to a cleaner, more sustainable Borough.

BSIP Structure

The BSIP contains the following sections:

- Policy context
- Vision
- Current offer
- Supported services
- Targets
- Suggested measures
- Funding
- Reporting

A BSIP overview table as required by the DfT is presented in APPENDIX A.



¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/bus01-local-bus-passenger-journeys>

POLICY CONTEXT



BSIP POLICY CONTEXT

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead declared a climate emergency in June 2020 setting out the council's intention to implement national policy and ensure net-zero carbon emissions are achieved by no later than 2050.

In December 2020 the Environment and Climate Strategy was adopted which sets out how the borough will address the climate emergency across four key themes (Circular Economy, Energy, Natural Environment and Transport). The strategy sets a trajectory which seeks to achieve a 50% reduction in emissions by 2025.

The Council is addressing these ambitions in local policy; The Local Transport Plan (LTP) (2012-26) adopts an evidence-based approach to transport planning and sets out high level policies for all aspects of local highways and transport provision within the Royal Borough, including public transport. The LTP provides an overarching set of policies within which more detailed plans and strategies can be prepared, such as the BSIP. These include policies for:

- Walking and cycling networks
- Provision of secure cycle parking
- Travel information
- Road safety education, enforcement and engineering
- Smarter choices programmes (designed to promote sustainable travel behaviours)
- Health (including promotion of active travel modes)

The Borough Local Plan (BLP) (2013-33) sets out a vision and framework for future development in the period to 2033, addressing local needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure, as well as providing a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design.

Like the Local Transport Plan, it provides an overarching policy document within which more detailed plans and strategies can be prepared.

Policies T10 and T11 in the Transportation and Movement section of the Plan discuss the ambition of the Royal Borough to improve connectivity to and between urban commercial centres whilst serving rural communities throughout the Royal Borough. The BLP states that the Royal Borough will encourage multi-modal travel and will do so by developing better links between transport, with a specific reference to Maidenhead Rail Station.

Additionally, there are 11 designated Neighbourhood Plan areas within the Royal Borough. Of these, the following have been completed:

- Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale
- Eton and Eton Wick
- Horton and Wraysbury
- Hurley and the Walthams
- Old Windsor

Communities will always have concerns about transport, but Neighbourhood Plans can allay these concerns by setting out realistic solutions to existing local issues which, in turn, would help to facilitate the delivery of future investment in the Plan area. Also, measures that encourage modal shift to cycling and walking contribute to economic growth by tackling congestion and environmental improvements through reductions in exhaust emissions.

Neighbourhood plans can contain policies to address key transport issues specific to them, such as:

- Facilitating provision of traffic calming and 20 mph speed limits
- Encouraging the provision of transport hubs and interchange between travel modes
- Identifying safe routes for walking and cycling



Bus Back Better: National Bus Strategy for England (2021)

Bus Back Better (2021) produced by the Department for Transport (DfT) provides a long-term strategy for encouraging the uptake of bus use on buses outside London. The strategy focuses on improvements that help deliver better bus services for passengers across England, to get overall patronage back to not only pre-COVID-19 levels but also to exceed it.

To achieve this the strategy outlines a number of opportunities to improve bus provision up to the standards set within London. These include:

- Making services more reliable and more frequent
- Improving communication, accessibility, and inclusivity of services
- Improving co-ordination and integration between services and operators
- Improving bus fare value for money
- Making buses greener, safer, and more comfortable

The strategy sets out that by the end of October 2021, all LTAs should have published a local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), which should illustrate how, subject to funding, they will deliver the ambitions and expectations in this strategy to improve their bus services. These BSIPs will then begin to be delivered by April 2022.

The BSIP will contribute to achieving the Council's climate objectives, including the themes set out in the Environment and Climate Strategy, by aiming to improve the bus network across several areas including bus priority infrastructure, fares support and ticketing reform.

VISION



VISION

To guide the BSIP and the suggested recommendations, a vision for the Plan has been developed. This has been developed through collaborative discussions with bus operators who currently provide services in the Borough as well as neighbouring authorities, in addition to responses to our on-board surveys and non-bus user research that was commissioned to inform the BSIP.

RBWM will work towards establishing and supporting an affordable, accessible, safe, convenient, environmentally friendly, and integrated bus network. This will facilitate growth in bus patronage within the Borough, thereby increasing the modal share of buses. A shift in the role of buses will contribute to the objectives in the Borough's Local Transport Plan and subsequent declaration of an environment and climate emergency in 2019.

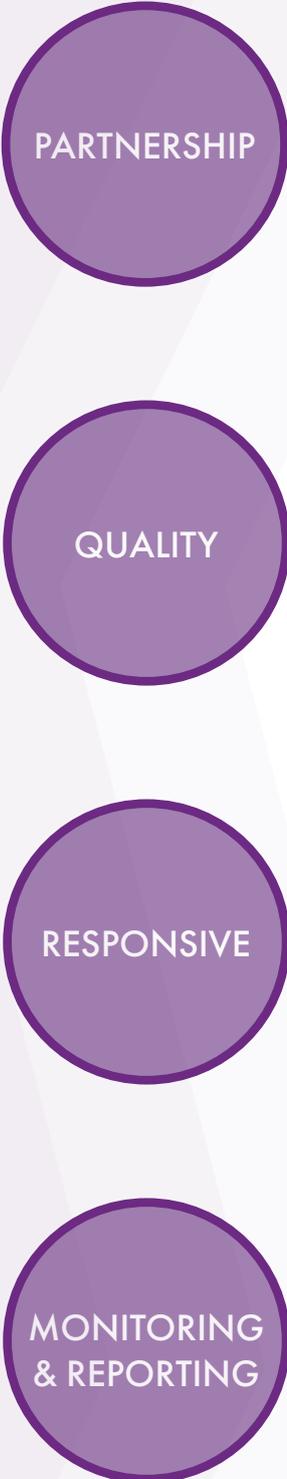


The vision will be achieved through the following core objectives. Each of the suggested measures contributes to at least one of these.

1. Buses will offer a quality service that provides accessibility to the widest cross section of the population
2. Buses will provide people will an option to access work, services, and leisure activities
3. Operators will offer and promote affordable fares and multi-operator ticketing
4. The bus network will encourage integration with other modes of transport
5. Information will be widely available and accessible to all users
6. Infrastructure supporting the bus network will be contemporary, well-maintained, and consistent

Principles

The following key principles have been developed which will link the suggested measures to implement the BSIP, with the objectives above:



PARTNERSHIP

Partnership: The Council recognises that it cannot fully meet its obligations without closely working with local residents, businesses and stakeholders including operators of all services. The Council will work with bus operators, in the form of Enhanced Partnerships, to deliver the BSIP.

QUALITY

Quality: For the bus network to compete with other modes, it needs to be developed in a way that provides a quality service that is affordable, accessible, reliable, and available.

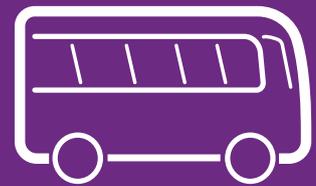
RESPONSIVE

Responsive: The BSIP presents the opportunity for the Council to have access to more reliable, more frequent data on the bus network. Working with operators and other stakeholders, this data can be used to react to changes in demand. Changes in the landscape, such as new developments or a new large employer are continually occurring, and therefore we will be consistently reviewing opportunities to increase patronage.

MONITORING & REPORTING

Monitoring and reporting: The suggested recommendations in the BSIP represent a significant investment from the Council, operators and the DfT in terms of money and resources. The Council will therefore continually monitor the bus network, enabling the impact of introduced measures to be understood. A monitoring plan is developed as part of this BSIP to ensure monitoring is carried out from an early stage.

CURRENT OFFER



RBWM BUS SERVICES: CURRENT OFFER

This section reviews the current bus offer in RBWM and identifies what the potential barriers to increased bus use are. It outlines where the bus network meets and falls short of expectations, as outlined in the BSIP guidance, and uses the barriers identified to make recommendations of measures that will be included within the 'suggested measures' section.

Evidence Base

We have collected vast quantities of data in the time available in preparing our BSIP, utilising nationally available datasets from DfT and working closely with operators and neighbouring authorities. This has been in line with expectations set out in the BSIP guidance. The following data has been collected, analysed, and used to inform the evidence base behind our targets and suggested measures:

- Details and maps of local commercial and supported bus services
- Case studies of multi-operator ticketing and Demand Responsive Transport schemes
- Local bus fares and those in neighbouring authorities
- Local bus frequencies and those in neighbouring authorities
- Details and maps of local bus stops (including those with real-time information)
- Percentage of bus services running on time (locally and in neighbouring authorities)
- Patronage on local bus services (locally and in neighbouring authorities)
- Distance travelled on local bus services (locally and in neighbouring authorities)
- National Highways and Transport Network public transport satisfaction scores (locally and in neighbouring authorities)
- Problem locations on the bus network from operators
- On-board timing surveys on two services
- On-board passenger surveys
- Non-bus user qualitative and quantitative research

Not all operator data is provided within the BSIP as some metrics are commercially sensitive, however data has been consolidated as to provide summary findings. Some data, such as bus stop and arrival and departure timings, have not been provided by some operators, as they do not have the capability to collect this.

Background

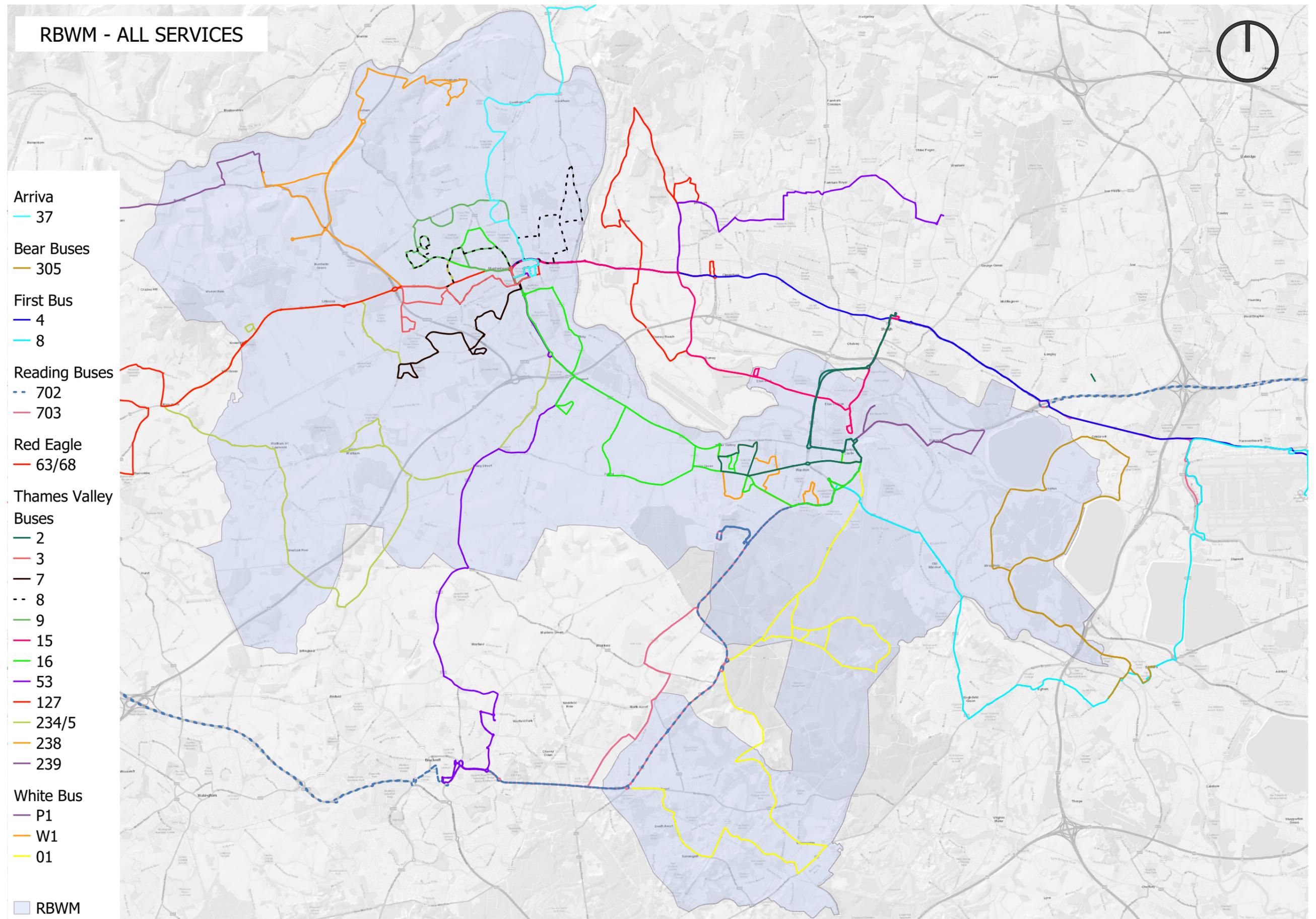
As of July 2021, there are 22 bus routes operating around the Borough. Thirteen of these are Council supported services (made up of 10 funding packages), and nine are run commercially by operators. The Borough is generally rural with three core urban centres in Windsor, Maidenhead and Ascot. The bus services that operate in the Borough reflect this, with the significant majority of services focusing their routes in these urban centres, particularly in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres.

Table 1 below outlines all the services operating in the Borough as of July 2021, whether they are supported or commercial and the areas that they serve. Figure 1 is a map of all the services, showing which areas within the Borough the routes serve, where they are coming from and where they go to.

Table 1. All bus services in RBWM

Operator	Route	Supported / Commercial	Area served
Arriva	37	Commercial	High Wycombe - Maidenhead
Bear Buses	305	Supported	Staines - Colnbrook
First Bus	8	Commercial	Slough - Heathrow T5
	4	Commercial	Maidenhead - Heathrow T5
Reading	702	Commercial	Legoland - London
	703	Commercial	Bracknell - Heathrow T5
Red Eagle	63/68	Commercial	Slough - Maidenhead
Thames Valley	3	Supported	Maidenhead
	2	Commercial	Slough - Dedworth
	7	Commercial	Maidenhead
	8	Supported	Maidenhead
	9	Supported	Maidenhead
	15	Supported	Maidenhead - Windsor - Slough
	16	Supported	Maidenhead - Windsor
	53	Supported	Bracknell - Maidenhead - Wrexham Park
	127	Commercial	Maidenhead - Reading
	234/5	Supported	Maidenhead
	238	Supported	Maidenhead
	239	Supported	Maidenhead
White Bus	P1	Supported	Windsor park and ride
	W1	Supported	Windsor - Dedworth
	01	Supported	Windsor - Ascot

Figure 1. Map of all RBWM bus services



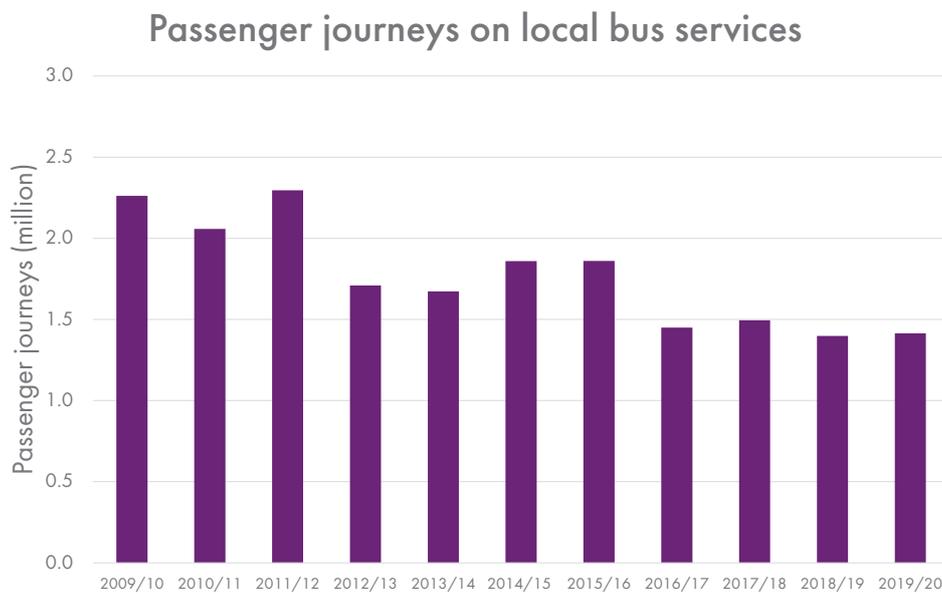
Patronage

In 2019/20 there were 1.4 million journeys on local bus services in RBWM. This equates to 9.3 journeys per head². This is one of the lowest nationally, and the Council has ambitions to bring bus patronage up to the levels seen in the wider Berkshire area, which is reflected in the 'targets' section. Working alongside the DfT, the Council wishes to increase bus patronage and commit to more sustainable transport in the Borough in line with the aims of the Council's Environment and Climate Strategy (2020).

Figure 2 below shows the passenger journeys on local bus services between 2009/10 and 2019/20. Generally, bus usage is decreasing over this time, and has been even more impacted by the recent COVID pandemic.

The Bus Back Better initiative and the development of our BSIP is the ideal way to set out aims and measures to reverse this trend and increase bus use across the Borough. Our aim is to not only get back to pre-COVID levels but to significantly increase bus usage.

Figure 2. Passenger journeys on local bus services

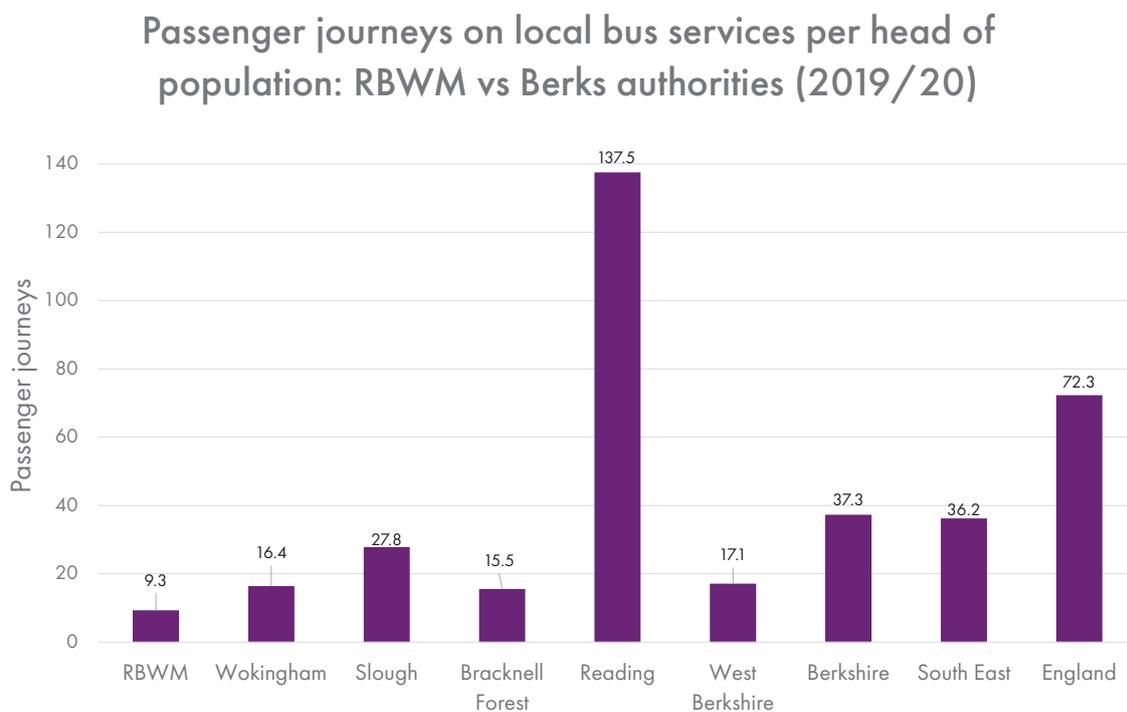


² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/bus01-local-bus-passenger-journeys>

Figure 3 below shows how RBWM compares with other Berkshire authorities, the South-east and nationally in terms of bus usage. This is based on journeys per head of population in 2019/20. The average bus strips per head for 2019/20 in RBWM was 9.3, compared to a wider Berkshire average of 17 (not including Reading).

It is acknowledged that Reading is significantly advanced in terms of its bus network. This is due to a number of factors including the dynamic of Council-owned bus services, and it being an urban centre that is also a university town. RBWM recognises that it does not have the infrastructure or demographic in place to achieve the levels of bus usage that Reading does, however we are working closely with our Berkshire partners to bring patronage up and have a developed bus network that runs cross-boundary.

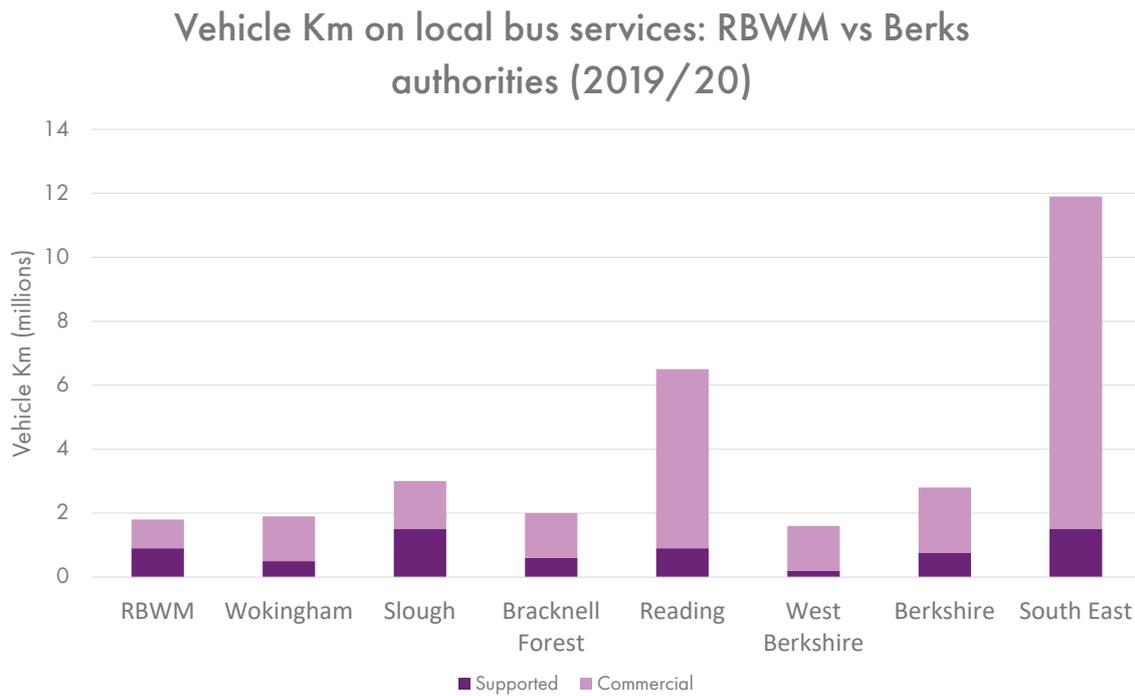
Figure 3. Passenger journeys on local bus services per head of population: RBWM vs Berks authorities (2019/20)



Distance Travelled by Passengers

Bus vehicle distance travelled has a similar trend with regards to performance against other Berkshire authorities. Figure 4 below shows this comparison. The graph shows the split between distance travelled on supported and commercial services; this is explored in more detail in the 'supported services' section of the BSIP.

Figure 4. Vehicle Km on local bus services: RBWM vs Berks authorities (2019/20)

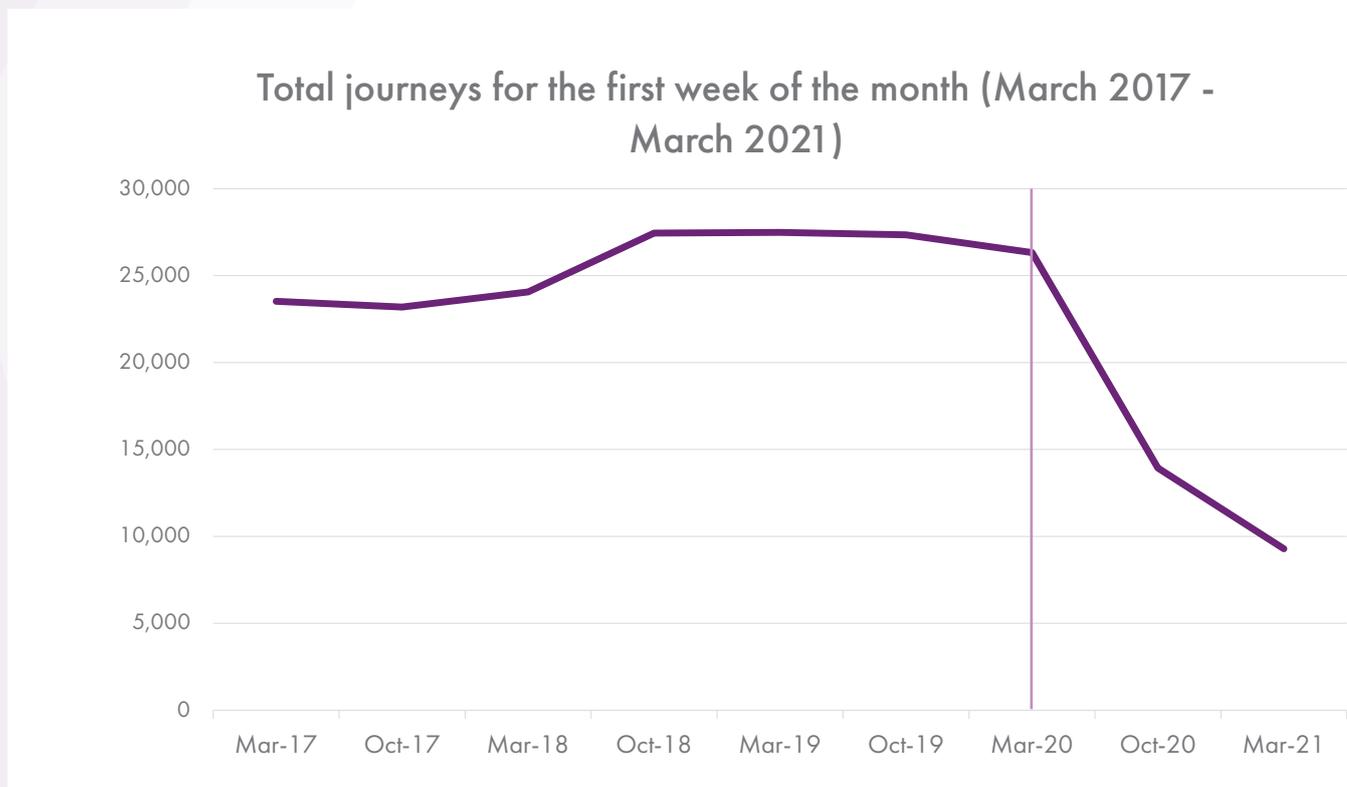


Total Journey Numbers

Undoubtedly the pandemic has had a huge impact on bus services nationally and RBWM was no exception to that. We have collected data from operators on the total number of journeys for the first week of March and October in each year for the past 5 years. Figure 5 below shows this data, and it clearly shows the impact of the pandemic with the huge drop in patronage following March 2020.³

Operators have indicated that as of July 2021 they are at approximately 70% of pre-pandemic levels. Despite restrictions being lifted bus usage has not returned to pre-COVID levels. The Council will use the Bus Back Better initiative to apply for the funding to deliver a bold strategy and set measures to not only encourage bus users back to pre-pandemic levels but increase these to be on a par with our neighbouring Boroughs.

Figure 5. Total journeys for the first week of the month (March 2017 – March 2021)



³ Figure 5 does not include data from 3 operators as this was not received

Research Surveys

The Council commissioned research that captured the views of both bus and non bus users within the Borough.

As part of the development of the BSIP, the Council carried out on-bus surveys to capture the views of bus users on the current bus offer and how it can be improved. Research on non-bus users was also carried out in the form of quantitative and qualitative research methods, to understand why those people do not use the bus, and crucially, what would persuade them to do so. A full analysis of the research is shown in APPENDIX B and APPENDIX C.

The following patterns were identified that demonstrate some of the typical behaviours of residents in the Borough with regards to bus use:

- Whilst most people use the car (79.9% of sample), and nearly half use the train, approximately a third in the sample use the bus regularly. However, the bus is not usually the mode of transport they most often use, and the car dominates heavily as the preferred mode of transport. Even bus users are using other modes of transport (i.e., the car) more often than the bus.
- Rural residents tend to stay rural, but others tend to be travelling to/from towns in the area for social and work reasons.
- People who use the bus are more likely to commute using the bus, and the bus is used less often than it might be for social and leisure reasons
- The alternatives to taking the car which people consider are taking the train (but only if it really suits their work route – the car is favoured for its privacy, flexibility and quicker journey times) or taking an uber (for getting into towns like Windsor for weekend/evening socialising)

These behaviours helped to inform the suggested measures that the Council is putting forward as part of this BSIP.

Fares and ticketing

Fares and ticketing play a vital role in bus usage. The prices of fares, the types of ticket available and how people can buy tickets make up part of the experience of using the bus, and therefore need to be considered in any development of a bus network.

In RBWM, there are 7 operators running services within the Borough, all of which have different ticket types with different prices. There isn't a multi-operator ticketing scheme that allows passengers to use the same ticket across several operators, meaning passengers must buy individual tickets for each service run by a specific operator. Each operator has different methods for which passengers can buy a ticket, whether that be on bus, online or via app. The surveys suggested that the sheer number of ticket types provides a complicated environment for passengers wishing to undertake journeys that involve routes with more than one operator, acting as a potential deterrent to choosing the bus as the preferred method of transport. Our BSIP will therefore seek funding to simplify ticket purchase and interoperability to encourage bus usage.

RBWM train stations are part of 'PlusBus', a discounted bus ticket for people making a combined rail and bus journey. The ticket allows passengers to take unlimited local bus travel around town at the start, the end, or on both ends of a train journey.

With regards to prices, an analysis of fares on RBWM services compared to services in other Berkshire authorities showed that RBWM fares are more expensive than four out of five nearby authorities. This is based on the average cost of a day ticket across all RBWM services against an average of 6 services in the other authorities. Table 2 below shows the comparison.

Table 2. Day ticket price comparison

Authority	Average day ticket (£)
Bracknell Forest	6.07
Slough	5.22
Wokingham	4.18
Buckinghamshire	4.18
Reading	4.00
RBWM	5.30

Using one operator as a case study, Thames Valley are one of the major operators in the area. Thames Valley charge £4.70 for their 'simplyMaidenhead' adult day ticket, which is valid on all Maidenhead routes. The 'simplySlough & Windsor' adult day ticket costs £5.50. This is more than the simplyBracknell & Wokingham' adult day tickets which costs £4.30. Fares on services within RBWM can be seen in APPENDIX E.

Our survey found that many non-bus user's perception of costs were higher than actual costs, when told what these are. Therefore, effective marketing of a reduced fares scheme will enable more people that wouldn't have otherwise been aware of fares in the Borough.

Both our non-bus user research and on-board surveys showed that fare prices were a barrier for people using the bus. As shown in APPENDIX B, our on-board survey showed that 7% of the sample said that fare prices were stopping them taking the bus more often. The average satisfaction for 'value for money' was 4.33 (where 1 is low, 5 is high). The interviews with non-bus users showed that over half of the sample said that cheaper fares would be a key driver in increasing their likelihood to use the bus in the future.

This shows the value in effective marketing that allows non-bus users to understand fare prices. Figure 6 below compares the average cost of owning a car per day⁴ with the average RBWM day ticket. The average cost of running a cost per day is 76% more than that of an average day ticket in RBWM. This is a significant difference, and demonstrates that generally people do not relate the actual cost of car trips to cost of the bus, including running costs, fuel, insurance and parking. This suggests that if people better understood the real costs of running a car and bus travel, the bus becomes a more attractive alternative.

Figure 6. Cost of owning a car vs average bus day ticket



⁴ <https://www.nerdwallet.com/uk/personal-finance/cost-of-car-ownership/>

Additionally, a suggestion that several interview respondents provided was to explore the option of discounts on fares for RBWM Advantage card holders. Local residents who pay Council tax to RBWM are entitled to a free card which gives discounts at a range of attractions, retailers, restaurants, council services and leisure activities. Subject to funding, this could be extended to buses and provide further incentive to potential bus users.

The National Highways and Transport Network (NHT) conduct a yearly survey which includes questions around public transport. The RBWM satisfaction score for bus fares in 2019 was 43%. This compares to 50% for the Berks average, and 49% for the national average.

Cheaper fares and discounts for RBWM residents are therefore something that the Council has identified as something to trial, and we have included a trial of both cheaper fares and discounts for RBWM residents using DfT funding over three years as a suggested short-term measure. This is with the aim of eventually phasing out the support and the operator(s) continuing the routes if they are commercially viable.

In terms of ticket schemes, 7% of our on-board survey sample said that the option of a multi-operator ticket would make them use buses more. Similarly, a phone app to plan journeys and buy tickets for multiple operators attracted 8% of the sample. We understand that some journeys involve routes across more than operator, and we want to capture those potential passengers that might use other methods of transport to avoid this additional cost and complexity.

Therefore, we have suggested as a medium-term measure to carry out a feasibility study into a multi-operator ticketing scheme, including a website and phone app. We are already working with our neighbouring authorities on the potential of multi-operator tickets that go cross boundary and have aspirations for this moving forward. A long-term measure is included of the creation of the scheme, website and app, however the progression of this will depend on the outcomes of the feasibility study.

Frequency of Services

The frequencies of buses in an area are hugely significant in determining the success of a bus network. Infrequent services are unattractive to potential bus users as it ultimately defines the convenience of taking the bus compared to other modes. Having to make the effort to tailor one's day to that of the timetable, rather than what is most efficient is likely to deter people from using the bus. The car allows people to travel as and when they want to, and therefore its convenience makes it more attractive.

In RBWM, services are relatively infrequent compared to that seen in urban centres nationally, with frequencies often hourly or at irregular intervals (differing times between services). Bus services at weekends are reduced further, with only 8 of the 22 services operating on a Sunday. This takes away the option of taking the bus on the weekend, when people may have more reason to given that people may want to socialise and not want to drive. This presents an opportunity to target potential bus users at weekends who would usually rely on other modes such as taxis.

Table 3 below shows the frequencies of all the services operating in the Borough on a weekday, a Saturday and a Sunday.

Table 3. Route frequencies in RBWM

Operator	Route	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Arriva	37	Hourly	Hourly	None
Bear Buses	305	Irregular	None	None
First Bus	8	Half hourly	Hourly	Hourly
	4	Half hourly	Hourly	Hourly
Reading	702	Hourly	Hourly	Hourly
	703	Hourly	Hourly	Hourly
Red Eagle	63/68	Irregular	None	None
Thames Valley	3	Hourly	Hourly	Hourly
	2	Hourly	Hourly	None
	7	Half hourly	Half hourly	Hourly
	8	Hourly	Hourly	None
	9	Hourly	Hourly	Hourly
	15	Irregular	Irregular	None
	16	Hourly	Hourly	Hourly
	53	Hourly	Hourly	None
	127	None	Every 2 hours	None
	234/5	Irregular	Irregular	None
	238	Irregular	None	None
239	Irregular	Irregular	None	
White Bus	P1	Every 20 mins	None	None
	W1	Hourly	None	None
	01	Every 90 mins	None	None

The on-board surveys showed that 61% of the sample indicated that more frequent services would make them use buses more. This is significantly higher than any other reason given for why users would use the buses more, demonstrating its importance.

In the non-bus user research, one of the key barriers to people using the buses is they are thought to be 'too infrequent'. Respondents indicated that every 30/60 minutes was too infrequent to them, with some respondents saying that even every 20 minutes is too long. The consensus amongst respondents was that every 10-15 minutes would attract them towards using the bus as a regular method of transport.

The NHT 2019 satisfaction score for the frequency of bus services was 44%. This compares to 55% for the Berks average and 61% for the national average.

Based on this research, the Council has suggested as a short-term measure a trial of more frequent services with at least one operator, in addition to more evening and weekend services using funding from the DfT over three years. Working with an operator(s), we believe that this will entice current non-bus users to using the bus as it would become more convenient, particularly at weekends and evenings where people are more likely to be looking at alternatives to the car. This is with the aim of eventually phasing out the support and operators continuing the routes if they are commercially viable.

Punctuality

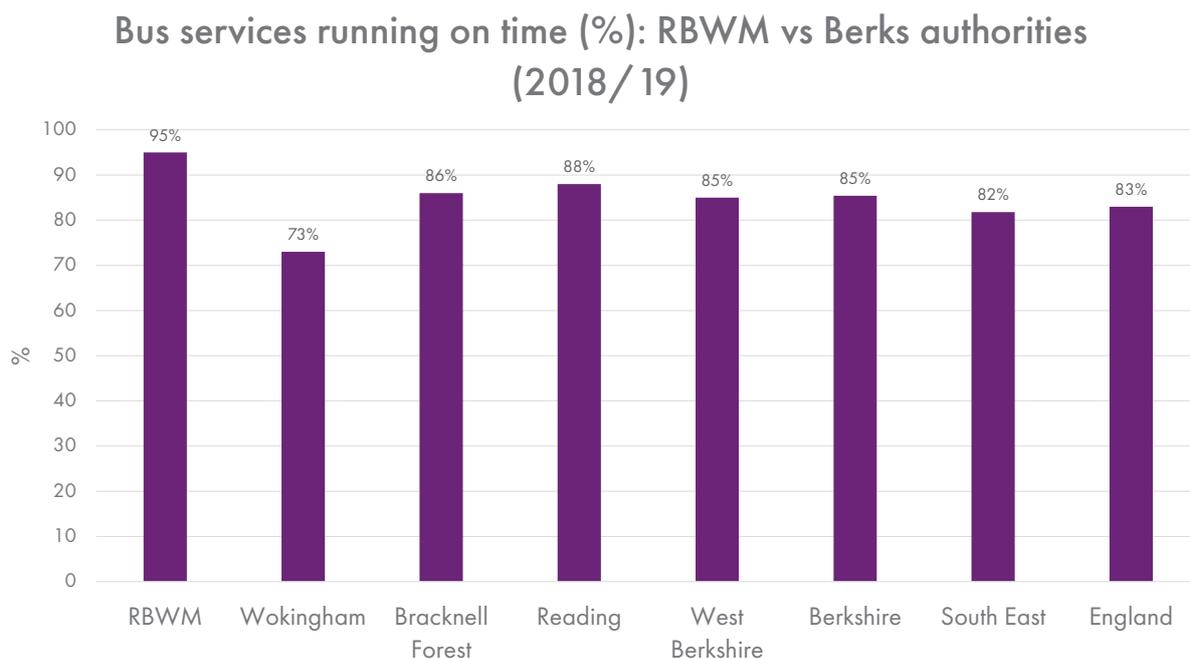
Punctuality is a key element in attracting bus patronage. In a similar fashion to frequencies, it plays into the convenience factor that people compare with other transport modes, mainly the private car. If people cannot rely on a bus to turn up on time, or the journey to take more time it is expected to, then the car becomes a more attractive option.

Punctuality in RBWM is favourable in comparison with nearby local authorities. Figure 7 below shows that for 2018/19, RBWM had the highest percentage of services running on time at 95% (defined as between 1 minute early and 6 minutes late)^{5,6}. The figure of 95% is unusually high in comparison with previous years. Recent years typically see figures of between 85% and 90% of services running on time.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/bus09-frequency-and-waiting-times>

⁶ Figures for Slough not included within DfT dataset

Figure 7. Bus services running on time: RBWM vs Berks authorities (2018/19)



The 2020/21 figure for the percentage of services running on time within RBWM is 87%; despite a drop from 2018/19, this is still a relatively high percentage in comparison to nearby authorities. A reason for the higher percentages of services running on time in RBWM compared to other nearby authorities is likely to be because RBWM as an authority is more rural than many of our surrounding authorities, which are largely urban centres (such as Slough and Reading). Operators may be able to make up time in the rural sections of routes, whereas services that operate only in town and city centres are likely to experience higher levels of congestion. Operators in RBWM are known to build time into their routes to level out the service and ensure that they are running on time.

Working with operators, we have been able to identify the points in the network that commonly experience delays. This allows the Council to focus measures on the 'problem areas', which can improve reliability with the aim of increasing patronage. The overwhelming majority of points raised by operators related to congestion in Windsor Town Centre, particularly on the High Street, causing delays to their services. To evidence this, we asked operators to provide us with data that tracks arrival and departure time from bus stops along their routes. An analysis of Thames Valley services showed that the average lateness across stops on their 2 service, which mainly covers Windsor town centre, is 3:54 late. An average of their five Maidenhead services (3, 7, 8, 9, 234/5/8/9) was 1:48 late. For the 2 service, the average lateness at the Windsor Parish Church stop, which is on the high street, was 3:17 late. It is recognised that this degree of lateness is still 'on-time' as defined by DfT, however they indicate delays on top of any time that operators build into their schedules, and help identify areas for improvement.

Although these findings are based on one weeks' worth of data in October 2019, it provides a consistent period to work from across each route. Dwell time was considered in this analysis, as to understand if the delays are caused by congestion or in fact more passengers boarding and alighting. An analysis of the 2 service showed that average dwell time at Parish Church, Windsor was 1:38, compared to 1.14 as an average of all stops on the route. This suggests that although dwell time is higher, the lateness on Windsor high street is due to congestion.

Going forward, the Council would like to monitor bus stop arrival and departure data (timing data) more regularly and have a larger dataset from which to make recommendations. Not all operators have access to this data, and it is often provided in different formats. We would therefore like to work closely with operators to ensure they have the capability to collect and provide us with this consistent data.

One of our suggested measures is to invest in the technology for those operators that do not have it, meaning we can continually collect bus stop arrival and departure time data across all services, allowing us to focus potential highway infrastructure improvements on where they would be most effective.

We have worked closely with the operators to identify areas of concern based on their daily experience where delays or issues may occur, alongside our findings from the data analysis. This is summarised in APPENDIX D.

While this provides an insight into timing data at the problem locations, a larger dataset from which ongoing monitoring is conducted is required in order to deduce more accurate conclusions.

Anecdotal evidence on the impact of congestion in Windsor town centre is supported by the timing data we have collected, and operators have stressed the need for improvements in this area to increase the reliability of their services.

Our on-board bus surveys showed that on average, our sample rated their satisfaction of punctuality as 4.41 (where 1 is low, 5 is high), and 18% of the sample said that more reliable services would make them use buses more. Our non-bus user research showed that a barrier for people using the bus is that routes take too long. A conclusion was that people want their length of the journey to be the same as the car, not 4 or 5 times as long.

The NHT 2019 satisfaction score for RBWM on whether buses arrive on time was 44%. This compares to the Berks average of 56%, and the national average of 58%. The Council recognises this as something that can deter potential bus users, and while bus services in RBWM have achieved a relatively high level of punctuality, there is potential to improve services to avoid delays and compete with journey times of that of a car.

We acknowledge that coming up with solutions to improve reliability is a task that needs investment in terms of resource and money, and we are therefore suggesting a feasibility study on potential highway infrastructure improvements as a short-term measure in our BSIP. A medium-term measure is included for designing, consulting on and constructing the improvements, however the progression of this will depend on the outcomes of the feasibility study. It is an ambition of the Council's to ensure the network has appropriate capacity to operate reliable bus services, particularly at peak times when the operators have reported that they experience delays.

The Network

The foundations of achieving high bus use are in the network, or more simply, where the routes serve. Fundamentally, buses should pick people up from where they are and take them to where they want to go. If routes are not designed in a way that meets the demand, then patronage will be restricted. Therefore, it is vitally important that for RBWM to improve the bus offer, the network must be designed to meet the demand.

From meeting regularly with our operators, we know that while some regularly review their routes using patronage and other useful data and make the appropriate changes to try to meet demand, some operators do not regularly review their routes due to resource or financial constraints. Some operators have not reviewed their routes in several years, meaning that there may have been changes in demand occurring that they are not adapting to and therefore losing existing and potential passengers. For example, if a new development is constructed, or a large employer moves to the area, there will be demand that could be captured.

Our on-board surveys showed that 20% of the sample said that no direct route/too many changes to their destination stops them from taking the bus more often. Similarly, our non-bus user research concluded that a general opinion is that buses do not travel to the 'right destinations'. People want to be able to go door to door with one mode of transport, rather than two or more buses, or a bus and a train for example. It was also emphasised that routes are too long and convoluted, and people want their journey to be similar in convenience and length to the use of the car.

Additionally, RBWM currently does not have a bus station within the Borough. Routes therefore often start and finish in town centres, waiting on the public highway which contributes towards congestion. Some of our neighbouring authorities benefit from a bus station, including Bracknell Forest, Slough and Buckinghamshire (High Wycombe and Aylesbury).

A bus station acts as a focal point for services, where routes can start/finish without waiting on the public highway. They allow for integration for passengers between the town centre and their transport to their destination and can provide facilities such as toilets as well as enclosed waiting areas and cycle parking. These can also be of benefit to operators in the form of somewhere to have welfare facilities for drivers.

Looking towards the future, bus stations could also play a key role in housing charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.

We are therefore suggesting a short-term measure to work with operators to conduct a wider review of bus routes and stops within RBWM. This will help us to unlock any uncovered demand, ensuring key developments, estates and workplaces have the option of taking the bus. The Council would like to internally fund this piece of work, which will include working with employers and developments to map origin/destination data of staff/residents and therefore make recommendations to ensure the bus network is sufficient.

In response to the lack of a bus station in RBWM, a long-term measure suggested is to conduct a feasibility into the construction of a bus station in Maidenhead. Another long-term measure is included for designing, consulting on and constructing the improvements, however the progression of this will depend on the outcome of the feasibility study.

Bus Infrastructure and Information

The infrastructure that supports the bus network plays an important role in the end-to-end experience of passengers. This includes physical assets such as the bus stops, flags and buses, but also information, including real-time data. Poor bus infrastructure and information, such as older buses and unmaintained bus stops deter people from using the bus. On the other hand, investment in infrastructure, such as modern buses and well-maintained bus stops with real-time information makes for a more appealing journey.

In terms of physical infrastructure, the buses used are the responsibility of the operator. The Council can influence the specification of buses on supported services, and we are currently exploring the different options for this for future tenders, such as Euro 6, hybrid or electric vehicles.

The bus stops are the responsibility of the Council, and we ensure they are maintained through the relevant contracts. Figure 8 shows all the bus stops in the Borough. It is clear that the majority are focused around the town centres, and others are more sparsely populated around the Borough.

With regards to information, some bus stops in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres have real-time information feeds (11 out of 48 bus stops in Windsor, 12 out of 48 bus stops in Maidenhead). Therefore, passengers are reliant on the timetables for when to expect the bus. Real-time information is available on the operators' apps, which may be useful to some passengers. However, if passengers are taking a journey that involves two or more operators, or regularly travel on buses of more than one operator, it becomes more of a challenge to keep track of bus times.

Our on-board surveys showed that the average satisfaction score for the condition of the buses was 4.4 (where 1 is low, 5 is high). Furthermore, 9% of survey responses said that improved buses (WiFi, charging ports etc) would make them use buses more, and 4% said that better maintenance or improved bus stops would make them use buses more. Lastly, 13% said that access/more reliable access to real-time information would make them use buses more.

The NHT 2019 satisfaction score for RBWM on the state of the bus stops was 58%. This compares to 62% for both the Berks and national average. The score for the cleanliness and quality of buses was 64%, compared to 68% for both the Berks and national average. Scores around information scored particularly poorly, with a score for ease of finding the right information of 44%, compared to 53% for the Berks average and the national average of 55%.

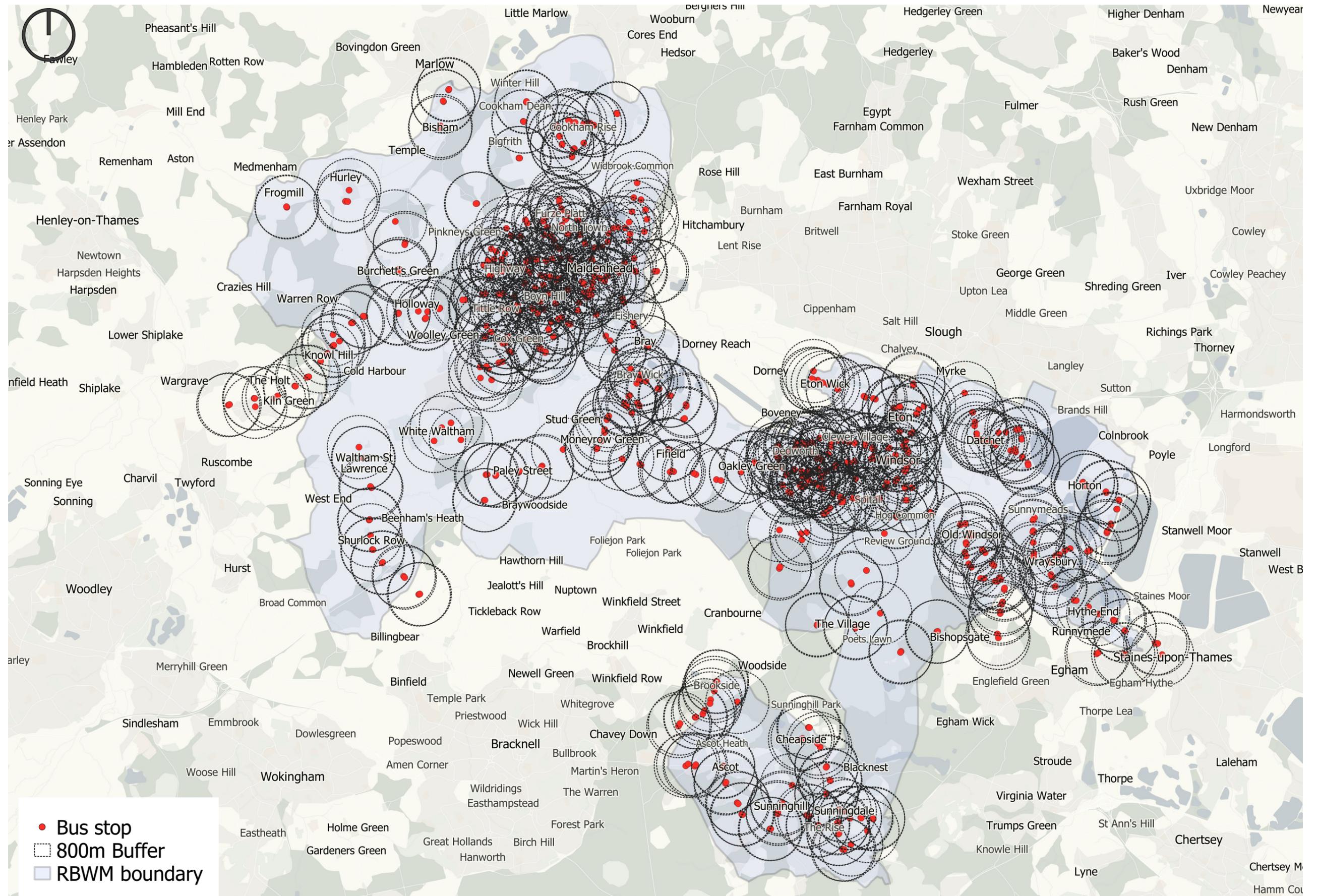
Two medium-term measures suggested are rolling out a programme of improvements to bus stops in town centres with support from DfT, in addition to installing real-time information.

Based on our findings we have suggested a medium-term measure of working with operators to improve the technology on board buses. This includes retrofitting technology such as WiFi and phone charging sockets where operators are unable to provide this currently.

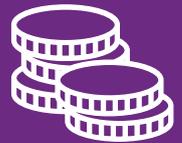
Currently, there is no central place that passengers can look at to view Borough wide bus information. Having several operators running services in the Borough means that passengers have to look on different websites to find the information they require. In our research with non-bus users, many respondents stated that it would be particularly useful to have a central place to go for Borough-wide bus information, such as route maps, fare prices and timetables. Other Councils provide this service, making the planning stage of the bus experience easier for passengers.

A short-term measure suggested is to create a bus webpage on the RBWM website, with route maps, fare prices and timetables from all operators running services in the Borough.

Figure 8. RBWM bus stops



SUPPORTED SERVICES



RBWM SUPPORTED BUS SERVICES

This section discusses the supported services that the Council funds within the Borough, how they compare with commercial services, and how the provision of socially necessary services can be improved.

Policy Context

With regards to supported bus services, the Transport Act 1985, Section 63(1)(a), explains that local transport authorities must:

“... secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as the council consider it appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements within the county which would not in their view be met apart from any action taken by them for that purpose.”

This principle applies to Integrated Transport Authorities, County Councils, and Unitary Authorities.

There is no mandatory obligation for the Council to fund any public transport services. However, it does have powers under the Transport Acts 1985 and 2000 and Local Transport Act 2008 to enter into agreements with public transport operators to provide subsidies for services which are not available commercially.

RBWM Supported Routes

There are 13 supported bus services provided through 10 funding packages in Windsor and Maidenhead as shown in below. The Council partly or wholly funds these services, equating to a total annual cost to the Council of approximately £870,000 in subsidies.

RBWM is committed to supporting local bus services where they cannot run commercially as they are essential to providing accessibility to all residents. They provide a form of public transport connecting residents to places of work and leisure where other options are lacking. Supported services also assist to deliver the Council’s objectives around reducing carbon emissions following the declaration of a climate emergency and supporting sustainable housing and employment.

Table 4 below outlines each of the supported bus service packages that the Council supports by operator. This highlights the main areas that each service operates in addition to the annual contract value of each service package.

Table 4. Supported bus services within the Borough

Operator	Route	Main areas served	Annual Contract Value
Bear Buses	305	Colnbrook - Horton - Staines	£29,868.00
Thames Valley	234/235 238/239	Maidenhead - Waltham / Maidenhead - Henley - Cookham	£151,370.00
	3/9	West Maidenhead	£12,224.00
	8	Maidenhead town centre - North Maidenhead	£124,838.00
	15	Slough - Eton - Maidenhead town centre	£115,000.00
	16/16A	Windsor town centre - Maidenhead town centre	£131,917.00
	53	Bracknell - Maidenhead	£24,292.22
	White Bus	01	Windsor - Ascot
W1		Windsor town centre	£33,963.00
P1		Windsor town centre - Datchet	£132,957.60

Figure 9 below compares the patronage levels of each bus service package, and the cost per journey of each service to the Council.

Figure 9. Patronage and cost per journey by service

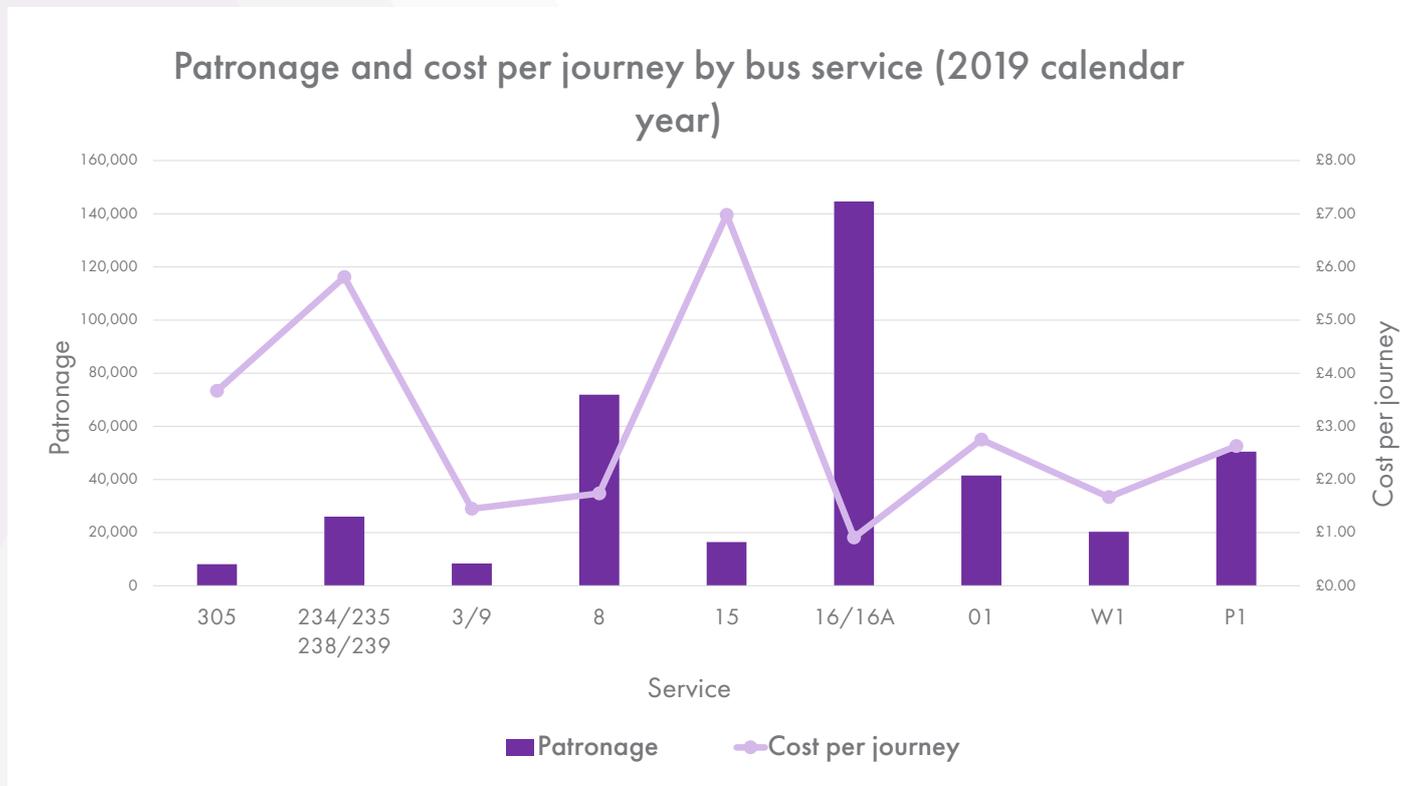


Figure 10 and Figure 11 below show supported service routes in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres.

The three White Bus supported services operate in the Windsor and surrounding areas. These routes support residents in travelling to and from the town centre from residential areas, with the P1 offering commuters and visitors to Windsor the opportunity to park just outside the town centre and travel in using public transport.

Thames Valley operate the 16/16A service which provides a service that connects Windsor and Maidenhead town centres, serving residential areas on the outskirts of both towns. Thames Valley operate several supported services in Maidenhead, including the 3,8 and 9 which serve the town centre and surrounding residential areas. The 234/235/238/239 services that operate in Maidenhead and the surrounding villages are rural services that connect the town centre to rural communities. Overall, the below maps demonstrate the commitment that the Council has adopted in providing residents with access to places of work and leisure across the Borough.

Figure 10. Supported services in the Windsor Town Centre area

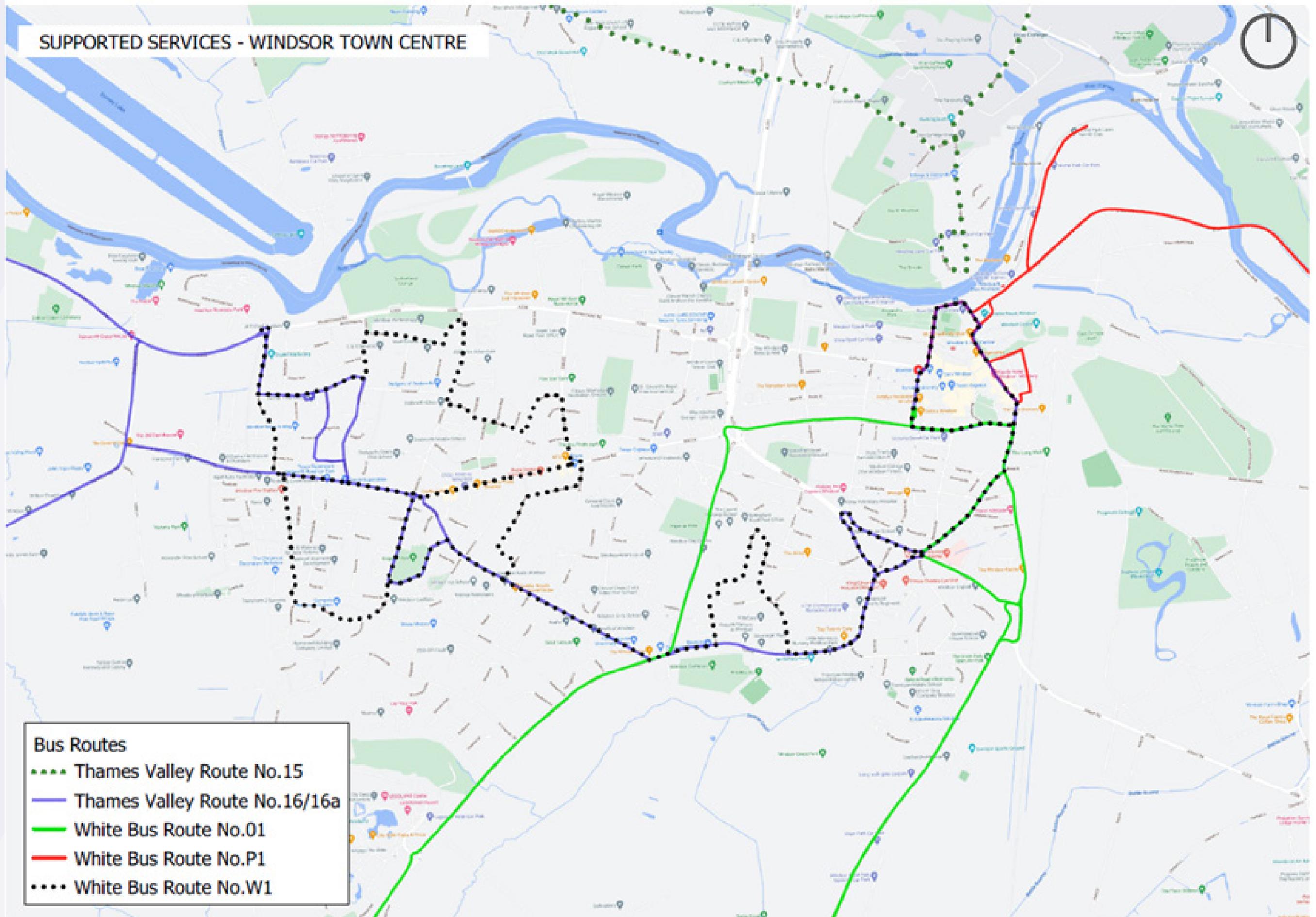
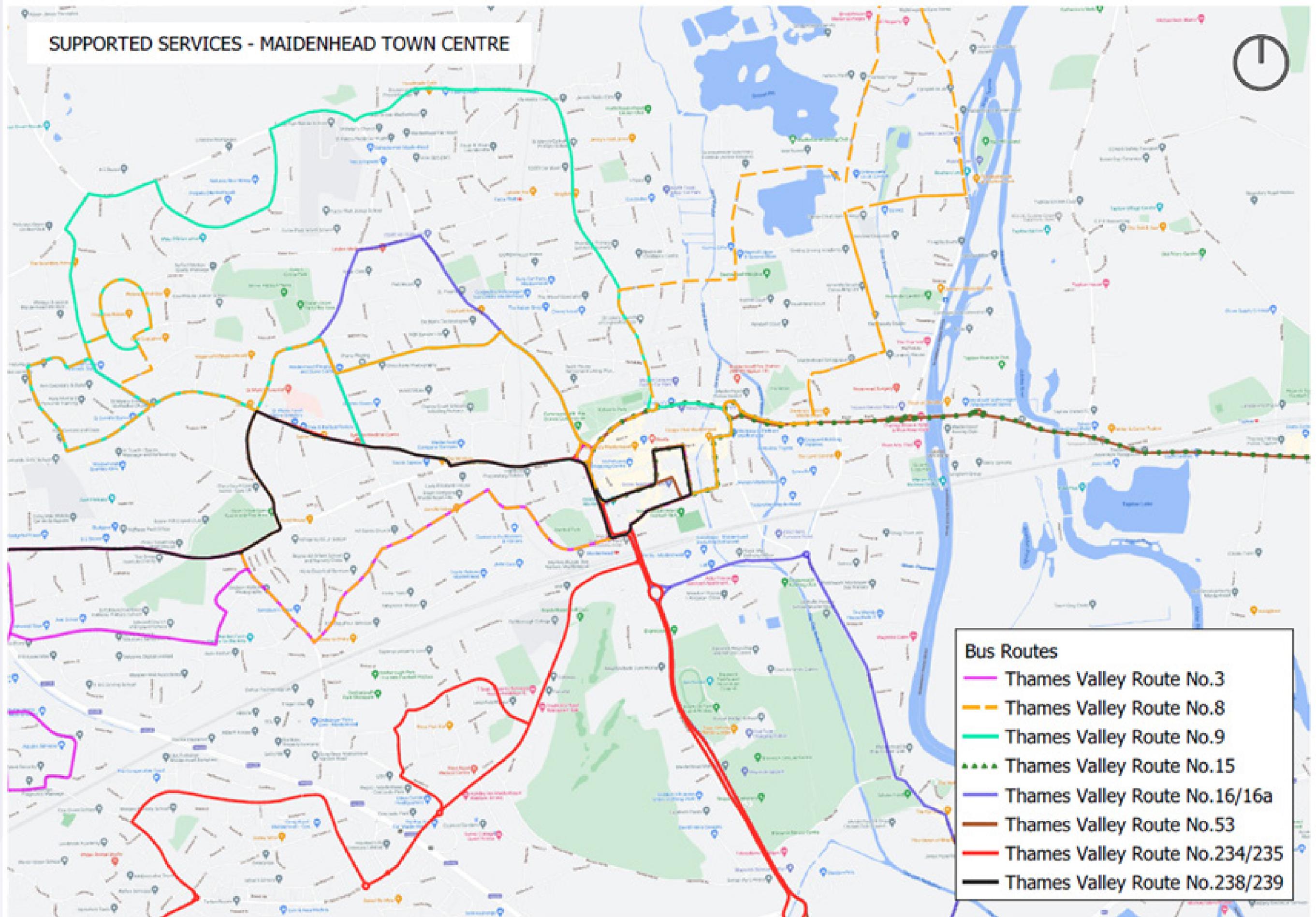


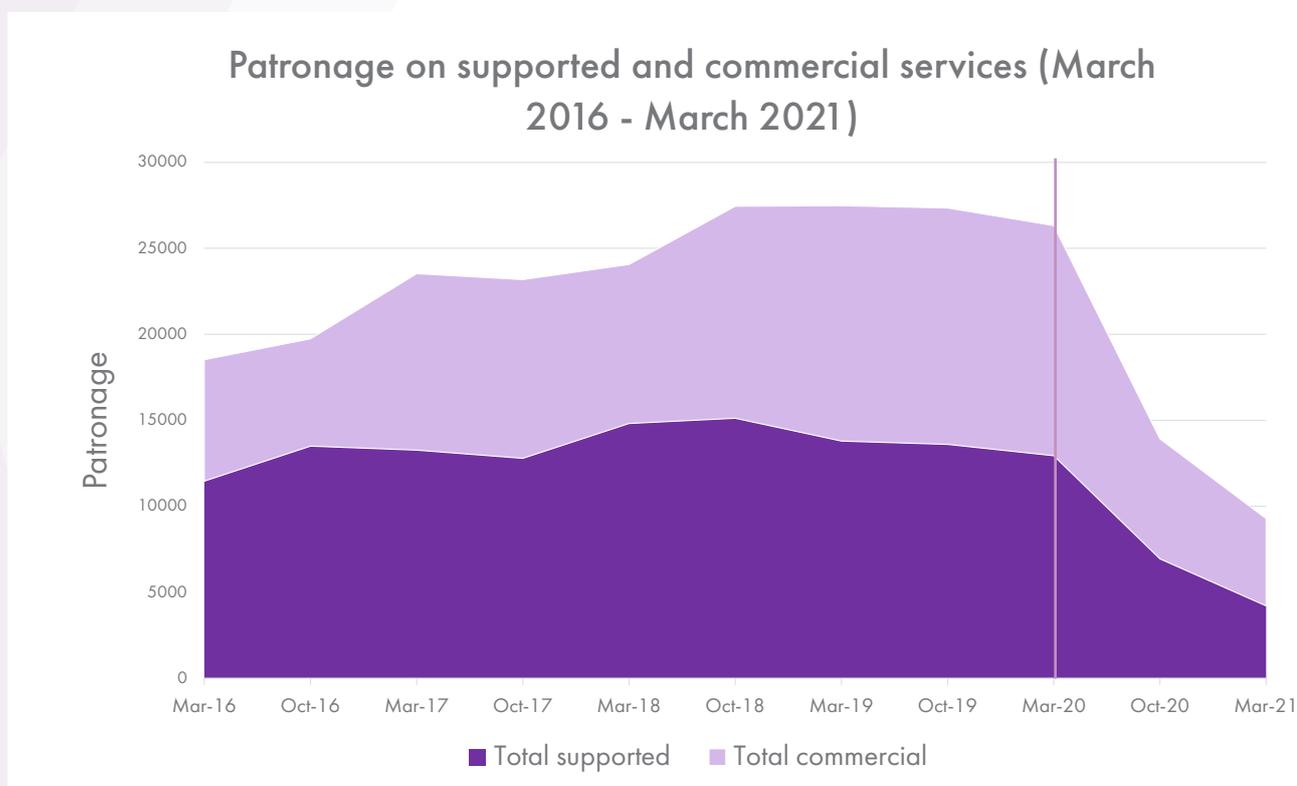
Figure 11. Supported services in the Maidenhead Town Centre area



Supported vs commercial services

Of the total Patronage in the Borough, the split between patronage on supported services and patronage on commercial services is relatively even, with March 2021 data showing commercial services slightly outweigh supported. For March 2021, a total patronage of 9,287 was recorded, of which 4,207 was on supported services, and 5,080 was on commercial services. Figure 12 below shows the split of patronage on supported vs commercial services since March 2016.⁷ The significant drop in total patronage following March 2020 demonstrates the detrimental impact of the pandemic on all services.

Figure 12. Patronage on concessionary and commercial services (March 2016 - March 2021)



⁷ Figure 12 does not include data from 3 operators as this has not yet been received

Conclusions

While the Council recognises its duty to provide socially necessary services (as required by DfT) as they are essential in providing accessibility to all residents, analysis of the usage of these services and their associated costs shows that there is opportunity to reduce the cost per journey of supported services and grow patronage. As demonstrated in Figure 9, some services have a high cost per journey, due to low patronage on those routes. For example, the 234/5/8/9 service has a cost per journey of £5.81, and the 15 has a cost per journey of £6.98. Boosting patronage and reducing costs on these services helps to bring the cost per journey down, making them more economically viable for the Council to continue running them. A potential method of achieving this is through a DRT scheme. This would provide a tailored service, reducing empty buses and the associated costs in addition to having the potential to unlock demand. A DRT scheme also has the benefit of reducing unnecessary bus trips and therefore reducing the climate emissions emitted, aligning with our Environment and Climate Strategy (2020).

Therefore, we have included a trial of DRT within our chosen measures, and support from the Department would allow us to implement this. A capital investment that would allow the Council to work alongside a chosen operator(s) to trial a scheme would provide the opportunity to build the foundation for a potential new way of delivering supported services.

TARGETS



TARGETS

The BSIP guidance provided by the DfT gives some direction on targets that should be included within each Council's BSIP. It suggests that headline targets should be given for passenger growth, customer satisfaction, reliability and journey times. It also states that LTAs should show what progress they expect to make by 2025 and also 2030.

In line with the guidance, the Council has developed a set of bold targets that reflect what we would like to achieve with regards to patronage, user satisfaction and reliability and journey times. We will set short-term targets (up to 2023) and medium-term targets that we aim to meet by 2025. We feel at this early stage in the development of the strategy and with less than six months to prepare and gather evidence and information that the 2030 target is likely to be too far into the future and possibly unrealistic at this stage.

Targets have been decided in collaboration with operators and neighbouring authorities, and they represent the Council's ambition to improve the bus network in the Borough. We have aligned the targets with those of other Council policy, including the Local Transport Plan (2012-26) and the Environment and Climate Strategy (2020-25).

Crucially, our targets set are dependent on funding being received from DfT for the short, medium and long-term measures outlined in the 'suggested measures' section. However, we acknowledge that targets may change as we move forwards and the BSIP and Enhanced Partnerships are developed in future years. We will therefore take a dynamic approach to targets and continually review them to ensure they are consistently ambitious yet realistic. We will continually monitor and report against these targets, as outlined in the 'reporting' section.

Table 5 below summarises our targets for patronage, user satisfaction and reliability and journey times. For each aspect, the current position is outlined, and the 2023 and 2025 targets are presented. A more detailed examination of each set of targets and the justification behind them is provided in the subsequent paragraphs.

Table 5. RBWM BSIP Targets



PATRONAGE

Current position	Short-term target (up to 2023)	2025 target	2030 target
Bus trips per head of population: 9.3	Bus trips per head of population: 17 (current wider Berks average without Reading)	Bus trips per head of population: >20 (currently only Slough higher (27.8) out of Berks authorities excluding Reading)	Bus trips per head of population: >30 (depending on progress of other Councils, this would be the best of the other Berks authorities behind Reading)

USER SATISFACTION



Current position	Short-term target (up to 2023)	2025 target	2030 target
NHT survey: Local Bus Services overall score: 48%	NHT survey: Local Bus Services overall score: 62% (current wider Berks average)	NHT survey: Local Bus Services overall score: 70%	To be explored further in future versions of the BSIP based on increased data and evaluation of short-term measures.

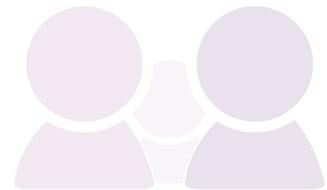
RELIABILITY AND JOURNEY TIMES



Current position	Short-term target (up to 2023)	2025 target	2030 target
% bus services running on time: 87%	% bus services running on time: >90%	% bus services running on time: >95%	To be explored further in future versions of the BSIP based on increased data and evaluation of short-term measures.

Patronage

The Borough is currently ranked as one of the lowest nationally in terms of bus use; the bus trips per head of population is just 9.3. We recognise that this should be improved, and we have analysed the performance of neighbouring Berkshire authorities to understand what the patronage levels can look like in areas similar to our demographic. For this reason, we have set a short-term target to bring patronage up to 17 bus trips per head of population. This is the wider Berkshire average that we would like to aim to reach. This excludes Reading, a Borough that has an exceptionally high bus trips per head of 137 as they have developed an advanced bus network with the Council owning the main operator. In the medium term, we'd like to be one of the leading Berkshire authorities and reach at least 20 bus trips per head. Our long term target is to be the leading Berkshire authority behind Reading, achieving over 30 journeys per head.



User satisfaction

The Council acknowledges that the Borough lags behind on user satisfaction compared to other Berkshire authorities and nationally. This is based on the NHT survey results, a survey conducted nationally by the National Highways & Transport Network. The overall score for local bus services is 48% in RBWM, compared to 62% as an average for other Berkshire authorities. We have therefore set the short-term goal to reach the average of the other Berkshire authorities, and moving forwards we would like to increase this to 70%. As with the other targets, this will be continually reviewed to reflect the bus network and may change depending on the Council's and operator's progress.



Reliability and journey times

While the Borough currently performs relatively well with regards to the percentage of journeys on time at 87%, we would like to keep this standard up and have therefore set a target of at least 90% of services on time in the short term. This is in the context of a 2018/19 figure of 95%. We recognise that this however was unusually high in comparison with previous years, and so the short-term target is lower than this as to not set an unrealistic target. This allows some room for delay due to the potential implementation of measures such as increased frequencies that may make achieving a higher figure more difficult. The 2025 target has increased to 95% of journeys on time, as by then we hope to have developed our bus network more significantly and have understood and started to address the problem hotspots on the network. As we develop the BSIP in future years, we would like to set more detailed journey time targets as we investigate potential infrastructure improvements that will aim to increase journey times for buses. This is listed as a medium-term measure in our 'suggested measures' section.



SUGGESTED MEASURES



SUGGESTED MEASURES

This section of the BSIP sets out how the Council is going to achieve the targets as set out in the previous section. These measures represent the package that the Council has identified to increase bus patronage in the Borough and develop the bus network. Any future DfT funding opportunities that the Council applies for will be informed by the measures outlined in this section, and therefore these measures have been carefully considered using a range of key factors.

The measures that have been put forward are based on evidence and data outlined in the 'current offer' section, including:

- the engagement with bus users;
- detailed survey of non-bus users;
- bus patronage;
- bus stop arrival and departure times
- extensive research on bus fares, DRT and multi-operator ticketing schemes;
- discussions with operators and neighbouring authorities

Measures, as with the rest of the BSIP are considered to be live and so will be continually reviewed in light of further information collected and updated annually.

The measures put forward are grouped into short, medium and long-term ambitions. This enables the Council to plan for any relevant future DfT funding bids. For each measure, the reason why this has been put forward is explained, in addition to how the success of it will be measured and the approximate cost. Again, this will guide the Council in the preparation of future funding bids. Table 6 is a summary of these proposed measures followed by supporting detail of why each measure has been identified and the benefit it will bring. The table is split into short, medium and long term measures. Each measure is grouped into a category as included on the funding guidance spreadsheet provided by the DfT that accompanies the BSIP. A symbol indicating which category each measure falls into is included in the second column of the table. These categories are:

- Bus priority infrastructure
- Other infrastructure
- Fares support
- Ticketing reform
- Bus service support
- EP/Franchising delivery: LTA costs

- Further research to inform future measures (added by RBWM)

These measures are intended to not only benefit bus users but also increase the mode share of bus across the Borough thus supporting the transport aim in RBWM's Environment and Climate Strategy (2020) of enabling sustainable transport choices.

The subsequent paragraphs outline the justification of each suggested measure being put forward, the reasoning behind the estimated funding required, and the key benefits of implementing the measure.

Table 6. Summary of proposed measures (short-term)

Measure	DfT funding category	Detail	Why was this chosen?	How will this be measured?	Which objectives does it meet?	Approximate funding required
Short term (next 12 months)						
Review of the RBWM bus network		RBWM funding to conduct a wider review of the network with operators and neighbouring authorities, with the aim of capturing any uncovered demand and maximising bus patronage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of recent review of services from some operators Continuous changing demand for travel in the Borough Unserved destinations highlighted in engagement with residents 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation of any changes resulting from the review	1, 2, 4	£35,000 - £65,000
Feasibility study into potential highway infrastructure improvements		RBWM funding to support a study into potential improvements to RBWM's road network that will increase bus reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus stop arrival and departure data from operators highlighted problem areas Reliability highlighted in engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring and bus stop timing data following implementation of any changes	1, 6	£35,000 - £65,000
Trial of cheaper tickets	£	Funding from DfT to trial cheaper fares for three years, supporting the operator with any losses until support can fall away	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively higher fares compared to neighbouring authorities Engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	1, 2, 3,	£300,000 for a three-year trial (£100,000 per year)
Trial of discounted fares for RBWM advantage card holders	£	Funding from DfT to trial discounted fares for RBWM advantage card holders for three years, supporting the operator with any losses until support can fall away	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively higher fares compared to neighbouring authorities Engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	1, 2, 3	Up to £600,000 for a three-year trial (up to £200,000 per year)
Trial of increased frequencies and more evening and Sunday services		Funding from DfT to trial increased frequencies for three years, supporting operators with any losses until support can fall away	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services relatively infrequent in the Borough, often hourly or at irregular intervals Engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	1, 2	Up to £1.5m for a three-year trial (up to £500,000 per year)
Demand Responsive Transport trial		Funding from DfT to trial a DRT or similar scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costly, unused supported services Engagement with residents 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	1, 2, 4	£150,000 - £500,000
Investment in technology for operators		RBWM funding to invest in technology to provide to operators that do not have bus stop arrival and departure data collection capabilities (timing data)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some operators do not have resource to fund on-board technologies, limiting the Council in having a consistent dataset across operators 	Bus stop timing data following provision of technology to operators	5	£10,000 - £50,000



Bus priority infrastructure



Other infrastructure



Fares support



Ticketing reform



Bus service support



EP/Franchising delivery - LTA costs



Further research to inform future measures

Table 6. Summary of proposed measures (short-term)

Measure	DfT funding category	Detail	Why was this chosen?	How will this be measured?	Which objectives does it meet?	Approximate funding required
Short term (next 12 months)						
Creation of Bus Passenger Charter		Create a Bus Passenger Charter (BPC) giving bus users rights to certain standards of service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators 	Monitoring of feedback from passengers using BPC web page	1, 5	Internal to RBWM
Creation of a RBWM bus webpage		Create a website with fares, timetables and maps, in addition to somewhere passengers can provide feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	1, 5	Internal to RBWM



Bus priority infrastructure



Other infrastructure



Fares support



Ticketing reform



Bus service support



EP/Franchising delivery - LTA costs



Further research to inform future measures

Table 6. Summary of proposed measures (medium-term)

Measure	DfT funding category	Detail	Why was this chosen?	How will this be measured?	Which objectives does it meet?	Approximate funding required
Medium-term (12-36months)						
Feasibility study into multi-operator ticketing, including website and phone app		RBWM funding to carry out a feasibility study into the implementation of multi-operator ticketing scheme in RBWM and potentially further afield. This will include the launch of a website and phone app	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex ticketing environment for passengers Engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators and neighbouring authorities 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	3, 4, 5	£35,000 - £65,000
Improvements to bus stops in town centres		Funding from DfT to invest in consistent bus stop infrastructure in town centres, such as standardising bus stops and improving lighting and maps. This will also allow RBWM to consider the introduction of EV charging points in select locations to support the long-term goal of operators using electric over diesel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators and neighbouring authorities Plan for operator aspiration for electric fleet 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	5, 6	Up to £500,000
Roll-out of real-time information at bus stops in town centres		Funding from DfT to install real-time data and support the maintenance of it at bus stops within town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 23 stops out of 96 in town centres have real-time information Engagement with residents 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	4, 5, 6	Up to £750,000
Make improvements to buses		RBWM funding to support operators with improving buses to have better and consistent on-board technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	1, 6	Up to £50,000
Highway Infrastructure improvements		Funding from DfT to design, consult on and construct the infrastructure improvements identified in the feasibility study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus stop arrival and departure data from operators highlighted problem areas Reliability highlighted in engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring and bus stop timing data following implementation of any changes	1,6	Up to £10 million



Bus priority infrastructure



Other infrastructure



Fares support



Ticketing reform



Bus service support



EP/Franchising delivery - LTA costs



Further research to inform future measures

Table 6. Summary of proposed measures (long-term)

Measure	DfT funding category	Detail	Why was this chosen?	How will this be measured?	Which objectives does it meet?	Approximate funding required
Long-term (36 months +)						
Creation of a multi-operator ticketing scheme, including website and phone app		Funding from DfT for the implementation of multi-operator ticketing in RBWM and potentially further afield. This will include the launch of a website and phone app	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex ticketing environment for passengers Engagement with residents Came out of discussions with operators and neighbouring authorities 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following implementation	3, 4, 5	Up to £5 million
Feasibility study into the construction of a bus station in Maidenhead		RBWM funding to support a feasibility study into a potential bus station in Maidenhead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No bus station in RBWM whereas some neighbouring authorities have one Has a number of benefits including integration with town centre, and housing facilities for customers / drivers and future EV charging infrastructure 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following any future construction. Operator feedback also monitored	4, 6	£35,000-£65,000
The construction of a bus station in Maidenhead		Funding from DfT design, consult and construct a bus station in Maidenhead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of bus station in RBWM compared to neighbouring authorities Has a number of benefits including integration with town centre, and housing charging infrastructure 	Patronage and passenger satisfaction monitoring following any future construction	4, 6	£5 million - £10 million


Bus priority infrastructure


Other infrastructure

£
Fares support


Ticketing reform


Bus service support


EP/Franchising delivery - LTA costs


Further research to inform future measures

Short term (12 months)

Review of the RBWM bus network:



The 'current offer' section outlines the current bus network within RBWM and suggests that while some operators regularly review their routes using patronage and other useful data to make the appropriate changes to meet demand, some are unable to do this. We have also seen the impact of operators removing services from the Borough has on patronage figures and the accessibility of buses to the population in RBWM. For example, passenger journeys in the Borough dropped by half a million between 2012 and 2013, which can be attributed to the removal of commercial services from one operator.

Our engagement with residents showed that 20% of bus users believe that bus routes are excessively long in comparison to other modes or there are too many changes to reach their destination by bus. Furthermore, the general opinion of non-bus users is that buses do not travel to the 'right destinations'.

Over time, demand for reaching destinations change as new developments come online and new workplaces open up. It is important that the bus network reflects this in order to maximise the number of potential bus users and ensure the Council meets the DfT's aspiration of a more comprehensive network. Therefore, the Council would like to work with operators and neighbouring authorities to conduct a wider review of the bus network within RBWM, to unlock any uncovered demand and maximise patronage.

As an example, RBWM, Slough Borough Council and Buckinghamshire Council have together identified the A4 corridor between Slough and Maidenhead, a prime commuter route, as a pinch point in the network and would like to identify potential solutions. RBWM would like to provide funding of between £35,000 and £65,000, and work with operators and neighbouring authorities to suggest any necessary improvements to the bus network.

This review will cover the existing routes and the associated locations of bus stops. It will also take account of school transport, which has not been part of the scope of the BSIP. Future monitoring of bus patronage and user satisfaction following any changes to services as a result of the review will take place to analyse the impact of the improvements made. While an initial review is proposed, the Council would continually refresh the final report to ensure the recommendations are up to date.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'further research to inform future measures category', which we added to the existing categories.

The BSIP can be found on the RBWM website here:

<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/transport-and-streets/public-transport>

A wider review of bus routes and stops within RBWM will help us to unlock any uncovered demand, ensuring key developments, estates and workplaces have an option of taking the bus. Using internal funding sources, the Council can dedicate the resource to conducting this piece of work, which will include working with employers and developments to map origin/destination data of staff/residents and therefore make recommendations to ensure the maximisation of the bus network.

Feasibility study into potential highway infrastructure improvements



The punctuality evidence set out in the 'current offer' section identifies that the bus network can be improved via modifications to the road network to allow for faster, more reliable bus services. We are aware from our engagement with residents that there is a perception amongst non-bus users that buses take too long, and 18% of bus users said more reliable services would make them use buses more.

Operators have provided us with the details of where the problem locations are on the network, and we have evidenced this through analysis of their bus stop arrival and departure data.

The Council would like to commit to a full review of problem locations on the bus network and where infrastructure improvements such as bus priority measures can be made. Should any identified improvements be constructed, this would improve the reliability of bus services and bring journey times closer to that of a car. The Council would like to provide funding of between £35,000 and £65,000 to conduct a feasibility study into potential infrastructure improvements to improve bus reliability within RBWM. We would consider the use of a strategic model to provide a further evidence base. This would support the need for infrastructure improvements at congestion hotspots and provide data for growth in later years.

Discussions with operators and the data that sits behind these have indicated some potential areas for further investigation into potential improvements. These include Windsor town centre where congestion is particularly bad, in addition to Maidenhead town centre where the layout is a hindrance to buses. Heathrow have identified Windsor as a location for bus priority in their 'Bus Vision' published in August 2021, further justifying the need to investigate solutions. Other areas including Sunningdale, Sunninghill High Street and the A4 near Maidenhead bridge are also problem locations that could potentially benefit from infrastructure improvements. A medium-term measure is included for the actual design, consultation and construction of any improvements identified. The funding needed for this will depend on what is identified in the feasibility study, however at this stage we have estimated a cost of up to £10 million. Future monitoring of bus patronage, user satisfaction and bus stop timing data following any infrastructure improvements will take place to analyse the impact of any improvements made.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'bus priority infrastructure' category.

A feasibility study into potential highway infrastructure improvements allows the Council to identify specific locations that suffer from poor reliability and the opportunities and risks associated with implementing improvements. Highway infrastructure improvements, such as bus priority measures, would aim to increase journey times for buses and improve reliability. This would make buses a more attractive option for passengers, attracting new users and making current users take the bus more.

Trial of cheaper tickets



The 'current offer' section shows that fare prices in RBWM are generally more expensive than in neighbouring authorities. Our engagement with residents showed that fare prices are a key factor in people deciding to take the bus, and it was concluded from our on-board survey that reduced fares would make people use the bus more. The non-bus user research also suggested that reduced fares have the potential to capture people who do not currently use the bus.

While we know fares are an area where we would like to explore potential interventions, they are part of operator's commercial strategies and therefore the Council has limited influence. However, working with at least one of our operators, we would like to run a trial period of cheaper fares, to see how that could increase patronage. With DfT support, the Council would have the funds to top-up the operators' revenues should the drop in fare prices cause any short-term losses. As patronage increases the need for support funding will decrease and the support funding will be phased out. The trial allows us to confirm this and demonstrate that cheaper fares can be a viable solution.

We have already had discussions with several operators willing to participate in the trial. In order for us to provide assurances to them, allowing them time to adjust to the change in fares and develop an exit strategy if required, the Council would ask the DfT for support for three years.

Operators have indicated that fares in the Borough are relatively high as the Borough is closer to London than other Berks authorities which pushes wages up. Other Berks authorities have more passengers, so operators can use bigger buses which have more passengers per journey which brings down overall costs. Operators have suggested that in order for reduced fares to be sustainable, patronage of paying passengers (i.e. not concessionary) would have to increase by the same or a higher percentage than fares were reduced by. We would therefore aim to increase patronage by at least the percentage that fares were reduced by so that the operator can run commercially without support. In the short-medium term, we would use the funding to bridge the gap of any losses the operator may experience as a result of the lower fares.

Approximate funding required is based on an assumption that a trial is done with an operator in one town centre to reduce fares by 25%. Without an increase in patronage, a 25% drop in fares would therefore cause annual revenues to drop by 25%. We estimate this at approximately £100,000 for Year 1. Therefore, to provide assurance to the chosen operator, we would require this funding for three years, totalling £300,000. It is unlikely that the payments to operators would equate to this amount as the ambition is for the increase in patronage to reduce losses and eventually lead to profit. Support for three years ensures the Council has the ability to commit to a trial period that allows some time to see the impacts.

As part of this measure, we would work with the operator(s) to market the discounted fares and reach as many people as possible. Some non-bus users indicated that their perception of costs were higher than actual costs, when told what these are. Therefore, effective marketing of a reduced fares scheme will enable more people that wouldn't have otherwise been aware of fares in the Borough.

Patronage and user satisfaction will be analysed over the period to track the trends in bus use and passenger experience. The BSIP guidance states that the BSIP will be assessed as a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and that further assessment will be required after this stage. When we reach this point in the process to unlock funding, we will provide additional detail on our funding request and the supporting evidence behind it.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'fares support category'.

A trial of cheaper fares aims to make bus users take the bus more, and attract current non-bus users. With support from the DfT, a trial allows the Council and the operators to work together to see if cheaper fares can become commercially viable through increasing bus patronage in the Borough

Trial of discounted fares for RBWM Advantage card holders



A common suggestion that several interview respondents provided was to explore the option of discounts on fares for RBWM Advantage card holders. Local residents who pay council tax to RBWM are entitled to a free card which gives discounts at a range of attractions, retailers, restaurants, council services and leisure activities.

Working alongside at least one operator that is already willing to take part, we would like to run a trial period of discounted fares for Advantage card holders, to see how that would affect patronage. With DfT support, the Council would have the funds to top-up the operators' revenues should the discounted tickets cause any losses in the short-term. As patronage increases, the need for support funding will decrease and will be phased out. The trial allows us to confirm this and demonstrate that discounted fares can be a viable solution.

We would like to work with at least one operator to trial discounted fares for Advantage card holders with support from the DfT over three years. Operators have suggested that in order for reduced fares to be sustainable, patronage of paying passengers (i.e. not concessionary) would have to increase by the same or a higher percentage than fares were discounted by. We would therefore aim to increase patronage by at least the percentage that fares were discounted by so that the operator can run commercially without support. In the short-medium term, we would use the funding to bridge the gap of any losses the operator may experience as a result of the discounted fares.

Approximate funding required is based on an assumption that a trial is done with an operator across the whole borough to discount fares for RBWM advantage card holders by 25%. Without an increase in patronage, a 25% discount for advantage card holders would therefore cause associated annual revenues to drop by 25%. While we know there are approximately 200,000 advantage card holders, our funding requirement is based on the assumption that everyone boarding within RBWM has access to an advantage card. Therefore, we estimate an approximate loss in revenue of up to £200,000 for Year 1.

In order for us to provide assurances to the operator(s), allowing them time to adjust to the change in fares and develop an exit strategy if required, the Council would ask the DfT for support for three years, totalling to up to £600,000.

Patronage and user satisfaction will be analysed over the period to track the trends in bus use and passenger experience. The BSIP guidance states that the BSIP will be assessed as a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and that further assessment will be required after this stage. When we reach this point in the process to unlock funding, we will provide additional detail on our funding request and the supporting evidence behind it.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'fares support category'.

A trial of discounted fares for RBWM advantage card holders aims to make bus users take the bus more, and attract current non-bus users. With support from the DfT, a trial allows the Council and the operators to work together to see if discounted fares can become commercially viable through increasing bus patronage in the Borough

Trial of increased frequencies and more evening and Sunday services



A conclusion of the 'current offer' section was that the frequencies of bus services in the Borough, often hourly or at irregular intervals, is a barrier to potential bus users. Our engagement with residents of the Borough indicates that more frequent bus services and more evening and Sunday services would make people use buses more, and the general perception of buses in the Borough was that they are too infrequent to serve a useful purpose.

As with fares, frequencies are part of operator's commercial strategies and increasing them comes at a cost, particularly as evening and weekend patronage is perceived to be lower than that of a weekday, when commuter trips occur. Working alongside at least one operator that is already willing to take part, we would like to trial increased frequencies with support from the DfT over three years.

Operators have suggested that in order for increased frequencies to be sustainable, patronage would have to increase by a percentage determined by how many additional buses were operational. The approximate cost of adding a bus to a service over a year (assuming 6 days a week) is between £90,000 and £160,000 (depending on the length and time the route takes). If this represents an increased cost of running the service of 30%, as an example, revenue from fares would have to be increased by at least that percentage in order to make the service commercially viable. Therefore, up to £500,000 of funding for Year 1 will allow for a trial of up to five additional buses on at least one route in the Borough. In order for us to provide assurances to the operators, allowing them time to adjust to the change in frequencies and develop an exit strategy if required, the Council would ask the DfT for support for three years, totalling up to £1.5m.

Patronage and user satisfaction will be analysed over the period to track the trends in bus use and passenger experience. The BSIP guidance states that the BSIP will be assessed as a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and that further assessment will be required after this stage. When we reach this point in the process to unlock funding, we will provide additional detail on our funding request and the supporting evidence behind it.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'bus service support' category.

A trial of increased frequencies and more evening and Sunday services aims to make bus users take the bus more, and attract current non-bus users. With support from the DfT, a trial allows the Council and the operators to work together to see if increased frequencies can become commercially viable through increasing bus patronage in the Borough

Demand Responsive Transport trial



RBWM currently supports 10 bus service packages, costing £870,000 annually. Patronage on these services for the 2019 calendar year was approximately 400,000, with an average cost per journey to the Council of £3. Some of the services have a particularly high cost per service; for example, the 234/5/8/9 service has a cost per journey of £5.81, and the 15 has a cost per journey of £6.98. These serve our rural communities and connect them to nearby towns. These services achieve a relatively low patronage, meaning a relatively high cost to run.

Boosting patronage and reducing costs on these services helps to bring the cost per journey down, making them more economically viable for the Council to continue running them. A potential method of achieving this is through a DRT scheme. This would provide a tailored service, reducing empty buses and the associated costs in addition to having the potential to unlock demand. A DRT scheme also has the benefit of reducing unnecessary bus trips and therefore reducing the climate emissions emitted, aligning with our Environment and Climate Strategy (2020).

In our engagement with residents, 34% of the sample said that they would definitely be interested in a DRT type scheme. Furthermore, 41% said they'd be interested if it suited their needs.

Working alongside at least one operator that is already willing to take part, we would like to trial a DRT scheme with support from the DfT. The scope of the scheme is yet to be determined, however our ambition is to trial the scheme to replace a former route, such as the Thames Valley 10 service. This service was withdrawn due a lack of funding from Heathrow as a result of the pandemic, and the Council was unable to fund the route without this support. A DRT trial that serves the areas of the former 10 route would be of huge value to the Council, allowing the impact of a new model of transport to be trialled without having consequences on operators on their existing services. Patronage will be tracked along with all other routes to understand the impact of overall bus use in the Borough while the trial is ongoing.

Following an analysis of other schemes nationally, the Council would be prepared to bid for between £150,000 to £500,000 of funding for a one-year trial depending on the scale of the scheme that was proposed. The BSIP guidance states that the BSIP will be assessed as a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and that further assessment will be required after this stage. When we reach this point in the process to unlock funding, we will provide additional detail on our funding request and the supporting evidence behind it.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'bus service support' category.

A trial of an alternative type of bus service, such as a DRT scheme has the potential to make bus users take the bus more, and attract current non-bus users. With support from the DfT, a trial allows the Council and the operators to work together to see if a DRT can be commercially viable, and reduce the cost per journey on supported services.

Investment in technology for operators



The majority of operators within the Borough own the technology to be able to record bus stop arrival and departure data (timing data) on their services. This means they can see when the bus arrives and departs from a stop and compare it to the scheduled times. This data has been provided to the Council, which informed part of the 'current offer' section of the BSIP. It is particularly useful as it allows us to understand where the problem areas are within the bus network, as demonstrated in APPENDIX D.

Unfortunately, some of our operators do not have the capability to capture timing data, as they are relatively small in size and do not have the financial resource to invest in the technology. The Council would like to invest in this technology, and provide it to operators that do not have the capability to track bus stop timing data. This would mean that for all services, the Council has access to reliable data that can be monitored over time and inform future measures.

This is critically important in the first year following the adoption of the BSIP, as it allows for continuous data gathering that is consistent across all services. If technology is procured that can be put on and taken off buses, it can also be used with operators that do have capability to capture timing data, however the Council could manage the data and not have to rely on the provision of data from operators.

This could be in the form of tap on-tap off technology, which can allow origin-destination data to be analysed, and also improves the experience for passengers able to make contactless payments. Initial estimates based on costings provided by operators suggest this is likely to cost between £10,000 and £50,000 depending on the scale and packages chosen.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'further research to inform future measures' category, which we added to the existing categories.

Investing in technology for operators means that we can capture bus stop arrival and departure times which continuously improves the Council's understanding of bus punctuality over time. This will help us in ensuring we have the right evidence base to deliver the medium-term measure of conducting a feasibility study on potential infrastructure improvements.

Creation of bus passenger charter



In line with the BSIP guidance which states the requirement to create a Bus Passenger Charter (BPC), the Council would like to give passengers more of a voice and say, and will therefore set-up a BPC in the short-term. We will create a webpage on the Council website that sets out how passengers can use services (timetables, fares, maps of all operators in the Borough) and what passengers can expect from operators delivering bus services across the Borough.

The webpage will give the option for passengers to provide feedback so that passengers have a voice and enable the Council in collaboration with the operators to address the concerns of passengers.

The Charter will not create any new legal relationship between the Council and passengers, but will open up dialogue and help the Council understand the opinions of passengers on an ongoing basis. The Charter will be reviewed annually to ensure it is kept up-to-date with the relevant needs of passengers.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'EP/franchising delivery: LTA costs' category.

A Bus Passenger Charter gives passengers a voice with regards to bus travel, and can provide constant feedback from which we can work with operators to improve services. Passengers will be aware of what they can expect from operators delivering bus services across the Borough, which creates a more transparent relationship between the Council, bus passengers and operators.

Creation of a RBWM bus webpage



As outlined in the paragraphs around the creation of a bus passenger charter, the Council will create a webpage on the Council website that sets out how passengers can use services (timetables, fares, maps of all operators in the Borough) and what passengers can expect from operators delivering bus services across the Borough.

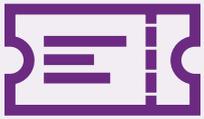
Currently, there is no central place that passengers can look at to view Borough wide bus information. Having several operators running services in the Borough means that passengers have to look on different website to find the information they require. In our research with non-bus users, many respondents stated that it would be particularly useful to have a central place to go for borough wide bus information, such as route maps, fare prices and timetables. For this reason, we will collate this information and put in on the RBWM website. We will update this regularly to reflect any changes, and use feedback from passengers to help define the content of the website in the months and years ahead.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'EP/franchising delivery: LTA costs' category.

The creation of a RBWM bus webpage with route maps, fare information and timetables that is regularly updated makes the passenger experience easier by having a central location where information is available from multiple operators. Passengers don't need to visit several operator's website to retrieve information, making the 'planning' stage of a journey quicker and simpler.

Medium and long-term (12-36 months and 36 months +)

Feasibility study into a multi-operator ticketing scheme



A conclusion from the 'current offer' section was that the complex environment for buying tickets acts as a barrier to people using the bus. In RBWM, there are 7 operators running services within the Borough, all of which have different ticket types with different prices. There isn't a multi-operator ticketing scheme that allows passengers to use the same ticket across several operators, meaning passengers must buy individual tickets for each service run by a specific operator. Research suggests that the sheer number of ticket types provides a complicated environment for passengers wishing to undertake journeys that involve routes with more than one operator.

Engagement with residents emphasised the inconvenience of having to purchase different tickets for different operators. Respondents indicated that a multi-operator ticketing system would make their journey easier and therefore encourage them to use the bus more often. It would also allow the capture of current non-bus users who may be deterred by the complexity of buying tickets.

A number of the operators have also raised the need for easier, multi-operator ticketing and are supporting of the introduction of this measure. Several operators have already been part of the delivery of the multi-operator ticketing in other areas and therefore bring that knowledge and practical experience to the delivery of this measure in the Borough.

Therefore, the Council would like to investigate the feasibility of introducing a multi-operator ticketing scheme, including the launch of a website and phone app. This would not necessarily be limited to just RBWM, but we are working closely with Slough Borough Council and Buckinghamshire Council to explore options of a potential cross-Borough ticketing system. We would also like to investigate the scope for including links to Heathrow in any scheme, following their priority for multi-operator ticketing outlined in their 'Bus Vision', published in August 2021.

The Council would like to provide funding of approximately £35,000-£65,000 to conduct a feasibility study into the implementation of a multi-operator ticketing system. A long-term measure is included for the creation of the multi-operator ticketing scheme and website and app launch, should the feasibility study indicate that it should be progressed. Should the study conclude that a multi-operator scheme is feasible, we expect that the funding required would be up to £5 million.

Future monitoring of bus patronage and user satisfaction following an introduction of a multi-operator ticketing scheme will take place to analyse the impact of any improvements made. In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'ticketing reform' category.

A feasibility study into a multi-operator ticketing scheme allows the Council to understand the opportunities and risks associated with introducing such a scheme. Multi-operator ticketing makes the passenger experience simpler and cheaper for those that make journeys that involve more than one operator. Should a scheme be introduced, passengers would no longer need to purchase multiple tickets, as tickets could be purchased and would be accepted on several operators.

Improvements to bus stops in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres



The importance of the infrastructure supporting the bus network was highlighted in the 'current offer' section. A measure was identified to roll out a programme of improvements to bus stops in town centres. This was also highlighted by the operators as a key point raised in terms of increasing patronage and customer satisfaction.

With financial support from DfT, we would like to improve shelters, lighting and timetable cases where appropriate. The specific bus stops and improvements made will be dependent on the outcomes of the review of the Borough wide bus network as identified in the short-term measures ensuring stops are in the right locations.

This measure will involve standardising the bus stops and ensuring all have an obvious bus flag. We would like to work with neighbouring authorities to standardise bus stops which will allow for an easier journey for passengers travelling around the wider Berks area.

A further infrastructure improvement will be considered depending on the future plans for the bus fleet to become electric rather than diesel and whether any EV charging infrastructure should be provided at points across the network. This supports the ambition to invest in zero emission vehicle infrastructure within the RBWM Environment and Climate Strategy (2020) and could then be incorporated into the bus stop improvement measures to ensure that future plans are included and a cost-effective use of funding.

Future monitoring of bus patronage and user satisfaction following any improvements to bus stops will take place to analyse the impact of any improvements made.

There are a combined 96 bus stops in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres. The replacement of a bus stop is estimated to cost approximately £10k. The number of bus stops selected for improvement will depend on the outcomes of the wider bus network review suggested as a short-term measure. However, should slightly over half of the combined bus stops be selected for improvement, an initial estimate of the programme cost is up to £500k. As stated, this depends on the outcomes of the wider bus network review and while the BSIP guidance states that the BSIP will be assessed as a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and that further assessment will be required after this stage, when we reach this point in the process to unlock funding, we will provide additional detail on our funding request and the supporting evidence behind it.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'other infrastructure' category.

Upgrades to bus stops in Windsor and Maidenhead town centre improve the end-to-end passenger experience, by providing a more pleasant environment for passengers to wait for and alight the bus. Standardising stops with neighbouring authorities helps passengers to understand the bus network and its link with neighbouring authorities, and improved shelters and lighting will make passengers feel safer. Upgraded flag poles and timetable cases provide better information for passengers, making their journey simpler and easier to plan. These benefits combined can help increase bus patronage in the Borough.

Roll-out of real-time information at bus stops in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres



Following on the review of the wider bus network (short-term measure) and to accompany the ambition of improvements at bus stops across RBWM, we would also like to invest in real-time data at bus stop in town centres. Currently, only 11 stops in Windsor and 12 stops in Maidenhead town centres have real-time data, leaving 37 without in Windsor and 36 without in Maidenhead. The 'current offer' section presented 'information' as a key factor in the passenger experience, with 13% of survey respondents saying that access/more reliable access to real-time information would make them use buses more.

There are a combined 73 bus stops in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres without real-time information. The approximate cost of the hardware and installation per stop is £7,500. Additionally, annual maintenance of the real-time costs approximately £360 per unit. Therefore, to cover all bus stops in the town centre without real-time, in addition to five years of maintenance, the Council would be looking for funding of up to £750,000 from DfT. In line with other improvements to bus stops, the specific stops identified for real-time data will depend on the outcomes of the review of the Borough-wide network as identified in the short-term measures.

The BSIP guidance states that the BSIP will be assessed as a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and that further assessment will be required after this stage. When we reach this point in the process to unlock funding, we will provide additional detail on our funding request and the supporting evidence behind it. As with other improvements to bus stops, future monitoring of bus patronage and user satisfaction following the installation of real-time data will take place to analyse the impact of any improvements made.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'other infrastructure' category.

The provision of real-time information at bus stops improves the end-to-end passenger experience, by providing information to passengers waiting at bus stops on when their bus is expected. Having better access to information can help passengers plan their journey better, which is likely to attract new bus users and make current users take the bus more.

Upgrade and make improvements to buses



The 'current offer' section highlights the importance of on-bus experience and the facilities available plays as important a role as the off-bus infrastructure in attracting people to use the bus. The condition of the buses plays an important role in the experience of passengers, and defines the comfort level of one's journey. Our engagement found that 9% of the sample said improved buses (including on-board WiFi, charging ports, next stop announcements) would make them use buses more.

The Council would like to use internal funding sources to work with operators to improve their buses, and where they currently do not, ensure they have modern facilities including on-board WiFi, charging ports and next stop announcements. We estimate that the approximate cost for installing technology, including WiFi, charging ports and next stop announcements on buses that do not currently have it at up to £50,000.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'other infrastructure' category.

Upgrading and making improvements to buses, such as retrofitting WiFi, charging ports and next stop announcements improves the passenger experience by increasing comfort levels on the buses. It provides passengers the opportunity to work while on the buses, attracting potential new users and making existing users take the bus more.

Feasibility study into the construction of a bus station in Maidenhead



As identified in the 'current offer' section, RBWM currently does not have a bus station within the Borough. Routes therefore often start and finish in town centres, waiting on the public highway which contributes towards congestion. Some of our neighbouring authorities benefit from a bus station, including Bracknell Forest, Slough and Buckinghamshire (High Wycombe and Aylesbury). A bus station acts as a focal point for services, where routes can start/finish without waiting on the public highway. They allow for integration for passengers between the town centre and their transport to their destination, and can also be of benefit to operators in the form of somewhere to have welfare facilities for drivers. Looking towards the future, bus stations could play a key role in housing charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. Furthermore, Maidenhead Railway Station is on the Crossrail line. It is important that bus services and facilities in Maidenhead encourage bus use given the projected increase in passenger journeys arriving at and departing from Maidenhead Station.

The Council has had a long-standing aspiration for a bus station in Maidenhead, and the BSIP presents an opportunity for the Council to realise it as an ambition. The Council would like to provide funding of between £35,000 to £65,000 to commission a feasibility study into the construction of a bus station in Maidenhead. A long-term measure is included for the actual design, consultation and construction of the bus station, should the feasibility study indicate that it should be progressed. Should the Council decide a bus station in Maidenhead is feasible, we expect that the funding required would be between £5million and £10 million.

In the accompanying DfT funding template, this falls into the 'other infrastructure' category.

A feasibility study into construction of a bus station in Maidenhead allows the Council to identify potential locations for a bus station and the opportunities and risks associated with constructing one. A bus station has a number of benefits including enabling integration with town centre, acting as a focal point for services, and housing facilities for customers / drivers and future EV charging infrastructure

Funding Requirement

In order for the Council to deliver the entirety of the measures put forward on our BSIP, the maximum funding required from DfT and internal sources is the following:

Period	Capital funding	Resource Funding	Total
Short-term	Up to £930k	Up to £550k	Approx. £1.5m
Medium-term	Up to £7.1m	Up to £865k	Approx. £8m
Long-term	Up to £20m	Up to £65k	Approx. £20m
Total	Approx. £28m	Approx. £1.5m	Approx. £29.5m

This will depend on further assessment to allow for more specific cost estimates at the appropriate stage in the funding process. Furthermore, some of the more costly schemes, including the introduction of a multi-operator ticketing scheme, infrastructure improvements and the construction of a bus station in Maidenhead town centre will depend on the outcomes of the respective feasibility studies.

Government define spending as either resource or capital; Resource spending is money that is spent on day to day resources and administration costs. Capital spending is money that is spent on investment and things that will create growth in the future. We have allocated all measures around further research and trials of schemes as resource spending. All other suggested measures are categorised as capital spending.

Delivery Approach

To maximise the success of all of the measures outlined in the 'suggested measures' section, we have phased the delivery into short, medium and long-term measures. While there is no set order to which we currently believe the measures should be delivered, phasing them allows for an approximate indication of when each measure is likely to be implemented should we receive funding. The period in which each measure has been positioned has been carefully considered and was based on discussions with operators and neighbouring authorities, in addition to the priorities of residents.

We have included the wider bus network review in the short-term, as depending on the outcomes of that, the detail of the other medium and long-term measures will be defined. For example, the wider bus network review will likely make recommendations around current areas of the Borough that are not sufficiently covered by bus routes. Therefore, improvements to bus stops and the real-time information roll-out will reflect these conclusions.

We commit to continually working alongside our neighbouring authorities to deliver the measures, as we have done in the development of our BSIP. We value partnership working and recognise its importance in delivering a consistent, cohesive bus network.

We also commit to working closely with operators through the development of Enhanced Partnerships. We have put forward a package of measures in our BSIP that aim to improve the bus network and grow patronage which is of benefit to the operators, and we therefore expect commitment in return. We expect operators to continually engage, and be open to trialling measures such as reduced fare prices, increased frequencies and multi-operator ticketing. As part of the Enhanced Partnerships, we also expect the continuous sharing of data (within the necessary legal frameworks in place, such as NDAs) from operators. This will allow us to continue to monitor the bus network and the impact of the measures, and evaluate which measures should be implemented going forward.

The BSIP will be a live document that is constantly evolving, and the measures and targets within it may change to fit the circumstances at the time. Priorities may change and future updated BSIPs will reflect that.

FUNDING £

FUNDING

The BSIP funding guidance produced in August 2021 asks for detail regarding potential funding requirements, both capital and resource, to deliver the expectations set out in the Strategy. It also suggests that LTAs should set out what alternative sources of funding are available to support delivery of BSIPs (e.g. operator or LTA contributions).

As part of the development of our BSIP, we have explored alternative, external sources of funding. This includes a range of potential funding sources that could potentially contribute to some of the measures outlined in the BSIP, such as the levelling-up fund. Unfortunately, the Council has been unsuccessful in previous funding bids due to the relative affluence of the Borough, and therefore to achieve a transformational improvement of the bus network we would be largely relying on BSIP funding. With regards to internal sources of funding that could supplement that received from the DfT, the Council will aim to internally fund a number of the measures outlined in the 'suggested measures' section, using capital funding. This includes three feasibility studies, the wider bus network review, improvements to buses, and investment in technology.

For schemes that we are relying on DfT funding for, we will seek developer contributions, in the form of Section 106 and CIL, towards funding those more costly measures. This is in addition to any future bids to the Council's capital programme. As outlined in the 'supported services' section, the Council funds supported services at a cost of £870,000 annually. As part of the review of the bus network that we have put forward as a short term measure, we will seek to make best possible use of existing revenue funds for supported services. As patronage increases, and new models of delivery are implemented (such as DRT), it may be possible to reduce subsidies on some of our supported services so we can reinvest that in new trials and measures in other parts of the bus network.

As part of our Enhanced Partnerships, we will work with operators to identify sources of funding that they are able to bid for, which will help them in improving and growing their services.

We recognise that RBWM are one of the worst performing Councils nationally with regards to bus patronage, and we are therefore looking to DfT to support us in our ambitions to grow patronage and experience the benefits that come with greater bus use.

The table in APPENDIX F outlines how we deduced the costs of all of the measures proposed in our BSIP. We recognise that some of these values are broad, however in the time provided to write the BSIP we were unable to collate the evidence base to cost more precise figures. For this reason, we have provided broader figures that allow us to calculate more accurate costings as we have more time going forward.

REPORTING

REPORTING

The BSIP guidance provided by the DfT gives some direction on reporting arrangements against the targets. It suggests that Councils should set out arrangements for publishing six-monthly performance against BSIP targets. This allows the Council, operators, passengers and DfT to monitor the bus network and understand whether any implemented measures have had their desired effect.

We have therefore set out a reporting plan which details reporting against the targets set in the 'targets' section of the BSIP. This outlines our aspiration to report against several metrics on a six-monthly or annually (depending on availability of data) basis. By reporting regularly, we can capture data that continuously improves our understanding of the bus network, helping us to inform the measures set out in the 'suggested measures' section.

We will publish the reporting data on our website at <https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/transport-and-streets/public-transport> every six months so that stakeholders, including residents, DfT, operators and neighbouring authorities are able to view our progress against the targets set in the BSIP. We will also update the BSIP document annually, to input updated reporting figures against targets, and potentially change targets accordingly. This will help to inform the suggested measures included within the BSIP.

Table 7 below summarises the metrics for which we will report on, the frequency of reporting, and the reason why we will report on it.

Additional mechanisms to record feedback will be put in place and reported on separately; for example, the creation of a Bus Passenger Charter will provide passengers with the opportunity to provide constant feedback through the RBWM website. Furthermore, we will receive feedback from operators through a constant line of communication in the Enhanced Partnerships that we develop alongside them.

Metric	Reporting frequency	Reason
% of journeys on time for all services (average of the month for each month)	Aspiration to publish as soon as DfT funding is in place, with the aim of publishing twice annually in January and July.	Capturing this data continuously improves the Council's understanding of bus punctuality over time. This will help us in ensuring we have the right evidence base to deliver the medium-term measure of conducting a feasibility study on potential infrastructure improvements.
Bus stop arrival and departure times (timing data) (monthly average) - as shown in APPENDIX D for October 2019	Aspiration to publish as soon as DfT funding is in place, with the aim of publishing twice annually in January and July.	Capturing this data continuously improves the Council's understanding of bus punctuality over time. This will help us in ensuring we have the right evidence base to deliver the medium-term measure of conducting a feasibility study on potential infrastructure improvements.
Patronage (monthly totals)	Aspiration to publish in January 2022 and every subsequent 6 months	This is the key metric in understanding the impact of measures on bus use. The majority of our suggested measures target increased patronage, including improvements to bus stops and buses, trials of cheaper fares, increased frequencies/Sunday/evening services and DRT and research into multi-operator ticketing and apps
NHT Satisfaction Survey scores for RBWM	Aspiration to publish in 2022 for 2021 survey (date TBC with NHT) and every subsequent year	Analysing the outcomes of the NHT survey and comparing them with previous years will provide an insight into the opinions of buses users. This enables us to understand what measures have been successful, and which aspects of bus travel requires further attention
On-board surveys	Aspiration to publish in August 2022 for a July 2022 survey, and every subsequent year	Analysing the outcomes of the on-board survey and comparing them with the survey conducted in 2021 will provide an insight into the opinions of buses users. This enables us to understand what measures have been successful, and which aspects of bus travel requires further attention. On-board surveys give bus users a voice and provides an annual opportunity for passengers to engage directly with the Council to provide feedback. On-board surveys also allows us to have an understanding of the levels of new bus users and climate impacts by asking the relevant questions around bus usage and behaviour change.

Table 7. Reporting Plan

APPENDIX A

BSIP Overview Table

BSIP Overview Table Template

Name of authority or authorities:	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Franchising or Enhanced Partnership (or both):	Enhanced Partnerships
Date of publication:	October 2021
Date of next annual update:	October 2022
URL of published report:	https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/transport-and-streets/public-transport

Targets	2018/19	2019/20	Target for 2024/25	Description of how each will be measured
Reliability and Journey times (% bus services running on time)	95%	87%	>95%	Measured using a combination of published DfT statistics and punctuality figures from operators. Journey times to be explored in further detail in wider bus network review proposed as a short-term measure
Passenger numbers (bus trips per head of population)	9.3	9.3	>20	Measured using a combination of published DfT statistics and patronage figures from operators
Average passenger satisfaction (NHT survey local bus services overall score)	52%	48%	70%	Measured using the overall local bus services score for RBWM in the NHT survey

Delivery - Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/No	Explanation
Make improvements to bus services and planning		
<i>More frequent and reliable services</i>		
Review service frequency	Yes	Service frequency analysed in 'current offer' section of BSIP. A short-term measure of a wider bus network review is proposed which will further review frequencies and make recommendations. An additional short-term

		measure is proposed to conduct a trial of increased frequencies on a package of routes with at least one operator.
Increase bus priority measures	Yes	A short-term measure is proposed to conduct a feasibility study into potential infrastructure improvements such as bus priority measures. Potential locations have been identified from discussions with operators and evidenced using bus stop timing data. A medium-term measure of implementing the improvements has been included but will depend on the outcomes of the feasibility study should it be progressed
Increase demand responsive services	Yes	A short-term measure of a wider bus network review is proposed which will further review DRT and make recommendations. An additional short-term measure is proposed to conduct a trial of DRT to see how effective it can operate in the Borough.
Consideration of bus rapid transport networks	No	The Council believes that we are not yet in a position to consider advanced bus priority schemes such as bus rapid transport networks. We recognise we are at an earlier stage in our bus network development and will priorities other measures such as trials of increased frequencies, cheaper fares and DRT in the short-term.
<i>Improvements to planning / integration with other modes</i>		
Integrate services with other transport modes	Yes	A short-term measure of a wider bus network review is proposed which will analyse the bus network, including routes, stops and areas of uncovered demand. This will review integration with other transport modes and make recommendations.
Simplify services	Yes	A short-term measure of a wider bus network review is proposed which will analyse the bus network, including routes, stops and areas of uncovered demand. In analysing routes, recommendations will be made that aim to simplify services
Review socially necessary services	Yes	The 'supported services' section reviews socially necessary services and makes recommendations to improve the efficiency of the socially necessary services offered by the Council

Invest in Superbus networks	No	The Council believes that we are not yet in a position to consider advanced schemes such as superbuses. We recognise we are at an earlier stage in our bus network development and will prioritise other measures such as trials of increased frequencies, cheaper fares and DRT in the short-term.
<i>Improvements to fares and ticketing</i>		
Lower fares	Yes	An analysis of fares in the Borough and comparison with fares in neighbouring authorities is conducted in the 'current offer' section. A short-term measure is proposed to trial cheaper fares on a package of routes with at least one operator.
Simplify fares	Yes	A feasibility study is included as a medium-term measure to investigate a multi-operator ticketing scheme that will simplify fares. A long-term measure of implementing the scheme is included and depends on the findings of the study.
Integrate ticketing between operators and transport	Yes	A feasibility study is included as a medium-term measure to investigate a multi-operator ticketing scheme. A long-term measure of implementing the scheme is included and depends on the findings of the study.
Make improvements to bus passenger experience		
<i>Higher spec buses</i>		
Invest in improved bus specifications	Yes	While the Council believes we are not yet in a position to be buying buses or investing in electric buses and the associated charging infrastructure, a medium-term measure is included to invest in retrofitting buses not already fitted with technologies such as WiFi, charging ports and next stop announcements.
Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services	Yes	A short-term measure of a wider bus network review is proposed which will analyse the bus network, including routes, stops and areas of uncovered demand which aims to improve accessibility to buses in the Borough. A medium-term measure is included to invest in retrofitting buses with technologies such as next-stop announcements.
Protect personal safety of bus passengers	No	In engagement with bus users and non-bus users conducted as part of the development of the BSIP, personal safety was not raised as a concern and was rated the highest of all aspects when asked about satisfaction (4.66/5). Other measures were therefore

		prioritised in the BSIP.
Improve buses for tourists	Yes	A short-term measure of a wider bus network review is proposed which will make recommendations around improving buses for tourists. This is particularly important in RBWM which attracts high numbers of tourists.
Invest in decarbonisation	No	The Council believes that we are not yet in a position to invest in decarbonisation. We recognise we are at an earlier stage in our bus network development and will priorities other measures such as trials of increased frequencies, cheaper fares and DRT in the short-term.
<i>Improvements to passenger engagement</i>		
Passenger charter	Yes	We have committed to a Bus Passenger Charter, which includes a new webpage on the Council website with route information and an area for passengers to provide feedback.
Strengthen network identity	Yes	A short-term measure of a wider bus network review is proposed which will analyse the whole bus network and make recommendations that strengthen its identity.
Improve bus information	Yes	Information is considered in the 'current offer' section and medium-term measures are proposed to invest in real-time information and improving bus stops for those in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres. An additional medium-term measure is proposed to conduct a feasibility study into a multi-operator ticketing scheme that includes the launch of a website and mobile phone app.



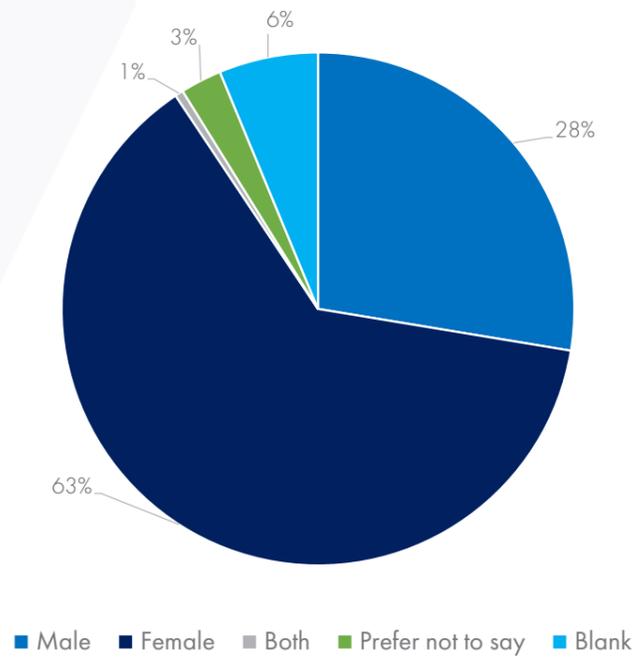
APPENDIX B

On-board survey results

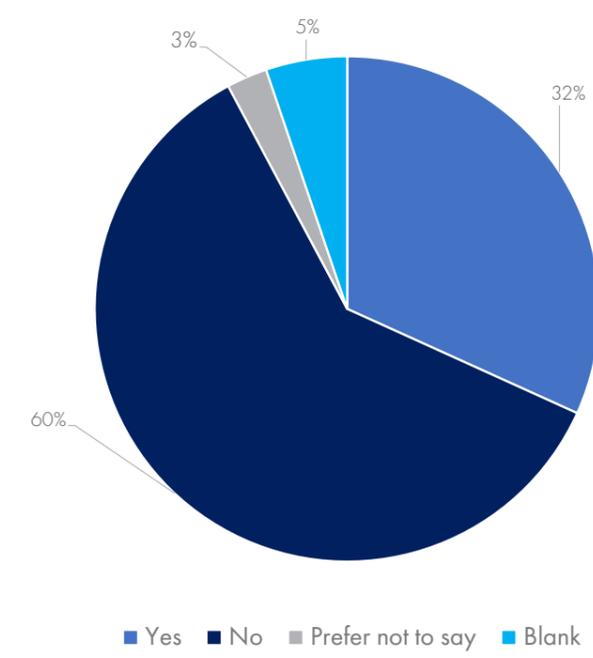
DEMOGRAPHICS

Total: 192 responses

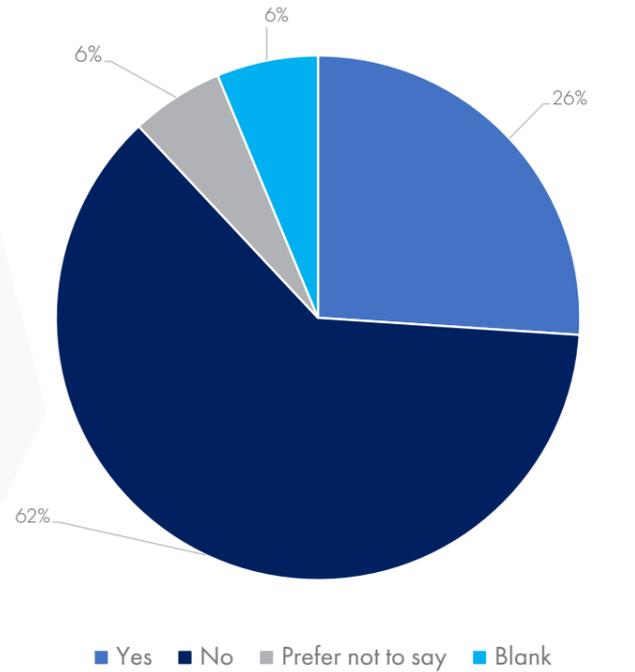
On-board survey: gender split



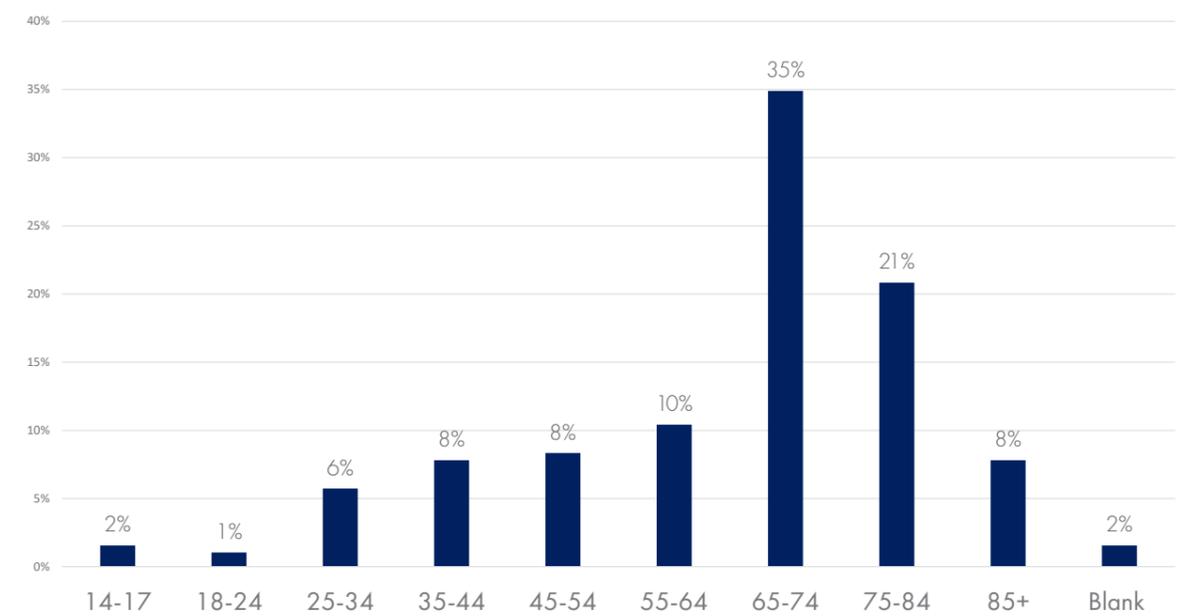
On-board survey: Own a car split



On-board survey: Long-term illness or disability split

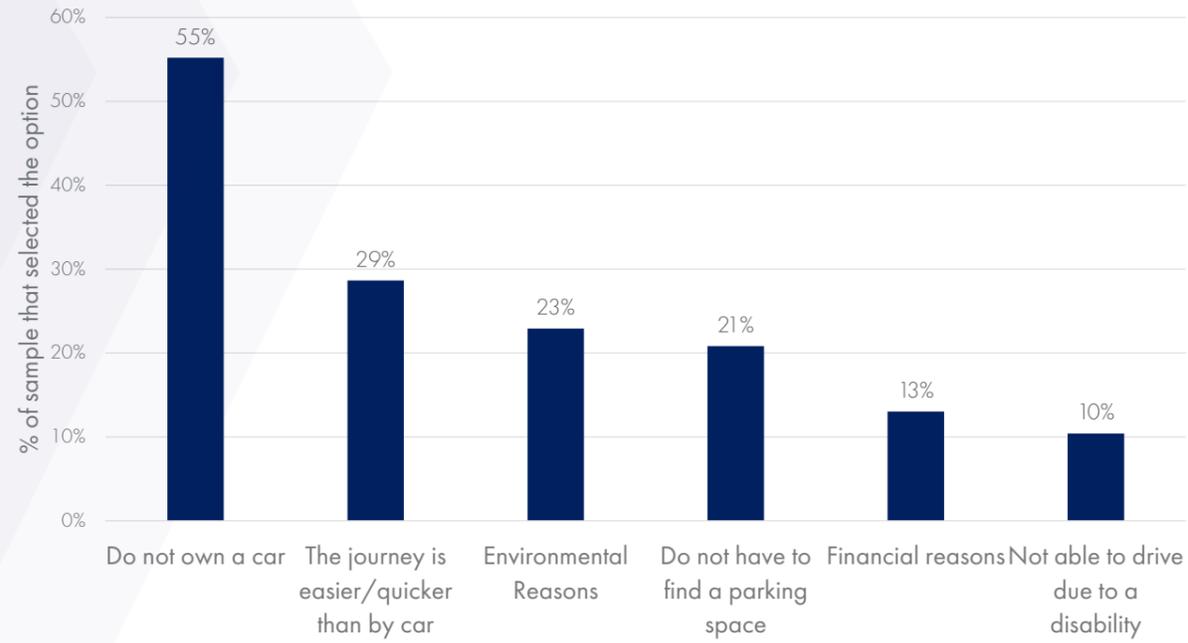


On-board survey: Age split

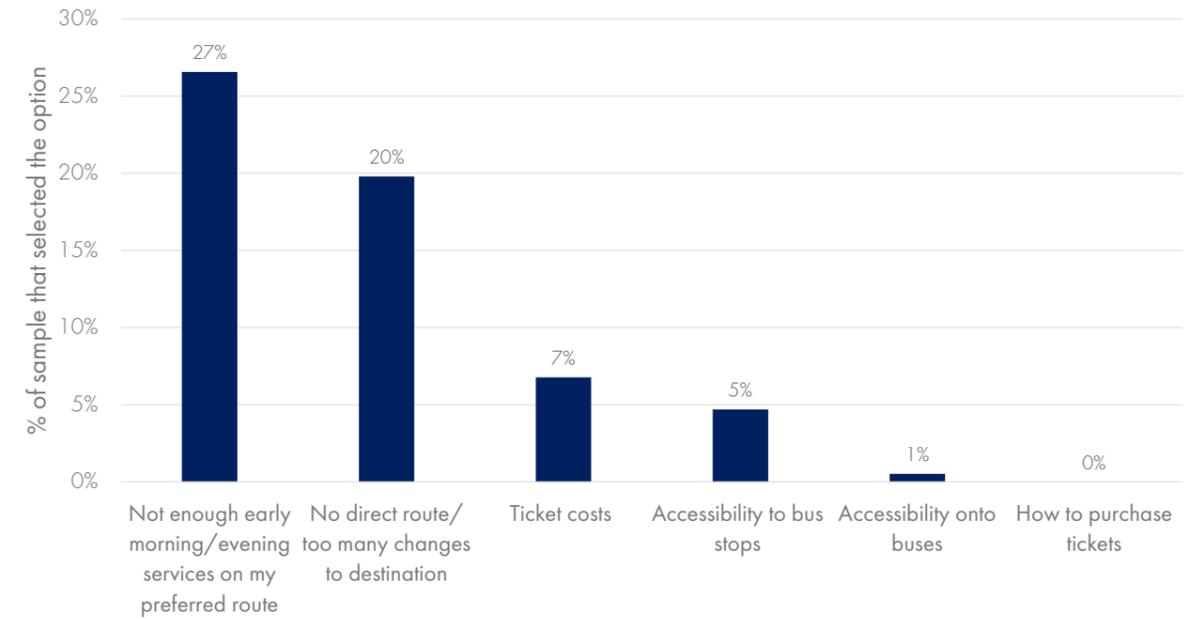


BUS TRAVEL INSIGHTS

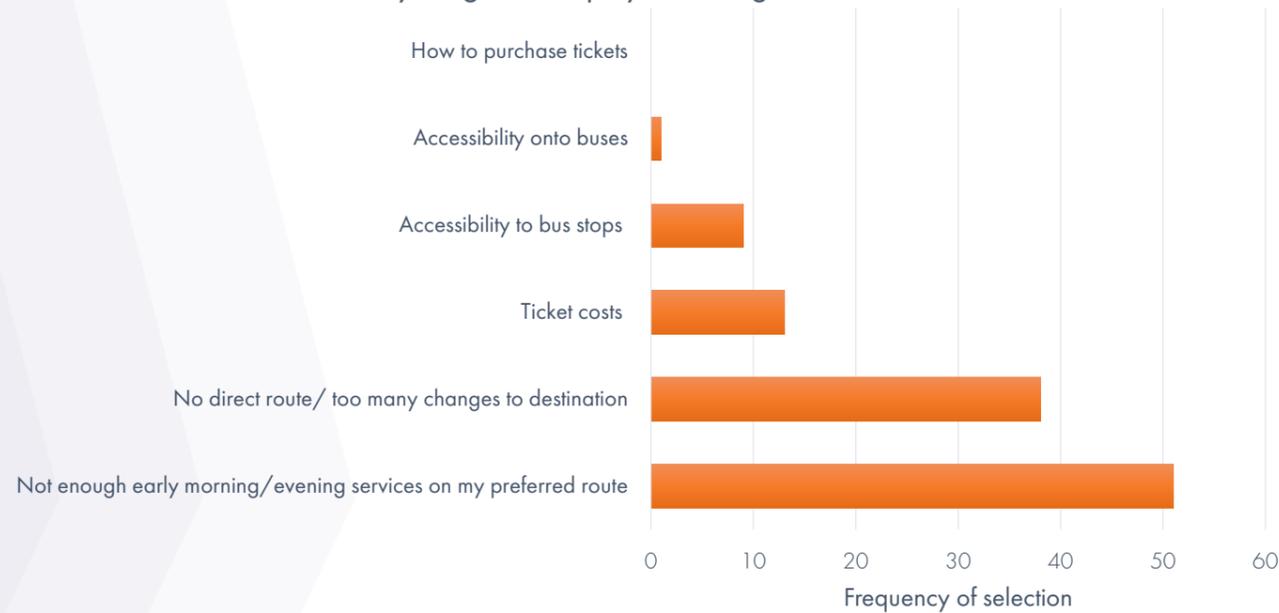
On-board survey: Why do you take the bus?



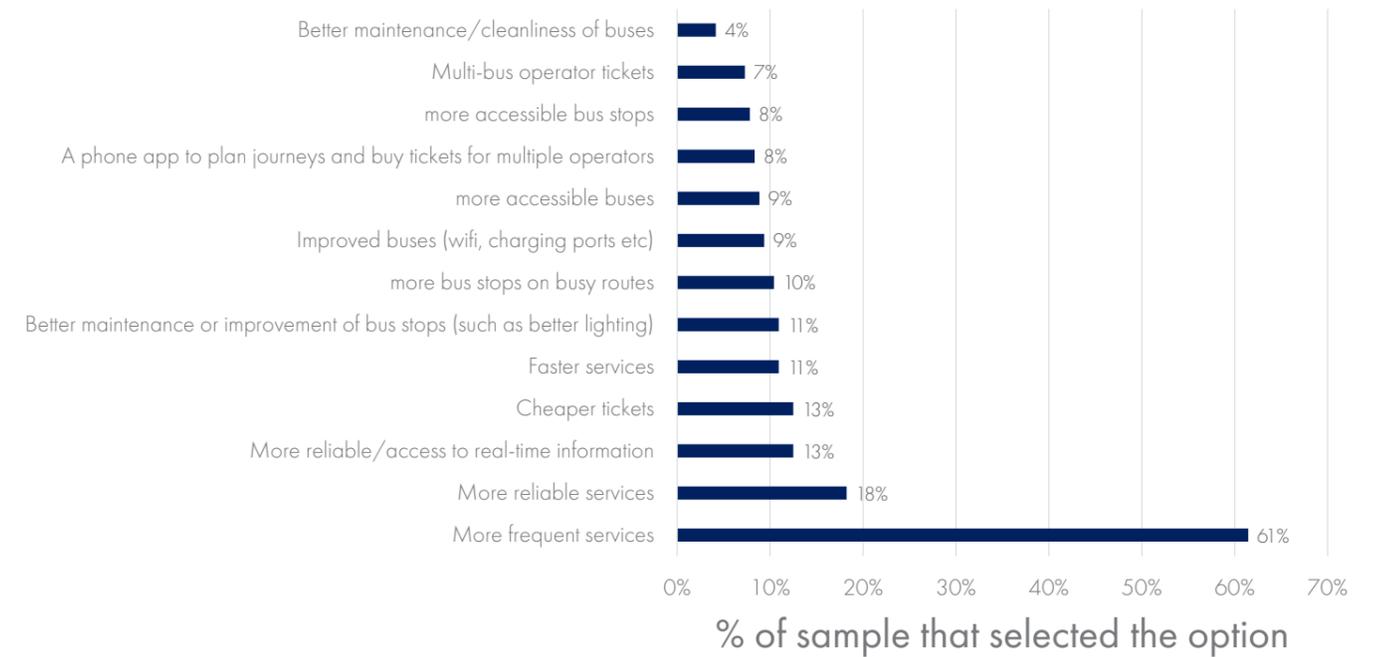
On-board survey: What stops you taking the bus more often?



Is there anything that stops you taking the bus more often?



On-board survey: What would make you use the bus more often?





APPENDIX C

Non-bus user research

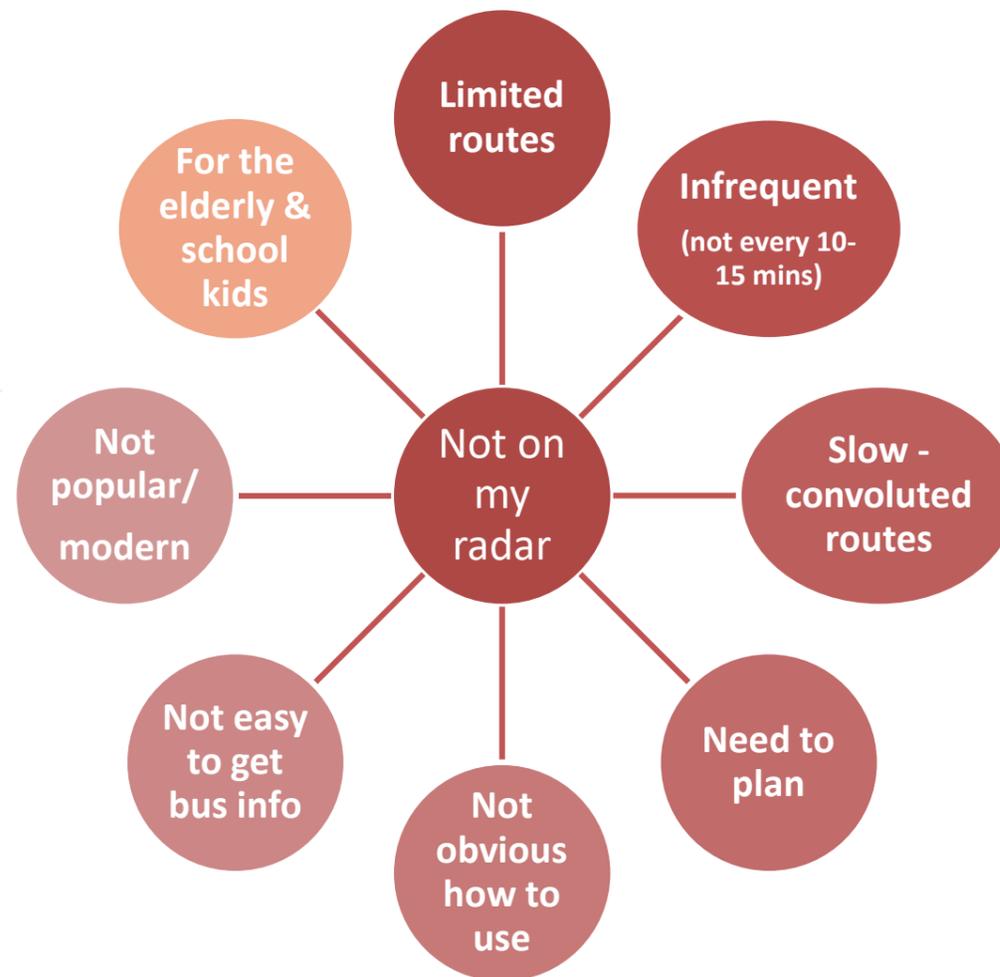
Barriers to using a bus in RBWM are often well-rooted and strong

“I used to get the school bus when I was young. But now I think of old people getting the bus. Pensioners...we have a couple of bus stops in Mortimer and there’s always OAPs and school kids waiting. The ‘school bus’ goes into Reading every day from here.”

“In Reading the buses have all this funky branding.”

“A 15 minutes wait is acceptable. But it’s probably more like 30 minutes. 3 an hour, every 20 minutes feels like about the ends of acceptability.”

“There’s a bus stop outside our house ..the one on the opposite side goes to Staines. I occasionally see someone waiting for a bus. But it’s rare I see someone using the bus.”

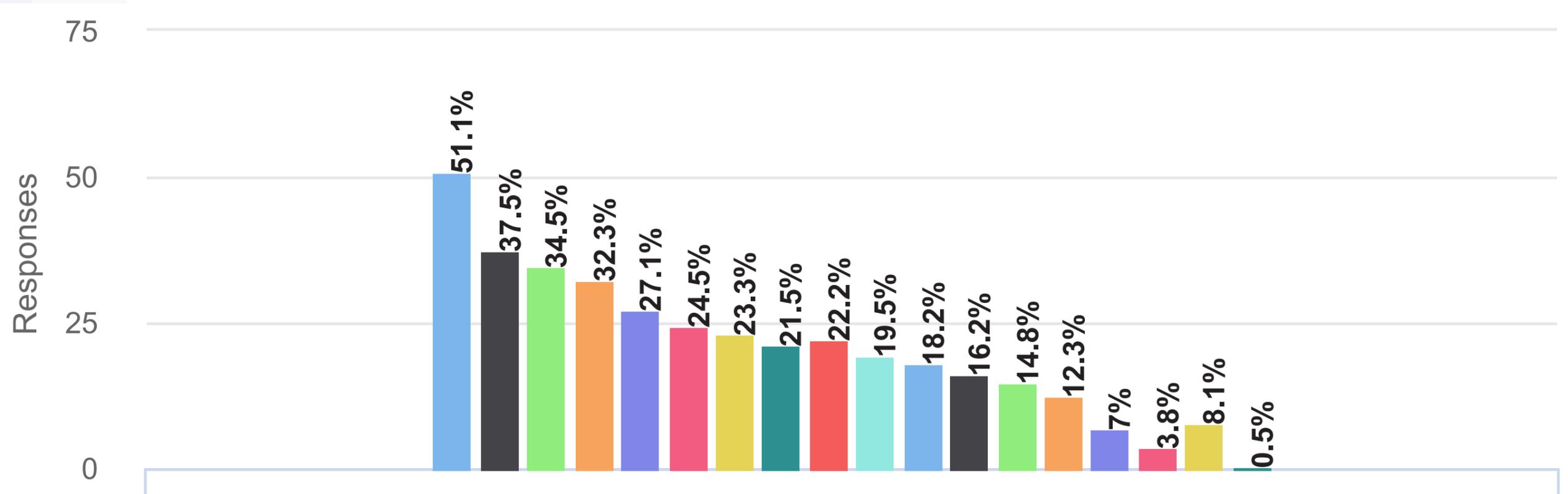


“In London it feels like everybody does it. It does feel like it [getting the bus] is something for people who can’t drive or are elderly.”

“It’s easier to go to Reading by train by the time we pay to get car parking and with the traffic. But generally, its easier by car. 9 times out of 10 we’re nipping here and there, dropping the kids off somewhere. I’d rather cut off my legs than give up my car.”

“I used to hate the bus timetables. Whereas I know the train is every 35 mins. 20 past and 10 to. You know the train is going to run. Buses might get caught up in traffic and not be reliable. It’s inconsistent.”

What would make people use buses



- Cheaper fares
- Cleaner buses
- Better live information on arrival times, schedules, etc on an app
- Wi fi on the buses
- Feeling safer
- Better live information on arrival times, schedules, etc at the bus stop
- Integrated tickets (with trains, for example)
- More accessible bus stops
- Having to pay to drive into town
- Other
- More frequent service
- Better punctuality
- Tickets that work across multiple bus companies
- More late night buses
- More bus lanes
- Lower speed limits for cars
- Nothing
- More bus routes

APPENDIX D

Problem locations

OPERATOR	PROBLEM LOCATION	ROUTES AFFECTED	STOP	FINDINGS
White Bus	Cannon Crossroads, the junction of the A329 and B383 north of Sunningdale, can be congested in the PM peak and cause delays, though this has yet to become a major issue post-covid.	1	Cannon Crossroads	Average variance at Cannon Crossroads between 16:00-18:00 is 3 minutes and 27 seconds late Average variance at Cannon Crossroads at all times is 4 minutes and 46 seconds late
	Windsor Town Centre can be congested, especially in PM peaks on weekdays and from 12-3 on Saturdays. The bus stop provision is not ideal because bus stops often get crowded – causing a backlog of vehicles and confused passengers. Only one bus needs to stop at the bus stop outside WHSmith and, with the taxis opposite, the town is completely blocked while the bus is waiting there. Since the withdrawal of service 10 and reduction in services 16/16A, there have been fewer issues of bus congestion, but if this scheme is to increase the number of buses again then it will come back. Parking can be an issue in the town, as well as delivery lorries and the taxis.	1, W1, P1	Barclays bank	(W1) Average variance at Barclays bank at PM times on weekdays (no Saturday data) is 58 seconds early (W1) Average variance at Barclays bank at all times is 30 seconds late
	Sunninghill High Street causes lots of congestion from the parked cars on the main road. This is more of an issue towards Ascot as that's the side on which cars are parked. Reallocating parking spaces in the area to improve congestion would also improve reliability of the bus service	1	Sunninghill, High street shops	Average variance at Sunninghill High St INBOUND is 2 minutes 59 seconds late Average variance at Sunninghill High St OUTBOUND is 8 minutes and 9 seconds late
Thames Valley	Traffic Congestion especially on school days, peak times and weekends in Windsor High Street due to road layout on River Street. No bus priority measures in Windsor High Street.	2/16/702/3	Windsor, Parish Church	(2) Average variance at Parish Church is 3 minutes and 17 seconds late (2) Average variance for all stops is 3 minutes and 54 seconds late
	Taxi rank blocking the flow of traffic and food takeaway delivery drivers parking outside McDonalds in Windsor	2/702/3	-	No nearby bus stop
	Slough bound bus stop (All Saints Church) - Buses unable to get close to kerb and to drop off customers safely because buses can hit (tailswing) nearby pillar box.	702/3	-	Awaiting Reading buses data
	Traffic Congestion on Winkfield Road at peak times and Legoland closing time. Traffic lights at the junction of Clewer Hill Road and Winkfield Road should be replaced with mini roundabouts to improve traffic flow	702/3	-	Awaiting Reading buses data

OPERATOR	PROBLEM LOCATION	ROUTES AFFECTED	STOP	FINDINGS
Thames Valley	No right turn (except buses) coming down the hill by the car park towards Slough at the top of river street. Will allow traffic to flow easier and divert traffic away from town centre.	702/703/2	WH Smith, Arthur Road	(2) Average variance at Arthur Road is 3 minutes and 13 seconds late (2) Average variance for all stops is 3 minutes and 54 seconds late
	The A4 constantly has roadworks	53/15	Dumb bell, Bishops centre, Ellington road	(15) Average variance at the 3 stops (Dumb Bell PH, Bishops Centre and Ellington) is 4 minutes and 56 seconds late (15) Average variance for all stops is 2 minutes and 53 seconds late
	Make bus, taxi & delivery only and ban cars on Windsor High Street		-	Demonstrated in Parish Church findings (2)
	Phased to allow more traffic to flow with Legoland	16/16A/702/3	-	Awaiting Reading buses data
	Severe congestion, parked taxis, illegal parking, esp evenings & Sundays when no wardens on Windsor High Street		-	Demonstrated in Parish Church findings (2)
	Very tight, blind bend, vehicles have to reverse if they meet (often)	8	Ray Street	Average variance at Ray Street is 2 minutes and 09 seconds late Average variance for all stops is 1 minutes and 13 seconds late
	Tight times at rush hours	8	All stops	Average variance for all stops at peak times is 1 minute and 2 seconds late Average variance for all stops at all times is 1 minutes and 13 seconds late
Arriva	Cookham pound where the road is very narrow and car drivers don't give way to our buses.	37	Cookham Rise Station, Bourne End Station	Average variance for all stops is 45 seconds late Average variance at Bourne End Inbound is 1 minute and 49 seconds late Average variance at Cookham Rise Railway Station Outbound is 8 seconds late

APPENDIX E

Bus fares in RBWM

OPERATOR	ROUTE	AREA SERVED	ADULT SINGLE	ADULT RETURN	ADULT DAY	NOTES
Arriva	37	High Wycombe - Maidenhead	2.70	2.80	4.70	
First	8	Slough - Heathrow T5	N/A	N/A	6.00	Slough and Windsor Zone. Berkshire Zone (to T5) is £7.50
	4	Maidenhead - Heathrow T5	N/A	N/A	6.00	Slough and Windsor Zone. Berkshire Zone (to T5) is £7.50
Reading	702	Legoland - London	2.00	3.50	20.00	Price given is lowest fare within Windsor (Windsor Parish Church to Windsor boys school). simplySlough and Windsor fare with Thames Valley buses - Adult day £5.50
	703	Bracknell - Heathrow T5	2.00	3.50	20.00	Price given is lowest fare within Windsor (Windsor Parish Church to Windsor boys school)
Red Eagle	63/68	Slough - Maidenhead				Awaiting confirmation from operator
Thames Valley	3	Maidenhead	2.60	3.90	4.70	Price given is lowest fare (Maidenhead Centre to All Saints Church)
	2	Slough to Dedworth	2.00	3.50	5.50	Price given is lowest fare (Windsor Town Centre to Windsor Boys School)
	7	Maidenhead	2.60	3.90	4.70	Price given is lowest fare (Maidenhead centre to Larchfield)
	8	Maidenhead	2.60	3.90	4.70	
	5	Slough	2.50	3.50	5.50	Price given is lowest fare (Slough Bus Station to Chalvey Shopping Centre)
	9	Maidenhead	2.60	3.90	4.70	Price given is lowest fare (Maidenhead centre to Australia Avenue)
	15	Maidenhead - Windsor - Slough	2.00	3.50	4.70	Price given is lowest fare (Windsor Road McDonalds to Slough bus station)

OPERATOR	ROUTE	AREA SERVED	ADULT SINGLE	ADULT RETURN	ADULT DAY	NOTES
Thames Valley	16	Maidenhead - Windsor	2.60	3.90	4.70	Price given is lowest fare (St Mark's Hospital to Maidenhead centre)
	53	Bracknell - Maidenhead - Wexham Park	2.60	3.60	4.70	Price given is lowest fare (Maidenhead Bridge to Dumb Bell)
	127	Maidenhead - Reading	2.20	3.50	4.70	Price given is lowest fare
	234/5	Maidenhead	2.60	3.90	4.70	Price given is lowest fare (Larchfield to Maidenhead centre)
	238	Maidenhead	2.60	3.90	4.70	
	239	Maidenhead	2.60	3.90	4.70	
White Bus	P1	Windsor park and ride	0.00	N/A	N/A	Travel anywhere to or from Datchet is £1 single
	W1	Windsor - Dedworth	2.30	3.70	8.00	Price given is lowest fare
	1	Windsor - Ascot	1.30	1.90	8.00	Price given is lowest fare
Bear Buses	305	Staines - Colnbrook				Awaiting confirmation from operator

APPENDIX F

Funding for proposed
measures

Measure	Approximate funding required	Explanation
Review of the RBWM bus network	£35,000 - £65,000	In preliminary discussions with consultants, we were provided with a cost of between £35,000 and £65,000 to conduct a review of the RBWM bus network. A more precise cost can be provided once a scope of the review has been agreed.
Trial of cheaper tickets	£300,000 for a three-year trial (£100,000 per year)	In discussions with an operator in the Borough, it was calculated that to reduce fares by 25% on all routes within Maidenhead would equate to £100,000 annually. This is based on data from October 2019. Therefore, we have provided a figure of £100,000 per year which will cover that 25% loss in revenue. The ambition for the trial is that the full £100,000 annually is not required, however it is important that it is available to provide operators that guarantee that they will not be out of pocket as a result of the trial. The percentage that fares will be reduced by, and the scope of the scheme, has not yet been agreed.
Trial of discounted fares for RBWM advantage card holders	Up to £600,000 for a three-year trial (up to £200,000 per year)	In discussions with an operator in the Borough, it was calculated that to reduce fares by 25% on all routes within the Borough would equate to £200,000 annually. This is based on data from October 2019. It is also based on trips starting within RBWM with any destination, and on the assumption that everyone in the Borough has access to a smartcard. We recognise that this is not the case, and the ambition for the trial is that the full £200,000 annually is not required, however it is important that it is available to provide operators that guarantee that they will not be out of pocket as a result of the trial. The percentage that fares will be discounted by, and the scope of the scheme, has not yet been agreed.
Trial of increased frequencies and more evening and Sunday services	Up to £1.5m for a three-year trial (up to £500,000 per year)	In discussions with operators it was calculated that to provide an additional bus on any route would equate to approximately £100,000. In order for any impact to be seen of increasing frequencies, we would like to allow up to 5 routes to have an additional bus. Therefore, for 5 buses over three years a cost of up to £1.5m is provided. The ambition for the trial is that the full £500,000 annually is not required, however it is important that it is available to provide operators that guarantee that they will not be out of pocket as a result of the trial. The specific routes and scope of the scheme has not yet been agreed.
Demand Responsive Transport Trial	£150,000 - £500,000	A cost of a DRT scheme depends on the scope of the scheme, in terms of number of routes, number of vehicles, mileage, expected patronage etc. However, we have analysed case studies of other schemes nationally, including MK Connect in Milton Keynes, Arriva Click in Watford, and a smaller scheme in Cannock Chase District Council. Funding of between £150,000 and £500,000 will allow us to set up a DRT scheme, invest in vehicles and arrange operations. For a small, local scheme, we estimate a cost of approximately £70,000 for a scheme operating six days a week using 2 minibuses. Therefore, to operate on at least 2 routes with 5 minibuses, we would require at least £150,000 of capital funding.
Investment in technology for operators	£10,000 - £50,000	In discussions with an operator it was calculated that on-board ticket technology that allows for arrival and departure data to be collected and analysed costs approximately £100,000 for 60 buses. In working with operators much fewer buses would require the installation of this technology. An assumption of 6 buses was made based on the routes of smaller operators. This would equate to £10,000, however the figure provided by an operator for 60 buses is likely to be discounted due to the large number of buses. Therefore, we have allowed room for increased costs, and also for us to explore additional technologies such as tap on tap off technology.
Creation of a bus passenger charger	Internal to RBWM	N/A
Creation of a RBWM webpage	Internal to RBWM	N/A
Feasibility study into multi-operator ticketing, including website and phone app	£35,000 - £65,000	In preliminary discussions with consultants, we were provided with a cost of between £35,000 and £65,000 to conduct a study. A more precise cost can be provided once a scope of the study has been agreed.

Measure	Approximate funding required	Explanation
Improvements to bus stops in town centres	Up to £500,000	There are a combined 96 bus stops in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres. The replacement of a bus stop is estimated to cost approximately £10k based on internal costs, and comparisons with the costs of other Local Authorities. The number of bus stops selected for improvement will depend on the outcomes of the wider bus network review suggested as a short-term measure. However, should slightly over half of the combined bus stops be selected for improvement, an initial estimate of the programme cost is up to £500k
Roll-out of real-time information at bus stops in town centres	Up to £750,000	There are a combined 73 bus stops in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres without real-time information. The approximate cost of the hardware and installation per stop is £7,500. Additionally, annual maintenance of the real-time costs approximately £360 per unit. Therefore, to cover all bus stops in the town centre without real-time, in addition to five years of maintenance, the Council would be looking for funding of up to £750,000 from DfT. In line with other improvements to bus stops, the specific stops identified for real-time data will depend on the outcomes of the review of the Borough-wide network as identified in the short-term measures.
Make improvements to buses	Up to £50,000	In discussions with operators it was calculated that USB installation costs approximately £1,500 per bus, and WiFi installation costs approximately £1,000 per bus. Assuming a retrofit programme of 20 buses across all operators that will equate to £50,000.
Feasibility study into potential highway infrastructure improvements	£35,000 - £65,000	In preliminary discussions with consultants, we were provided with a cost of between £35,000 and £65,000 to conduct a study. A more precise cost can be provided once a scope of the study has been agreed.
Feasibility study into the construction of a bus station in Maidenhead	£35,000 - £65,000	In preliminary discussions with consultants, we were provided with a cost of between £35,000 and £65,000 to conduct a study. A more precise cost can be provided once a scope of the study has been agreed.
Creation of a multi-operator ticketing scheme, including website and phone app	Up to £5m	The scope of any multi-operator scheme will depend on the outcomes of the feasibility study. This will help to inform the costs of the scheme. An indicative cost of up to £5m has been provided which would cover elements including the delivery of a commercial smart ticketing product, sales infrastructure, back-office functionality, marketing and promotion and the development of a website and phone app. The cost is based on research into other multi-operator schemes, including in York, Transport for the West Midlands and the West of England Combined Authority
Infrastructure Improvements	Up to £10m	The scope of any infrastructure improvements will depend on the outcomes of the feasibility study. This will help us to inform the costs of any improvements. A cost of up to £10m allows us to explore transformative schemes, such as town-centre redesigns that will improve bus reliability.
The construction of a bus station in Maidenhead	£5million - £10million	The scope of any scheme will depend on the outcomes of the feasibility study. This will help us to inform the costs of the construction of a bus station. A cost between £5million and £10million is provided due to the estimated costs of purchasing the land, designing, consulting and constructing the scheme. This cost is based on schemes of a similar size and scope.



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
WINDSOR AND
MAIDENHEAD

**Qualitative & Quantitative
Research Findings:
Bus Usage
31st August 2021**

CTA

Caroline
Thompson
Associates

Background

- As part of its strategic business planning, and to meet obligations to the local authorities, the RBWM wishes to understand current residents' behaviours and attitudes towards using buses within the borough - to establish where RBWM/how should invest to encourage more people to take the bus in the future. The RBWM currently has comparatively low uptake of bus travel vs other UK boroughs.
- RBWM commissioned market research amongst its residents to provide robust data regarding the perceived barriers to using the buses/using them more:
 - A **Quantitative** survey on-line with residents in the borough:
 - Online survey with residents of Windsor & Maidenhead
 - Respondents recruited via specialist panel
 - Survey hosted on Survey Mechanics
 - A **Qualitative** survey consisting of 15 interviews on Zoom with non-users of buses.
- The key question which needs to be addressed is what is stopping people using the buses, with a further 'build' question being where/how should RBWM invest limited resources to encourage more usage of buses in the future.

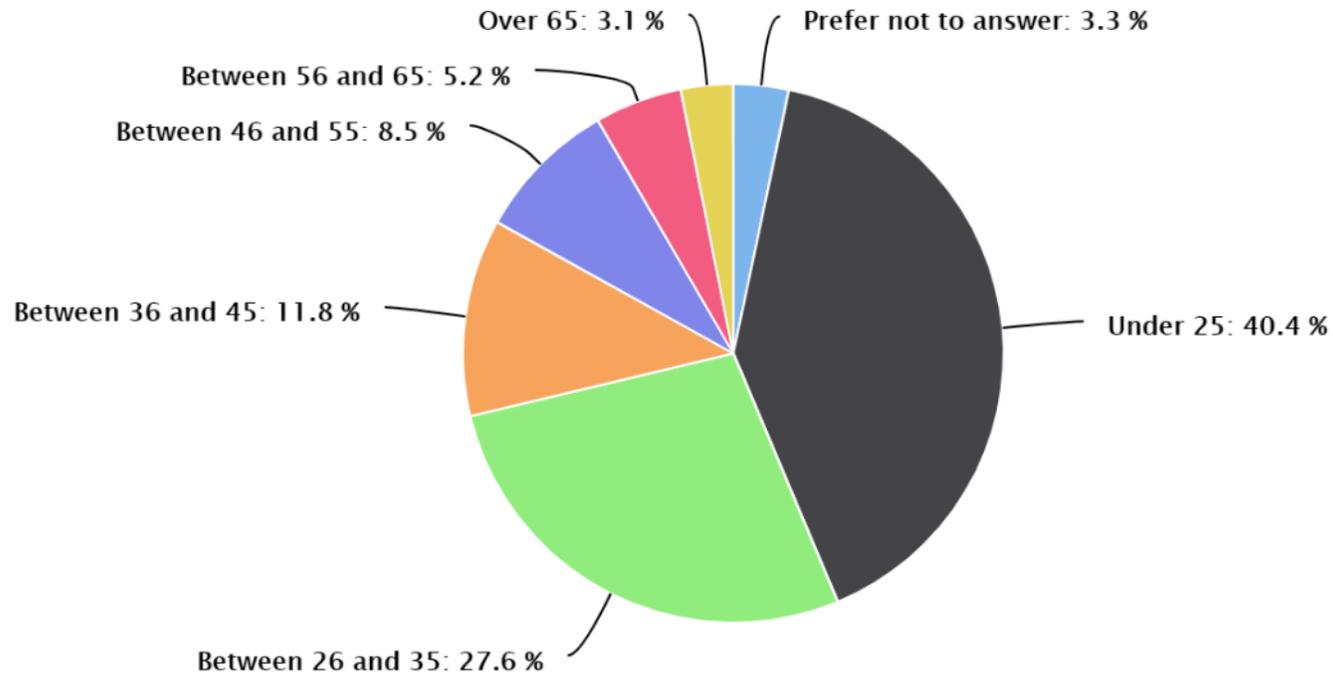
Research Objectives

- **To provide contextual insight about current transport choices when travelling within the RBWM, including:**
 - the kind of trips people are making (shopping, school, visiting friends/relatives, work)
 - the mode of transport chosen for these different occasions
 - the reasons for choosing these modes of transport for these trips
 - whether taking the bus is considered, and how feasible an option it is for these trips.
- **To understand attitudes towards using a bus to travel within the borough, inc. positives and negatives.**
- **To elicit the barriers to travelling by bus within the borough, providing a sense of the most/least common barriers; and ascertaining the underlying rational and emotional perceptions that underpin these barriers.**
- **To understand where the potential to uplift usage of buses seems to lie (which parts of the target audience)**
- **To understand what kind of initiatives would be likely to motivate potential bus users to take the bus (more often) in the future.**

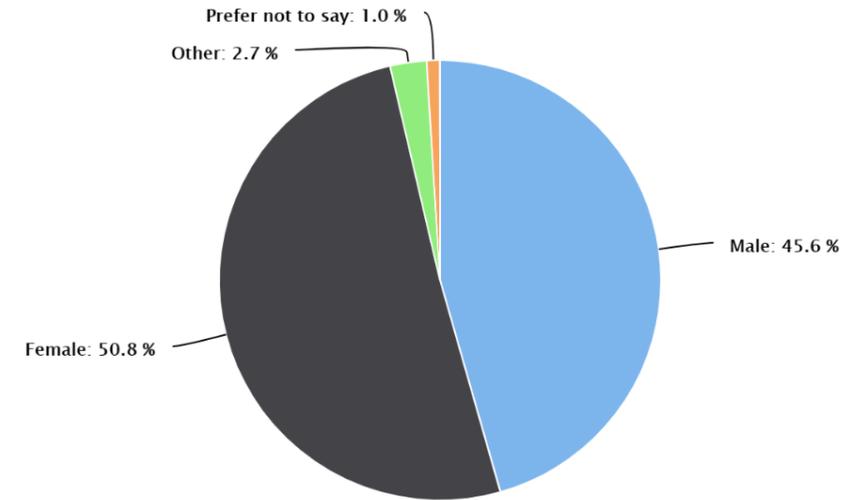


SAMPLE PROFILE – QUANTITATIVE & QUALITATIVE

Profile of the Quantitative Sample: 554 respondents (including 205 bus users)

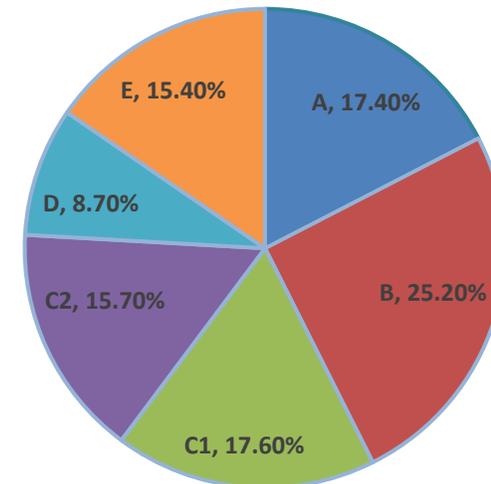


- Prefer not to answer ● Under 25 ● Between 26 and 35
- Between 36 and 45 ● Between 46 and 55 ● Between 56 and 65 ● Over 65



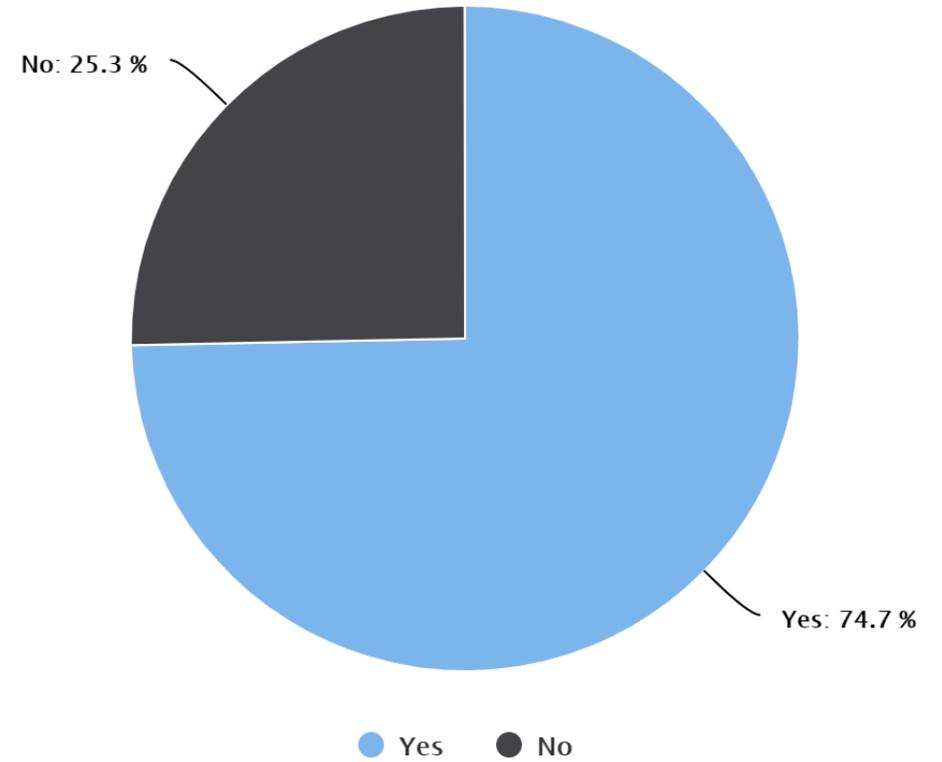
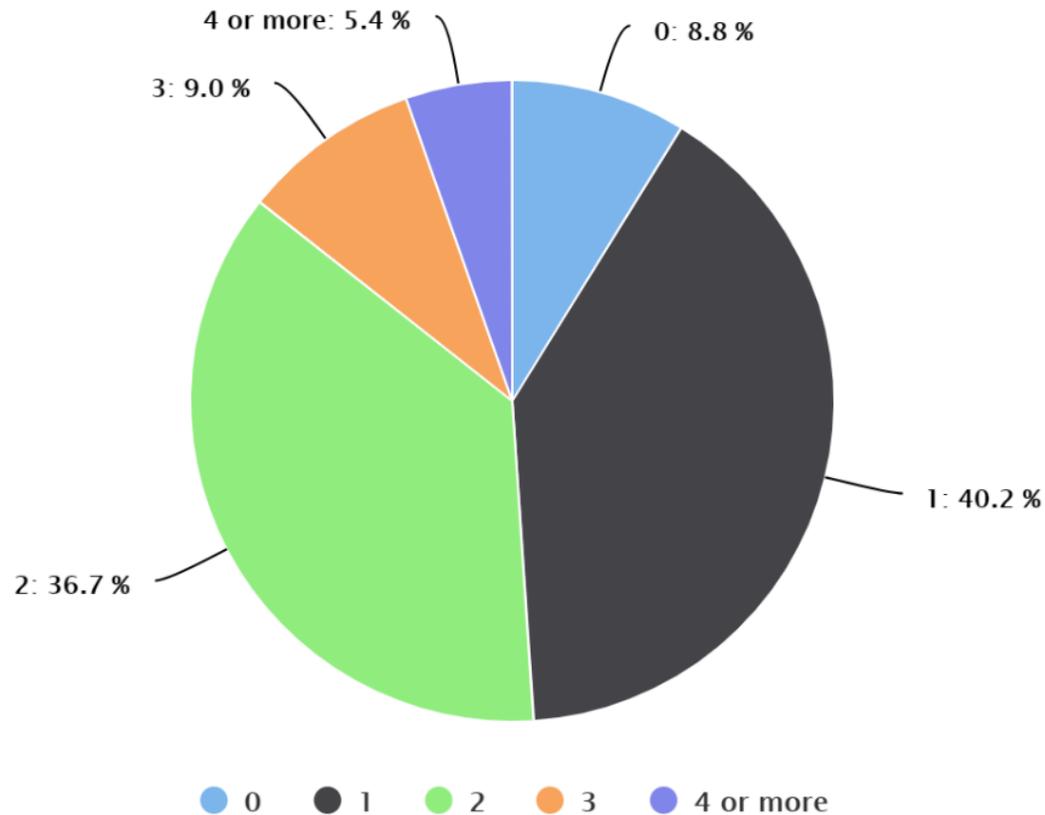
- Male ● Female ● Other ● Prefer not to say

Socio-economic group

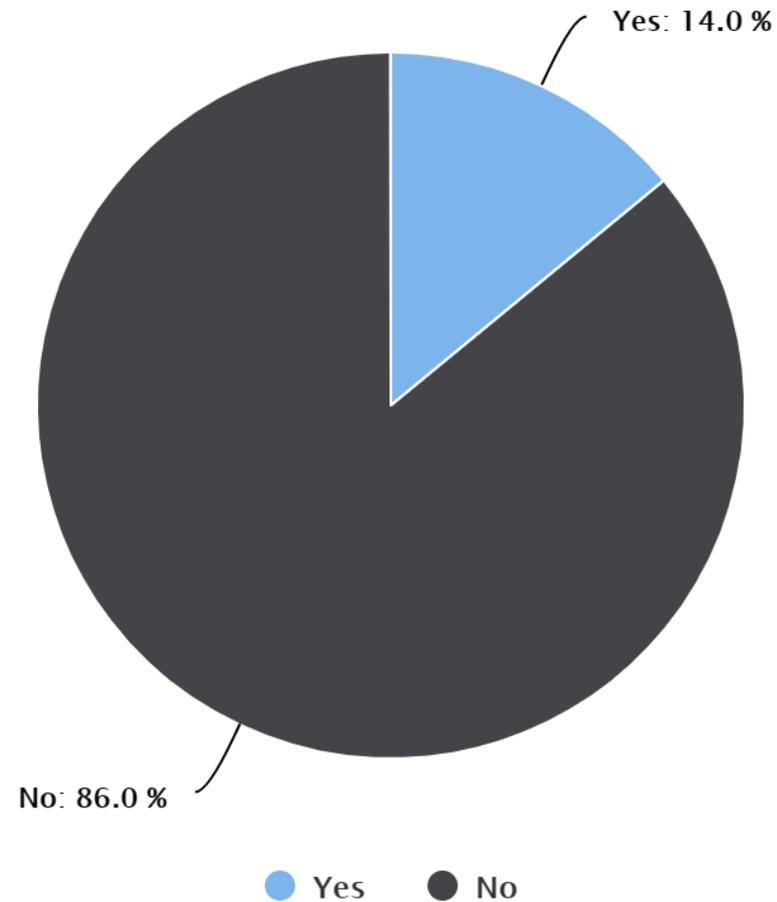


40% had 1 car, and approx 50% had 2+ cars, in their household

"I have a Land Rover Discovery which is really costly, and a small Hyundai which I use everyday for short journeys locally. I also have a Merc soft top, but I am thinking of selling it because we hardly use it."



14% of the quant sample had a long term disability that makes it difficult for them to use public transport



Qualitative Sample of 15 Residents

- Mix of ages - 2 x 20s, 3 x 30s, 5 x 40s, 4 x 50ys, 1 x 60s
- 5 men, 10 women
- Mix of occupations e.g. psychologist, facilities administrator, community carer, several teachers, social services managers, police officer, charity administrator, student, financial administrator
- Mix of urban, semi rural, rural residents
- Living in places like:
 - Old Windsor; Windsor town; Datchet, Sunningdale, Crowthorne, Cookham, Binfield, Winkfield Row, Maidenhead, Sippenham, Wooton Way, Wargreave (Twyford), Mortimer
- Some working locally; some WFH; and a few were commuting further afield
- Everyone had at least one car in the household – but many had 2+ cars
- All were not travelling by bus nowadays but did not reject the idea of using the bus in the future.

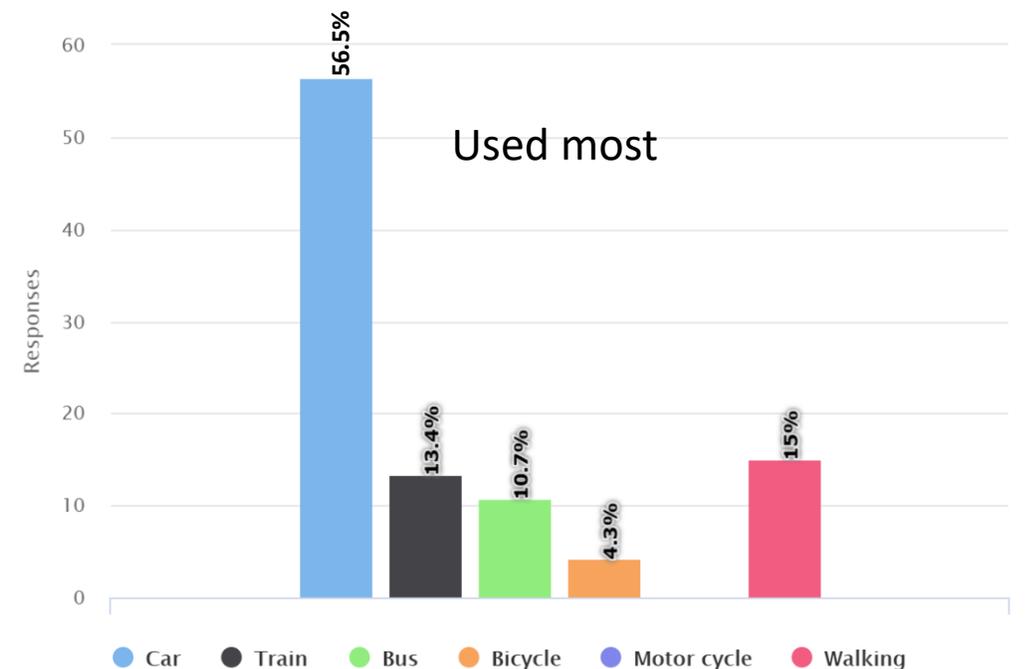
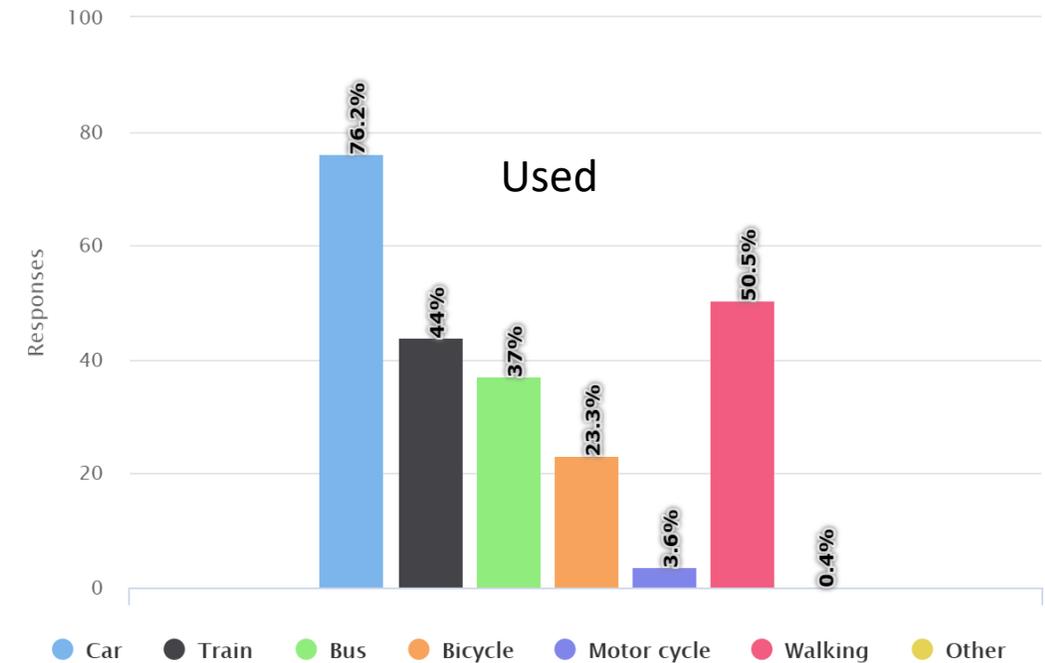




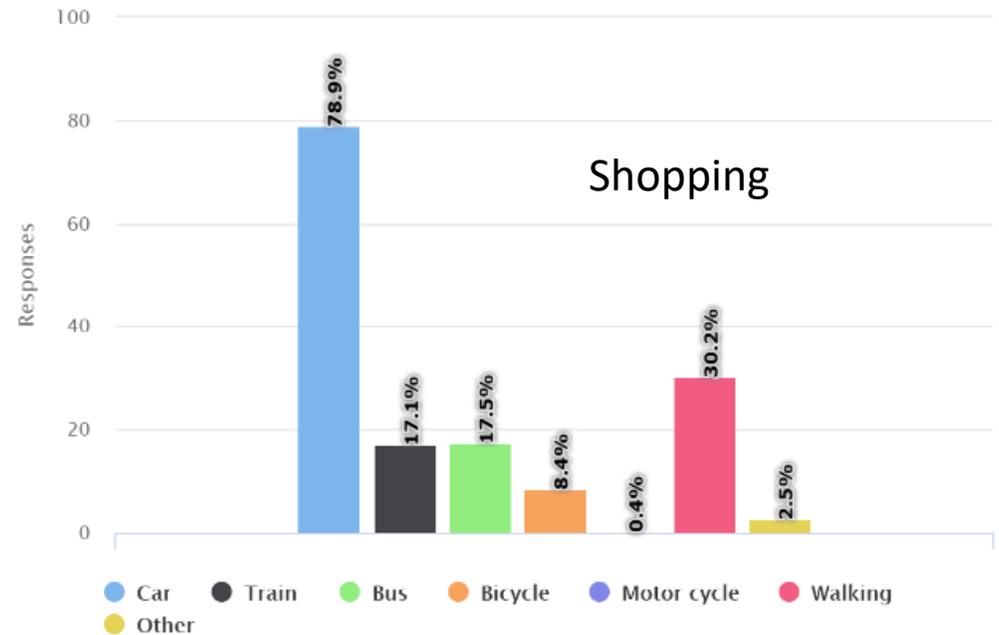
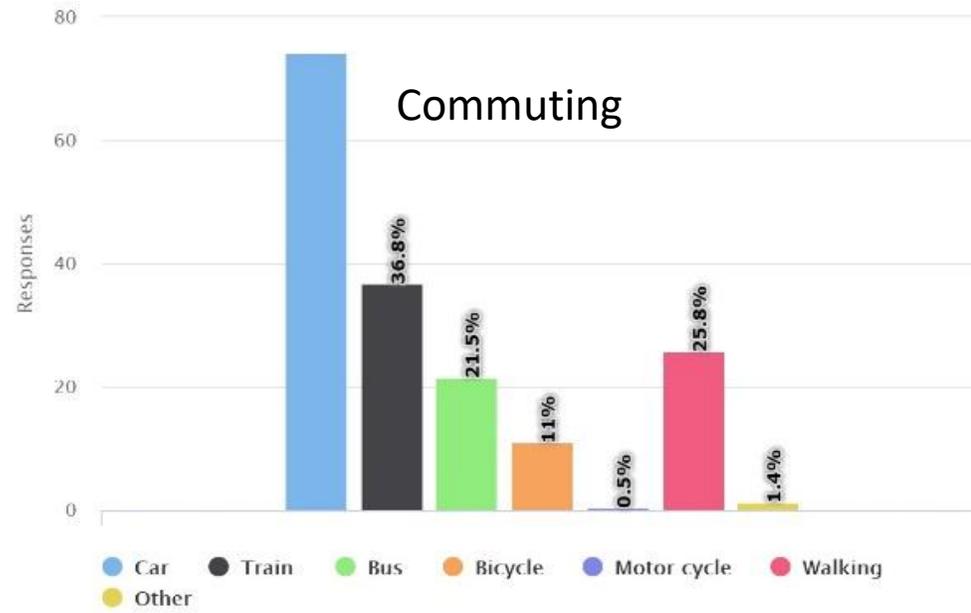
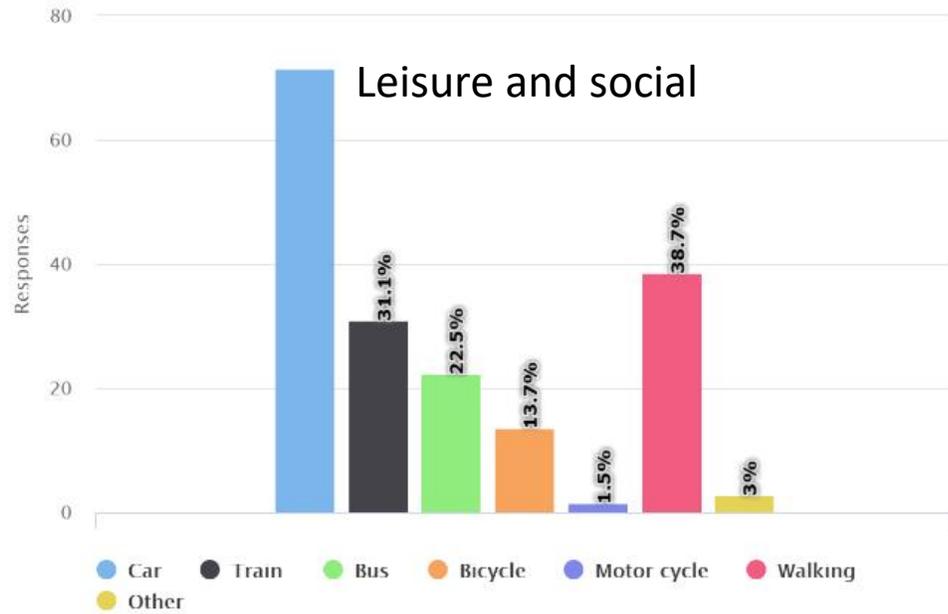
TRANSPORT CHOICES & BEHAVIOURS

Overwhelmingly the car is the most favoured means of transport in the Borough

- Bus users use the bus as part of a wider repertoire of transport modes:
 - only 28% of bus users use the bus most often
 - 68% of bus users also travel by car
 - 78% of bus users travel by other means at least weekly
 - 39% of bus users use the car more than the bus
- Only about a fifth of people (or less) use the bus when commuting (21%), going shopping (17%), or going out for leisure and social purposes (20%).
- The car dominates as the most used mode of transport with the train being used mostly by a about a third of the sample for commuting, leisure and social purposes.
- Cycling also features as a way of moving about the Borough.



Cars are used more often for every purpose



The Qual insight supports the Quant data with non-users of the bus using the car for nearly all types of outing

“The majority of the time it’s in the car”

Trips by themselves

- Driving to work locally & further afield e.g.
 - Maidenhead, Camberley, Thiele, Reading, Greenford, Bracknell, Slough, Basingstoke
- Grocery Shopping, DIY Stores
- Visiting Friends & Family (locally, further afield/outside Borough)
- Going to parks/river to walk (often with dog)
- Going to the gym (before Covid)
- Volunteering (locally)

All driving habitually

Trips with others

- School runs
- Visiting Friends & Family
- Social & shopping outings in towns:
 - **Windsor** - restaurants, cafes, bars, clubs, picnics in the park/by the river, lifestyle shopping (Zara)
 - **Reading** – lifestyle shopping, restaurants & bars etc
 - **Maidenhead** – cinema, shopping, but limited shopping
 - **Bracknell** – lifestyle shopping, restaurants, bars
 - **Ascot** (a few) - for socialising
 - **Guildford** (one mention)– lifestyle shopping, eating out (day/evening)
- Local pubs/restaurants
- Going for walks/picnics

Giving lifts to kids/teenagers

- Meeting friends in town/at their homes, gym, shopping outings, cinema, bowling, school/college, swimming club, scouts

Driving usually....

But these leisure trips are where people already switch the car for the train or an uber/taxi sometimes, or teenagers get the train sometimes.

"If I'm going into London I get the train into Waterloo, but I often drive to Westfield because its easier."

"I drive to Windsor Great Park or the race-course to walk the dog."

"I visit family and friends by car. I have elderly parents in Ascot, and a daughter in Bracknell"

"It just takes too long. My pace of life is so much more manic and it frustrates me waiting for a bus. Although I know from an environmental point of view there should be less cars on the road. But getting the bus means you have to do their schedule rather than yours. I would miss buses all the time! "

"It's just so easy. You're in your own little space. I am aware obviously of the carbon footprint and trying to extend the expiry date of the earth. I know its bad, but I do love the car because it is so easy. We did think about an electric vehicle but it doesn't quite work for doing long trips. "

"It's easier to go to Reading by the train by the time we pay to get car parking and with the traffic. But generally its easier by car. 9 times out of 10 we're nipping here and there, dropping the kids off somewhere. I'd rather cut off my legs than give up my car."

"It's always the car. It's easier. Especially if you have loads of shopping. Like last weekend we went shopping [fashion] and we had 5 bags of stuff because the sales were on."

"There isn't a bus stop on our road. You'd have to walk to the A4 Bath Road first. The car is quick and easy. It's knowing I'll get somewhere on time."

Whilst people are wedded to using their car, some downsides are acknowledged

Pull Factors Towards Car

- **CONVENIENCE & PRACTICALITY:**
 - Door to door
 - Flexibility:
 - Any time, at a moment's notice
 - Can go A → B → C easily
 - Efficient use of time
 - Easier with shopping bags
- **QUICKER**
 - Direct, no changes, no waiting around
- **PRIVACY**
 - Own personal space
- **CHEAPER**
 - Especially vs a train fare
- **SEE NO OTHER CREDIBLE OPTIONS:**
 - *"Buses don't go to places I need to go."*

Push Factors Away from Car

- **INCONVENIENCE & EXPENSE:**
 - **PARKING** a big cost issue
 - Especially Windsor & Reading towns
 - Increasing cost of fuel & maintenance
 - *But expense diminishes if 2+ people*
- **CAN'T DRINK LIQUOR – EVENINGS/WEEKENDS**
- **PREFER TEENAGERS TO BE INDEPENDENT**
- **ENVIRONMENTAL GUILT (in some cases)**
- **SLOW – LOTS OF TRAFFIC:**
 - but a good level of tolerance of traffic

Can be prompts to consider alternatives

There is a readiness to leave the car at home when socializing and shopping – especially when going into towns

People are more likely to consider leaving the car behind:

- To be able to drink alcohol (++)
 - To avoid high parking fees
 - To avoid the hassle of driving and parking.
- **Taxis are cost effective:**
 - especially if shared between 2-4 people, but can still be affordable for one
 - E.g., Uber cab from Clewer Hill Road Windsor to Windsor town is £10-£12 each way
 - E.g., Uber cab from Datchet to Maidenhead is £6 after 30% promo discount
 - E.g., Cab from Reading to Mortimer is £25
 - **Trains can be seen as reasonably cost effective and quick:**
 - Cheaper compared to parking costs or a taxis
 - E.g., Train into Reading from Mortimer is £4 each single ticket
 - E.g., £8.40 return to Guildford from Crowthorne

Leisure trips are important future opportunities for bus uptake.

“If I go from Crowthorne to Reading or Guildford to meet friends I take the train. I hate parking – it’s expensive and its hassle getting there. And it means I can have a drink if it’s like Bottomless Breakfast with Prosecco. It’s cheap and easier.”

“I meet friends in Windsor town – it’s nice but its expensive to park. If I had the choice I would get a bus. There are 2 route options from the Clewer Road – one direct to Windsor and one indirect around Dedworth. It drops you off at Pescod Street in Windsor.”



“Bracknell is a 15 minute drive away, and Windsor is our local town. It’s got good shopping, Zara ...but a few shops have shut down. It’s too busy at the weekend. It’s a nightmare to park anywhere. There is a car park I use which is 50/hour and I walk in, and the main one in Windsor is £2.40. Its so easy as it’s next to Zara. It’s at the bottom of the high street.”

“To go into Windsor with friends it’s cheaper to get a taxi...£5. Whereas 2-3 of us on the bus would probably be £7.50. And the taxi is door to door. Normally its 4 of you.”

“We take the train if we’re having dinner in Reading. The traffic into Reading is horrendous...and we can have a little drink. The parking is ridiculous in Reading. For 2 hours its £8. It’s about 30 minutes on the train but it’s a direct line into Reading. It’s about £4 each way. Then we get the train back. The last one is 11.35pm.”

“By the time we have paid for car parking it costs a fortune so we like to go by train.”

Lots of resistance in this sample to using the bus for work

- No buses service my route for work/impossible by bus
- To get a bus (or a train) would involve a lot of hassle
 - Would need to change
 - Would be slow
 - You'd arrive at work stressed and disheveled
- Inconvenient:
 - too slow – bus takes too convoluted a route
 - Wouldn't be able to fit in other 'tasks' alongside driving to/from work e.g. supermarket shopping, dropping kids at school
- Need the car during the working day to go to clients/other offices
- Since Covid 19, been avoiding taking public transport.

"Oh, it would be impossible to get the bus to work. I commute an hour. It would be longer than that on a bus. So it's an hour to drive. I think it would just be an absolute pain. From here [near Reading] to Basingstoke. And it's like kind of a walk away from the town centre of Basingstoke - a fairly sizable walk."

"During the day [at the office] I need the car...if I'm having to go down to either the police station or further places in Slough. That's so more difficult, really, [without the car] because some of the buses don't go to the places where we need them to go.."

"I couldn't to Camberley. It would be, it would probably triple my time. Oh my God. I it's not feasible. I mean, I'm not actually on a bus route at work anyway,...It wouldn't be impossible. It would involve more walking, I guess. I'd get so hot. I'd have to get up earlier. .."

There seems to be a lot of variation across the Borough in terms of how much access to buses and trains people have

Potentially more about new bus routes or types of bus services

Potentially more about pulling people towards using buses – and introducing new types of bus service

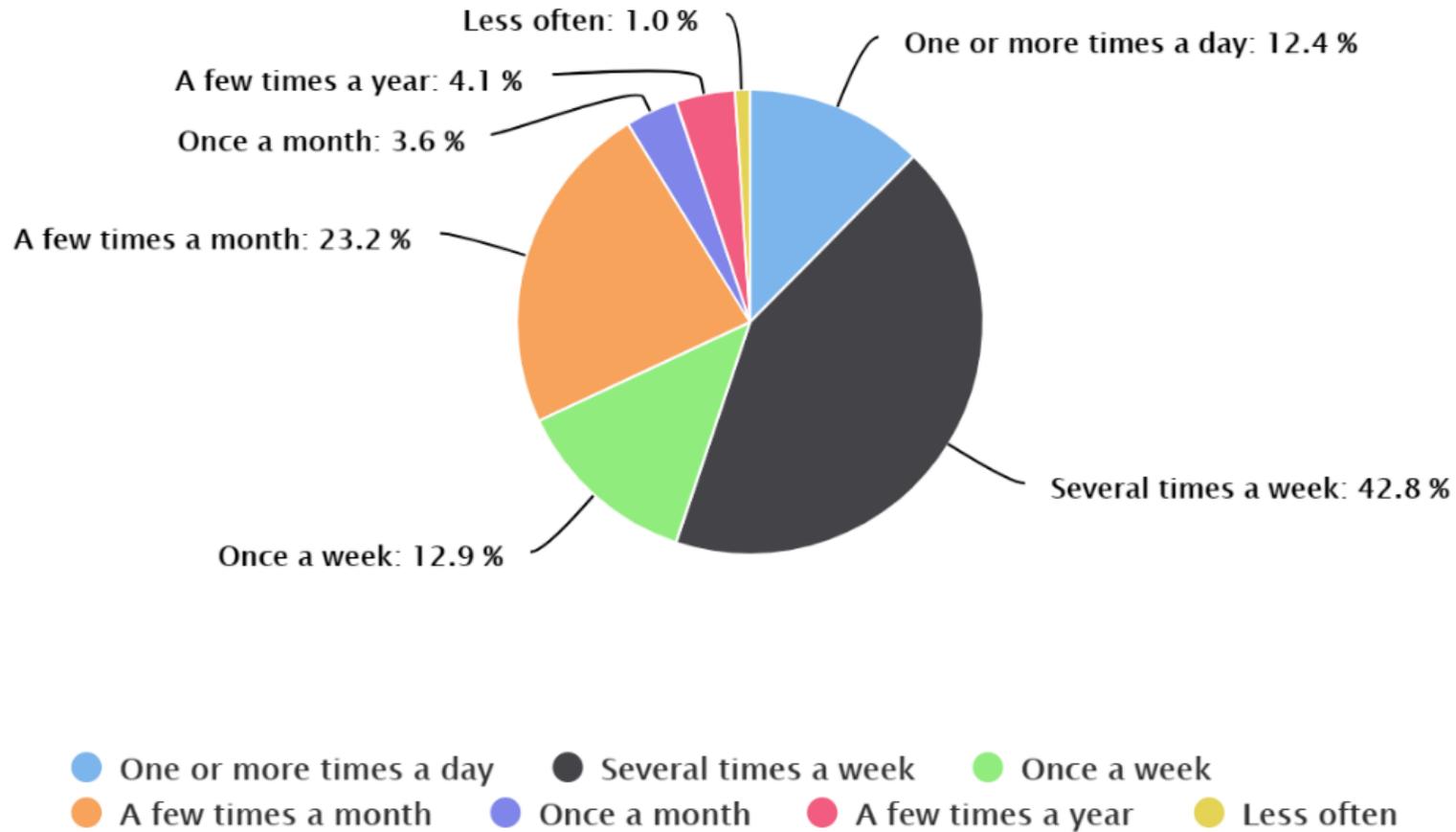
No public transport at all	Can get a train, but no buses	Bus option(s), but no train option	Both bus and train options
<p>e.g. Winkfield Row</p> <p>e.g. Oldfield Road near Maidenhead.</p> <p><i>“There isn’t a bus stop on our road. You’d have to walk to the A4 Bath Road first. The car is quick and easy. It’s knowing I’ll get somewhere on time.”</i></p>	<p>e.g. Datchet – Train to Windsor local train station, then change to Windsor Central for Reading or Maidenhead, then a lift to work. Takes 75 mins (20 mins by car)</p> <p>e.g. Direct train from Burnham to Slough</p> <p>e.g. Mortimer to Reading/Basingstoke.</p> <p>e.g. Binfield, near Cookham</p>	<p>e.g. Dedwash Road (Windsor) - believes buses go to Reading, Slough, Windsor. <i>“There’s a bus stop either side of the road, but I never thought of using it.”</i></p> <p>e.g. Wargreave (near Twyford) – can see a bus stop but never sees a bus.</p>	<p>e.g. train from Sunningdale to London, Reading, Windsor, Maidenhead. Buses from Sunningdale to Windsor & to Ascot and Bracknell</p> <p>e.g. London- and can pick up mainline at Reading. Upon prompting discovered also buses to Guildford and other towns.</p> <p>e.g. Wooton Way near Maidenhead.</p>

People often struggled to know what public transport alternatives to taking the car are available unless they already have had direct experience of using it – especially poor understanding of the bus options. More likely to consider the train (or a taxi) if they are looking for an alternative to using the car.



MOTIVATIONS FOR, AND BARRIERS TO, TAKING THE BUS

Bus users: 2/3's of them use the bus at least weekly



Usefulness of buses to bus users

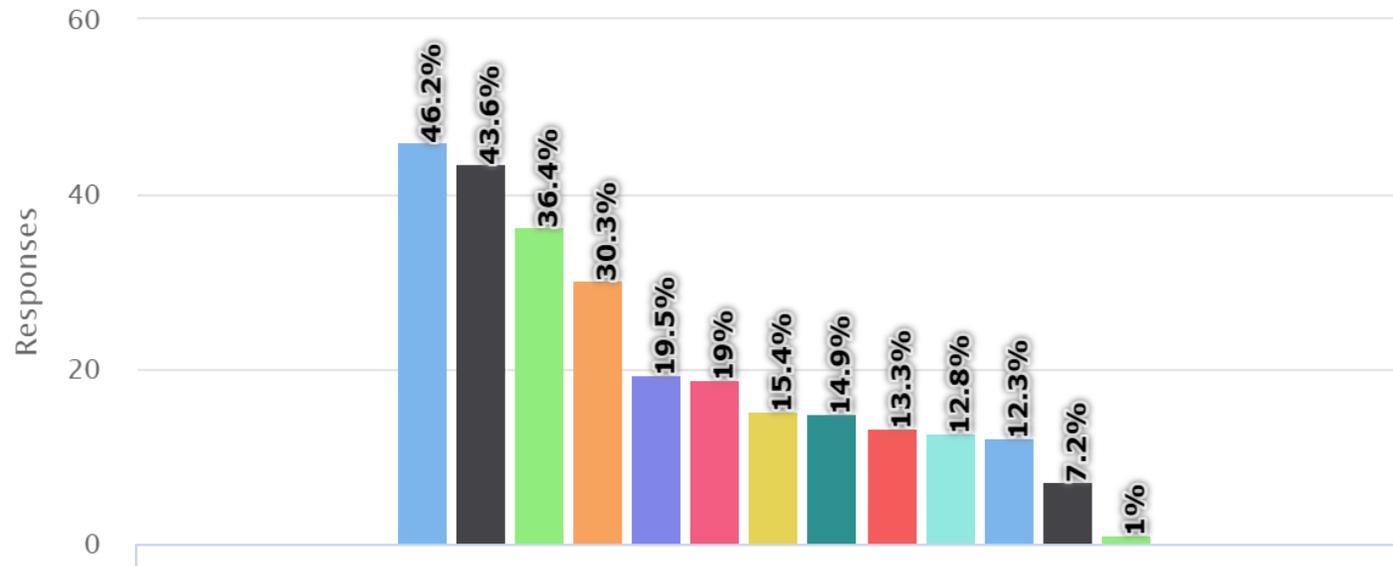
- Fewer than half (46%) of bus users agreed that without buses they'd not be able to travel.
- More than half (52%) agreed buses are an essential part of their life:
 - Applies to people with fewer than 2 vehicles (64% vs 39%)
- 60% agreed "buses are useful but I could live without them"

Satisfaction of bus users: scores out of 6

- Overall = 3.94
- Punctuality = 3.85
- Cleanliness = 3.70
- Value for money = 3.56
- Personal safety = 3.95
- Ease of journey = 3.97

Bus Users: Main reasons for taking the bus (n = 195)

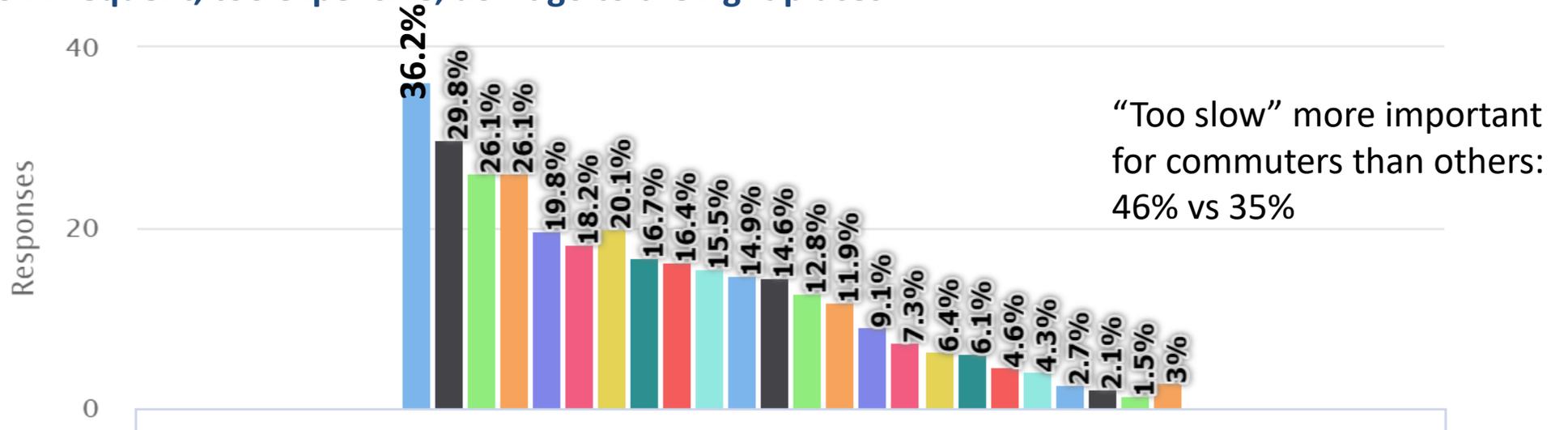
- Cost (cheaper), parking, the environment, too far to walk/cycle, better in bad weather than walking/cycling
- Only 20% use the bus because they don't drive



- It's cheaper than driving
- Don't have to worry about parking
- It's better for the environment than driving
- It's too far for me to walk/cycle
- I don't drive
- It's better in bad weather than walking or cycling
- I don't have a car
- Means I can have a drink at my destination
- There are no other public transport options available
- It's safer than walking or cycling
- I prefer not to drive
- My car is unreliable
- Other

Non-users of buses: their reasons for not using buses (n = 348)

- Too slow, too infrequent, too expensive, don't go to the right places



“Too slow” more important for commuters than others: 46% vs 35%

- Too slow
- Too infrequent
- Too expensive
- Buses don't go near my destinations
- I've stopped using buses since the pandemic
- I prefer to avoid contact with other people
- Buses are too crowded
- Other public transport is quicker/more convenient
- I need to take two or more buses to reach my destination
- I don't feel safe on a bus
- Don't have a bus stop near me
- It's difficult to carry all my shopping on a bus
- Buses are not punctual enough
- There aren't enough buses for the times I need to travel

People not using buses nowadays seem to have positive sentiments about buses, but resist using them in practice

Positive sentiments about bus use:

48% agreed that “I might consider taking the bus in the future” (average score = 3.53/6)

37% agreed that they liked the idea of using the bus in the future (3.09/6)

A third disagreed with “Taking the bus would be a last resort”

- Especially under 25s and non-drivers

But resistance in practice:

- Two thirds agreed that “Taking the bus would be a last resort” (4.22/6)
- 57% tend to agree buses are not a convenient way to travel (3.85)
- 80% agree they prefer the privacy of the car (4.73)
- 81% agree they need to have the flexibility to travel when and where they want (4.67)
- 70% agree they are wary of public transport since the pandemic (4.15)
- 55% agree they are wary of who they may encounter (3.69)

The Qualitative research also picked up an underlying positive sentiment towards using buses: when buses are done well, even non-users love them

“When we lived in a different part of Maidenhead, we used to take the bus to go into town – there was a bus stop outside our house.”

“We went into Windsor from Bracknell. We thought the 702 goes into Windsor. It’s only a couple of quid and we thought it would seem like a fun thing to do.”

“Getting a bus is fun you know. It’s not stressful. You can take in the journey and chat to people.”

“I will probably do the bus with my grandson – into Egham or Windsor. Just for the trip. He’s just at that kind of age. Trains, buses, they love getting those..”

Efficient, frequent, hop on/hop off, services in London and Uni towns

Nostalgic memories of childhood trips

Fun way to travel for a night out or to a festival

Great Heathrow Link

“I have really positive associations with using the bus. I used to take it at University in Southampton. The bus service was fantastic. So many buses. I took the bus everywhere for 3 years. It was hop on and hop off. There were 14 numbered buses I could take. They were almost like shuttles. It was only 2 stops to get from campus to the university. But here in Datchet, in 23 years I have never taken the bus. There’s only the Slough/Heathrow bus and the tourist ones for Windsor.”

“I got the bus when we were going to a festival around the corner. I cannot remember the last time I got the bus other than that. The buses are always jam packed in London.”

Overall, the bus is not even on most people's radar

- **Majority hadn't even considered the bus**
- **Perceived almost like a "ghost service", that they're "completely in the dark about"**
 - **"A bit of an unknown.....whereas the train is familiar."**
- **Non-users of the bus in this sample would get a train ...or take an uber or a lift with a friend/family member before considering the bus.**

"The challenge is to get someone like me to use the other transport options when using the car is an engrained habit."

"It just takes too long. My pace of life is so much more manic, and it frustrates me waiting for a bus. Although I know from an environmental point of view there should be less cars on the road. But getting the bus means you have to keep to their schedule rather than yours. I would miss buses all the time!"

"When I think bus, the first thing that comes to mind is I'd say 'Empty'!"

"I literally don't know what buses there are. There are bus stops on our road. Its every few hours rather than every half an hour. I see it rarely. Maybe once or twice a day. And there's only maybe on person on there. It's a ghost service. It's not very appealing."

"If I couldn't drive, I'd ask a friend for a lift, or I'd work from home. My absolute last thought would be to take a bus!"

The big challenge is to get the bus on people's radar for consideration.

Barriers to using a bus in RBWM are often well-rooted and strong

"I used to get the school bus when I was young. But now I think of old people getting the bus. Pensioners...we have a couple of bus stops in Mortimer and there's always OAPs and school kids waiting. The 'school bus' goes into Reading every day from here."

"In Reading the buses have all this funky branding."

"A 15 minutes wait is acceptable. But it's probably more like 30 minutes. 3 an hour, every 20 minutes feels like about the ends of acceptability."

"There's a bus stop outside our house ..the one on the opposite side goes to Staines. I occasionally see someone waiting for a bus. But it's rare I see someone using the bus."



"In London it feels like everybody does it. It does feel like it [getting the bus] is something for people who can't drive or are elderly."

"Empty...but then I'd think germs, condensation, noisy, the elderly, youth."

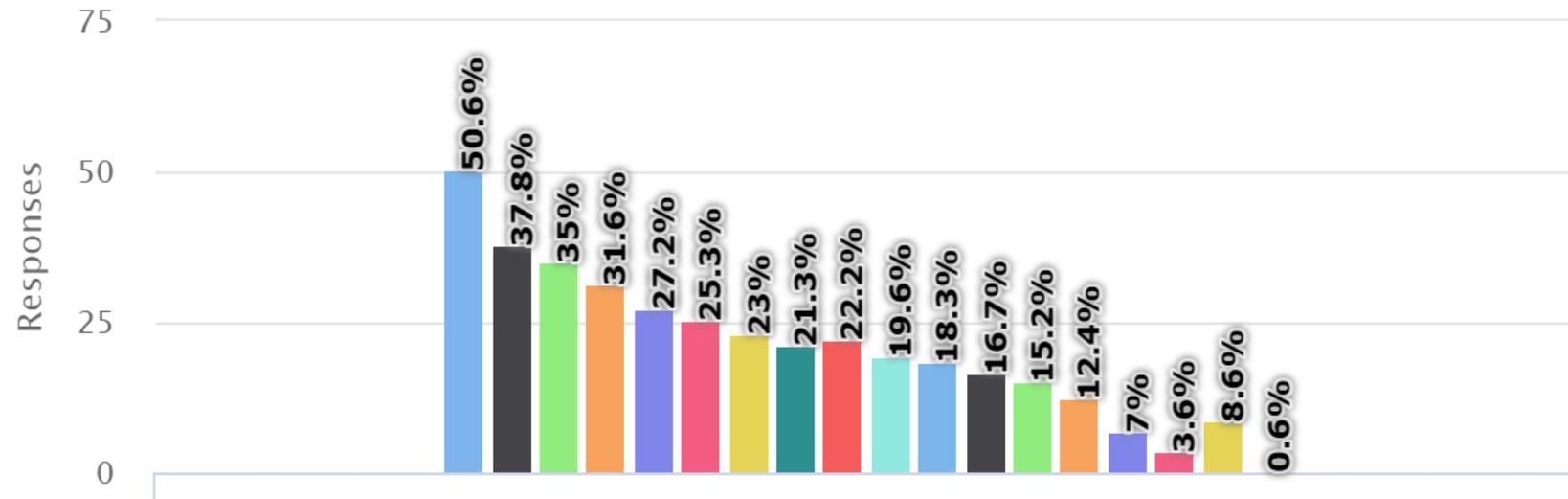
"There is a bus service ..but I've never seen it used. They've probably stopped the bus."

"I used to hate the bus timetables. Whereas I know the train is every 35 mins. 20 past and 10 to. You know the train is going to run. Buses might get caught up in traffic and not be reliable. It's inconsistent."

BUSES ARE NOT SEEN AS A POPULAR, QUICK, EFFICIENT CHOICE OF TRANSPORT – A BIT STUCK ON THE MANTLEPIECE

Incentives to use buses more, as cited in the Quant

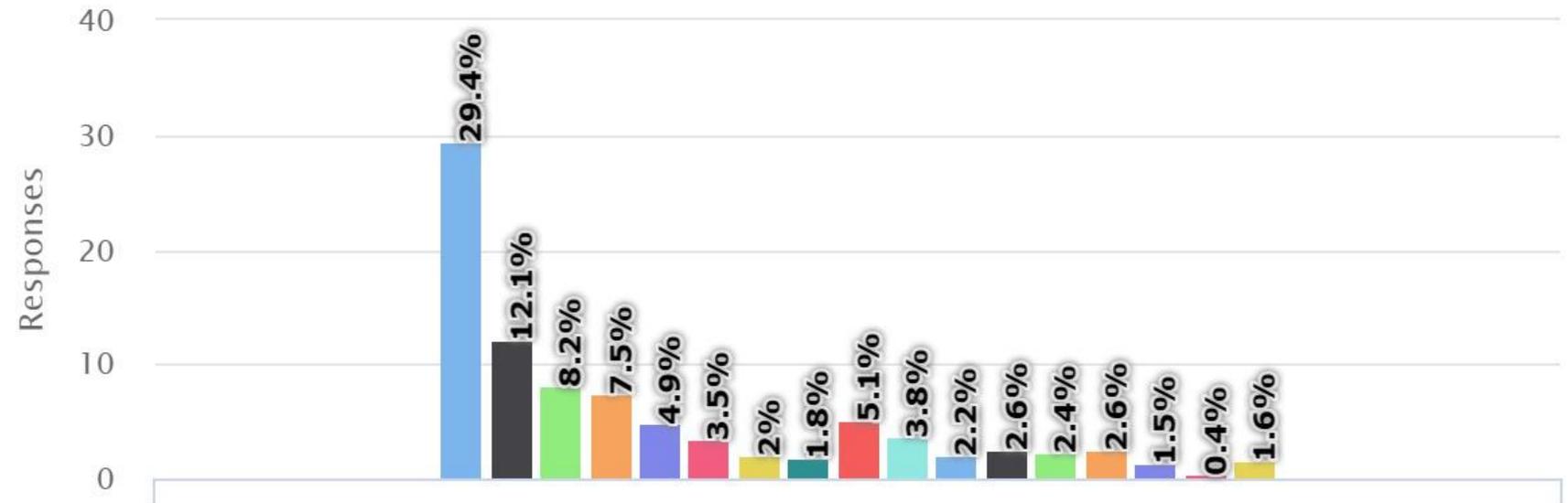
- Cheaper fares
- More frequent service
- More bus routes
- Cleaner buses
- Better punctuality
- Better live info



- Cheaper fares
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- Cleaner buses
- Better punctuality
- Better live information on arrival times, schedules, etc on an app
- Wi fi on the buses
- Tickets that work across multiple bus companies
- Feeling safer
- Better live information on arrival times, schedules, etc at the bus stop
- Integrated tickets (with trains, for example)
- More late night buses
- More accessible bus stops
- More bus lanes

What *single* thing...

- Cheaper fares
- More frequent service
- More bus routes



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- More late night buses
- More accessible bus stops
- More bus lanes
- Having to pay to drive into town
- Lower speed limits for cars
- Other

Summary

- Buses are not on the radar for most travellers
 - Preferred methods are cars, trains and walking
- Buses are used where alternatives aren't available:
 - “last resort” apart from under 25s and non drivers
 - But even bus users prefer other means.
- The key issues are:
 - Not enough buses (not frequent enough, not enough routes, not enough destinations, no bus stop close to me)
 - Less convenient and flexible than car
 - Perceived slowness of bus journeys (convoluted routes, lots of stops, long intervals in bus times)
 - Perceptions that buses are expensive (although prices not known by non-users)
 - Lack of information/understanding of buses on their routes that would work for them

Plus from the qualitative research, a sense that buses in RBWM are ‘lost in time’, for others (like pensioners and school kids) and not for me
- However, people often hold an underlying positive sentiment towards using buses where they are ‘done well’ and we believe there is the potential to leverage this through updating the bus service in the RBWM and introducing innovation.

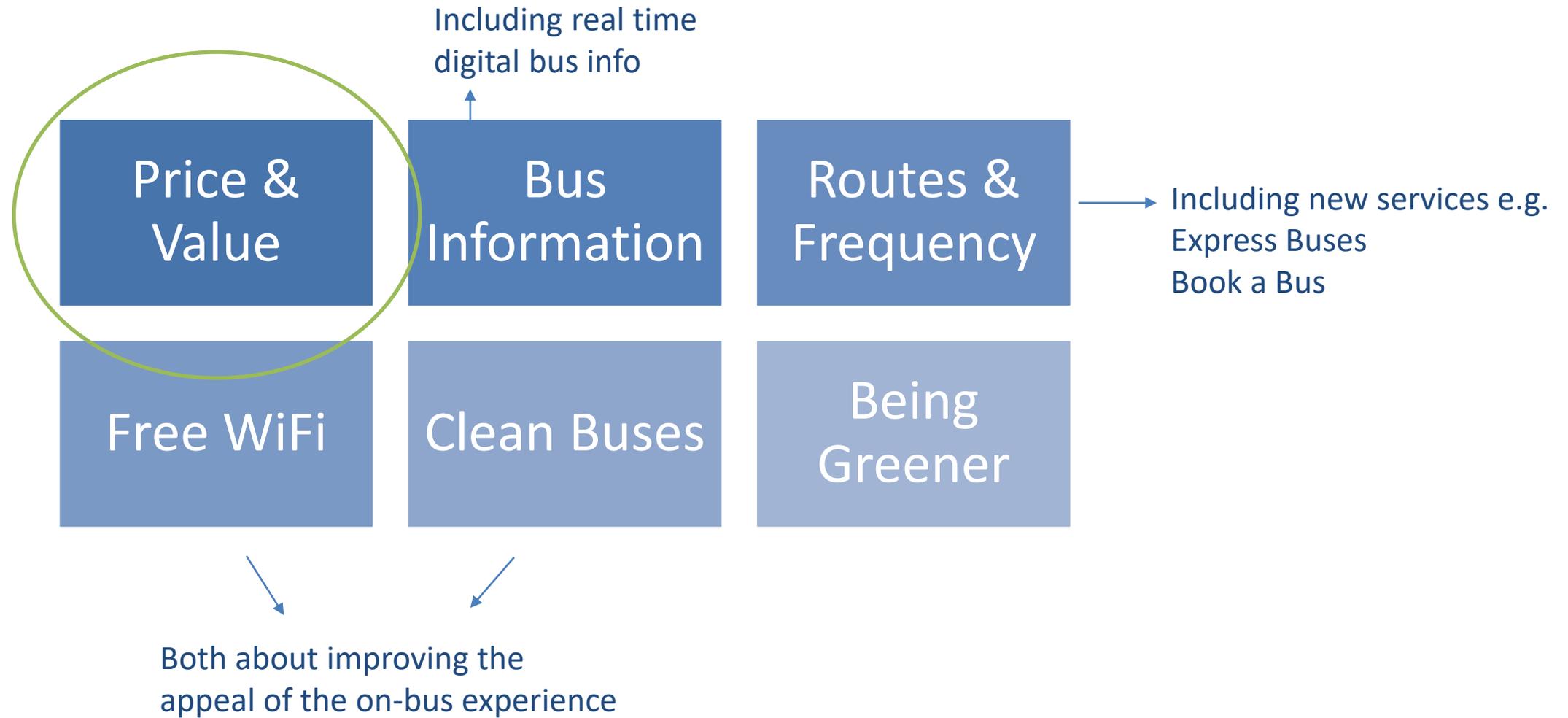


IN-DEPTH EXPLORATION OF POTENTIAL LEVERS

The Qualitative insight throws further light on potential levers

- **Whilst the Quant data indicates cheaper fares would incentivise people to use buses more, it's not clear cut:**
 - Non-users *don't know the price* of bus fares (and can be pleasantly surprised by price points on local journeys when researched)
 - Further analysis of actual price points and their competitiveness (vs trains, taxis) may be required
 - *Plus*, it's not just about the price points, people want to feel that the prices are easy to understand/grasp and predictable
 - *Plus*, they want to feel rewarded for bus usage
 - *Plus*, people need to feel the prices are competitive because they are trading off the bus fare cost with the cost of alternative modes of transport like the train or the uber, as well as perceived trade offs in convenience and comfort.
- **The Quant data shows that frequent buses is appealing to people, but there is a sense this is potentially 'not the whole story':**
 - But people want more frequent buses that are also quick to their destination
 - Whilst people may ideally think more frequent means every 10-15 minutes rather than every 30-40 minutes they may feel more tolerant of longer gaps between the buses on their service:
 - if they have precise real time information about when the bus is going to arrive:
 - Live, accurate digital information came across in the Qual as having the potential to be a game-changer generally
 - If the journey to their destination is direct and quick (minimal stops).
- **Finally, perceived cleanliness of the buses remains important as a table stake, especially given the current 'Covid Times'.**

Exploring the opportunities to encourage more bus usage



Price of the bus fare matters but to grow bus usage it's not simply about making prices cheaper

- **Non-users don't know how much buses cost or how to find out about prices:**

- Consequently can't assess the appeal or value of buses
- Prices not given at bus stops or with schedules online if they do a search
- Some assume bus fares are expensive (hearsay), some assume they're cheap (experience elsewhere).

- **Assume the price structure will be complicated and off-putting:**

- Peak vs off-peak tariffs; longer vs shorter journeys
- Fares for different users – adults, elderly, school kids
- Don't even think about differences between different operators across the Borough – this idea is an unwelcome surprise.

- **Plus, the notional costs of taking the bus can undermine the perceived appeal and value of taking the bus e.g.**

- Inconvenience of waiting for a bus at a bus stop
- Having to plan the journey (vs taking the car)
- The slowness and discomfort of the journey (vs taxi, train, car).

When some people researched the price of the bus fare for a local trip for them, when they found the price information, they were often positively surprised.

Further research into the competitiveness of price points for bus fares across the borough bus fares is recommended.

“...Thames Valley Buses. The no 16 ...Oh, the single fare is £2.60 which is not too bad. A return is £3.70. When you think that the car parks charge £4/hour. It's much better to get the bus. It's beating the car parking cost.”

Using price as a lever to shift bus usage behaviour

Tell people how much it is

Opportunity to get a clear message out about what bus fare prices are:

- Marketing and comms about the price
- Even as obvious as slapping the price on the side of buses and bus shelters!

Have a simple tariff structure

Opportunity to keep the bus tariff structure very simple (across the borough) e.g.

- *Ideally*, one price per journey no matter when, where, who

Tell them how to get prices

Opportunity to make it simple and obvious how to find out the price of a fare and how to buy a ticket e.g.

- An App that includes prices alongside bus times
- Information at the bus stops.

When prompted, people like to imagine it will cost £2- £2.50 for a single one-way bus fare

- **They're comparing the cost of a bus fare (for 1+) with the cost of a taxi/uber and parking costsand building in any experience of bus fares elsewhere**
- **They suggest £2 (up to £2.50) as a competitive price point that feels fair and worthwhile:**
 - This price point is easy to 'grasp', feels affordable
 - Can transform the idea of getting the bus into a 'no brainer':
 - If they otherwise would pay for parking, a train/taxi.

"From here to Maidenhead I'd say it's probably £2.80 on the bus. I'm going by the fact you can get an uber taxi for a fiver straight into Maidenhead from my house. They would have to be competitive. But if it were anymore than £2.50, I'd get a taxi every time because its less convenient."

"It's £1.70 in London, and £2.30 in Nottingham. I'd expect maybe £2 here. Maybe £2.50 return. London is cheaper but there is a bigger number of customers. "

"It's £8 for parking in Windsor for 2 hours."

"It's £6 for an uber from Datchet to Maidenhead with the 30% discount."

The concept of a 10-journey card/carnet had appeal: for its ease, modernity, and sense of value

- **Convenient, flexible, predictable**
- **Feels modern, simple, user-friendly**
- **Great for anyone including teens**
- **Encourages repeat bus trips, so habit forming**
- **Assume has a discounted price, so good value**
- **Would expect it to be valid for 6+ months across multiple operators**
- **Expect it to be a digital card or on your phone**
- **Expect to work in both peak and off-peak time periods**
- **Prefer it can be shared between different travellers, not just the purchaser.**

“That is attractive.. I like that. The idea that comes to mind is the Carnet ticket system. You can use it anywhere. To be able to buy a bulk system. I’d be attracted to that. If I committed to 10 tickets in advance, that would encourage me to use it. But getting people over the hump to buy a 10-journey ticket as a non-user would be hard. But if you could get them to buy it, then 10 journeys is habit forming. It might take a year, but you’d get a complete new set of users.”

“With a discount it’s a nice idea for youngsters”

“A 10-journey ticket I can understand that. It would work for people commuting and working 5 days a week.”

“I like the 10 journey ticket idea. One ticket for all. The freedom that affords you. If I knew for example I had 8 journeys on my ticket that would give me autonomy and flexibility. But I would need better routes. ”

“I wouldn’t want a multiple ticket offers. I’m not using it every day or even every week. It would be more now and then. ”

Other promotional ideas (suggested by participants) that could enhance the perceived value of taking the bus

- **Using RBWM residents' card to earn discounts on bus fares:**
 - Used to be popular when they could use it for payments for car parks in town
 - Feels like RBWM would be rewarding 'greener' choices.
- **Promotional offers to encourage visits by bus into town at weekends/evenings:**
 - Link saves with cafes in towns (e.g. Windsor Costa)
 - Discounted fares from 6pm-7pm on Friday/Sat evenings, like a 'Happy Hour'
- **Promotional Day Trip offers**
 - e.g. Taking a day trip to town, to a local amenity/attraction on the bus
 - e.g. Friends & Family group ticket

“Would you be able to use your discount card that gets you into certain places like Windsor Castle? It would be nice to use your resident's card as a perk.”

“I do think it's good to work on loyalty. If you take 20 buses, you get a discount somewhere. The residents loyalty card has been forgotten about. Can they do something with that?”

“I would go into Windsor and meet friends, go to Zara. Can you do something with the shops? Or Costa?”

But overall, lots of factors contribute to the perceived value of taking the bus, and should be considered as potential value levers

Value Levers

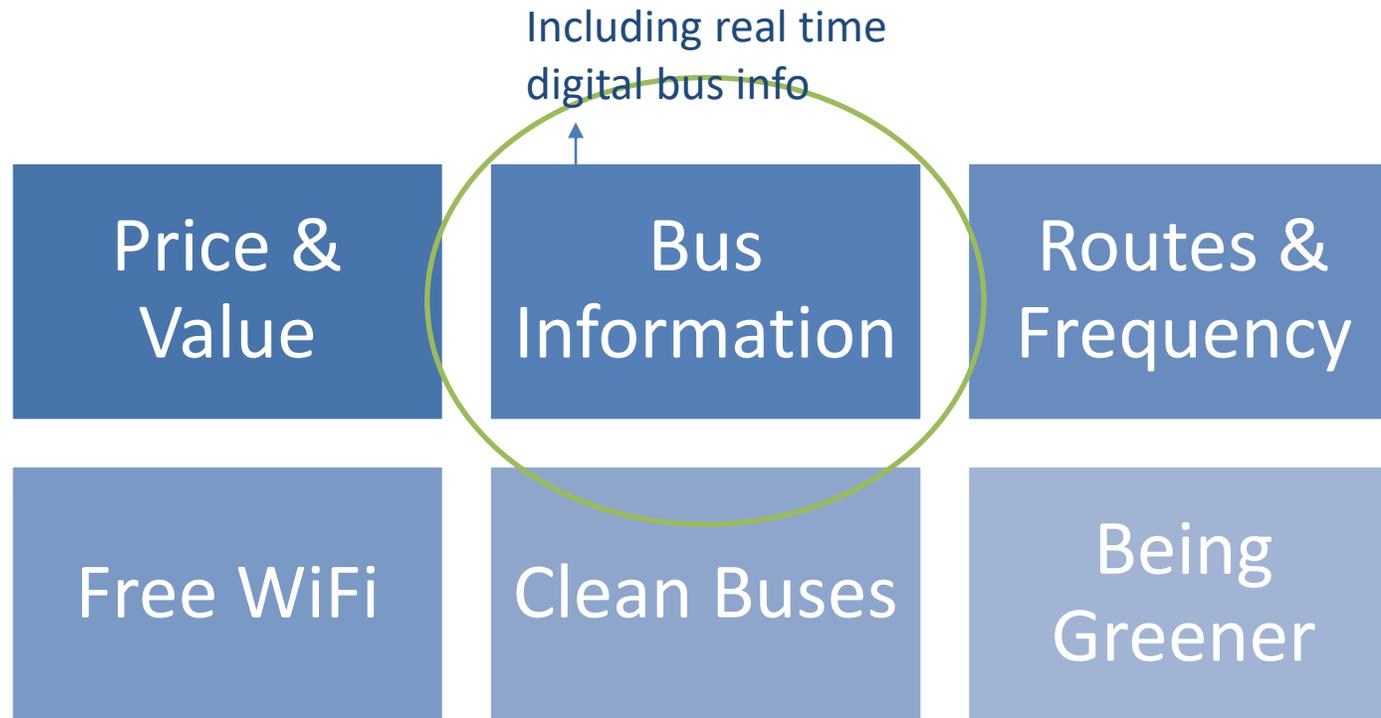
- Competitive prices
- Promotions & deals
- Contactless payment on bus or on line payment (no over payment)
- Speedy, direct journey
- Punctuality, not waiting around
- Precise real time information
- Feeling the on-board journey is comfy and modern:
 - Clean bus & bus stop
 - Free WiFi
 - Timely information about next stops
 - Free phone charging on bus
 - Green credentials (for some)

“Can I scan my travel card onto my phone? In Nottingham if I tap it on the back of the phone, it tells me how much is left on it.”

“It’s £1.70 in London, and £2.30 in Nottingham. I’d expect maybe £2 here. Maybe £2.50 return. You need to keep it to an easy number because they won’t give you change. You end up paying £2.50 in Nottingham. London is cheaper but there is a bigger number of customers.”

“You’ve got to make it really easy to pay. ...When I go out with my friends, I can then just wonder down and do a tap.”

Exploring the opportunities to encourage more bus usage



People expect information about bus & journey times (along with the prices) to be at their finger-tips

People don't know where to start to get bus information

Do they look on the bus stop at the schedules on display?

Is there information on the Council/Borough's website?

Do they do a Google search on their journey?

Is there an App?

The current information set up does not inspire confidence

Current bus information format is fragmented and feels outdated

People have become used to amalgamated travel websites and apps to source info for transport and wayfinding

They want to know the info that relates to their specific journey, at a specific day and time.

Real time information changes perceptions of taking the bus

Bespoke information to plan their journey on a website - with an App option

Real time live updates on bus times on-line, at the bus stops, and on the buses

Need to integrate prices within schedule information

Real time digital information has the potential to be a game changer in terms of getting people to use buses more. A golden opportunity e.g. Best/next bus is at X, from your bus stop Y, and costs Z.

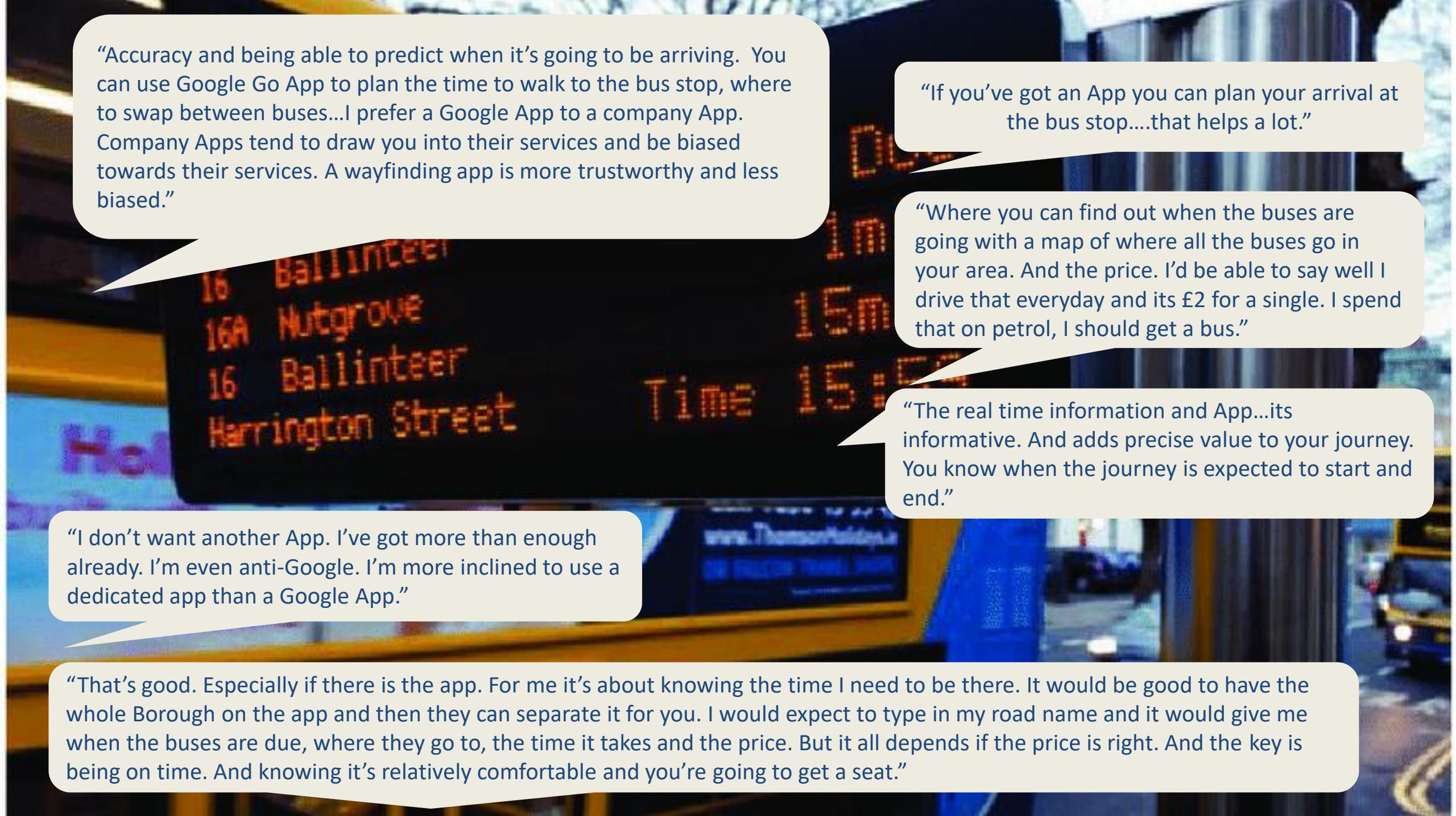
There is a need to give people accurate timely information to put them in control and give them certainty

- **People were much less motivated by the idea of introducing bus lanes:**
 - Could cause even more traffic congestion
 - Difficult to achieve given narrow roads in the RBWM
 - But could be useful for alleviating bottlenecks (e.g. Windsor Relief Road) if wide enough
- **A main concern about using the bus is it being unpredictable and not having to deal with 'surprise' schedule delays and long waits:**
 - Even for leisure trips they want to be able to plan bus times and feel that they can rely on the buses.
- **They want to be kept up-to-date so they can plan efficiently and adapt around any changes to the schedule in a timely way.**
- **Some want an App - others just want information available on Google search on a web site**
- **Everyone likes the idea of real time digital information at the bus stops**
- **Digital information about bus times should be coupled with the price of that journey.**

"I can't see that they can do any bus lanes. We're in a little tiny village."

"You just feel like if you knew, for example, when a bus was going to get to the bus stop, you wouldn't have to sit at the bus stop or is this bus for whatever reason...if it's not going to be there for 15 mins you can leave home 10 minutes later"

"We used to live in Arthur Road on the main drag in from the M4. That would be at a standstill. It's so narrow. How would they put a bus lane route in there?"



“Accuracy and being able to predict when it’s going to be arriving. You can use Google Go App to plan the time to walk to the bus stop, where to swap between buses...I prefer a Google App to a company App. Company Apps tend to draw you into their services and be biased towards their services. A wayfinding app is more trustworthy and less biased.”

“If you’ve got an App you can plan your arrival at the bus stop....that helps a lot.”

“Where you can find out when the buses are going with a map of where all the buses go in your area. And the price. I’d be able to say well I drive that everyday and its £2 for a single. I spend that on petrol, I should get a bus.”

“The real time information and App...its informative. And adds precise value to your journey. You know when the journey is expected to start and end.”

“I don’t want another App. I’ve got more than enough already. I’m even anti-Google. I’m more inclined to use a dedicated app than a Google App.”

“That’s good. Especially if there is the app. For me it’s about knowing the time I need to be there. It would be good to have the whole Borough on the app and then they can separate it for you. I would expect to type in my road name and it would give me when the buses are due, where they go to, the time it takes and the price. But it all depends if the price is right. And the key is being on time. And knowing it’s relatively comfortable and you’re going to get a seat.”

Price information isn't easy to find online– hard to know where to go to find it, and prices don't automatically appear alongside the route schedule.

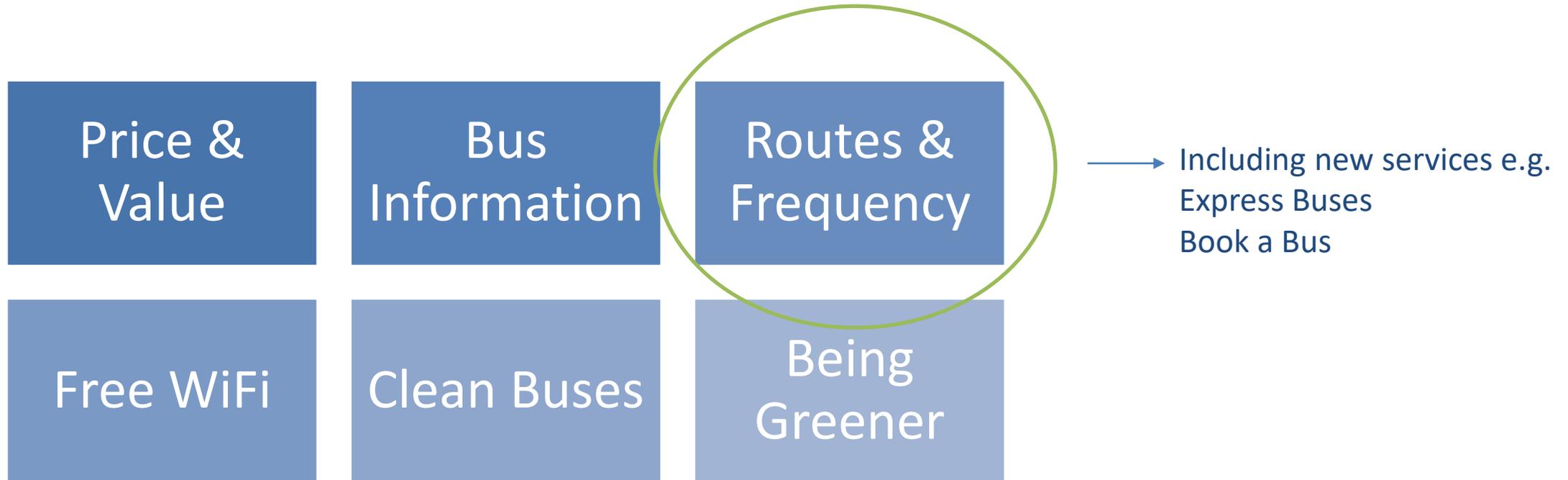
[PDF Route Map 16, 16A](#) | [PDF Fares 16, 16A](#)

To Windsor | To St Marks Hospital (Maidenhead) | Major stops | All stops | 23/08/2021 | Update

	16	16A	16	16A	16	16A	16	16	16A	16	16A	16A
<u>St Marks Hospital, Stop C</u>	-	-	08:45	09:55	11:00	12:05	13:10	14:15	15:30	16:35	17:55	-
<u>Frascati Way (Teapot Cafe)</u>	06:35	07:40	09:00	10:05	11:10	12:15	13:20	14:25	15:40	16:45	18:05	18:45
<u>Bray Village</u>	06:38	07:49	09:10	10:16	11:21	12:26	13:31	14:36	15:51	16:56	18:16	18:54
<u>Holyport</u>	06:41	07:54	09:15	10:20	11:25	12:30	13:35	14:40	15:55	17:00	18:20	18:57
<u>Windsor Road, Fifield Road End</u>	06:48	08:04	09:24	10:27	11:32	12:37	13:42	14:47	16:04	17:08	18:28	19:03
<u>Fifield</u>	-	08:07	-	10:30	-	12:40	-	-	16:07	-	18:31	19:06
<u>Testwood Road</u>	06:52	08:16	09:29	-	11:37	-	13:47	14:52	-	17:13	-	-
<u>Dedworth (Tesco)</u>	06:54	08:20	09:33	10:39	11:40	12:49	13:50	14:55	16:16	17:16	18:39	19:13
<u>Wolf Lane/Foster Avenue</u>	-	08:23	09:36	10:42	11:43	12:52	13:53	14:58	16:19	17:19	18:41	19:15
<u>King Edward VII Hospital</u>	07:01	08:35	09:46	10:50	11:51	13:00	14:01	15:06	16:27	17:28	18:48	19:22
<u>Windsor (High Street Stop C)</u>	07:06	08:40	09:51	10:56	11:57	13:06	14:07	15:12	16:33	17:33	18:53	19:27

“Once I took the bus to work from Crowthorne Village and I was so confused. When you go online you can find the whole timetable. That’s not so easy to read on your phone. It’s not like National Rail where you say I want to go from there to there, when are the trains? You have to look at the whole timetable Mon-Fri, and you think ‘where do I start’? It’s a bit of an unknown. I just want it to come up with the options and the price. It comes up with the company and then you have to plough your way through the timetables. If you don’t use them that often its confusing.”

Exploring the opportunities to encourage more bus usage



Some areas are not served by buses at all

- 26.1% of people who don't use a bus say its because there isn't a bus
- This was supported by the qualitative findings e.g. Datchet, Mortimer, Binfield
- Adding new routes could be one solution....

- But economically, it may not be feasible to provide scheduled bus services to all areas
- And people feel it is wasteful to add more buses onto the road, if they are not going to be full.



- We found that the Book a Bus idea had some appeal
- Plus we believe that people not served by buses nowadays could potentially be motivated in the future to go to a local 'hub' to pick up an Express/Direct bus into the local town (e.g. like Windsor) instead of driving.

Issues raised tend to centre on the slowness of bus journeys and their disappointing frequency

The slowness of the journey

- **Usually stemming from convoluted journeys with multiple stops, rather than going directly from A to B:**
 - E.g. want from 'here' direct into town - Windsor especially, also Maidenhead, Reading, Ascot
 - E.g. want town A to B, not via C – Windsor to Maidenhead, not via Slough
- **But recognise slowness can be because of traffic congestion too**

Want direct Express Buses or Fast Buses between towns & into town from key link points

Disappointing Frequency of Buses

- **A key concern is long interval times in the schedule:**
 - Don't expect to wait more than 10 minutes for a bus
 - every 10-15 mins feels tolerable
 - every 20 mins is starting to push acceptance levels
 - Intervals of 30,40 or 50 mins is too long for many people
- **But also feel buses aren't always scheduled when they need them:**
 - Important that school times and commuting times covered well
 - But weekends (inc Sun) and evenings are not always well served (key for leisure usage)
 - Need to have frequent coverage for those trips especially:
 - Into/out of towns, with last bus at around 11.30pm at least.

Want to avoid waiting for buses – want more frequent buses and/or updates on when the bus due.

Want have more frequent buses at weekends (Fri-Sun) as well as for schools/work

What consumers said about the disappointing frequency of buses



“A 15 minutes wait is acceptable. But it’s probably more like 30 minutes. 3 an hour, every 20 minutes feels like about the ends of acceptability.”

“There’s only one route through Old Windsor. I tend not to use the bus because the car is just so convenient. There’s only one bus every half hour to Windsor.”

“It’s 2 miles to the train station but there’s no bus stop at the train station. It’s not something that is normal to take a bus ..you see them so infrequently.”

“You really need to increase the frequency of the buses.....but a whole load of buses with just 2 people on it will add to the carbon footprint.”

“Weekends are a really busy time. That's when people who work during the day and don't have time to ...go to the shops in Maidenhead. That's when people go out to do that and Sundays has always been a day where you don't see that many buses ”

The idea of introducing an Express Bus or Direct Shuttle Bus appealed

- People want a faster option that doesn't stop en route or stops perhaps once:
 - Like there are fast trains and slow trains
- The fast express bus could be an option intertwined into the scheduleor an exclusively fast service
 - e.g. an express link into Windsor from key points around Windsor
- Would feel more reliable, quicker and modern
- Could be a mini-bus or smaller bus
- Clearly branded or signaled.

"I'd have the buses run along the main routes and then the buses for the people in the intertwined streets would get a less frequent (every half hour service). And the main trunk runs every 10 minutes."

"Like the underground ..super quick and there are a lot of them [frequent]. Every 10 minutes, if its longer than that you are starting to wonder why did I do this? "

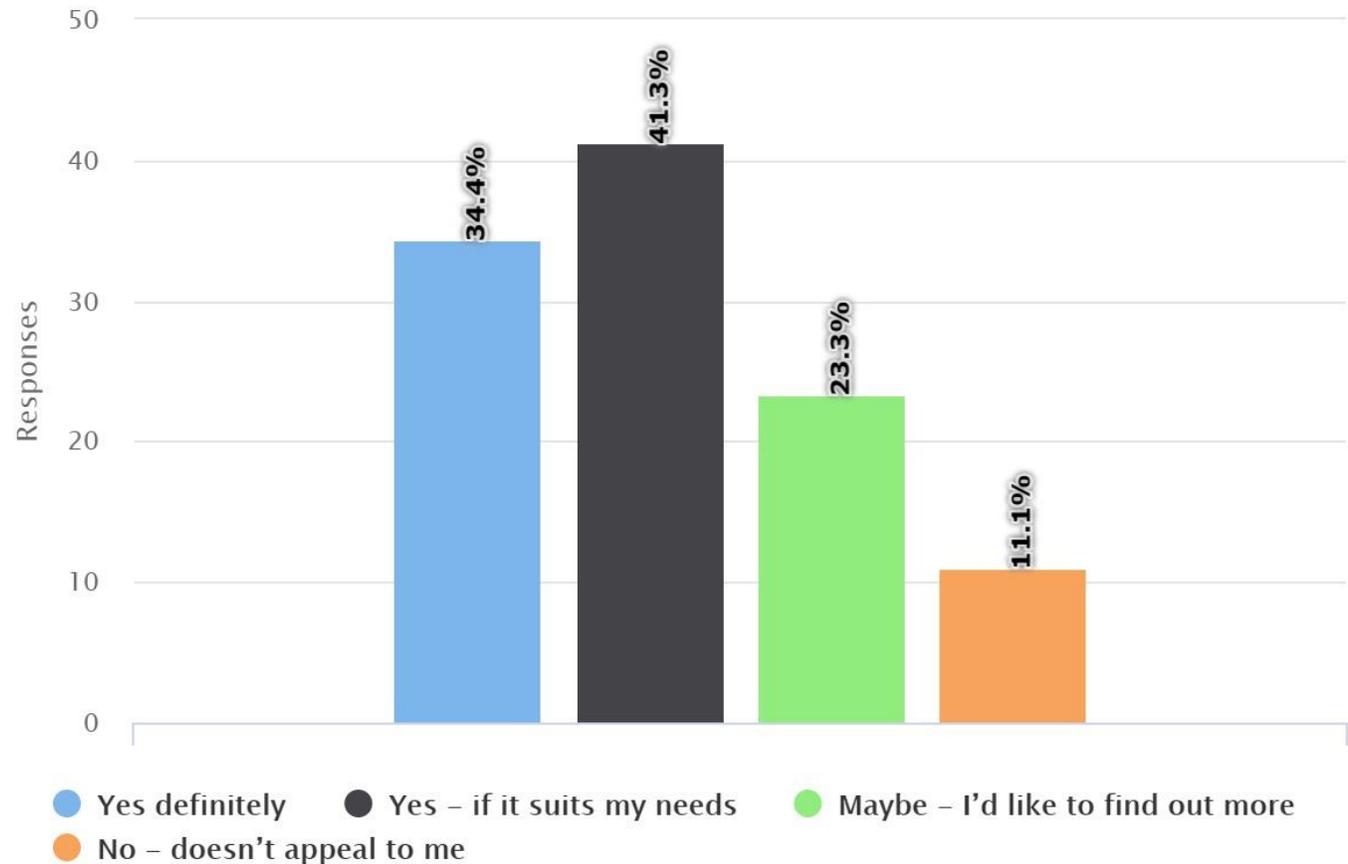
"When we have a girl's get together ...It would be like a hop on, hop off bus...no cab fares, safe, low cost. A bit like in London when you get on and off a red bus. Convenient, every half an hour. Maybe a few pounds for a local trip."

"A quick link into Windsor from Clewer Lane e.g. 10 mins. Sometimes it can take you half an hour to get into Windsor in the car."

Interest in “Book a Bus”

- 34% “Definitely”
- 41% “If it suits my needs”
- 23% “Maybe”
- 11% “No”

This may overcome the perceived weaknesses of bus travel – i.e. lack of flexibility, sufficient routes and timetables



The Book a Bus idea appealed – but some people were unsure

Positive Reaction

- Feels modern and new – “the future”
- Great option if no public transport options currently
- Many assume it’s like booking an uber online – but cheaper:
 - Great for groups of friends going out in the evening
 - Great for individuals going out
 - Great for family days out shopping
- Others intuitively feel it would suit older people like their retired parents:
 - Especially if collects from their front door and can be booked by phone.
- Potentially safer than taking an uber.

Negative/Unsure Reaction

- How would it work?
- Would require more advance notice – doesn’t suit spontaneous arrangements (especially younger people)
- Wouldn’t work for unstructured evenings out (but great if you know what time you will need to go home at e.g. going to a film)
- Would it be a slow journey – very convoluted:
 - Especially if you’re the first person picked up
- Some would expect it to be more expensive than getting a bus/train
- The economics perplex some people - how is it affordable for RBWM to provide?

What consumers said about the Book a Bus idea

“Like an Uber.....book it through an app. Like booking a big taxi. Maybe £2 each. Or maybe for older people who are not time constrained because you would want to know when it is coming.”

“I like the idea. Its being able to plan my day and know I can book something at my convenience.”

“I could see the appeal for my ex-in-laws. For the elderly...They wouldn't book it online or on an App...they would have to phone a number. ..the Book a Bus gives them more freedom than they get at the moment. Especially for the elderly on their own.”

“All sounds quite positive and interesting [really rural location]. It's like booking an uber. If they made that work it would be magical. Like a cab share. If it's for work or an appointment it sounds a little too flexy for that kind of need but for leisure/socialising it's a good idea.”

“I would probably look into that to be honest. To go into town. If I go by train I have to walk into town and get a train from the station. It would be good for the community.”

“How would that work? It would be expensive for them (RBWM)? It makes sense for the elderly. I wouldn't go to the effort of booking a bus given I would have the luxury of the car. Surely you would have to book it way in advance? Like 24 hours in advance. It's not really something for me. For the effort I'd ask my mum to give me a lift.”

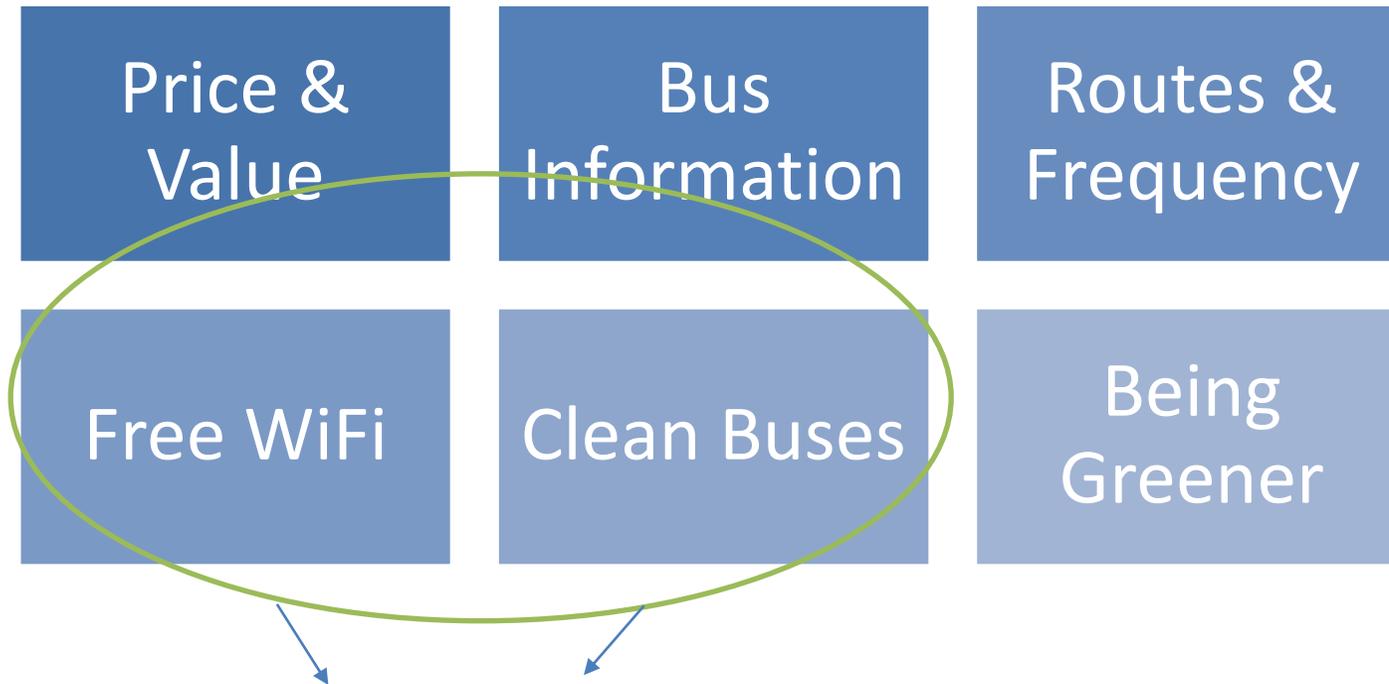
“I'm not sure about the minibus. I don't know how that would work. Will it go around the houses? I'd rather know the route.”

“I'd expect it to be more expensive than getting a bus. How would it compare with getting other buses?”

“It wouldn't work unless you were going to the Cinema or something. At the evening it would suck a bit if you said 'sorry I have to go now'.”

“Is it going to be more hassle? Is it going to take me longer? How frequent is it going to be? If it's not frequent then I'd go back to using the car. .”

Exploring the opportunities to encourage more bus usage



Both about improving the appeal of the on-bus experience

On-board free WiFi appealed

- **Helps modernise perceptions of RBWM buses**
- **Makes people reconsider time on-board:**
 - Useful/enjoyable/relaxing time:
 - Catching up on emails, programmes, social media, Kindle reading
 - Rather than wasted time - can be frustrating
 - Makes getting the bus a smart way to move around
- **Would make it easier to travel with children**
- **May encourage teenagers to use the bus**
- **Would be great to have phone charging too**
- **Some expect buses in RBWM to have free WiFi anyway these days**

” A decent WiFi signal so you could pick up emails, send messages...”

Overall, free WiFi adds support to reasons to consider travelling by bus, rather than being a key lever to gain switches to the bus.

“That’s part of the reason I do take public transport - you can sit back and not worry about driving. I love the idea of sitting back and relaxing. That appeals and resonates, but it’s not new.”

Clean buses – important to deliver on and communicate this

- 31.6% of non-users of buses in the Borough said that cleaner buses would help encourage them to use the bus
- In the qualitative research, the cleanliness was not raised as a huge barrier to using the bus
- But it is a concern for some people:
 - Especially in these post-Covid times
 - 70% of non-users of buses agreed they are wary of public transport since the pandemic
- People remain cautious and would like reassurance that the buses are clean and safe.

- Ways to show or tell people that the buses are clean include:
 - Keeping the outside of the buses clean and smart
 - Ensuring the inside of the bus is clean and clear of litter – and smells clean
 - Ensuring the bus shelters/bus stops are clean areas and clear of litter/debris
 - Posting notification on board the bus as to the last time it was cleaned
 - People want/expect it to be cleaned as often as possible – ideally after each circuit route trip

“My impression is [from historically] that the buses always had a horrendous, horrible, dirty smell. I don't know if it was, they were mopped with a dirty mop or, they weren't cleaned. I just always remember them being grubby. Yeah. It just, isn't very nice to sit in a journey ”

Travelling greener - an underlying important but not primary reason to take the bus

- We explored how engaging the idea of taking the bus to be greener was
- Specifically, we explored how the idea of taking the bus once a week to reduce the carbon footprint resonated.
- Being greener resonated with some, but not others.



- Taking the bus to be greener is not a universally strong motivating lever to shift people's transport behaviour.
- But it does have relevance to some and should be part of the communications plan to shift behaviours
- There was a feeling that to be credible, RBWM should be moving the bus fleet to electric or hybrid vehicles in the future.

- Taking the bus to be greener resonates with some people – 'pricking their conscience' and does make them reconsider whether they could take the bus at least once a week/at times
- For these people, some of the new ideas like real time information, Book a Bus, Express Buses help make taking the bus a real future possibility.
- However, for others whilst they recognise the environmental impact of driving, being greener is not sufficiently important or motivating to prompt a shift in their travel behaviours.
- They are only going to change for greater convenience or because taking the bus suits their needs better. They'll stick with the car.

Positive responses to the idea of taking a bus to be greener

“ Being Greener...I like that. I'm drawn to the idea of carbon footprint reduction. The idea draws me in. I like if it says on the bus 'this bus is carbon neutral'. It's environmentally important. I like the idea of being part of the movement. It feels worthwhile. For me, it would be I need to go into Windsor, so I'll take the bus in and walk back. You could use it for exercise.”

“I like the Save the Planet idea. They should make something of that. I'm sitting here with my 3 cars and I'm feeling slightly guilty.”

“Why not? They'll need to encourage people to use it...they'll need to show that its clean, that it runs smoothly, and it will need to be efficient.”

“I like it. I have to admit I'm not very good with being green ...I take the car. I've become more conscious about it since Covid. I'm walking more and I walk into Windsor more if I'm not pushed for time. To save money, to save carbon. I'm feeling more conscious of that. If there were more of a green way to travel I would go.”

“Even switching once a week ..it feels do-able, achievable. You could make it part of your routine. I could do that. Sam goes to the gym so I drive him. But Sam could get the bus by himself.”

“I know its not going to happen over night. We see a lot of hybrids. I 'd to like to see an advert that says this bus generates less emissions..”

“The charging facilities aren't there for them to introduce electric buses now. It's not going to be doing that right away. But it would make me drawn to taking the bus even once a week. It would put it in my thought process that idea of taking the bus once a week to make a difference.”

For others being Greener isn't a strong motivator

"I drive a Mercedes and it's a diesel guzzler. I get all that. I know petrol is so expensive...But it's not that that would make me start taking the bus...My heart tells me I should be greener and be sensible, but I do like getting the car and driving. It's your independence."

"I like the idea of being greener. If buses were electric and carbon neutral I'd consider that more. Oh no, I couldn't get the bus to Camberley [for work] ..it would triple my time, there isn't a direct bus route. I'd end up having to get up earlier and arriving for work all hot."

"I feel really guilty that the local carbon footprint is not a priority for me. It's not something that I would think about. It wouldn't be my big concern."

"Young people are very in touch with carbon footprint. A lot of young people are interested in reducing their carbon footprint. You should engage the younger population to take bus travel with discounts on things they buy when they're out for the evening if they take the bus...But I'm not going to be changing my planned transport from just reading that."

"I want to hear more about the buses being more carbon neutral. I'm pretty sure some of the buses in Reading are electric. I'd be very impressed if the local bus was electric. But it wouldn't change me really. It would have to be safe, easy and cheap. It's not just about carbon neutral."

"People are on about that a bit. But it's not really for me."

At the heart of developing motivating ideas are Predictability, Speed, Ease & Value

Predictability	Speed	Ease	Value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live digital live information about bus times and prices from A to B... • On a website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – One overall borough website • On an App (for some) • At the bus stops • Ideally, one set fare e.g. £2 per journey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequent bus services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – E.g. every 10-15 mins – Late night services at weekends (11.30pm) • Express bus services, either direct to destination or with minimal stops en route: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potentially could be smaller vehicles • Bus lanes are not generally an expectation given the narrow road network in RBWM (and some worry bus lanes would accentuate road congestion). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to find out bus information (like the TfL or Trainline approach) • Direct way to travel from town to town, or into town centre • Easy access - a stop near me • Contactless payment on board – card, phone. • Book a Bus – easy option for those not near a bus stop. • Easier journey than driving – can work, catch up with reading, social media, TV • Easier than parking in town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it clear what the price of the bus fare is – no/little knowledge currently. Assume it's expensive. • Affordable fares, cheaper than taking the train and/or an uber <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – £2 feels great value ...or even £2.50 • Value carnet of 10 tickets (e.g. on your phone). • Tickets are assumed to operate across different bus companies.

“It’s just knowing I could trust it [the bus to be on time]. If I’m going to go to use the train it has to be to the minute. You want to be confident where the bus is..”

“You really need to increase the frequency of the buses....but a whole load of buses with just 2 people on it will add to the carbon footprint.”



CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, to increase people's propensity to consider buses..

- **The bus needs to be brought onto people's radar. They're not even considered by the majority of people who don't use buses nowadays.**
- **People need to see:**
 - the relevance to them in their lives, on the routes they travel – we believe that this is particularly for **leisure** journeys which involve going into town centres for Retail, and Food & Drink activities.
 - bus travel as a credible and cost-effective alternative to other transport options like the train and taxis/Ubbers
 - there is a need to establish a clear price point(s) or bus fares and create awareness of this
 - that taking the bus as a more liberating cost-effective alternative to taking the car (no car parking cost or hassle, no worries about drink-driving, no need to deal with traffic, and congestion)
 - more evidence of buses around their area and to feel buses are modern and popular
 - that the buses are clean.
- **But to achieve this, it means re-shaping the kind of bus services that are available to people and modernising perceptions:**
 - more frequent buses
 - faster express bus services on key routes
 - more bus routes/stops near me
 - new flexible services e.g. Book a Bus Ride to cater for people who are not well served by buses currently
 - new 'greener' buses would also help modernise the appeal of buses – but asking people to take a bus to be greener by itself will not generate a shift in bus usage.
- **There is a huge opportunity to modernise the way bus information and prices are communicated:**
 - with people wanting real-time digital information on what bus will take them from A to B, the bus times around their preferred departure times, where the relevant stops are, how long their journey will take them, and how much it will cost. The information should be online (App, website) and at the bus stops
 - they want a cohesive cross-operator website information service like that provided by TfL or The TrainLine.com
 - this (along with predictable prices) could be a game changer.

The opportunity for increasing bus usage

Priority opportunities

We believe that there is most ready potential to create incremental shifts in bus usage. The priority is to encourage people to use the bus more for *leisure* trips (shopping, visiting restaurants and bars)
- a side benefit may be a positive impact on work travel.

Make buses a more serious contender vs driving & parking and/or taking an uber or the train - especially for getting into town – with a proposition centered around being easier and more liberating, and cost-effective

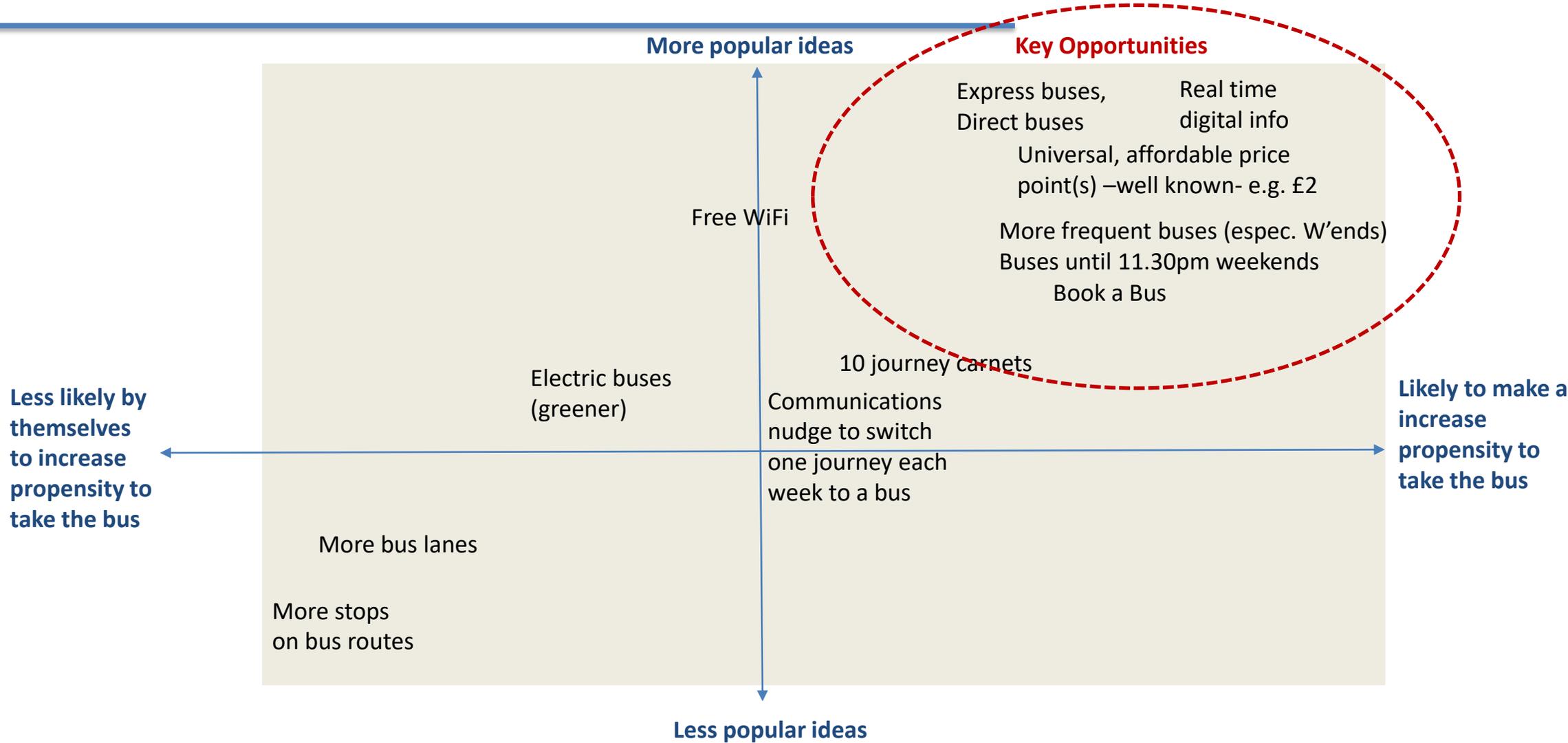
Big opportunity to create a real time bus information system – providing accessible (digital) info about the times and prices for journeys from A to B

Opportunity to simplify/ standardize bus prices so people know and believe they are cheap(er) and great value.

Create more bus options inc (a) Express routes (direct/minimal stops) from A to B, especially focusing on links *between* towns and into town centres, particularly Windsor (b) Book a Bus Ride. Both are worth exploring further. Adding new routes may also be considered where needed and economically viable.

Other communications messages that are likely to enhance the appeal of taking a bus include (a) take a bus just once a week (or more often) to be greener (b) the idea that travelling by bus is relaxing and with free WiFi it allows you time to catch up (reading, programmes) or do work (c) get your teenagers to take a bus. Furthermore, for reassurance in this post Covid market, it is important to have clean buses and signal/communicate their cleanliness.

Opportunities



More Detail on the Quantitative Survey Results

<https://surveymechanics.com/r/buses&sharedResults=2ybhGNL>



APPENDIX – THE STIMULUS MATERIAL FOR THE QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

Efficient & Predictable

We understand that people worry about getting to their destination on time if they take the bus – they just don't want to be held up. There can be uncertainty about whether the bus will arrive to pick them up punctually, how long they'll have to wait, and whether traffic en route will delay their journey.

That's why in the RBWM we're making changes:

- We will provide **real time information at the bus stops** and on our **Bus Journey App**, to let you know what time the next bus is due to arrive at, and if there any delay to the journey so you can build that into your plans.
- We have a new schedule in place to **increase the frequency of our buses on popular routes**, especially at the beginning and end of the working day when there is most demand
- We're also **introducing bus lanes** wherever it's feasible to ensure we keep to our promised schedules.

We're doing everything we can to keep our buses moving quickly, and to let you know just when to expect them!

Great Value

We know that consumers can find it difficult having to buy different types of ticket to travel on buses from different operators in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead area. It's hard to keep a track of all the tickets and prices, and how to buy them, and you can't easily make savings on multi-ticket offers.

That's why we're introducing **a new type of ticket that works across all operators...one ticket fits all...and you can buy a 10-journey ticket at a discounted rate.**

We're making it easier and cheaper to ride on any bus in our Borough!

Great On-Board Experience

Consumers are looking for less stressful and more convenient ways of doing things – including travelling around the local area. Taking the car isn't always that convenient or easy – especially by the time you've navigated the traffic and found a car parking spot!

We've improved our bus routes and schedules so its easier for you to get the bus and enjoy a hassle-free journey.

Buses in the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead have got **new systems and protocols to make sure all our passengers are safe**, there's **free WiFi** on all our buses, **all buses are cleaned thoroughly** at the bus depot at regular times.

Why not take the bus and relax?

More Buses on Your Door Step

We know many residents in the Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead would like to take the bus if it were closer to them and easier for them to access.

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is **improving its bus routes** to make it easier to travel from A to B directly, **adding more bus stops** in places where there are 'gaps' in the route coverage – and we've extended the bus service to later in the evening.

We're also introducing a new **Book-A-Bus service** in some areas that are currently less well served by buses. People can book a bus ride, and a mini-bus will pick them up during the agreed period, and take them to where they need to go, with people on the same journey route sharing the same bus ride. So, you can get out and about more easily, no matter where you live.

We've got new bus services coming to your area to serve you better.

Greener Travel

The impact of how we travel on the environment is something that matters – making travel choices is not just about price of a ticket vs the price of petrol. We understand the importance of **reducing our local carbon footprint** in the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

That's why we are encouraging more people to take the bus rather than the car whenever they can. We've got lots of new and different bus services, including a **late-night service** - and a **Book a Bus** service where people in some areas which were not so well served by buses can readily access a mini-bus service when they need it.

Even switching once a week to the bus will help reduce our carbon footprint. You can rest assured we're doing our bit to help.

We hope you'll Take a Bus to Be Greener!