



Herefordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (2024)



June 2024

1. Herefordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan

Creating an exemplar for rural bus services

June 2024

Produced by:



Herefordshire Council and
Herefordshire's bus operators

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Council by

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1. Overview

Introduction

- 1.1 Situated in the south west of the West Midlands region bordering Wales, Herefordshire has beautiful unspoilt countryside with remote valleys and rivers and a distinctive heritage. The River Wye winds through the county, flowing east from the Welsh border through Hereford city before turning south to flow through the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Malvern Hills border the east of the county, while the south west is dominated by the western reaches of the Black Mountains.
- 1.2 Whilst the landscape and setting make for an idyllic place to live, there are significant challenges for the operation of effective and viable bus services. Small overall population dispersed across the area limits the demand for bus travel. Furthermore, high car ownership results from necessity. Even so, bus services are vitally important for those who do not have access to a car, particularly older and young people, and those that want to move away from a reliance on private vehicles. Buses will play an important role in actions to address the declared climate emergency.
- 1.3 Hereford is a centre of activity and a focal point for the county to which people converge. With a single bridging point of the river and significant through traffic, the city suffers from congestion, which impacts on the ability to provide efficient bus services.
- 1.4 Despite these challenges, Herefordshire is uniquely placed to transform its bus network, to bring real benefit to its residents. There is much support for change and even before the publication of the Bus Back Better: National Bus Strategy, Herefordshire Council was looking at ways to revitalise public transport through various initiatives.

With relatively modest levels of support for the proposals contained in this Plan, significant transformation can take place, showing what can be achieved in a rural area

Development of the Bus Service Improvement Plan

- 1.5 The Herefordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) covers Herefordshire only, reflecting the largely self-contained, inward-facing nature of the bus network, which focuses on Hereford city (where key health and education facilities are located) and the county's market towns. There are several cross-boundary services that link to Worcester, Gloucester and into Wales, used by residents to reach further destinations, although to some extent these are duplicated by rail services that offer quicker journeys and links with the national rail network.

Figure 1 Herefordshire BSIP Area



- 1.6 In developing the BSIP, there has been dialogue with neighbouring authorities. Many of the issues facing Herefordshire are also to be found in Shropshire, reflecting their rural geography, main centre of activity and surrounding market towns. With few cross boundary services and largely different operators, there is little common ground for a joint BSIP. However, there will be opportunities to share experience and knowledge in delivering similar bus service improvements. With other neighbours, continued dialogue and collaboration will be important to maintain and develop existing cross boundary services, including those into Wales
- 1.7 Following the publication of the National Bus Strategy, Herefordshire Council convened an all-operator group that has come together as a Partnership. Terms of Reference were agreed and monthly meetings held, chaired independently to allow authority officers and operators to discuss things freely on equal terms. The Group supported the proposal for an Enhanced Partnership (EP) and the Council published a notice of intent to develop an EP on 25 June 2021. All operators are invited to attend meetings and contribute to its work. There has been good representation at the meetings to date.
- 1.8 The Partnership Group has overseen the development of the BSIP and will ultimately be responsible for the EP Plan and Schemes.

For 2024, Herefordshire Council has committed to refresh the Enhanced Partnership, recognising that it is currently not functioning as we would like. We will seek to bring all bus operators on board, following DfT advice and guidance, and to develop the group over time. We will resource this.

- 1.9 The BSIP will be maintained as a living document that is regularly reviewed and updated, at least annually. Monitoring reports will be produced every 6 months to demonstrate progress towards the objectives and targets set.

Aims and objectives of the BSIP

- 1.10 All partners have been engaged in the development of the BSIP and the formulation of the vision and objectives set out below. Letters of support for the BSIP have been received from the majority of operators and are included at appendix b.

Vision

Buses in Herefordshire play a significant role in meeting travel needs, having a positive impact on the lives and wellbeing of those who use them and making a positive contribution to the county's economy and environment.

BSIP goal

To use BSIP funding to continually improve the bus network across, and out of the county. Providing, eventually, a firm foundation for the Herefordshire bus network on which to build, develop and improve service provision. This will be achieved by focusing efforts and resources on measures that maximise benefits.

Objectives

1. Establish a coherent, consistent and integrated bus network that is well understood and easy to use.
2. Offer a quality service that is attractive to use and portrays a positive image.
3. Provide a service that offers value for money.
4. Contribute positively towards Herefordshire's ambitions for decarbonisation and environmental improvement.
5. Support the wellbeing of Herefordshire residents, enabling people to access key services and live independently

BSIP+ Priorities

The BSIP+ priorities for Herefordshire (in order) are:

1. Support the existing network where services are at risk and identified by operators
2. Hourly core network throughout Herefordshire
3. 2 hourly secondary network throughout Herefordshire
4. Enhanced early morning and later afternoon services
5. Continued support for Sunday service
6. Enhanced evening offer on core network.

2. Current offer to passengers

Introduction

- 2.1 The expectation on BSIPs is for local authorities to deliver a fully integrated bus service, with simple multi-operator tickets, more bus priority measures, the same high quality information for all passengers in more places, and better turn-up and go frequencies that keep running in to the evening and at weekends. By delivering these, the expectation is that patronage growth will follow.
- 2.2 This chapter summarises the existing position regarding the delivery and use of bus services across Herefordshire. It takes account of the evidence gathered from stakeholders and residents during summer 2021. By considering the gap between the current position and ambition, areas for improvement have been identified, along with targets, approaches to delivering change and reporting structures. These are set out in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Herefordshire in context

- 2.3 With a population of 188,700 (2022), Herefordshire is the fourth least populated county in England, with 221 people per square mile. One third of the population lives in Hereford, one third in the five market towns and the remaining third distributed across the villages and hamlets. Most of the county (95%) is classed as rural and **53% of the population live in rural areas**. In the DfT's Index of Accessibility, it is the **lowest ranking local authority in terms of access to key services**.

Herefordshire at a glance

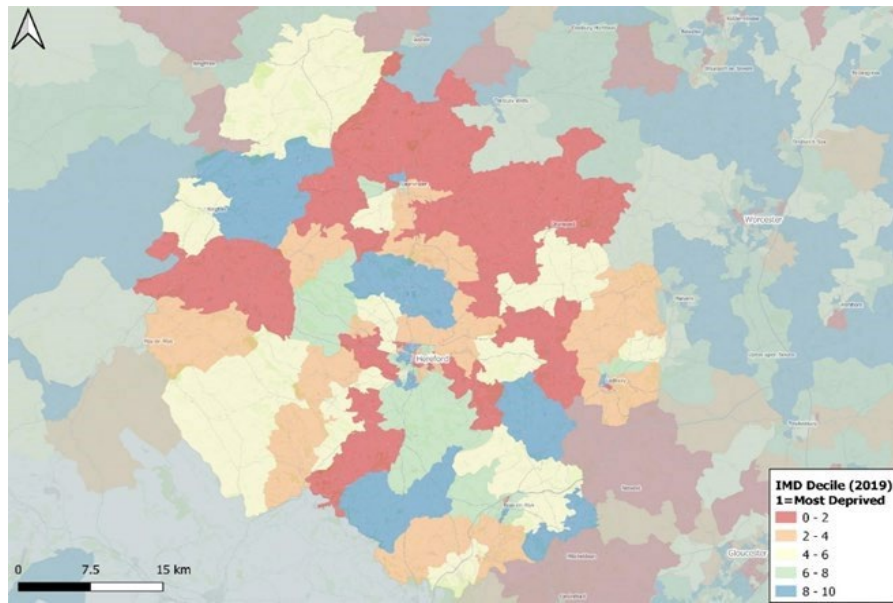
Median age - 48 years compared with national average 40.4

26% of the population is aged 65+ compared to 18.6% nationally

16% of people aged 0-15 compared to 23% nationally

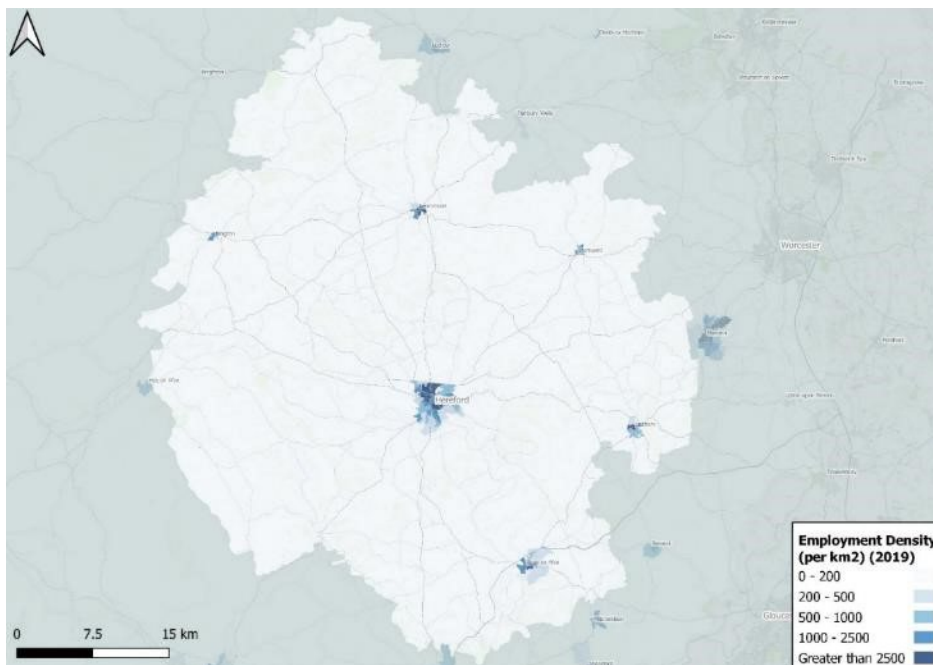
Herefordshire has limited ethnic diversity – 2.3% of the population is non-white

Figure 2 Levels of deprivation across Herefordshire



- 2.4 Despite having higher than average life expectancy, Herefordshire has areas of high deprivation. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019) highlight that **31% of the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in the county are in the top 20% most deprived areas.**

Figure 3 Employment density in Herefordshire (2019)

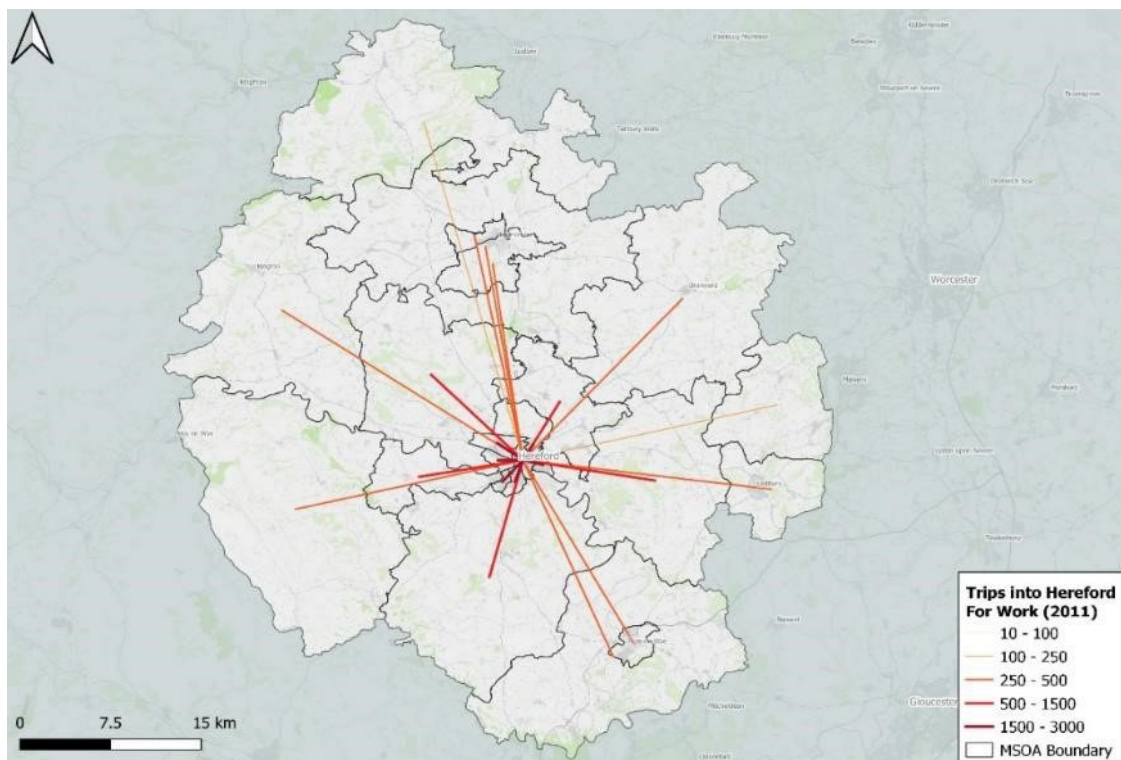


- 2.5 Herefordshire's economy is predominantly rural. In 2018, 90% of enterprises registered in the county employed less than 10 people, with only 0.1% of companies in the county classified as 'large employers' and employing more than 250 people. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (24%), 'construction' (11%) and 'professional and

technical activities' (11%) sectors employed the largest share of people. Employment density, according to the 2019 Business Register and Employment Survey, is shown in Figure 3.

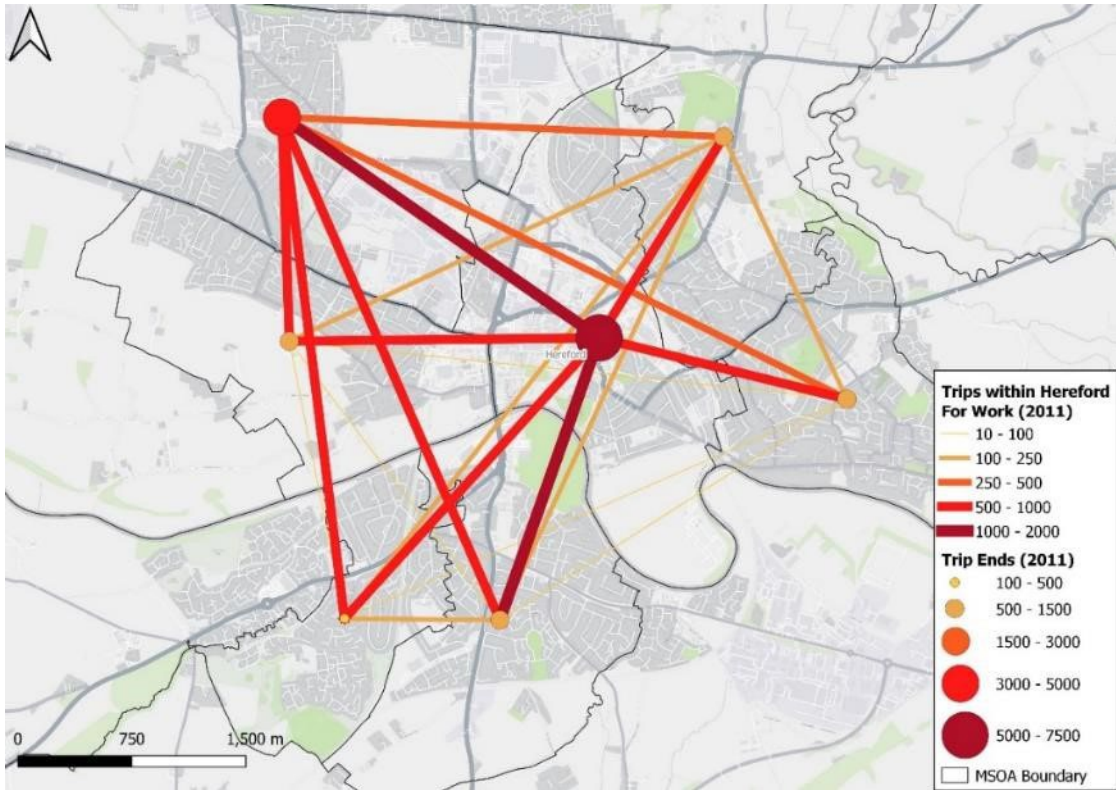
- 2.6 Hereford has the largest concentration of employment in the county, with an estimated 29,000 jobs located in the city in 2019. As such, the city is a major trip generator for journeys to work. Figure 4 shows the relative flows into the city for work from all parts of the county. Other important centres of employment include Ross on Wye, Leominster and Ledbury and, to a lesser extent Kington and Bromyard.

Figure 4 Travel to work in Herefordshire (Census 2011)

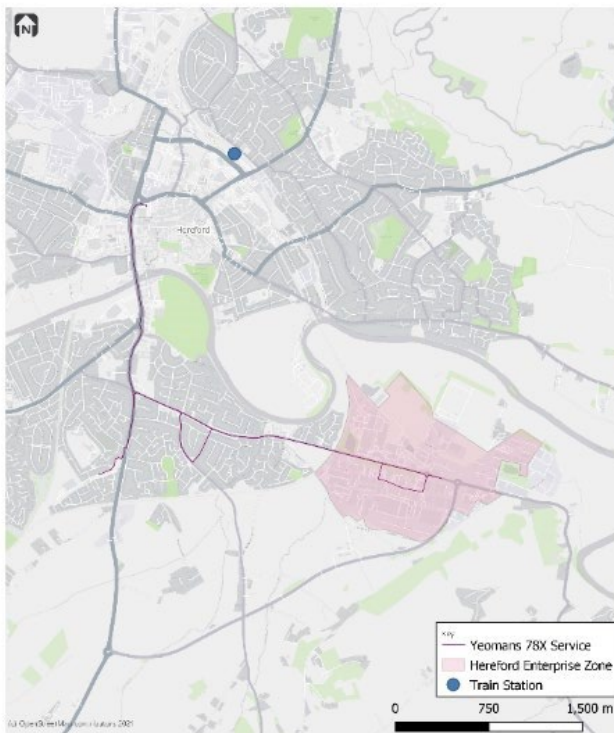


- 2.7 Within Hereford itself there are significant movements in and around the city for work, as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5 Travel to work within Herefordshire (Census 2011)



- 2.8 Recent years have seen the development of large employment areas in Hereford, most notably the Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ) located to the south-east of the city.



Herefordshire Enterprise Zone - Why is the site important?

Skylon Park is the 72-hectare Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ) - the largest employment area in Hereford. It is intended that further highly skilled jobs will be created and investment encouraged into the area. There are currently around 4,000 people employed across the HEZ. The site is served by a new two-mile long access road directly onto the A49, and the M50 is around a 25-minute drive from the site. Shift times vary, with most operations between 07:00 and 19:00, with a few 24/7 operations.

Current public transport access

Bus service 78X, operated by Yeoman's, links the HEZ and Hereford city centre. It operates every 30 minutes for much of the day, with some longer gaps at times. Using Phase 2 BSIP+ funding, the 78X service has been extended further into the HEZ. As part of Herefordshire Council's bus infrastructure project, four bus shelters have been re-purposed to this area, during May 2024.

296 passengers of the service were surveyed in 2018. People commented on the large gaps in the timetables in the morning (for instance between 08:00 and 08:45), which was not conducive for travelling to work. Furthermore, people noted that the service was often late with variable punctuality in the late afternoon due to traffic. There were calls for the service to be extended to the railway station to improve connectivity.

Whilst some improvements were made in response to the feedback, including updated timings and amendments to the route around the estate, the service continues to run only to the city centre and not beyond to the railway station.

Transport barriers for employees

In May 2019, 392 staff from 92 different businesses across the HEZ responded to a Herefordshire Council survey. 19% of respondents lived within 2 miles of Skylon Park and 49% within 5 miles. 68% of respondents travelled alone by car (72% in 2018), 14% cycled (12% in 2018) and 1% used the bus (2% in 2018). A reasonable number of employees occasionally cycled (22%), walked (14%) or car-shared (17%). Only 4% of respondents occasionally used the bus.

When asked what would encourage them to start, or continue using the bus, the most common measures were discounts on tickets (19%), better bus information (8%) and bus stop closer to the workplace (5%). Of those respondents who generally drove alone to work, two thirds indicated that none of the suggested changes would encourage them to use the bus.

People further commented on the inconvenience and expense of having to get connecting buses in Hereford city centre. A number highlighted that there was no suitable bus service close to their home. The main reasons for using the car were that it was quicker, easier and more convenient (54%), the distance of the journey (38%) and lack of suitable public transport services from where they live (37%).

Challenges and opportunities

- 2.9 Herefordshire's Local Transport Plan (LTP) Strategy 2016-2031 outlines the main challenges relating to travel and transport in Herefordshire, summarised in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6 LTP analysis of travel and transport in Herefordshire

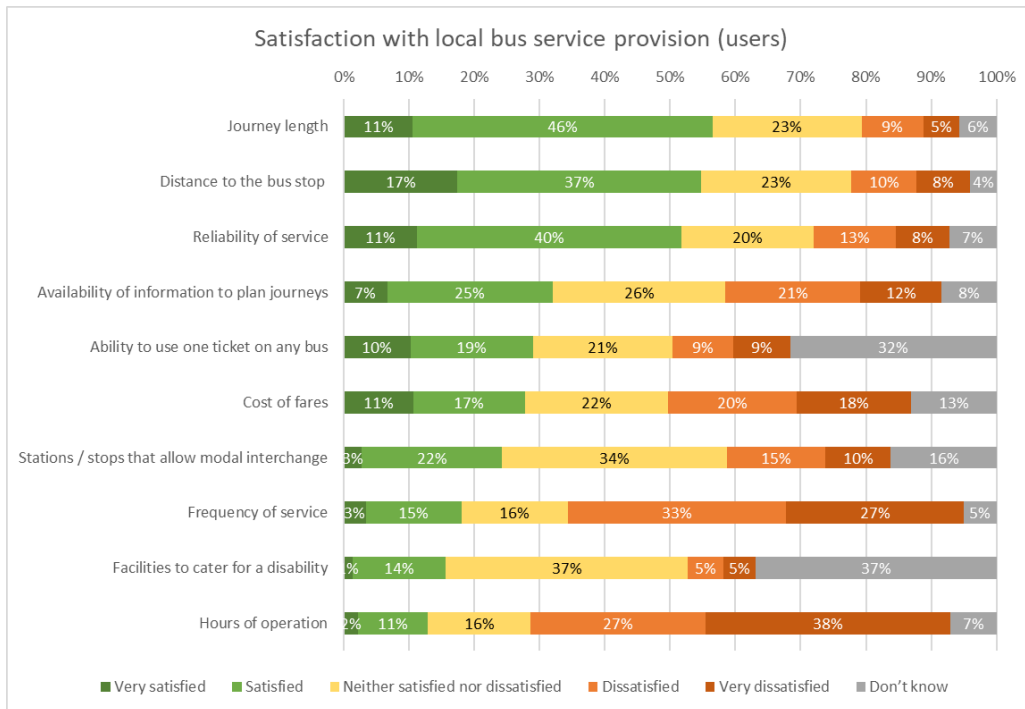


What do people think about buses in Herefordshire?

- 2.10 Herefordshire Council has carried out a number of public consultation exercises over the last few years, gauging opinion on bus and community transport services. Whilst providing useful insights, these have tended to focus on guiding future spending priorities on bus services, rather than transformational enhancements to the network. Therefore, in summer 2021, an on-line survey was undertaken to better understand people's views of the current bus network and what they considered should be the priority actions for inclusion in the Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- 2.11 Appendix A contains a summary of the public consultation.
- 2.12 The survey received 753 responses, mainly from residents and with a few from representatives of organisations. 32% of respondents were non-users of bus. 33% were regular bus users and 35% occasional users of bus. Overall, 25% of respondents expected that their journey patterns would change because of the pandemic.

- 2.13 Bus users were most satisfied with journey length, distance to the bus stop and service reliability. They were least satisfied with service frequency, facilities to cater for those with disabilities and hours of operation.
- 2.14 In terms of reasons for using the car rather than bus, similar patterns existed for both bus users and non-users. Most cited were the lack of available buses and the frequency of services.

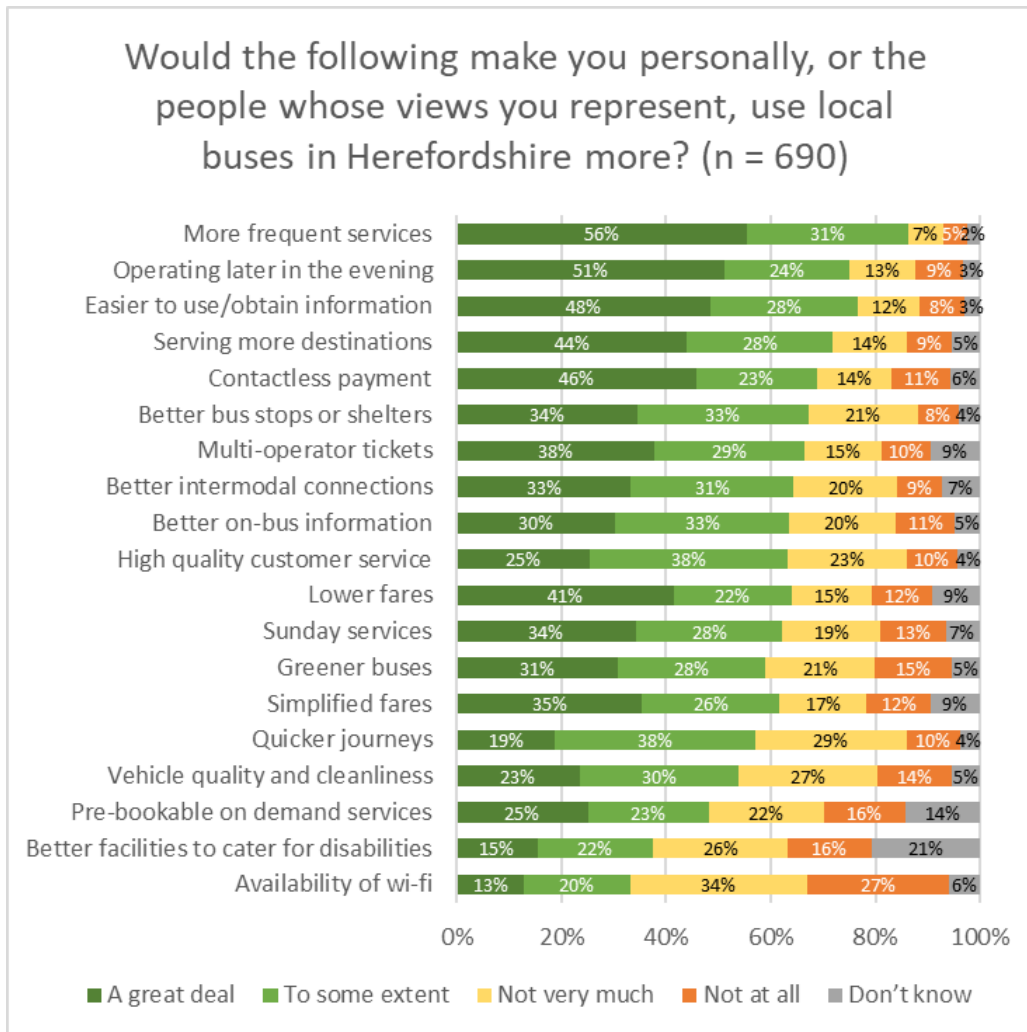
Figure 7 Bus users' satisfaction



- 2.15 When asked what they considered to be the priorities for the BSIP, the following were highlighted:

- More frequent services (87%)
- Evening services (75%)
- Information that is easier to obtain and use (76%)
- More destinations reached by bus (72%)

Figure 8 Views on which improvements would encourage bus use



2.16 In terms of fares and ticketing, the provision of a multi-operator ticket was considered more important than lower fares. Meanwhile, improved bus stops were mid-ranking and rated above better vehicles. The priorities expressed by users and non-users were aligned and expressed almost in the same order, as highlighted in Figure 9.

Figure 9 BSIP priorities for bus users and non-users

Bus users	Non-Bus users
More frequent services (88%)	More frequent services (83%)
Information easier to use/find (79%)	Information easier to use/find (74%)
Contactless payment (78%)	Contactless payment (73%)
Serving more destinations (72%)	Serving more destinations (71%)
Multi operator ticket (69%)	Multi operator ticket (67%)
Operate later in evening (68%)	Operate later in evening (68%)

2.17 For businesses and groups, priorities were:

- More frequent services (100%)
- Information that is easier to obtain and use (100%)
- Multi-operator ticketing (91%)

2.18 Two workshops were held to gauge the views and thoughts of elected members and wider stakeholder interests (business, Department of Work and Pensions, bus user representatives, community groups; disability groups). Both groups expressed a poor perception of the existing bus network, although bus users highlighted some positive points of services, including examples.

2.19 The main points to emerge were:

- Desire to see more consistent provision and improved frequencies on core routes (operating 07:00 – 22:00) and with a service 7 days per week
- Important to recognise the leisure/tourism potential of bus services
- More links between market towns, such as Kington – Leominster
- Concerns around the operation and image of City Bus Station
- Herefordshire Council should coordinate the provision of information

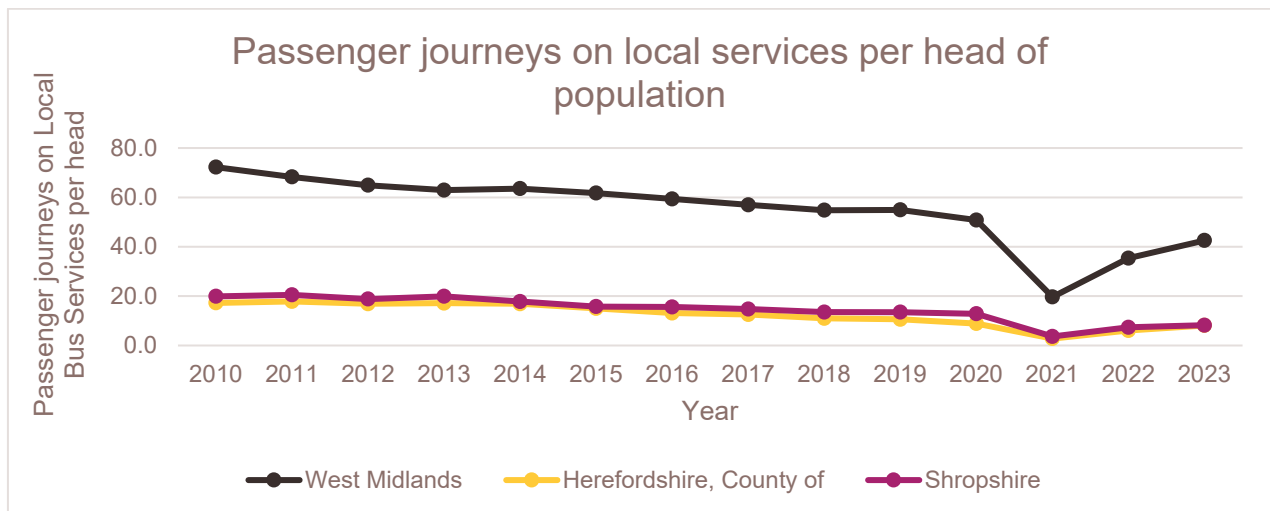
Current offer to passengers

The network

2.20 Just over 2 million passenger journeys were undertaken on local bus services in Herefordshire in 2018/19. The network has seen patronage decline over the past decade. Between 2009/10 and 2018/19, total local bus patronage fell by 35%. Concessionary travel use fell by 29%, suggesting that there has been a more significant fall in fare-paying passengers. During the Covid pandemic in 2021, patronage fell to 0.5 million passenger journeys. 2023 saw a 200% increase in passengers totalling 1.5 million journeys.

2.21 Between 2009/10 and 2019/20 passenger journeys per head of population fell by 46%, more than in neighbouring Shropshire (down 33.6%) and the West Midlands region (down 30.1%). 2021 saw passenger journeys per head of population drop by 83.7% compared to 2009/10. As of 2023, there was an increase of 189% compared to 2021, this figure is still considerably lower than the 2009/10 benchmark – an overall decline of 52%. Shropshire in comparison are at an overall fall rate of 58.8%, with the West Midlands region at 51%.

Figure 10 Passenger journeys on local services per head of population



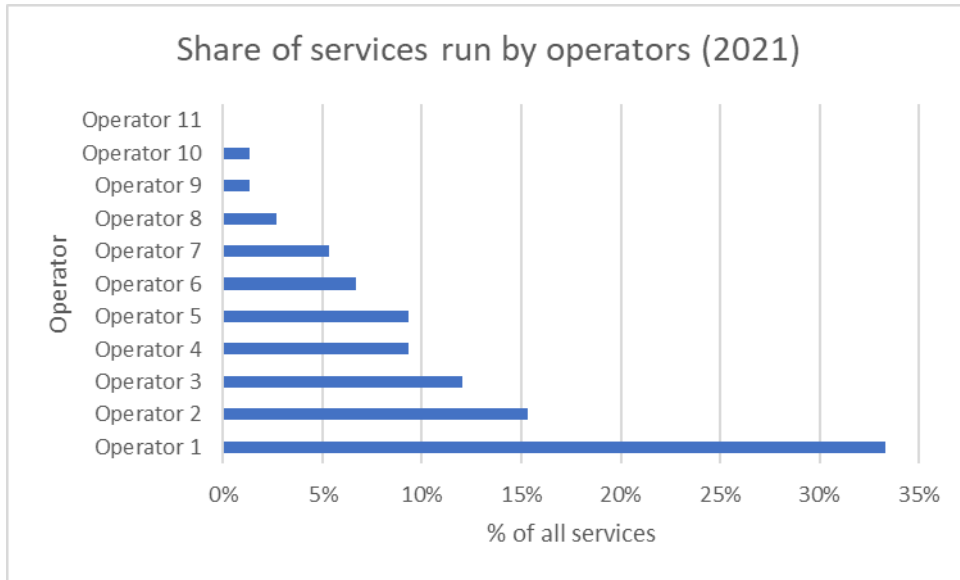
- 2.22 The bus network is focused on Hereford, with services radiating out to the market towns. These operate with varying frequencies, which are at best hourly. From those towns, some services continue into neighbouring areas, running on to Gloucester, Worcester and Ludlow. There are a number of services that cross into Wales, including the 23 to Newport and TrawsCymru T14 service via Hay-on-Wye to Brecon, Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff. There are also more local links to Llandrindod Wells and Monmouth.
- 2.23 There are a number of other rural bus services linking larger villages to Hereford. Across the county there are more occasional services, many only operating on certain days of the week, that provide links from rural hinterlands into the nearest market town or to Hereford.
- 2.24 Within Hereford itself is a network of local city bus services, linking the main residential areas to the city centre. These provide quite a complex pattern of loops and route variations and operate, with most offering a 30-minute frequency. The city network converges on the City Bus Station, whilst other bus services use the Country Bus Station.
- 2.25 Several community transport operators offer a range of minibus and volunteer car services to residents in each of their areas. Between them, the entire county is covered. These benefit people who either are unable to use conventional public transport services or those for whom no other service is available.
- 2.26 The bus network is shown in Figure 15, with more detailed local maps available on [our website](#).

Operators

- 2.27 Herefordshire's bus network is unique in being dominated by local independent companies. Eleven operators provide services. Whilst three of the large national

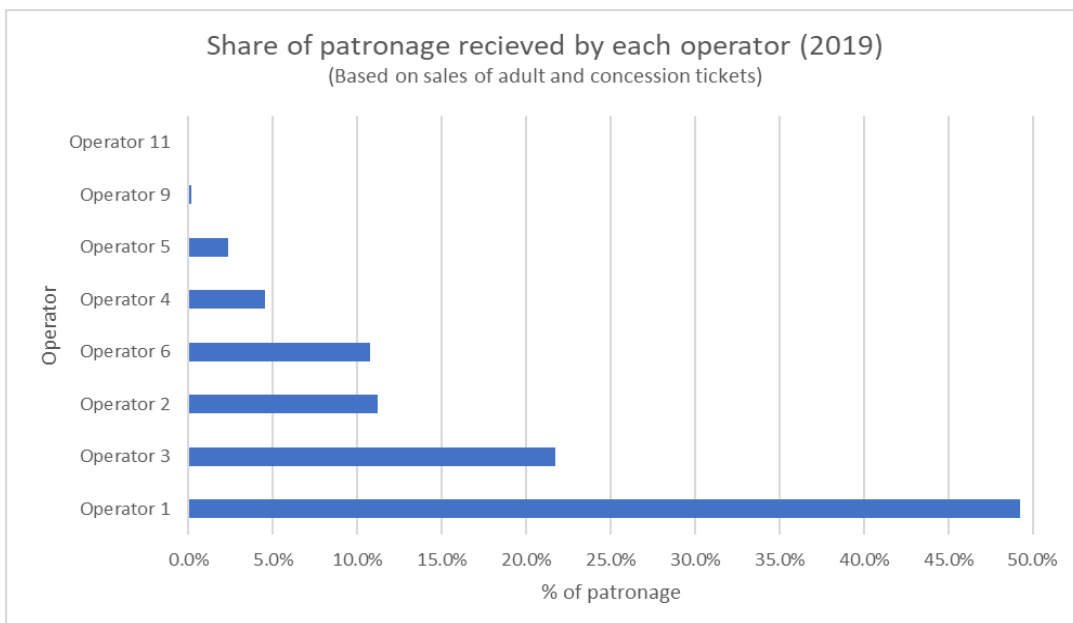
operators run services into Herefordshire, they have no base in the county and have a relatively small share of services.

Figure 11 Share of services run by each operator



- 2.28 115 different registered local bus services operate, for at least some of their length, in the county. The largest operator provides a third of all registered services. The top five operators between them run just 75% of the registered services.
- 2.29 The largest operator accounts for a greater proportion of all patronage, an indication of the higher levels of usage on services in Hereford city.

Figure 12 Share of patronage by each operator



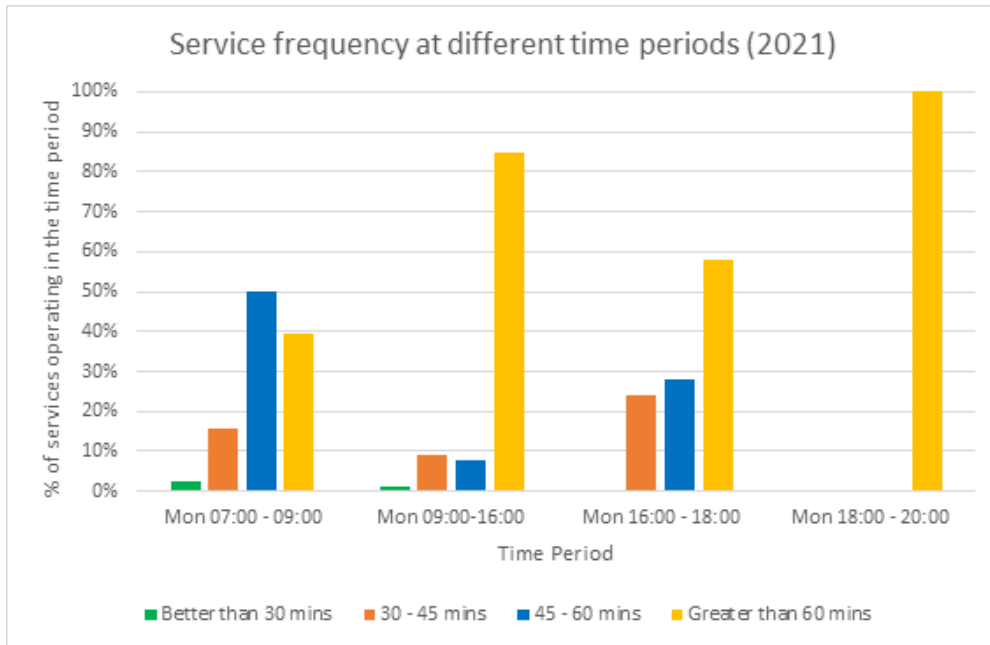
Service Frequency

- 2.30 Much of the current bus network is designed around meeting the travel requirements of young people travelling to and from school and college. This results in journeys that fall

out of regular service patterns. Equally, where buses carry large numbers of young people, it can deter other users.

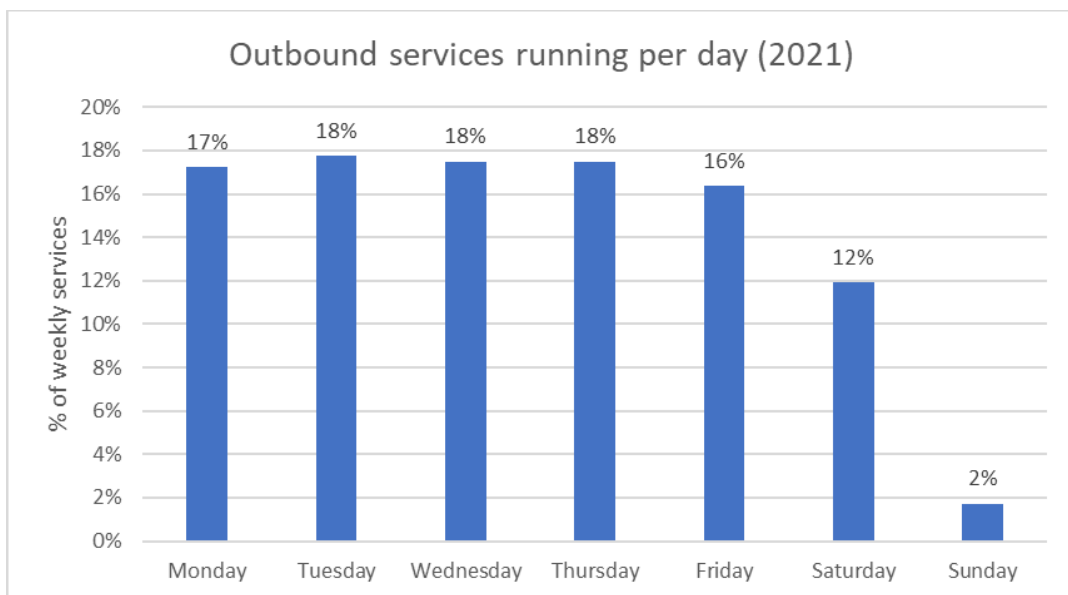
2.31 The variability in service frequencies is shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13 Service frequency at different time periods (2021)



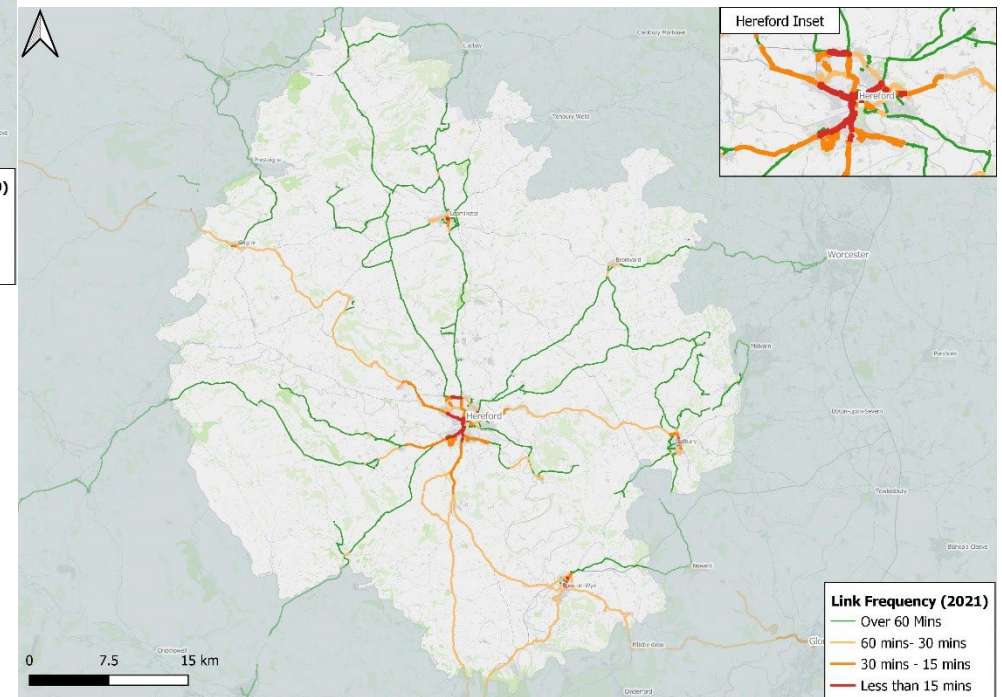
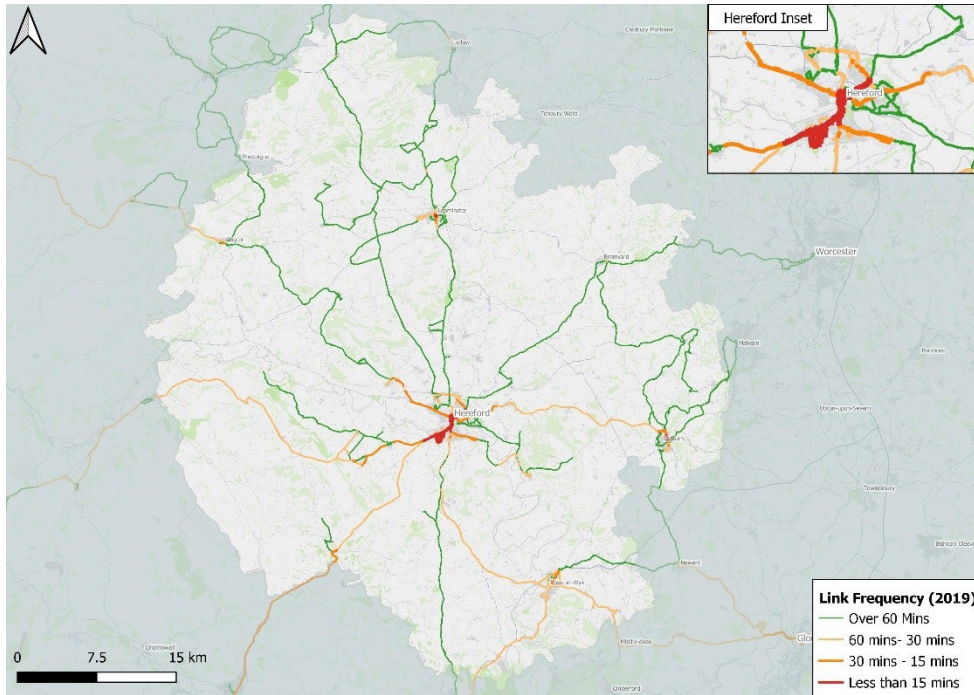
2.32 Levels of service also vary by day of the week, with less provision on Saturday than weekdays and significantly less on Sunday.

Figure 14 Outbound services running per day (2021)



2.33 The overall bus network is shown in Figure 15, along with maps showing the relative frequencies both now and pre-pandemic.

Figure 15 Herefordshire Bus Network Link Frequency 2019 and 2021



Herefordshire Council Support

In 2020/21 the Council spent over £3.5 million supporting bus services in Herefordshire, £800,000 secured 13 contracts with operators, which account for more than a quarter of total patronage across the County. Over £1.2 million was spent reimbursing operators for carrying concessionary passholders. The remaining expenditure was on student passes, publicity, Covid-19 recovery and staffing costs

- 2.34 A team of 1.3 officers have prime responsibility for overseeing the support of the network, concessionary travel, information and liaising with operators. We intend to increase the staff resources to support BSIP operations during 2024.

Network density

Much of the population does not have access to a frequent service. Based on 2021 service level, 43% of the county's population had access to at least an hourly bus service (measured during the morning peak). This reduced to just 8% that could access services with frequencies of 30 minutes or better, with these residents living exclusively in Hereford city.

- 2.35 Service frequency falls after 18:00, and there are no services operating after 20:00. Sunday service frequency is also low, with only five services operating, each with a frequency of less than hourly.

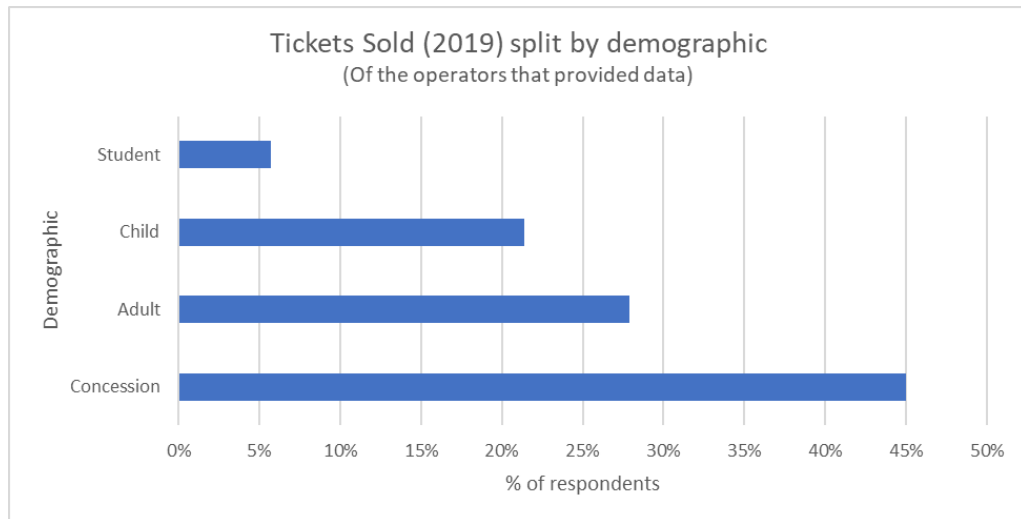
Table 1 Proportion of population with access to different levels of service

Service frequency	% of population within 400m of a service Monday (07:00 - 09:00)	% of population within 400m of a service Monday (after 18:00)	% of population within 400m of a service Monday (after 20:00)	% of population within 400m of a service Sunday daytime
Less than 30mins	8%	No services	No services	No services
30 mins - 60 mins	43%	No services	No services	No services
All Services	56%	40%	No services	25%

- 2.36 There are over 1800 bus stops across Herefordshire, approximately one for every 104 residents. This compares to one bus stop per 101 residents in Shropshire, 133 residents in Worcestershire and 90 in Gloucestershire.

Users

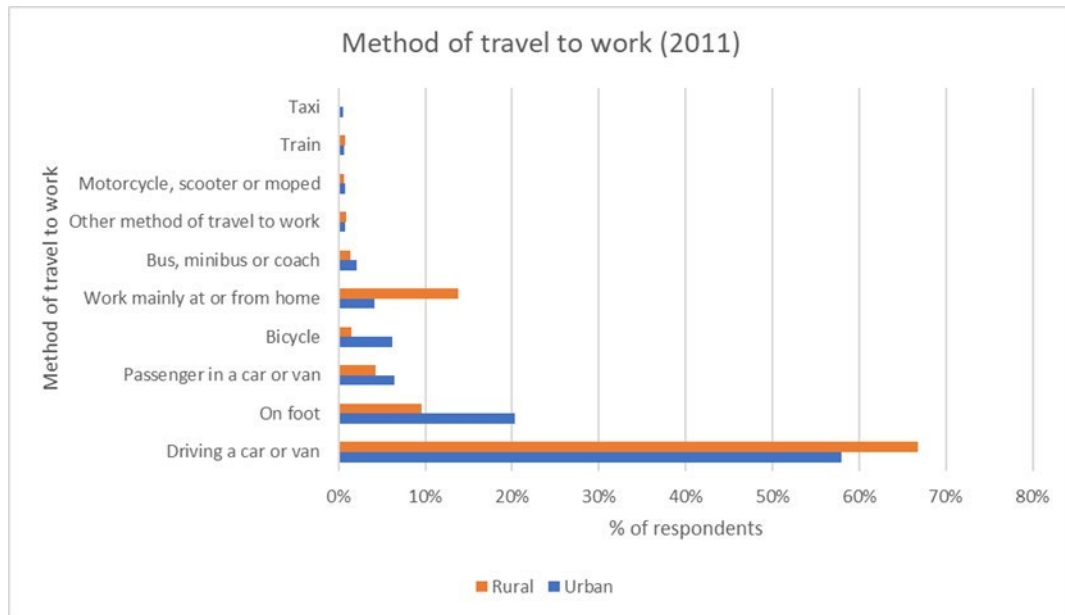
- 2.37 Between 2009/10 and 2018/19, total local bus patronage fell by 35%. Concession use fell by 29%, suggesting that there was a more significant fall in fare-paying passengers. Concessionary fares have yet to reach pre-Covid levels. During the decade from 2009/10, an average of 1.2 million concessionary journeys were made in Herefordshire. As of 2023, this figure sits at 0.5 million and totals a decline of 64%. As a region, the West Midlands have a seen a reduction of 55.8%, with Shropshire revealing a similar figure (56%).
- 2.38 The network is failing to attract fare paying adults. The largest single user group on the network in Herefordshire in 2019 was concessionary fare pass holders, making up approximately 45% of tickets sold (of operators that provided data). Full fare paying adults represent 28% of tickets sold whilst the remaining share was made up of children and student tickets.



Ticketing and patronage data was provided from five operators. To obtain a more holistic view, concessionary fare returns were used to determine patronage on routes where data was not available. Action is underway to obtain data from the remaining operators, some of which do not hold the technology or expertise to provide the full range of data requested for the BSIP.

Modal share

- 2.39 With high car ownership, much of the population relies on the car as the main form of transport. The most recent available modal share statistics are from the 2011 Census, at a time when bus passenger journeys were 44% higher than in 2019/20.
- 2.40 In 2011, 62% of all journeys to work were by car and just 1.5% by bus (1% in rural areas, 2% in urban areas). 85% of households had a car, compared to 74% for England as a whole. The decline in bus patronage is likely to have increased the modal share towards car further, and when data is made available from the 2021 census, full analysis will be undertaken.



Reliability

- 2.41 High car use is one factor that contributes to poor network reliability, particularly in Hereford. Bus reliability and punctuality are key concerns for the operators. Over time, timetabled journey times have increased to manage falls in reliability, affecting service frequency, service regularity and operating costs. In Herefordshire, the percentage of non-frequent bus services running on time has decreased from 92% in 2015/16 to 78% in 2018/19¹.
- 2.42 Leading to longer journey times and unreliable journeys, congestion directly increases operating costs, therefore potential capital for investment in service improvements and better levels of services is lost by operators having to maintain headways.

Pinch Points

Bus vehicle speed and congestion by route and by time of day – using GPS vehicle data from operators was not possible as the operators in Herefordshire do not have the technology to collect this data at present. Instead, consultation has been undertaken with operators to identify pinch points, with supplementary secondary analysis undertaken to inform the BSIP goals.

- 2.43 Operators were asked to identify sections of road and junctions where delays to their services occurred. Central Hereford is the main area for delays at locations including:
- Entry to the City and Country Bus Stations.
 - Major roads into the city, including Belmont Road, Whitecross Road, Commercial Road and Aylestone Hill.

¹ DfT stats Table BUS0902 - Non-frequent bus services running on time¹ by local authority: England, annual from 2004/05

- Newmarket Road (a key link between major roads in the city).
- St Peter's Square (a narrow road located in the historic city centre).

2.44 Only one location outside of Hereford was identified, which was in Bromyard (Broad Street into Pump Street). The locations of pinch points identified is shown in Figure 17.

Figure 16 Pinch points in Herefordshire identified by operators



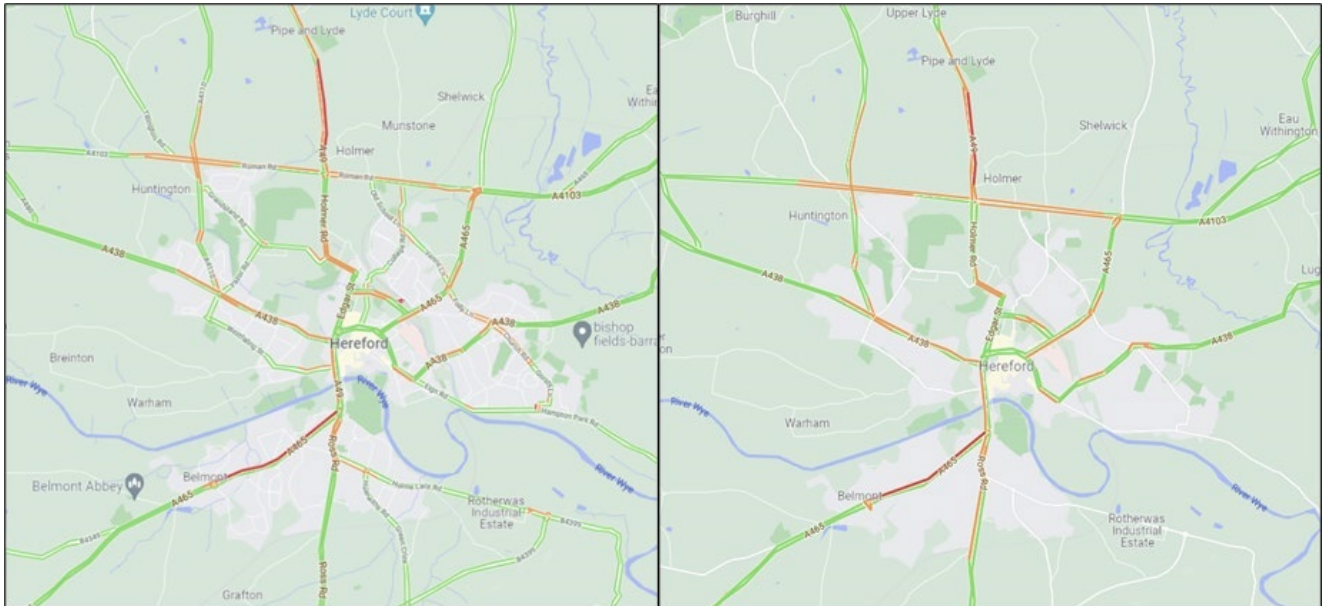
2.45 Operators were also asked about desirable interventions at these pinch points. Bus priority at junctions and bus lanes were considered to offer the best solutions.

Congestion

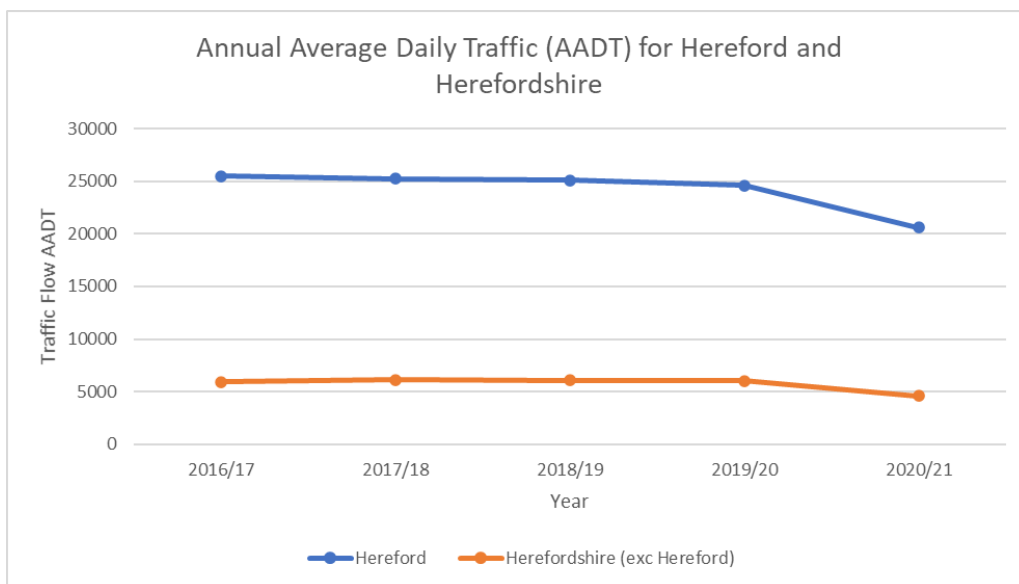
Traffic levels and a lack of priority are the cause of the problems at the identified pinch points. The maps below show typical congestion in Hereford city according to the Google Maps predictive model at 08:00 (left) and 17:00 (right). Virtually all major roads in the city are congested at these times, delaying buses and reducing the competitiveness of the bus compared to private vehicles.

Figure 17 Typical congestion in Hereford city in the am (left) and pm (right)

Source - Google Maps, 2021



2.46 Overall Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) in Hereford fell by 1.6% between 2016/17 and 2019/20.² During the same period for Herefordshire county (excluding Hereford), AADT rose by 1.3%.



² The last full year without the pandemic influencing traffic levels

Existing bus priority

- 2.47 Delays caused by congestion are exacerbated by the lack of bus priority. There is only one bus lane in Herefordshire currently, with an approximate length of 15m (pictured). Otherwise, there are no specific bus priority measures, with buses left to queue with other general traffic.



Bus vehicle speed and journey times

- 2.48 Congestion in Hereford slows down vehicle speeds and impacts on bus journey times. In the absence of location or service-specific speed and journey time information, basic analysis has been undertaken using the timetabled journey time for the 33 services that operate in Hereford city for at least part of their journey. This analysis indicated that:
- End-to-end average speed of services in the morning peak is 14.7mph (23.7 km/h)
 - End-to-end average speed of services between the peaks is 15.5mph (25km/h).
- 2.49 Almost 65% of services have timetabled speeds slower in the morning peak than between the peaks, indicating the impact of congestion.

Information, branding and ticketing

- 2.50 There is no central or integrated system for information, branding and ticketing in Herefordshire, and therefore, no consistency for customers. Users and Non-Users considered this their second most common priority for improvement.

Information

- 2.51 Information is provided through separate sources, with no central point available online where a person can access information for the entire network. Although operators make best efforts to ensure information is available to their passengers, some operators lack resource or skills to develop information provision in accessible and user-friendly formats.
- 2.52 A summary of information available through different sources is provided below.

Table 2 Summary of available bus information

Source of information	Availability
Websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each operator has a website where timetable information from their services can be accessed. • Fares information can be accessed via websites for only one operator • Herefordshire Council uploads data files to Traveline.info, where timetable information can be obtained.
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each operator has an individual Facebook page. Timetable changes and other urgent information such as road closures are given on these sites. • Some operators have other social media such as Instagram or Twitter. • A central twitter site 'Hereford Buses' provides updates on bus travel for all services in the county.
Apps	Only the national operators, Stagecoach and First, provide individual apps where passengers can access information and buy tickets.
Real-Time Passenger Information (RTPI)	RTPI screens are provided at main stops in Hereford city centre, with QR codes provided at other bus stops so passengers can access this information. Herefordshire Council uploads the relevant data files to support this service.
Roadside information	Herefordshire Council funds the provision of timetables and publicity at stops and shelters.
Paper timetables	Each operator produces individual paper timetables. There is no central resource available for all timetables.

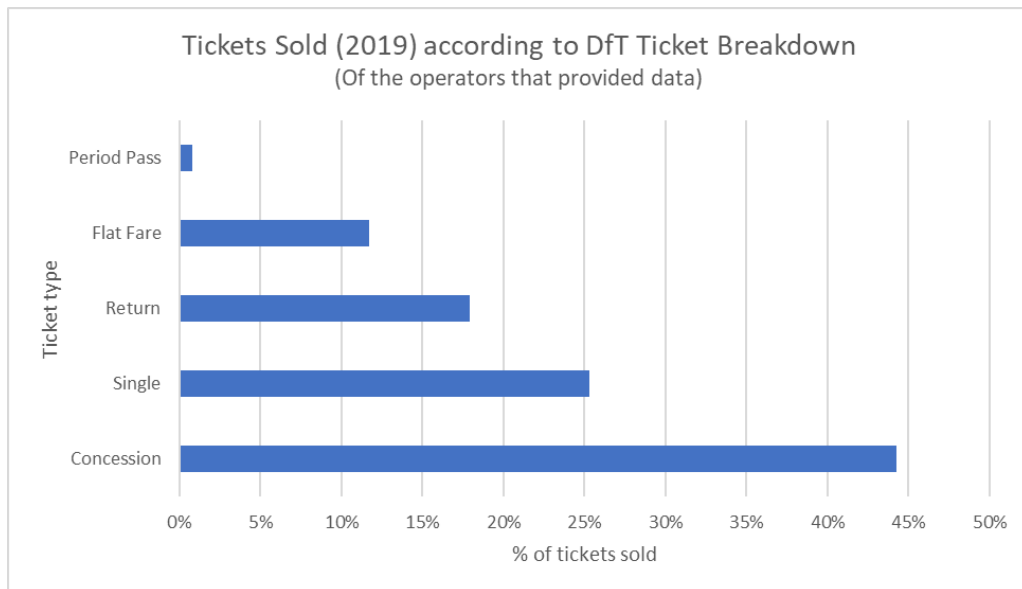
Branding

2.53 Aside from bus stop signage, which is managed by the council and is consistent, all branding is undertaken by operators, meaning there is no one brand for bus services in Herefordshire.

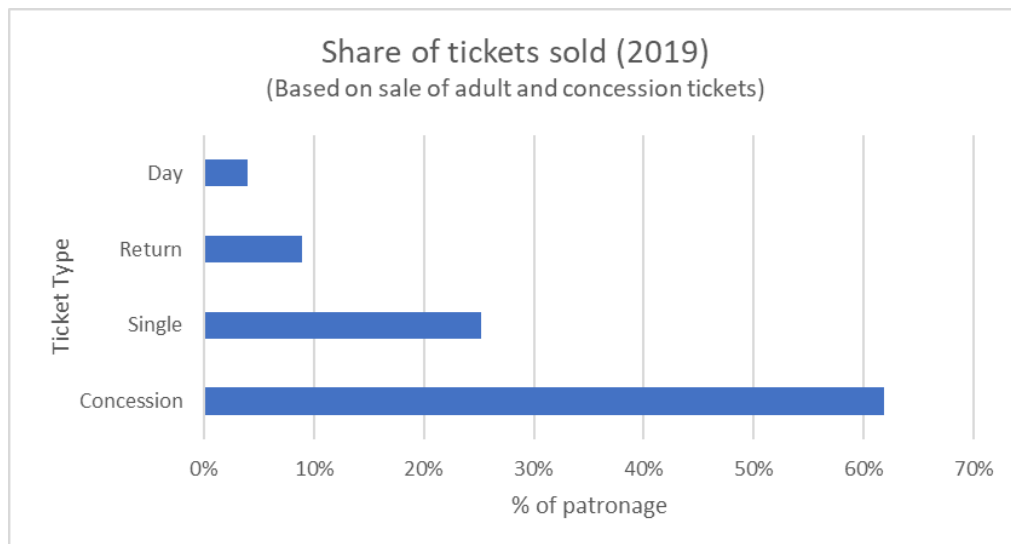
Tickets

2.54 There is no multi-operator ticketing agreement in Herefordshire, with each operator offering its own range of singles, returns, daily, weekly and monthly tickets. Multioperator tickets were cited by residents as one of the top 5 reasons that would encourage bus use.

- 2.55 Analysis of ticket sales, split according to the breakdown specified by the DfT, was undertaken. This breakdown was only possible for the operators that provided full set of data; therefore, it does not represent all journeys.
- 2.56 Concessionary fares accounted for the greatest proportion of ticket sales in 2019 (44%), followed by singles (25%), and then returns (17%).



Alternative data was taken from the forms submitted by operators for concessionary travel reimbursement. This gives a split of ticket types for all services.

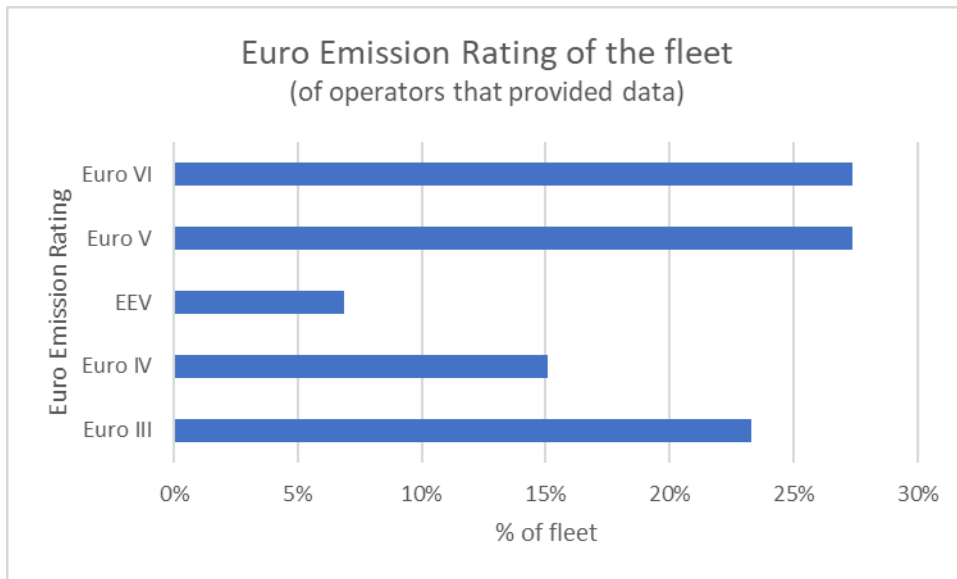


In terms of payment, operators were not able to provide data about the split of electronic and cash payments. Card and contactless payment is available on all buses apart from those of one operator. By the end of 2021, all operators will offer contactless payment methods.

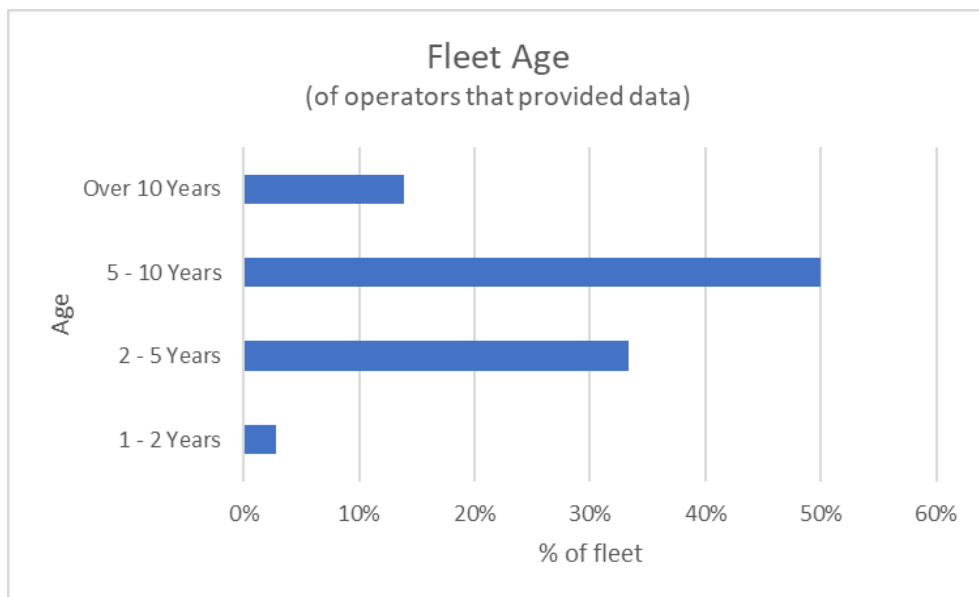
The split of electronic and cash payments was not possible to obtain from operators. The project team will work to obtain this data as soon as possible.

Decarbonisation and support

- 2.57 Herefordshire declared a climate emergency in 2019, which committed the authority to become climate neutral by 2030/1 and reduce carbon emissions by 75% by 2025/6.
- 2.58 Transport is estimated to contribute 36% of emissions in Herefordshire and whilst the bus network offers a low-carbon alternative to driving, the bus fleet itself contributes to local air pollution and CO₂ emissions.
- 2.59 Fleet information was provided by five operators. Whilst 27% of the fleet met the highest standard, Euro VI, nearly 40% of vehicles meet only Euro III and IV emission standards.



- 2.60 The lower standards for emissions reflect the age profile of the fleet. Almost 50% of the fleet is aged between 5 and 10 years, with less than 5% of the fleet less than 2 years old.



Fleet data was not provided by certain operators. The project team will seek to obtain this data.

Public transport and local policy

Herefordshire County Plan 2020-2024

“Respecting our past, shaping our future – we will improve the sustainability, connectivity and wellbeing of our county by strengthening our communities, creating a thriving local economy and protecting and enhancing our environment.”

Ambition for Herefordshire to be “an exemplar of 21st Century rural living where market towns and rural communities are properly valued and recognised for the contributions they make to the success of the county”

- 2.61 The Council’s ambitions for the role public transport can play in reducing congestion and carbon emissions, and contribute to enhanced wellbeing, is recognised in the County Plan:

“We will enable more healthy low carbon travel options, including walking, public transport and cycling, to reduce congestion, improve local air quality and enhance health and wellbeing.”

- 2.62 The plan is supported by the ambition to improve and extend active travel options throughout the county. Capital schemes are already progressing, which will support public transport and integration, including the Transport Hub project at Hereford rail station and public realm improvements that will consider improved access to rural and city-based services in Hereford.
- 2.63 The Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2016-31 centres on a transport network that supports growth, enables development and provides safe conditions for active travel. Its 5 objectives are to:
- Enable economic growth
 - Provide a good quality transport network for all
 - Promote healthy lifestyles
 - Make journeys safer, easier and healthier
 - Ensure access to services for those living in rural area
- 2.64 The role of public transport was assessed and developed through the Hereford Transport Strategy Review, 2020. Whilst the review focused on the Hereford urban area, it identified a series of priorities for public transport that impact the wider network and have been taken into account in the development of this BSIP. These include increased frequency and hours of operation of services, bus priority to increase the efficiency and attractiveness of services, electrification of the fleet and greater provision for school

access. Further development work will be undertaken on these proposals during 2021/22.

2.65 The wider transport strategy recognises the importance of demand management for car-based travel (focusing primarily on parking charges and supply) in combination with positive measures to support bus use and active travel modes. The strategy and proposals are being developed further as part of a master plan for the city which will ensure coordination with land use planning proposals (the council is currently updating its adopted local plan), economic development strategy (the council is developing the Big Plan 2050 which will set out the strategy for long term economic growth and the Pathway to Carbon Neutral, the carbon management plan 2020-26).

2.66 The important role improved bus services and better integration with rail could play in supporting tourism is reflected in the priorities of the [Herefordshire Sustainable Destination Management Plan 2018-22](#). This includes an action to encourage sustainable accessibility under the key priority to Grow Herefordshire as a Visitor Destination. This is further supported by the County Plan 2020-2024 that includes ambitions to:

- Protect and promote our heritage, culture and natural beauty to enhance quality of life and support tourism

Performance of Herefordshire's current bus network against the ambitions of the National Bus Strategy and Herefordshire BSIP

National Bus Strategy ambition	Herefordshire BSIP Ambition	Herefordshire BSIP Workstream	Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>More frequent</p> <p>More comprehensive</p> <p>Better integrated</p>	<p>Network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive, coordinated bus network • Service hierarchy • Regular, clockface times • Evening and Sunday services • Commercially viable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued financial support from HC for bus services • Good cross-boundary services to key destinations • Additional Sunday services provided with Covid recovery funding • Bus operators locally based and focused • HEZ support for service 78X • Stakeholder/member support for network enhancements • Planned growth could increase demand • Potential to convert car journeys in Hereford to bus • Hereford Transport Strategy Review (HTSR) supportive of public transport initiatives and DRT development • Policies and strategies support sustainable travel modes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small overall and sparse population • High car ownership • Decreasing bus usage • Local bus operation is not the only focus for operators • Fragmented and inconsistent levels of service network • Irregular timetables • Uncoordinated headways • Lack of evening bus services • Operators struggling to find drivers • Cross-boundary services are the responsibility of multiple authorities and so at risk of changes in funding • Pressures on revenue funding have led to reduced financial support • Network highly dependent on concession use, which is slowest to return postpandemic

National Bus Strategy ambition	Herefordshire BSIP Ambition	Herefordshire BSIP Workstream	Strengths	Weaknesses
Faster and more reliable	Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliable, unhindered operation of buses Shorter journey times for passengers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus priority and dealing with school run traffic are work packages to emerge from the HTSR, with feasibility work underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congestion in Hereford city Congestion resulting in weakened peak running time and frequency Worsening situation with planned growth Little road space to improve bus without worsening car
Cheaper	Fares and ticketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to use/understand Single system More affordable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free weekend travel being provided with Covid recovery funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No comprehensive ticketing (multi-operator) across the network Fares viewed as expensive and not value for money Few off-bus/mobile options within current operator resources Mixed technology/hardware

National Bus Strategy ambition	Herefordshire BSIP Ambition	Herefordshire BSIP Workstream	Strengths	Weaknesses
Easy Ticketing More understandable	Information and branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Umbrella branding • Centralised information provision • Different media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HC produces county and city bus map • HC maintains information at bus stops • Real time information at city centre stops • Pre-Covid operators adhered to a Code of Service Stability with • Changes on 4 fixed dates in the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of comprehensive information provision • Variable provision of information by different operators • Uncoordinated route numbering • Uncoordinated service change dates at present (during covid)
Better to ride (comfortable; safe; accessible)	Decarbonisation and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrification of fleet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hereford City Council's Hereford Zipper electric bus trial, secured funding through Stronger Towns Fund • New interchange being developed at Hereford Railway Station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of investment in vehicles and infrastructure • Variable quality of passenger waiting infrastructure • City Bus station inadequate • Two bus stations with limited connectivity and interchange opportunity

3. Targets

- 3.1 The core targets for measuring the success of the BSIP are set out below, and supported in more detail by the table provided in Annex B.

Table 3 Core targets for measuring the success of the BSIP

Targets	Description	2018/19	2019/20	Targets for 2024/25
Journey time	Average bus speed (am peak)	-	14.7mph	5% increase in bus speed
Reliability	Non-frequent bus services running on time (within 1min early, 5mins late)	78%	79%	86%
Passenger numbers	Total passenger journeys on the whole bus network	2.05 million	1.79 million	2.4million
Average passenger satisfaction	% of surveyed users who we dissatisfied with elements of the current networks	-	34%	27%

- 3.2 At present the availability of data is limited, especially regarding bus operation and passenger satisfaction. As data provision improves, through the Bus Open Data Service, it will be necessary to reset some of the targets. Going forward, the above targets will be refined and measured using the following approaches:

- **Passenger satisfaction** will be measured through participation in the Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey, allowing comparisons with other areas. Five specific areas of satisfaction will be measured and targets developed:
 - Overall passenger satisfaction with bus journey
 - Satisfaction with value for money
 - Satisfaction with bus punctuality
 - Satisfaction with on-bus journey time
 - Satisfaction with bus information

- **Passenger growth** will be measured by reviewing operator patronage data on a route-by-route basis, which is currently submitted to the Local Transport

Authorities as part of their returns to the DfT. Growth will be monitored on an area and corridor basis to understand the impact of specific BSIP measures, which will be used to inform the development of the BSIP in future years.

- **Reliability** will be measured by monitoring non-frequent bus services running on time, as submitted to DfT, and supported by local surveys. BODS data will be utilised to measure services running on time. Reliability will be monitored on an area and corridor basis to understand the impact of specific BSIP measures, which will be used to inform the development of the BSIP targets in future years.
- **Journey time.** Average speed has been estimated using the timetabled journey time for the 33 services that operate in Hereford city for at least part of their journey. Going forward it will be measured using a combination of timetable information and data supplied through BODs. Journey time will be monitored on an area and corridor basis to understand the impact of specific BSIP measures, which will be used to inform the development of the BSIP targets in future years. In addition to this

Supporting monitoring, targets and evaluation

3.3 In addition to measuring the above, a number of other measures will be monitored, and targets set, to help steer BSIP implementation. It will be important to monitor the impact of specific interventions, in order to learn from experience and adapt to maximise success.

Journey time improvements

- Ratio of bus journey time compared to car journey time for the core network

Passenger growth

- Number of passenger journeys by bus per head of population
- % of passenger journeys made by concessionary travel holders
- % of passenger journeys made by fare-paying passengers
- % of total passengers boarding after 19:00 Monday – Saturday
- % of total passengers boarding on Sundays

Network improvements

- Proportion of Hereford city population within 400m of a bus service operating at least every 15 minutes (M-S daytime)

- Proportion of Herefordshire population within 400m of at least an hourly bus service (M-S daytime)
- Proportion of Herefordshire population within 400m of at least a half hourly bus service (M-S daytime)
- Proportion of Herefordshire population within 400m with an evening service
- Proportion of Herefordshire population within 400m with a Sunday service

Infrastructure

- Number of bus stops upgraded each year
- Number of bus shelters upgraded each year
- Number of Park and Choose sites connected directly to the bus network

De-carbonisation

- % of overall fleet that is zero emission and/or ultra-low emission •
Of diesel fleet, the % of fleet that is Euro VI or better

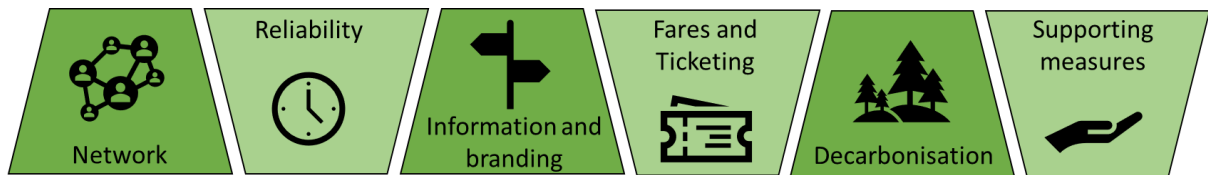
4. Delivery

- 4.1 The ambition is for buses to play a significant role in meeting travel needs, contributing to the council's commitment to reduce carbon emissions and reduce dependence on cars, having a positive impact on the lives and wellbeing of those who use them and making a positive contribution to the county's economy and environment. The County Plan sets out a vision for Herefordshire to be an exemplar for rural living. The BSIP sets out a similar vision for the county to have an exemplar public transport network. The council is keen to work with government and explore the opportunity to demonstrate the potential to transform passenger transport in a rural area with a county town that suffers from similar challenges to larger urban areas, including congestion and poor air quality.

How do we get there?

- 4.2 This section sets out the measures and projects that will be developed through the life of the BSIP, with the goal to establish a firm foundation for the Herefordshire bus network on which to build. Developed around the National Bus Strategy objectives, and local objectives that have been determined through local engagement with operators, the public and key stakeholders, the BSIP focuses developing the 'cornerstones' of the network:

Figure 18 Herefordshire's BSIP Cornerstones



The Network

Table 4 Summary of the ambition and measures relating to the network

The Network

Why it is important:

- The current network is historic and has been adapted to meet different needs to as viability and funding have declined. It is no longer fit for purpose and needs recasting.
- From the public survey, for both users and non-users, the areas of least satisfaction were the hours of operation and frequency of bus services.
- The most cited reason for using the car instead of bus was the lack of availability of suitable bus services and the inadequate frequency of services.
- The top two priorities that would encourage people to use the bus more were more frequent services and provision of evening services.
- Operators agree with the need to develop a consistent and simple network for users.
- Bus users predominantly use bus services for shopping and recreational purposes, infrequently and off-peak. There is a need to develop the network to be more attractive to those accessing employment and education, as well as social/leisure in the evening.
- Significant shortages of PSV drivers in Herefordshire means that any proposed changes that lead to expansion of service provision will have to be preceded by measures to encourage and train new drivers.
- Long term impact of the pandemic, marginal network profitability and a base of smaller local operators means that opportunities to develop the network commercially are seen as high-risk and unattractive without support.

The ambition:

- An integrated, comprehensive network that will encourage modal shift and reduce car usage.
- Service hierarchy, with minimum standards, that is clearly defined and easy to understand.
- Regular, clockface timetables.

- Evening and Sunday services that mirror the day-time core network, at appropriate frequencies.
- Services that are increasingly commercially viable.

Herefordshire's exemplar network

A review of the entire bus network will be undertaken and then planned from scratch with the operators. There will be two main elements to the network development. Firstly, enhancements to the 'core' network. In the city, a number of main services will be increased to 15-minute frequencies, and evening and Sunday buses offered. On the core county services, between the market towns and Hereford, routes will be made as direct as possible, frequencies increased to every 30 minutes, and again evening and Sunday journeys provided. Where appropriate, interchange hubs will be developed on the core routes to facilitate connections with other services.

In parallel, improvements will be made to the supporting network. This will include other city services and links connecting market towns and villages. These will be less frequent than core services (30 minutes in Hereford and local town services in the market towns; and hourly elsewhere), but still offering regular headways. Supporting services will include a mix of timetabled and demand responsive services. As well as providing local links, these will be routed and timed to provide connections with core services, either in the market towns or at intermediate interchange hubs, with through ticketing available.

What is already being done:

- Herefordshire Council's strategic change to a pro-public transport policy.
- Herefordshire Council continues to financially support many local bus services at a cost of £1,083,779.00 p.a.
- Bus Recovery Grant funding is being used to provide additional Sunday buses and to support current city services
- School and college transport arrangements are integrated into the local bus network, supporting current levels of provision.
- Phase 2 BSIP+ funding is being used to support current routes, increase frequency and extend timings on a popular corridor from the border of Wales to Hereford

Projects and schemes			
No.	BSIP Measure	Description	Timescale
1.	Network review and resourcing	<p>The current network has evolved incrementally over a number of years, often responding to reduced subsidy or commercial pressures and falling revenues. This has resulted in fragmented services and inconsistencies between different geographies. A comprehensive review is required, having regard to the current commercial and subsidised services with a view to identifying a holistic network which meets the aspirations of users and ambitions of the council. The review will be holistic and consider not just the existing and potential public transport network, but opportunities for further integration of travel and movement in, around and out of Herefordshire. It will involve network planning, operator and stakeholder consultation (including neighbouring authorities) , and consider delivery and procurement, being built around Herefordshire’s vision for an exemplar network of integrated core, supporting and DRT services.</p> <p>Delivery of the new network will begin in August 2024, with the review quickly identifying ‘early wins’ for funding and service improvements to be introduced on the network, including opportunity for increased daytime frequencies, evening, and Sunday journeys. Although the main focus in these early stages will be the core network, opportunity to develop both the supporting network and DRT in the first year of funding will be considered.</p> <p>At the same time, internal resource to manage and co-ordinate the network review, co-ordinate the expanded bus network and DRT, and deliver the wider ambitions of the BSIP will be required. This will take the form of a new <i>Bus Strategy Manager</i> position, and a junior supporting role.</p>	2024/25 – 2026+

No.	BSIP Measure	Description	Timescale
2.	Delivering the 'core' network	Influenced by the network review, the 'core' network in Herefordshire will be transformed through enhanced levels of service on Hereford city services (15-minute frequency) and on main corridors linking market towns and Hereford (30-minute frequency) operating 7 days per week and Monday – Saturday evenings. The delivery of 'early wins' will take place in 2024/25, with the roll out of the wider core network taking place from 2023/24 on a phased approach (recognising the lead-in time required for operators to upscale and prepare). Investment and development of the core network will peak in 2024/25.	2024/25 – 2026+
3.	Enhancing the supporting rural network	Supporting the core network, an enhanced rural network across the remainder of the bus network in Herefordshire will be delivered. Providing an hourly frequency, a network of rural services will connect with core services and DRT and reflect the opening hours of leisure and social facilities. This will include the development of off-peak services that mirror the daytime core network	2022/23 – 2025+
4.	Driver training and retention	<p>Countywide project to promote and develop drivers for the Herefordshire bus network. Promotional scheme to subsidise operator PSV training costs, developing and ensuring options for local training provision.</p> <p>In the second-year purchase of a dedicated vehicle for training for Herefordshire operators Driver/employee incentive schemes.</p>	2022/23 – 2025+

*Table 5 Summary of the ambition and measures relating to reliability***Reliability and ambition****Why it is important:**

- Operators identified congestion and operation in Hereford as the single biggest area the BSIP needs to address.
- Bus reliability and punctuality is a growing issue in Hereford with city operators, over the years, increasing their timetabled journey times, affecting frequency, headway regularity and requiring additional vehicles to maintain reliability
- Not only does this provide an unreliable and longer journey time for the passenger, but it increases operational costs, preventing further investment in additional services or journeys.

The ambition:

- Buses operate reliably and unhindered within Hereford, ensuring services are reliable and offer shorter journey times.

What is already being done:

- Hereford Transport Hub – planning permission has been accepted for a new transport hub that will make it easier for visitors and residents to use buses and trains, for their onward journey across the county and beyond. Set to be a central feature of a high quality, well-connected and low carbon transport system for the city, the transport hub is part of the Hereford city centre transport package funded by Herefordshire Council and Marches Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Assessment of current congestion points and hotspots, to identify priority schemes to progress.
- Assessment of potential places to trial additional school transport provision underway.

Projects and schemes			
No.	BSIP Measure	Description	Timescale
5, 6 and 7.	Bus Priority	<p>Building on HTSR, congestion hotspots will be examined for potential interventions (traffic signal priority; bus lanes; bus gates). Feasibility studies will be undertaken and schemes brought forward in a phased approach, depending on funding available and relative benefit on reliability and journey time.</p> <p>Initial work has identified 3 areas to focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belmont Rd – bus lane and priority towards the city centre. • Newmarket St - bus lane and junction priority, supporting the development of the street as a key city interchange. • Commercial Rd / Aylestone Hill – junction redevelopment and bus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • priority/bus lane towards city on Aylestone Hill 	2022/23 – 2024/25
8.	Enforcement and restrictions	<p>Review across the whole county areas for increased enforcement, with the intention of developing redline routes in market towns. Funding to support the development and execution of TROs at key locations.</p> <p>Considering enforcement, parking restrictions, loading restrictions etc,</p>	2022/23 – 2024/25

*Table 6 Summary of the ambition and measures for information and branding***Information and branding****Why it is important:**

- Better information surrounding the buses, and it being easier to understand and obtain was the second highest BSIP priority for both bus users and non-users
- Information is sporadic across operators' websites, with no consistency of format or information; some websites are difficult to find and navigate
- Smaller operators lack resource or skills to develop their own information in an accessible and up-to-date format
- Limited resource or capital for local operators to develop their own marketing campaigns or publicity

The ambition:

- An umbrella brand developed Transport for Herefordshire
- Providing a single point of information for Herefordshire residents and visitors, including timetables, maps, fares information and journey planning
- Available via a range of mediums including app and web along with printed information
- Linked to wider active and sustainable travel across the county
- Substantial uplift in marketing spend for buses across the county. Informed by better understanding of information needs and information delivery access of passengers and potential passengers

What is already being done:

- HC produces and maintains a county bus map
- HC maintains some provision of real time information
- QR Codes linked to RTI being rolled out to most stops in Herefordshire during early 2022

Projects and Schemes			
No.	BSIP Measure	Description	Timescale
9.	Transport for Herefordshire	Herefordshire Council leading a centralised, branded and coordinated approach to public transport information in all media, with all sources offering a complete picture of what is available, when and at what cost. This will improve understanding of travel options and make planning journeys easier.	2025+
10.	Promotional and marketing campaigns	Enhance the image of bus and encourage modal shift, with campaigns specifically aimed at encouraging journeys to work by bus, leisure travel and sustainable tourism.	2024/25-2026

Table 7 Summary of the ambition and measures relating to ticketing and fares

Fares and ticketing

Why it is important:

- Buses accepting contactless payments was the third highest BSIP priority for both bus users and non-users
- For both users and non-users, the availability of a multi-operator ticket was cited in the top 5 reasons that would encourage them to use the bus more
- For young people, the cost of buses was one of the most significant barriers to use
- Range of ticket offers across operators, but limited number of season and period passes
- No flexible ticketing arrangements to benefit those with flexible working arrangements.

The ambition:

- Ticketing products that are easily understood, simple to use and consistent across the entire public transport-network
- Single ticketing system that allows for travel across the whole of the bus network, regardless of operator
- Covers more than just bus, but cycle hire, car hire and potential expanding to rail
- More affordable travel for those that need it

What is already being done:

- Free weekend travel promotion on all buses in Herefordshire (September 2021 – August 2022)
- HC ETM Loan scheme ended in 2021. All operators are now able to accept contactless ticket payment

Projects and schemes			
No.	BSIP Measure	Description	Timescale
11.	Ticketing and fares strategy	<p>Review of ticketing and fare options and available technology to determine the most suitable options to be developed going forward, considering the needs of different groups, including young people, and future aspirational ticketing options.</p> <p>Quick win project developing multioperator tickets for all Herefordshire and Hereford city, allowing travel across different operators with minimal premium. Allowance for capital investment in ticket machine upgrades and supporting infrastructure</p>	2024/25 – 2026
12.	Mobile ticketing solutions	Support and resource for local operators to provide mobile ticketing options to customers through existing suppliers (e.g. Mytrip).	2024/2025 – 2026+

*Table 8 Summary of the ambition for decarbonisation and supporting measures***Decarbonisation and supporting measures****Why it is important:**

- Buses accepting contactless payments was the third highest BSIP priority for both bus users and non-users
- For both users and non-users, the availability of a multi-operator ticket was cited in the top 5 reasons that would encourage them to use the bus more
- For young people, the cost of buses was one of the most significant barriers to use
- Range of ticket offers across operators, but limited number of season and period passes
- No flexible ticketing arrangements to benefit those with flexible working arrangements.

The ambition:

- Ticketing products that are easily understood, simple to use and consistent across the entire public transport-network
- Single ticketing system that allows for travel across the whole of the bus network, regardless of operator
- Covers more than just bus, but cycle hire, car hire and potential expanding to rail
- More affordable travel for those that need it

What is already being done:

- Free weekend travel promotion on all buses in Herefordshire (September 2021 – August 2022)
- HC ETM Loan scheme ended in 2021. All operators are now able to accept contactless ticket payment

Projects and schemes			
No.	BSIP Measure	Description	Timescale
11.	Ticketing and fares strategy	<p>Review of ticketing and fare options and available technology to determine the most suitable options to be developed going forward, considering the needs of different groups, including young people, and future aspirational ticketing options.</p> <p>Quick win project developing multioperator tickets for all Herefordshire and Hereford city, allowing travel across different operators with minimal premium. Allowance for capital investment in ticket machine upgrades and supporting infrastructure</p>	2024/25 – 2026
12.	Mobile ticketing solutions	Support and resource for local operators to provide mobile ticketing options to customers through existing suppliers (e.g. Mytrip).	2024/2025 – 2026+

No.	BSIP Measure	Description	Timescale
11.	Ticketing and fares strategy	<p>Review of ticketing and fare options and available technology to determine the most suitable options to be developed going forward, considering the needs of different groups, including young people, and future aspirational ticketing options.</p> <p>Quick win project developing multioperator tickets for all Herefordshire and Hereford city, allowing travel across different operators with minimal premium. Allowance for capital investment in ticket machine upgrades and supporting infrastructure</p>	2024/25 – 2026
12.	Mobile ticketing solutions	Support and resource for local operators to provide mobile ticketing options to customers through existing suppliers (e.g. Mytrip).	2024/2025 – 2026+

Decarbonisation and supporting measures**Why it is important:**

- Herefordshire declared a climate emergency in 2019, buses have a critical role to play in meeting the council objective of carbon neutrality by 2030
- With only 25% of the fleet in Herefordshire operating Euro VI engines, there is significant progress to be made
- Current grants for zero-emission vehicles require significant investment from the operator – with the majority of the network in Herefordshire provided by local operators (rather than larger national operators) these are financially unviable
- Regulatory challenge of more bespoke funding arrangements due to commercial competition in Hereford
- A safe to use and attractive bus network will support access for all members of the community

The ambition:

- The electrification of the urban bus fleet and, over time, the whole fleet
- An attractive and safe network

What is already being done:

- Hereford City Council has secured funding from the Towns' Fund to introduce the Hereford Zipper service operated by electric vehicles. It includes charging infrastructure sufficient for the scheme although with further investment it could be the basis for expanded provision to support the wider local bus fleet as more electric vehicles are brought into service.
- Hereford Enterprise Zone interested in converting the dedicated service that it supports to electric.

Projects and schemes

No.	BSIP Measure	Description	Timescale
13.	Electric vehicles Trials	Development of service 78X, serving the county's biggest employment area, converted to fully electric vehicles. Additional resource built into the proposal brings opportunity to trial a number of fully electric park and choose services.	2025/26

No.	BSIP Measure	Description	Timescale
14.	A service for all	Operators putting disabled passengers at the heart of their service provision and playing a leading role in creating a more accessible transport system in Herefordshire, through training and resource (involvement in DfT's Inclusive Transport Leaders Scheme).	2024/25 – 2025/26
15.	Infrastructure development programme	In tandem with the Network Review, the development of an infrastructure programme to link bus and active travel modes through the development of 4 park and choose sites, travel hubs in key market towns and rolling programme of bus stop/shelter improvements, taking into account safe access and the needs of all users.	2022/23 – 2025+
16.	Better cleaner buses	Through the wider network review, and development of the core and supporting network, improvements will come from development of the 'quality' element of the Council's local bus contracts and network expectations set out and agreed in the Enhanced Partnership	2023/24 – 2024/25
17.	Aspirational passenger charter	<p>This will set out what passengers can expect in using any bus across Herefordshire and be consistent with neighbouring authorities for passengers travelling across the region.</p> <p>It will be coupled with the inclusion of user representatives on the main Partnership Group overseeing the delivery of the EP.</p>	2024+

The BSIP as a foundation

- 4.3 The BSIP provides a foundation for the transformation of the Herefordshire bus network over the next 3 years. However, **Herefordshire Council's ambition goes further. As the BSIP is reviewed and updated each year, the opportunity will be taken to set out that greater ambition, including electrification of the entire fleet.**

Phased implementation

- 4.4 The 17 different BSIP measures or schemes within the tables above are not discrete packages of work. There is a significant amount of dependency between them, with maximum impact achieved if they are all funded and able to be implemented in parallel (in a phased way) as part of an overall programme.
- 4.5 Important elements to take forward will be the bus priority schemes within Hereford, as they will have wide benefit for bus services generally and give a strong indication that improvements are taking place.
- 4.6 In parallel, a full review of the county's bus network will be undertaken, in order to define what the future enhanced network and levels of service look like in accordance with the agreed hierarchy relating to core and supporting services. This will be planned in a coordinated way with regular clockface timetables, connecting services and feeder services. New patterns of service will be introduced on core services, including improved evening and Sunday provision. These routes will be the first to see enhanced bus stop infrastructure and information provision and roll out of the network branding.
- 4.7 Monitoring of these early improvements will help in the design and introduction of later improvements to other core services.
- 4.8 Improved supporting services will be introduced once the enhanced core network is in place, again on a phased approach. Demand responsive transport service will be trialled. This will be based on one of the market towns, providing semi-scheduled feeder journeys into the market town, connecting with the core network. Associated with this will be the introduction of a hub with improved waiting infrastructure. By this stage, it will be important to have multi-operator ticketing in place to facilitate easy transfer between services.
- 4.9 Throughout the period of implementing the service enhancements there will be significant marketing and promotion to highlight the transformation and the travel opportunities provided. This will be accompanied by network-wide branding and provision of comprehensive information about routes, times and fares, coordinated by the enlarged team within Herefordshire Council.
- 4.10 Given the current network, and scale of the aspirations outlined in the original BSIP proposal, the full transformation of the network will take over 5 years to achieve.

Funding and priorities

- 4.11 The previous total funding requirement for the BSIP in Herefordshire over 3 years 2022/23 to 2024/25 was £18,130,000. To deliver the aspirations we as an authority have, funding of this level would still be required. Recognising the importance and need for infrastructure to improve priority to be in place ahead of the new network being delivered, there is a need and focus on developing, and delivering bus priority measures in the county.
- 4.12 These costs are inclusive of resource to define, plan, deliver, monitor and evaluate the schemes and measures to be delivered through the BSIP.
- 4.14 The rural nature of the area and challenges faced means that, to achieve the aspirational network for Herefordshire, a commitment to ongoing funding in the long term will be vital to sustain the network.

5. Reporting

- 5.1 Each workstream and some individual projects will have their own implementation plans, with a designated project lead to coordinate and oversee progress.
- 5.2 In the short term, the expanded Herefordshire Bus Partnership will continue to meet to monitor progress and take responsibility for the development and agreement of appropriate EP Schemes to gain suitable commitments to facilitate delivery of the various schemes and projects. This Group will receive monitoring reports and guide the implementation of the BSIP.
- 5.3 6-monthly monitoring reports will be produced, providing an update on implementation and assessing progress towards the targets set. These reports will be published on the Council's website, as detailed below.
- 5.4 In the longer term, there will be a designated person responsible for overall monitoring, collection, and collation of data, to assess progress with expected outputs/outcomes and towards targets.
- 5.5 The Herefordshire Bus Partnership will be responsible for overseeing the updating and revising of the BSIP annually, to reflect changing circumstances; new challenges and opportunities; public feedback in annual satisfaction surveys; completed projects and schemes; and emerging ideas for improvement and/or funding.
- 5.6 A record of actions to address any under performance and a copy of the report will be published by Herefordshire Council on its website.

6. Overview

Table 9 Overview of the Herefordshire BSIP and EP

Name of authority	Herefordshire Council
Franchising or Enhanced Partnership (or both)	Enhanced Partnership
Date of publication	12th June 2024
Date of next annual update	12th June 2025
URL of published report	www.herefordshire.gov.uk/bsip

Targets	Description of measure	2018/19	2019/20	Targets for 2024/25
Journey time	Average bus speed (am peak)	-	14.7mph	5% increase in bus speed
Reliability	Non-frequent bus services running on time (within 1min early, 5mins late)	78%	79%	86%
Passenger numbers	Total passenger journeys on the whole bus network	2.05 million	1.79 million	2.4million
Average passenger satisfaction	% of surveyed users who we dissatisfied with elements of the current networks	-	34%	27%

Delivery - Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/No	Explanation (max 50 words)
Make improvements to bus services and planning		
More frequent and reliable services		
Review service frequency	Yes	Measure 1 – A review of the entire network will ensure that timetables are co-ordinated to address current inadequacies Scheme 2/3/4 – will provide increased service frequencies on specified routes
Increase bus priority measures	Yes	Measure 6/7/8 – will deliver bus priority measures along the network at points identified within the scheme description

Delivery - Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/No	Explanation (max 50 words)
		Scheme 9 – will deliver enforcement measures including parking and loading measures to reduce bus delays.
Increase demand responsive services	Yes	Measure 4 – will address the potential for DRT, beginning with a trial, with a view to roll out to replace infrequent rural services.
Consideration of bus rapid transport networks	No	N/A

Improvements to planning / integration with other modes

Delivery - Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/No	Explanation (max 50 words)
Integrate services with other transport modes	Yes	Measure 1/12/16 – will facilitate integration of bus with active travel modes.
Simplify services	Yes	Measure 1/2/3/4 will see a redevelopment of the network in line with simple and consistent criteria across services types across the whole of the county
Review socially necessary services	Yes	Measure 1 – The entire network will be replanned meaning that all supported services will be reviewed. Measure 3 – The development of a supporting network will enhance the bus provision for the local community. Measure 4 – will address how DRT will play a part in providing socially necessary journeys
Invest in Superbus networks	No	N/A

Improvements to fares and ticketing

Delivery - Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/No	Explanation (max 50 words)
Lower fares	Yes	Measure 12/13 the development of an MOT will reduce costs to the passengers making multiple trips on more than one bus service
Simplify fares	Yes	Measure 13 – mobile ticketing will allow for quick and easy purchasing of the correct ticket type for a specific journey Scheme 12 – multi operator ticketing will allow seamless travel between operators with minimal premium
Integrate ticketing between operators and transport modes	Yes	Measure 12 – will address multi- operator ticketing, allowing travel across all operators in Herefordshire and Hereford City

Make improvements to bus passenger experience

Higher specification buses

Delivery - Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/No	Explanation (max 50 words)
Invest in improved bus specifications	Yes	Measure 14 – investment in electric vehicles on specific routes
		Measure 15 – the development of the core and supported network with include a 'quality' element of local bus contracts to ensure that expectations are met. Measure 16 – to set out expectations of the bus in Herefordshire
Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services	Yes	Measure 17 – a commitment to providing an accessible transport system in Herefordshire, with great consideration for disabled passengers
Protect personal safety of bus passengers		Measure 16 – will address what passengers should expect from buses in Herefordshire and what to do if expectations are not met.
Improve buses for tourists	Yes	Measure 10 – Targeted promotional campaigns with a focus on sustainable tourism
Invest in decarbonisation	Yes	Measure 14 - investment in electric vehicles on specific routes

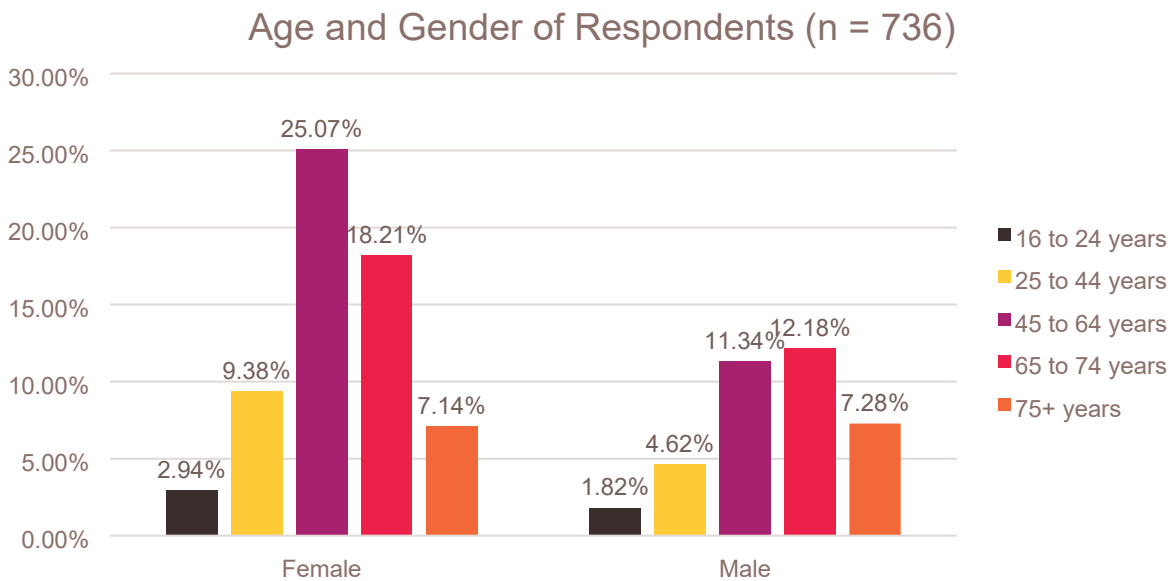
Improvements to passenger engagement			
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Delivery - Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/No		Explanation (max 50 words)
Passenger charter	Yes		Measure 16 – will provide an aspirational passenger charter
Strengthen network identity	Yes		Measure 9 – Transport for Herefordshire will provide network identity. Measure 10 – targeted promotional campaigns to target specific user groups.
Improve bus information	Yes		Measure 9 - a co-ordinated approach to public transport information, making it more accessible and easier to understand, with a complete picture of what is available and the associated costs

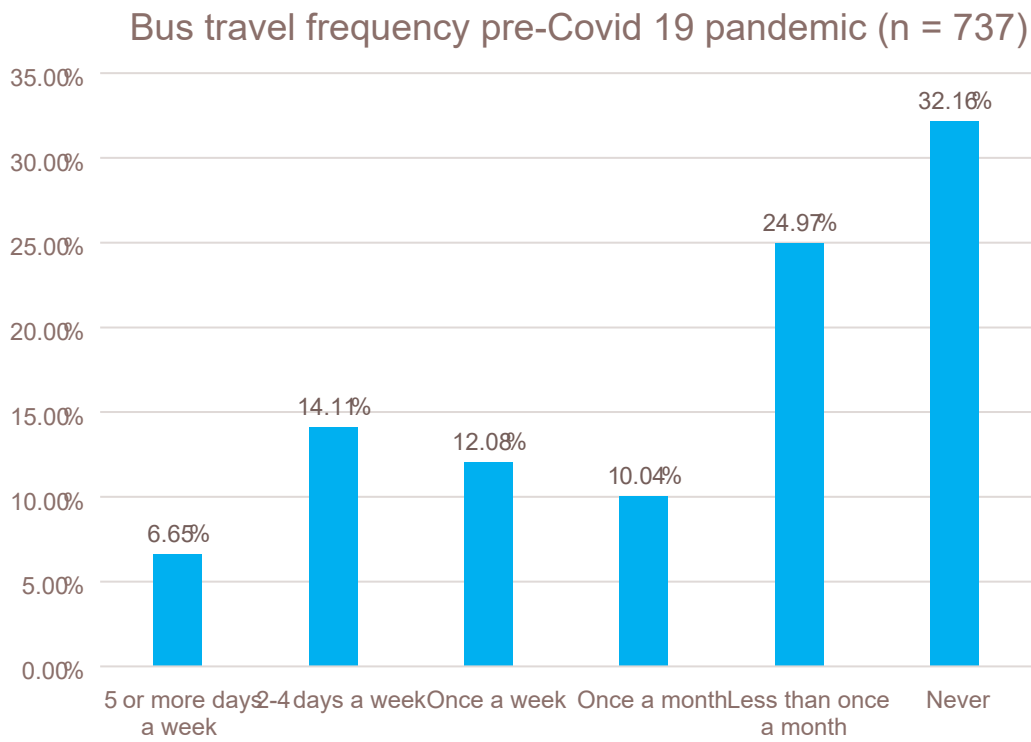
Appendix A – Public consultation summary

Overview

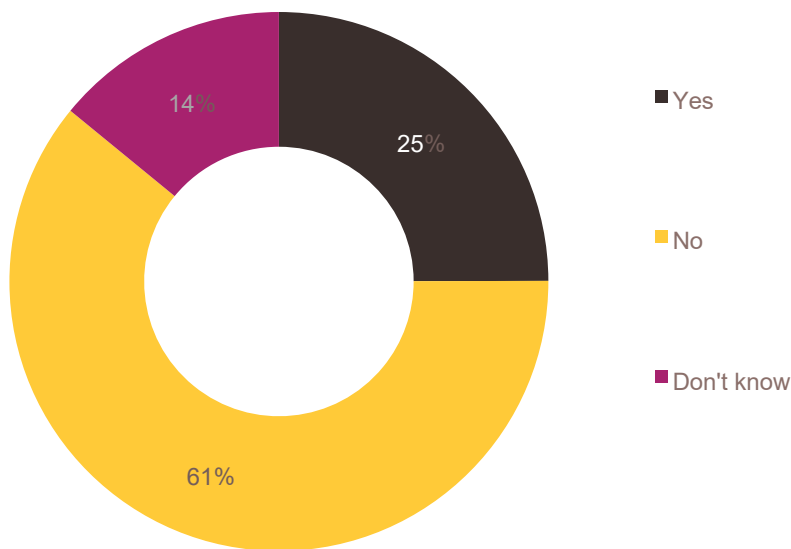
- 1.1. There were 753 respondents to the public consultation which ran from Friday 15th July to Sunday 16th August. Of these 96% were local residents, with the remaining respondents being visitors to the area or representatives of local groups and businesses.
- 1.2. More females (62%) than males (37%) responded, with the 45-64 years old category being the main age group of respondents. There was slight under representation of the under 24s (5%). See figure 1 below for a further breakdown of respondents.



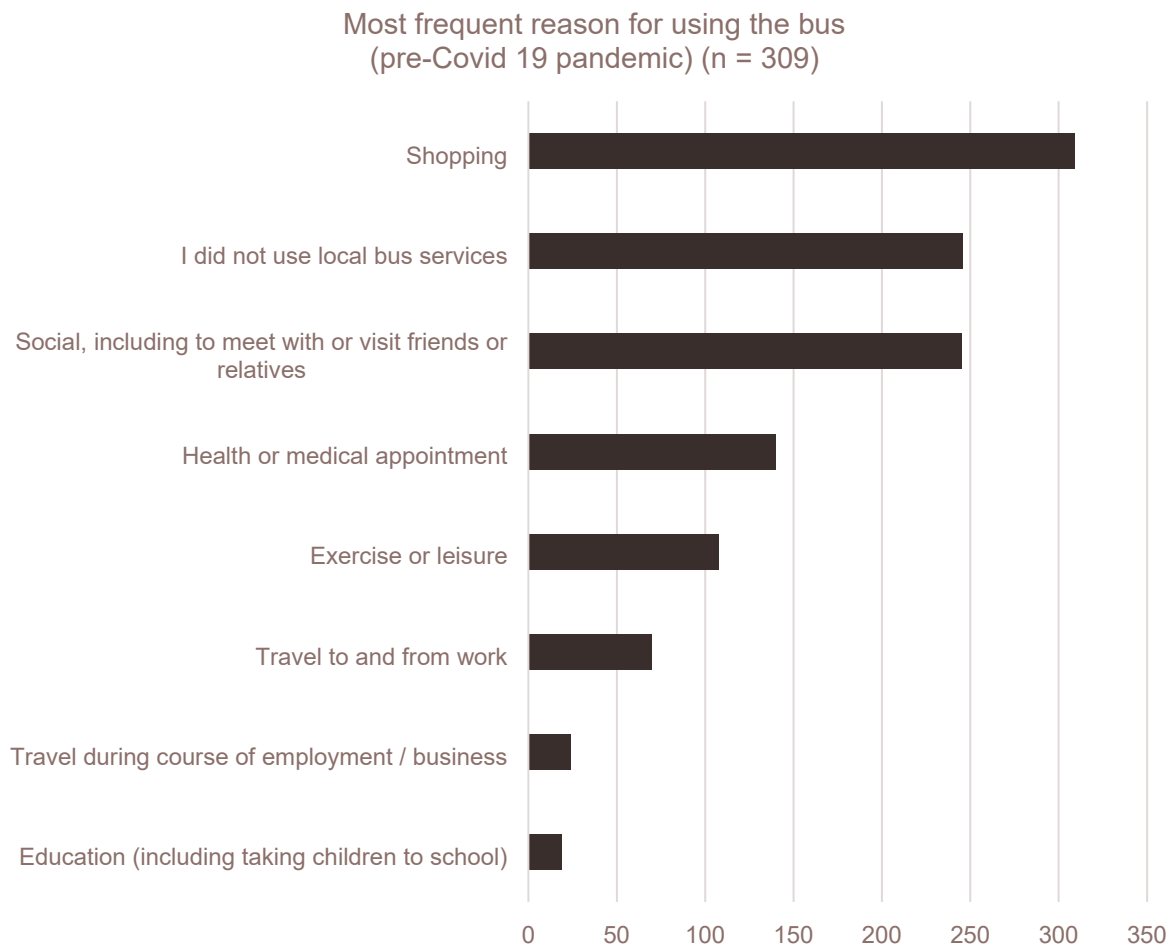
- 1.3. 32% of respondents never travelled by bus and 41% of respondents don't expect this to change post-pandemic (see figures 2 and 3 below).



Do you envisage your work pattern changing post-Covid 19 pandemic? (n= 733)



1.4. The greatest use of bus was to go shopping, followed by social, including visiting friends and family, and healthcare appointments (see figure 4 below)

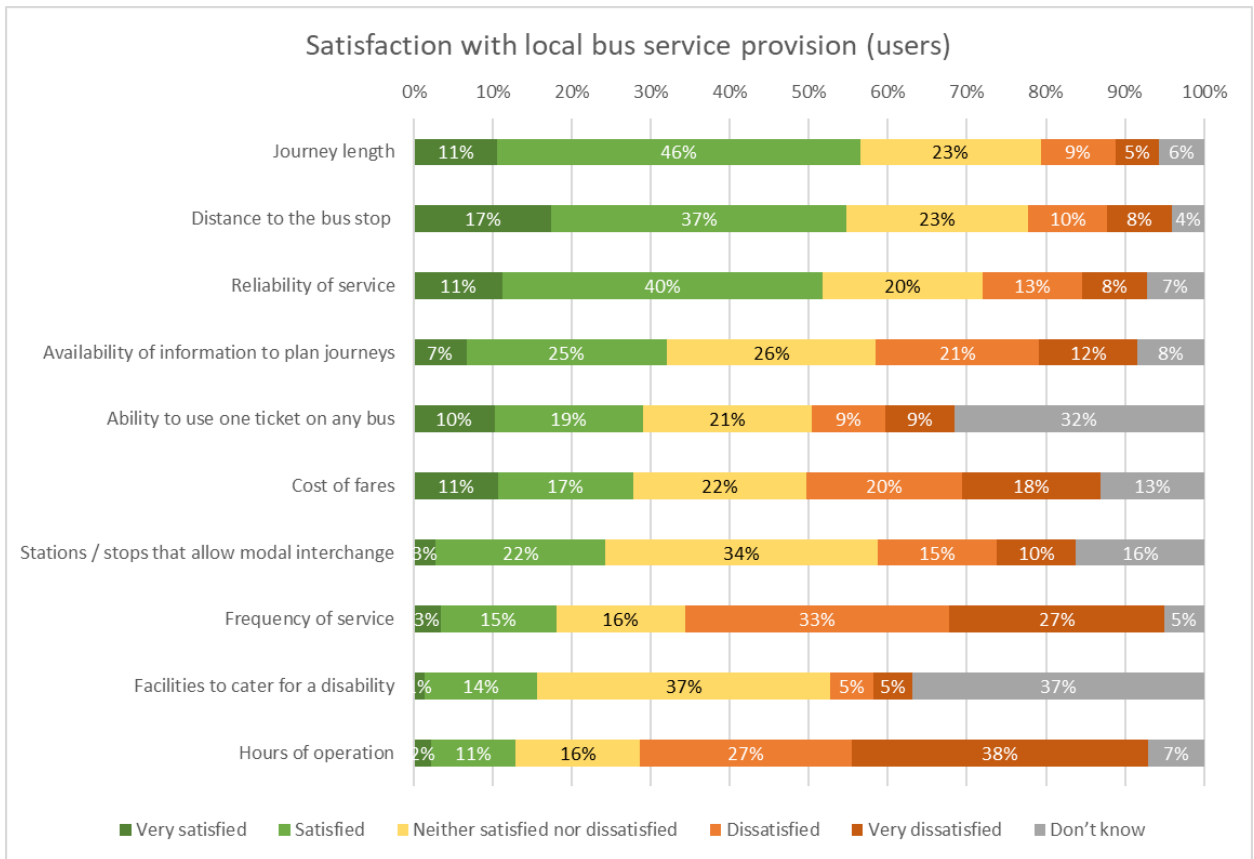


Satisfaction with current bus services

Bus users

- 1.5. Amongst bus users (those who responded as having used the bus at least once - 68%), the satisfaction with local bus provision can be seen overleaf (figure 5).
- 1.6. The areas of greatest satisfaction were journey length, distance to the bus stop and reliability.
- 1.7. The areas of least satisfaction were hours of operation, facilities to cater for disabilities (although this category also received the most “don’t know” responses), and frequency of services.
- 1.8. Alongside facilities to cater for a disability, the categories that received the most “don’t know” responses were multi-operator tickets (32%), intermodal services (16%) and cost of fares (13%).

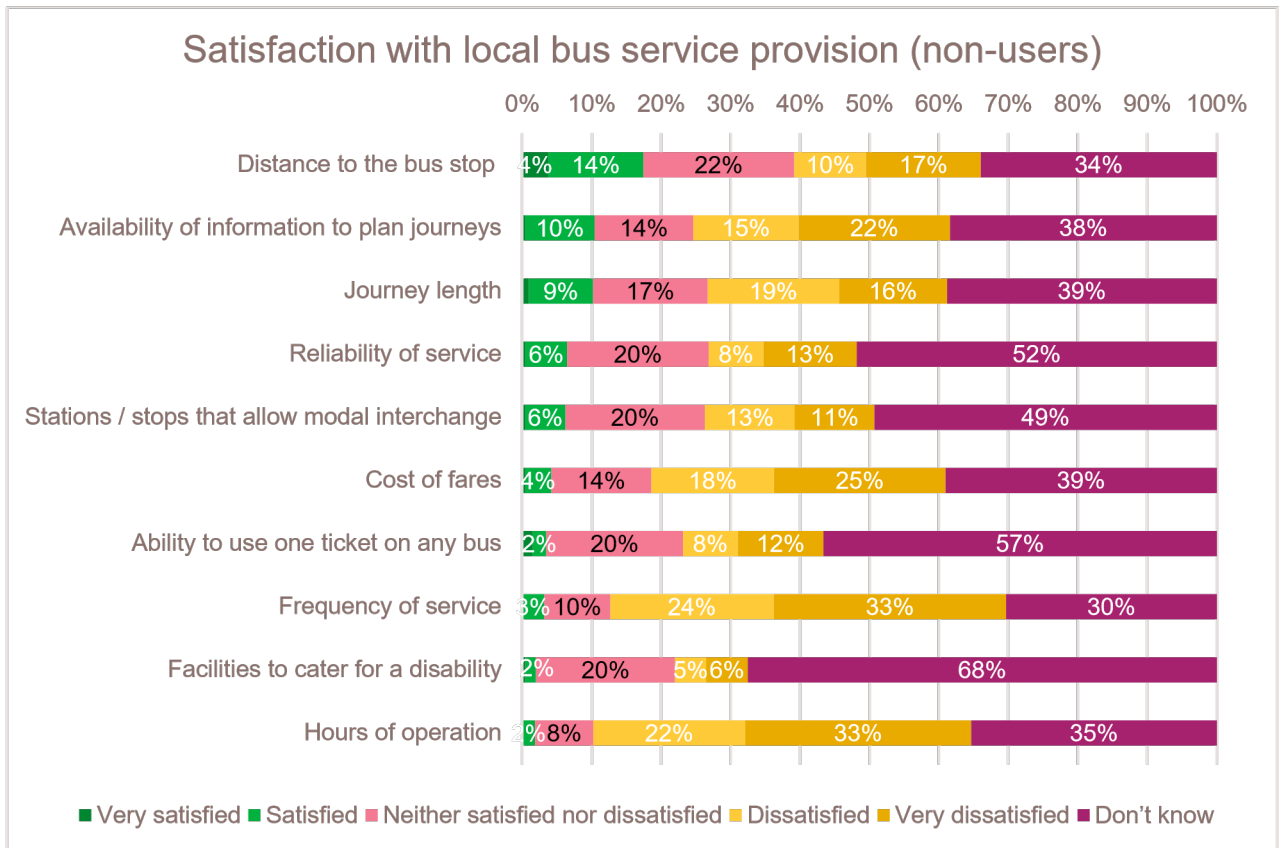
Figure 5. Satisfaction with bus services - users



Non-bus users

- 1.9. Of those who responded as never having used the buses in Herefordshire (32%), satisfaction with local bus provision can be seen below (figure 6).
- 1.10. Although these respondents will have less experience of bus services, the areas of (perceived) satisfaction were the distance to bus stops, ability to plan journeys and journey length – suggesting some respondents have considered using the bus.

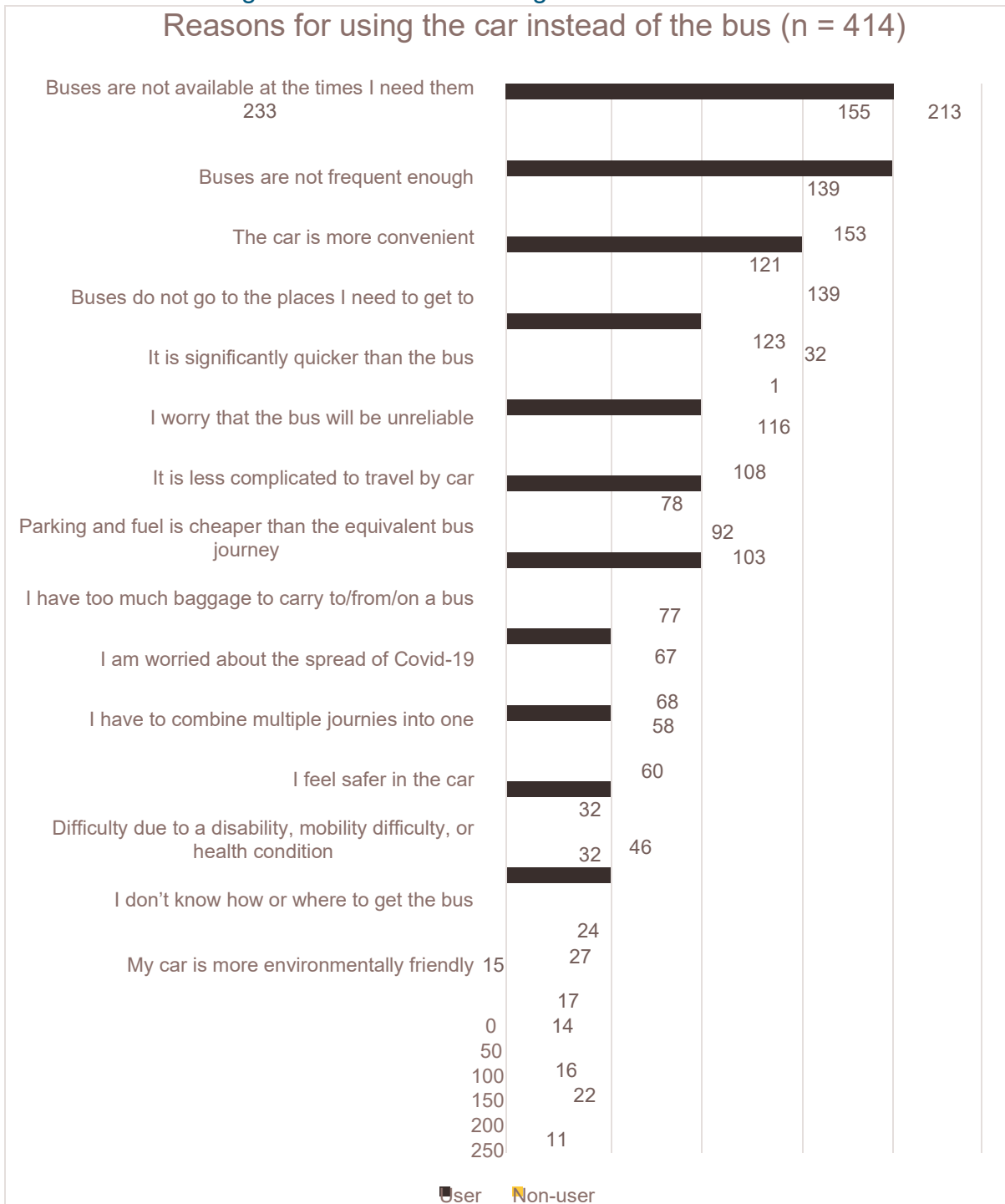
Figure 6. Satisfaction with bus provision - non-users



2. Barriers to bus use

- 2.1 Amongst both users and non-users of the bus the main barrier to using the bus as opposed to the car is that buses are unavailable when needed and that they are not frequent enough.
- 2.2 For the most part the reasons bus users give for opting for the car align with non-bus users, however there is a perception amongst non-users that the bus is a more complicated way to travel. This is summarised in figure 7 below.

Figure 7. Reasons for using the car over the bus



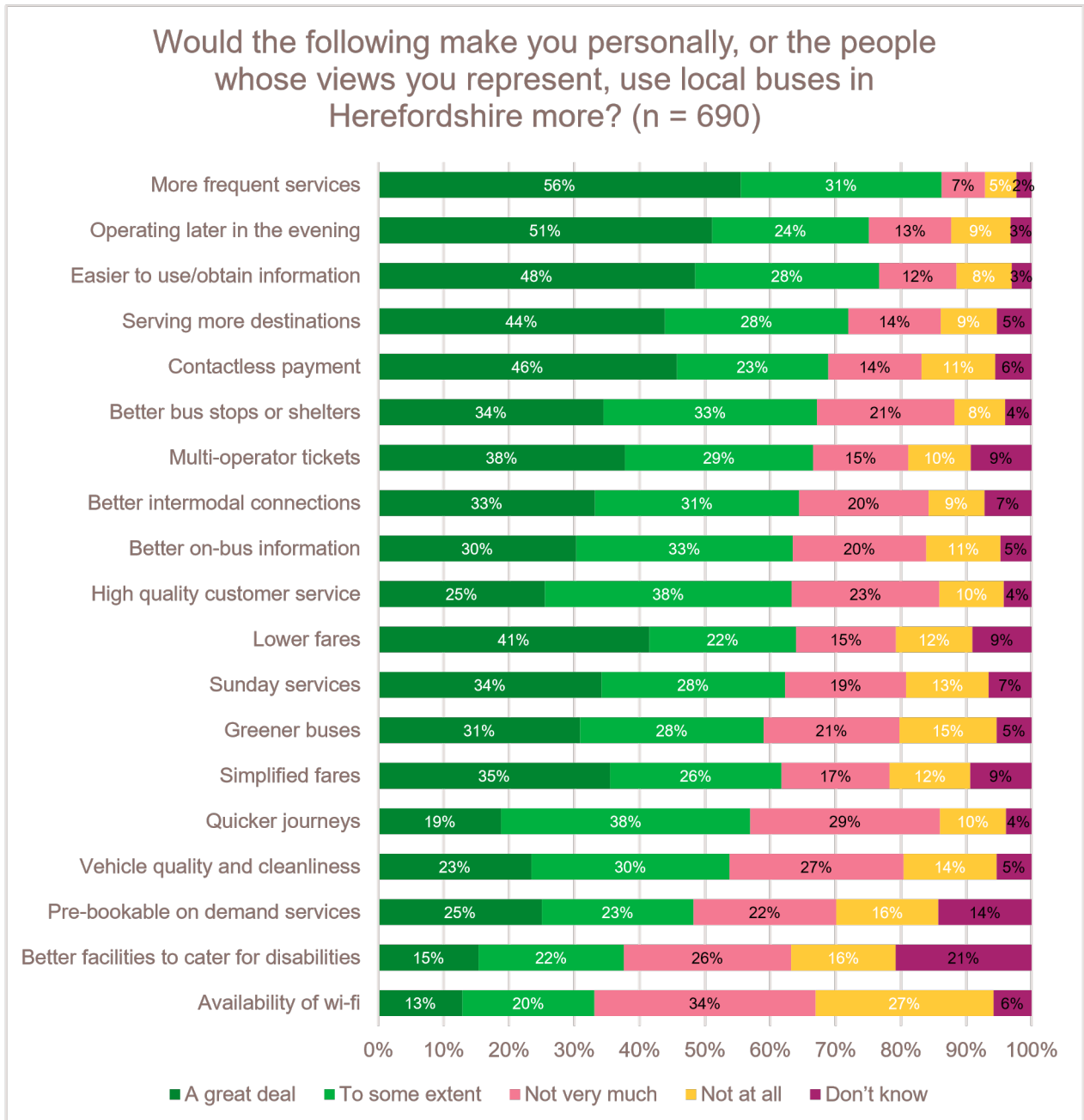
3. BSIP priorities

- 3.1 The factor which would make respondents use the bus more was more frequent services (87%), followed by information surrounding the buses being easier to understand and obtain (76%) and longer operating hours (75%). This correlates with the

main reasons for travelling by car rather than bus being that buses are not available when needed, they're infrequent and don't go to the places people wish to travel to. Over half of respondents felt that the car was quicker and more convenient than the bus.

- 3.2 Actual bus quality, such as Wi-Fi provision and vehicle cleanliness were deemed far less important than frequent and reliable services.
- 3.3 Despite 50% of people not being satisfied with the cost of fares, lower fares ranked 11th out of 19 bus improvement methods, with multi-operator tickets and contactless payments being higher ranked.
- 3.4 These can be seen summarised in figure 8 below.

Figure 8.BSIP priorities



3.5 For both users and non-users, the top four priorities were aligned, with more frequent services being the highest priority (88% and 83% respectively), followed by information about journeys being easier to obtain and use (79% and 74%), contactless payments being number 3 (78% and 73%) and more destinations served at 72% and 71%.

3.6 For bus users the fifth most requested change to bus services was multi-operator tickets (69%) followed by later hours of operation (68%). For non-users these were reversed with later hours of operation being a higher priority (68%) than multi-operator tickets (67%).

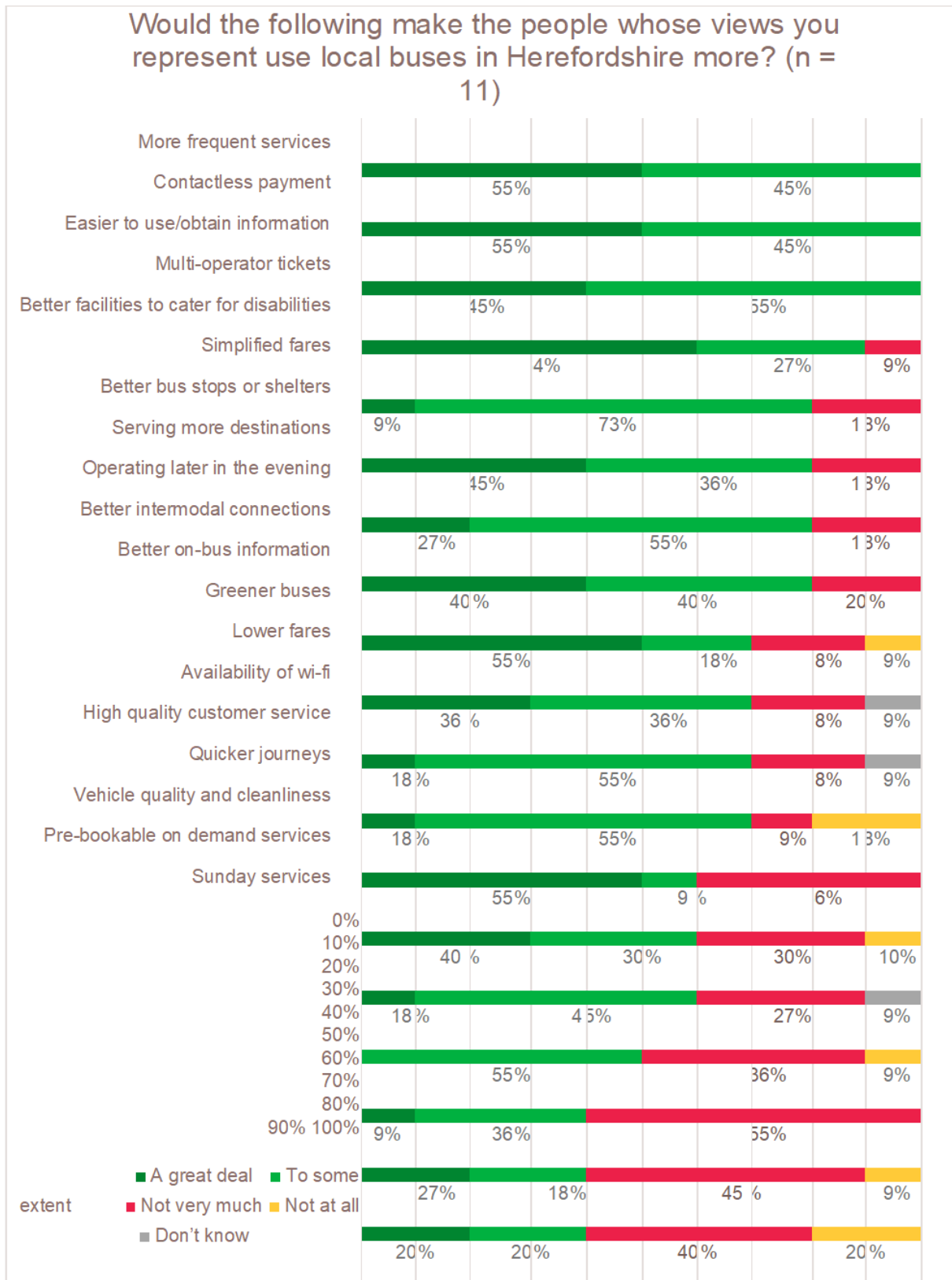
- 3.7 For both groups the provision of Wi-Fi was the least popular measure with only 41% of users and 34% of non-users indicating it would encourage them to use the bus more.
- 3.8 For both categories an increased provision of facilities for disabled people were the poorly ranked (32-33%), however amongst disabled respondents this increased to 60% for users and 55% for non-users.
- 3.9 An increase in Sunday services was also ranked as a low priority with 46% of users and 47% of non-users indicating it would increase their likelihood of using the bus.

Bus users	Non-Bus users
More frequent services (88%)	More frequent services (83%)
Information easier to use/find (79%)	Information easier to use/find (74%)
Contactless payment (78%)	Contactless payment (73%)
Serving more destinations (72%)	Serving more destinations (71%)
Multi operator ticket (69%)	Multi operator ticket 67%)
Operate later in evening (68%)	Operate later in evening (68%)

Business and group representatives

- 3.10 Figure 9 (below) shows the BSIP priorities for business and group representatives. Whilst this was a small sample size of 11 it highlights the differing priorities compared to the general public.
- 3.11 More frequent services had 100% popularity, making it the top priority which echoes the views of local residents. Contactless payment was equally prioritised by representatives, whereas it ranked 3rd in the general results. This is followed by easier to use and obtain information, again 100% but with a higher proportion of “To some extent” respondents, which was a high priority for local residents.
- 3.12 The lowest priority for business and group representatives was more Sunday services (40%) compared to 62% for general responses, this is not unexpected given most business don’t operate on a Sunday. The provision of Wi-Fi, which was the lowest ranked priority generally (33%) was ranked 13/19 for representatives (70%), possibly to encourage work whilst travelling. Pre-bookable services and vehicle cleanliness and quality ranked lowly in priorities for both representatives and general respondents.

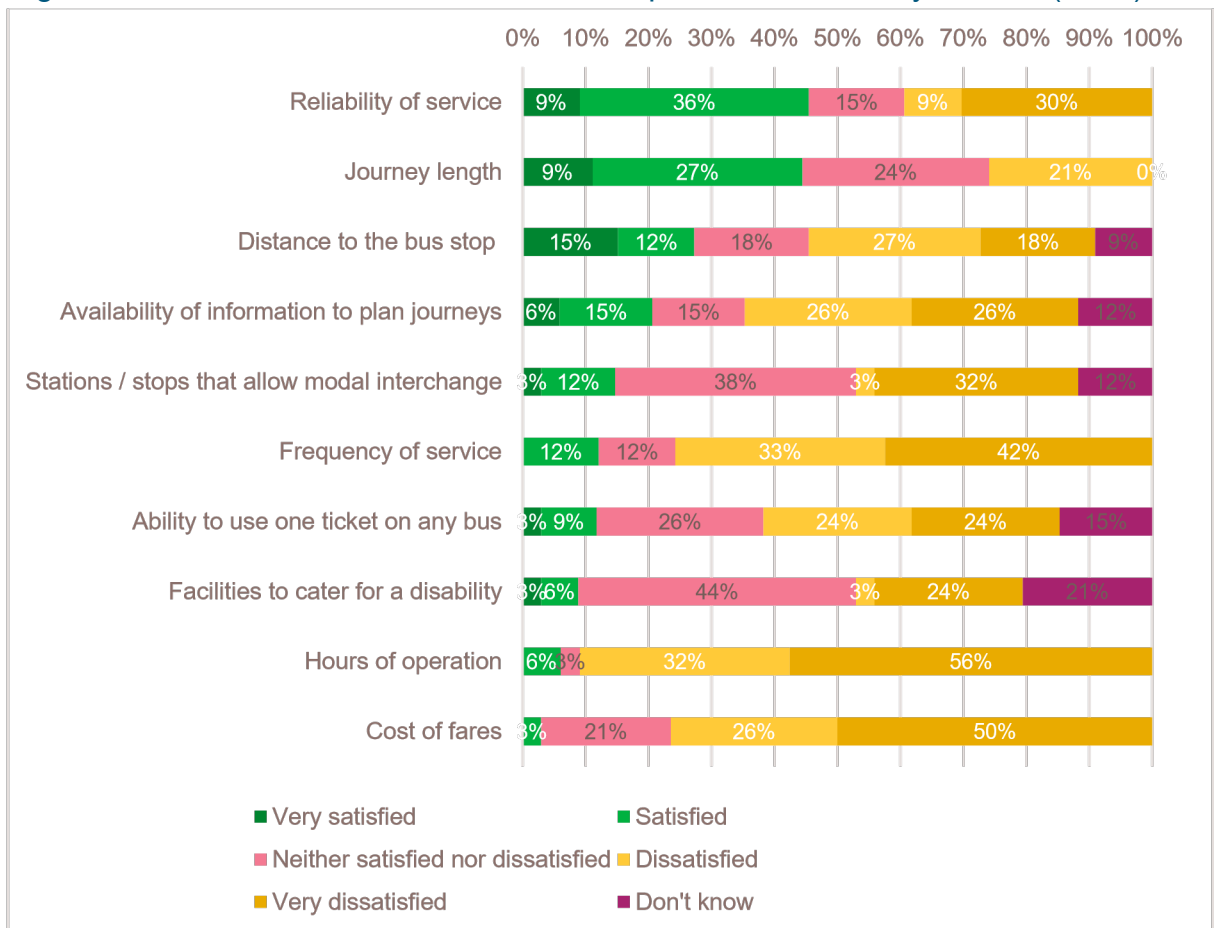
Figure 9. BSIP priorities for business and group representatives



4. Results by age demographics

- 4.1 Figure 10 shows that overall respondents under 24 are not happy with local bus services. Under 24s are most satisfied with the reliability of the service (45%), followed by journey length (36%) – however although these are the categories with the highest levels of satisfaction over half of respondents are not happy with them.
- 4.2 The cost of fares was the area of least satisfaction, with only 3% of respondents feeling “satisfied” and none responding as “very satisfied”.
- 4.3 Hours of operation was the second least satisfied category (6%) and the option with the most active dissatisfaction (88%). Cost of fares also received large amounts of dissatisfaction (76%), followed by frequency of service (75%).

Figure 10. Satisfaction with local bus service provision of 16-24 year olds (n=34)

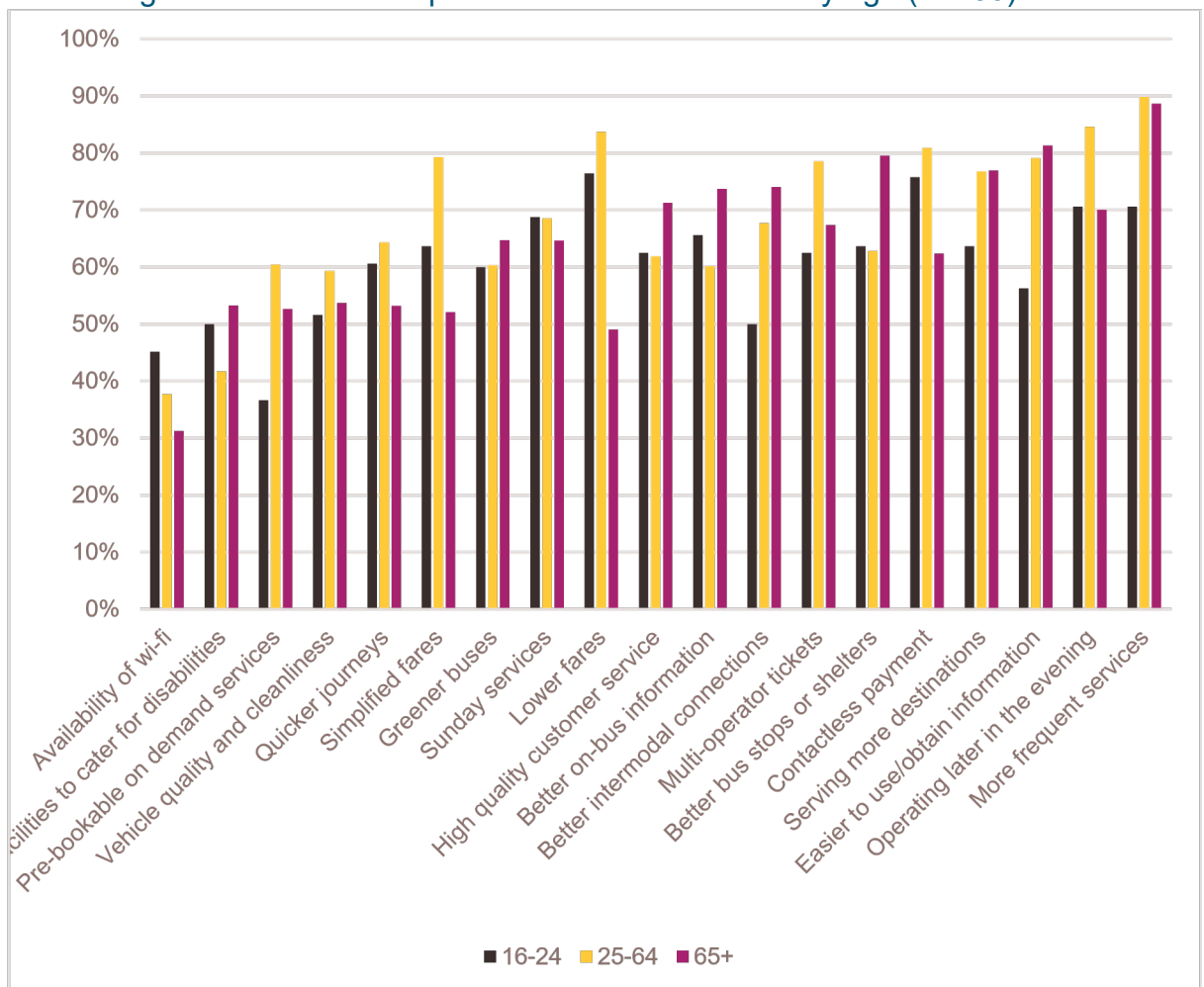


- 4.4 As shown in figure 11 there are discrepancies in priorities between age groups.
- 4.5 The most popular improvement measure for those under 25 was lower fares (76%) and contactless payments (76%). In both these categories these received more enthusiasm

by the 25-64 category (84% and 81% respectively) and less enthusiasm for those aged 65+ (49% and 62%).

- 4.6 The second most popular category for 16-24 year olds was later hours of operation and more frequent services (71%). More frequent services was 25-64 year olds highest priority (90%) and over 65s's (89%), however operating later in the evening only received 70% of positive responses for those aged 65+; it did however rank as 25-64 year olds second priority (85%).
- 4.7 The least popular improvement for 16-24 year olds was pre-bookable on demand services (37%), followed by Wi-Fi (45%) and better inter-modal connections (50%).

Figure 11. Positive responses to BSIP measures by age (n=753)



5. Workshop outcomes

- 5.1 Two workshops were undertaken as part of the BSIP development programme. One with Elected members (17th August 2021) and one with a wider stakeholder group (19th August 2021).
- 5.2 The key outcomes from the workshop with Elected members included:

- Supportive of initiatives to train PSV drivers locally
- Important to recognise the leisure/tourism potential of bus services
- Supportive of the concept of improved frequencies and consistent core network •
Agreement with draft vision and objectives

5.3 The key outcomes from the workshop with Stakeholders included:

- Desire to see more consistent provision / improved frequencies (hourly service on core routes 0700 – 2200 on 7 days per week)
- More links between market towns (e.g. Kington – Leominster)
- Concerns around the operation / image of City Bus Station
- Herefordshire Council should take lead in information provision
- Vision and objectives – more ambition and more explicit objectives

Appendix B – letters of support from local bus operators



Sargeants Brothers LTD

Kington

Herefordshire

HR5 3AL

01544230481

Transportmanager@sargeantsbros.com

21st October 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

Support for Herefordshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan

I write to confirm that Sargeants Brothers Ltd has been engaged with Herefordshire Council and other operators in the process of developing Herefordshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and is fully supportive of its content. Sargeants Brothers Ltd has worked in partnership with the local authority for many years.

We look forward to continuing this partnership approach in the delivery of the BSIP.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'M. Evans'.

Matthew Evans

Director



www.drmbus.com



DRM BUS



Tel: 01885 483219 drm@drmbus.com The Bus Garage Bromyard HR7 4NT

22 Oct 2021

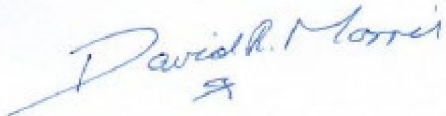
Dear Sir/Madam

Support for Herefordshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan

I write to confirm that DRM BUS has been engaged with Herefordshire Council and other operators in the process of developing Herefordshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and is fully supportive of its content. DRMBUS has worked in partnership with the local authority for many years and as a result has implemented a number of successful schemes to enhance the bus offer for passengers.

We look forward to continuing this partnership approach in the delivery of the BSIP.

Yours faithfully



D R Morris

DRM Bromyard



Stagecoach West
Third Floor
65 London Road
Gloucester
GL13HF

21st October 2021

Herefordshire Council Bus Service Improvement Plan

Dear Sir/Madam,

I'm writing to confirm that Stagecoach West has been actively engaged in the preparation of Herefordshire Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and is fully supportive of its ambition.

Stagecoach has a long history of working with Herefordshire Council on bus services in the region, both commercial and subsidy-supported. We are encouraged by positive schemes including the current 'free weekend travel' offer which prove an initiative to proactively support bus as part of the post-Covid regional recovery programme.

We support the Council's vision to radically enhance long-term bus modal share within the County through ring-fenced investment and formal partnership. We welcome the commitment of policy focussed on customer volume growth across the region, overcoming the core legacy challenges of chronic traffic congestion and a fragmented baseline service network.

We consider the indicative targets set by the Council meet the fundamental need to create a faster, more punctual and more car-competitive bus network to meet and exceed the expectations of existing and, most importantly, new customers. We welcome these targets being strengthened in due course as part of a virtuous cycle of investment, growth and reinvestment.

Herefordshire Council has remained supportive of and receptive to bus operators throughout the BSIP process and we look forward to entering into a formal Enhanced Partnership in due course.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Geliamassi", enclosed within a simple circular outline.

Rachel Geliamassi
Managing Director
Stagecoach West



Herefordshire Council
Plough Lane
Hereford
HR4 0LE

25th October 2021

Dear Sir,

Herefordshire Council – Bus Service Improvement Plan

In response to *Bus Back Better*, the National Bus Strategy for England, Herefordshire Council has consulted with us in developing a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

We believe that the BSIP document created in partnership between the Council, ourselves, and other operators creates an exciting opportunity to deliver an integrated and inclusive transport network across Herefordshire, sustaining the existing level of service, and better connecting places, communities and economic assets within the region and beyond.

A focus on public transport will prioritise investment in a sustainable future, supporting a green recovery from Covid-19 and tackling the climate emergency through the decarbonisation of the transport sector.

Arriva fully support Herefordshire Council's BSIP and the measures contained within it. As a major bus operator we are making every effort to regrow customer demand following the pandemic, and we welcome the future funding from DfT to help support that recovery and build upon it to deliver the BSIP's ambitious targets on patronage growth, reliability, punctuality, journey times and overall passenger satisfaction.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Godley".

Andrew Godley
Commercial Director

Arriva Midlands
Westmoreland Avenue
Thurmaston
Leicester
LE4 8PH

Tel 0116 264 0400
Fax 0116 260 8620

www.arrivabus.co.uk

"Arriva Midlands" is the trading name of the following companies, each of which has its registered office address at 1 Admiral Way, Doxford International Business Park, Sunderland SR3 3XP: Arriva Midlands Limited (02141078), Arriva Midlands North Limited (01556305), Arriva The Shires Limited (0116519) and Centrebus Holdings Limited (06544272).

a company



The Travel Centre
Old School Lane
Hereford
HR1 1EX

Email: sales@luggvalleytravel.co.uk

Enquiries and Coach Hire 01432 344341

Coach Holidays 01432 356201

British & Continental Coach Holidays and Tours

Dear Sir/Madam,

Support for Herefordshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan

I write to confirm that Lugg Valley Travel has been engaged with Herefordshire Council and other operators in the process of developing Herefordshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and is fully supportive of its content. Lugg Valley Travel has worked in partnership with the local authority for many years.

We look forward to continuing this partnership approach in the delivery of the BSIP.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nigel Yeomans", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nigel Yeomans
Managing Director



Coach Hire
01432 356201

YEOMANS TRAVEL



Established 1920



Worldwide
01432 356202

The Travel Centre, Old School Lane, Hereford HR1 1EX Email: sales@yeomanstravel.co.uk www.yeomanscoachholidays.com

British & Continental Coach Tours, Air Travel and Holidays

Dear Sir/Madam,

Support for Herefordshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan

I write to confirm that Yeomans Travel has been engaged with Herefordshire Council and other operators in the process of developing Herefordshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and is fully supportive of its content. Yeomans Travel has worked in partnership with the local authority for many years.

We look forward to continuing this partnership approach in the delivery of the BSIP.

Yours faithfully

Nigel Yeomans
Managing Director



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