



TRAFNIDIAETH  
CYMRU  
TRANSPORT  
FOR WALES

# DESIGN OF WALES AND BORDERS RAIL SERVICE INCLUDING METRO

Summary of responses

Date of issue: 18 July 2017

## INTRODUCTION

The Welsh Government's vision is for a high-quality, safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable public transport system of which the people of Wales can be proud. We believe that creating an effective, integrated transport network will enhance the social and economic prospects for the whole of Wales, connecting people, communities and businesses to jobs, facilities, services and markets in an affordable and sustainable way.

Transport for Wales is a wholly owned, not-for-profit company established by the Welsh Government in 2015 to provide support and expertise to the Welsh Government in connection to public transport projects in Wales. We are currently undertaking the procurement process for the next Wales and Border Rail Service including the South Wales Metro on behalf of the Welsh Government.

We published our consultation **Design of Wales and Borders Rail Service including Metro** on behalf of the Welsh Government and the Department for Transport in February this year to gather views on the sort of rail service people want. This report provides a summary the responses received. It is an overall summary and does not include individual responses.

## **1. BACKGROUND TO THE CONSULTATION**

Transport for Wales (TfW) published a consultation document on behalf of the Welsh Government and Department for Transport on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017. It was made available on the Welsh Government website with a link from the Department for Transport's website. The consultation was designed to allow respondents to prioritise which aspects of a potential new rail service is important to them. The views received will help TfW to advise the Welsh Government of the sort of rail service passengers wish to see delivered over the lifetime of the service and to implement the improvements that will help encourage more people to use it in the future.

We have undertaken a wide-reaching engagement campaign to gather views from people across Wales and the Borders region including:

- An e-newsletter including a link to the consultation was sent to over 170 stakeholder groups on our database
- An Easy Read version was developed
- A young people's version was published
- We held 5 consultation events across Wales and the Borders in Shrewsbury, Llandudno, Nantgarw, Carmarthen and Aberystwyth
- An online advertising campaign targeted passengers and non-passengers
- We worked with Business Wales to target the business community
- We commissioned Participation Cymru to gather views from community groups in North and South Wales

During this time, Transport Focus also undertook their own independent research that will also inform our approach. A copy of their research is available from their website [www.transportfocus.org.uk](http://www.transportfocus.org.uk).

### **Who responded?**

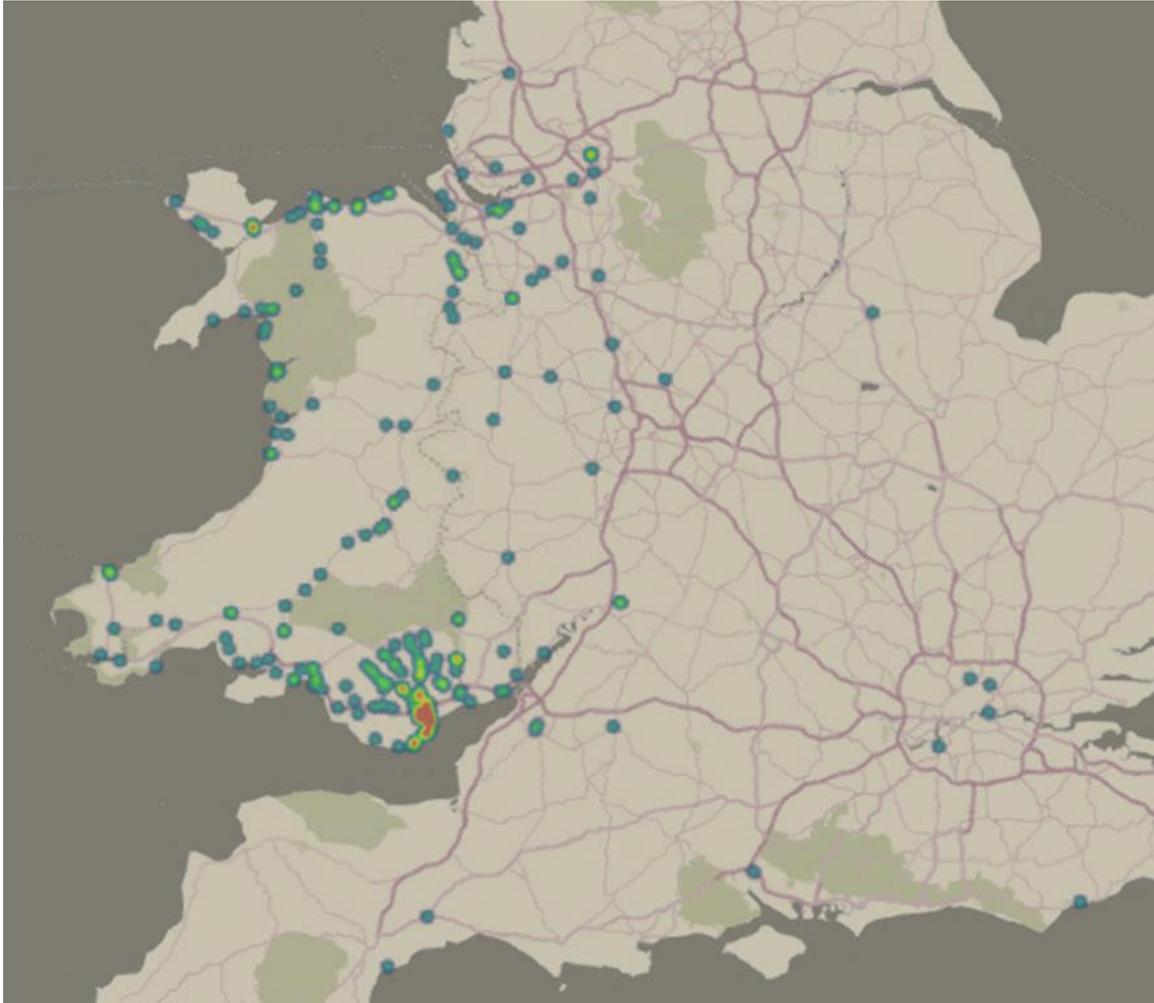
We received a high number of responses to the consultation with a wide range of views and ideas that will help us develop a rail service that meets the needs of the people of Wales and the borders. Responses were received through a variety of routes including:

- Over 1,300 people responded to the consultation either through the document template or by submitting a free-form response
- 128 people attended the 5 consultation events hosted by Transport for Wales
- 8 focus groups with community groups organised on our behalf by Participation Cymru
- 61 comments were received via our social media channels Twitter and Facebook
- 22 responses were received to the Easy Read version

- 17 responses were received to the young people's version, 7 of which were on behalf of a class

### Where did the respondents come from?

The map below shows the geographic spread of responses received. The analysis is based on location of respondents using the first part of their post code and their nearest station.



## 2. RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION

### Trains to meet passengers' needs

In this section, we asked questions about the train layout and on-board services. Figure 1 below shows how respondents prioritised the various attributes. More luggage space was the highest priority for those responding to the consultation. Sufficient legroom was also a priority for those responding to the consultation. Many also thought that aligning seats with windows was also important, particularly for the more scenic lines that attract visitors. Other priorities that were raised at the consultation events and the focus groups included clean and accessible toilet facilities and reasonably priced food and drink. Fewer people rated business class facilities as a high priority.

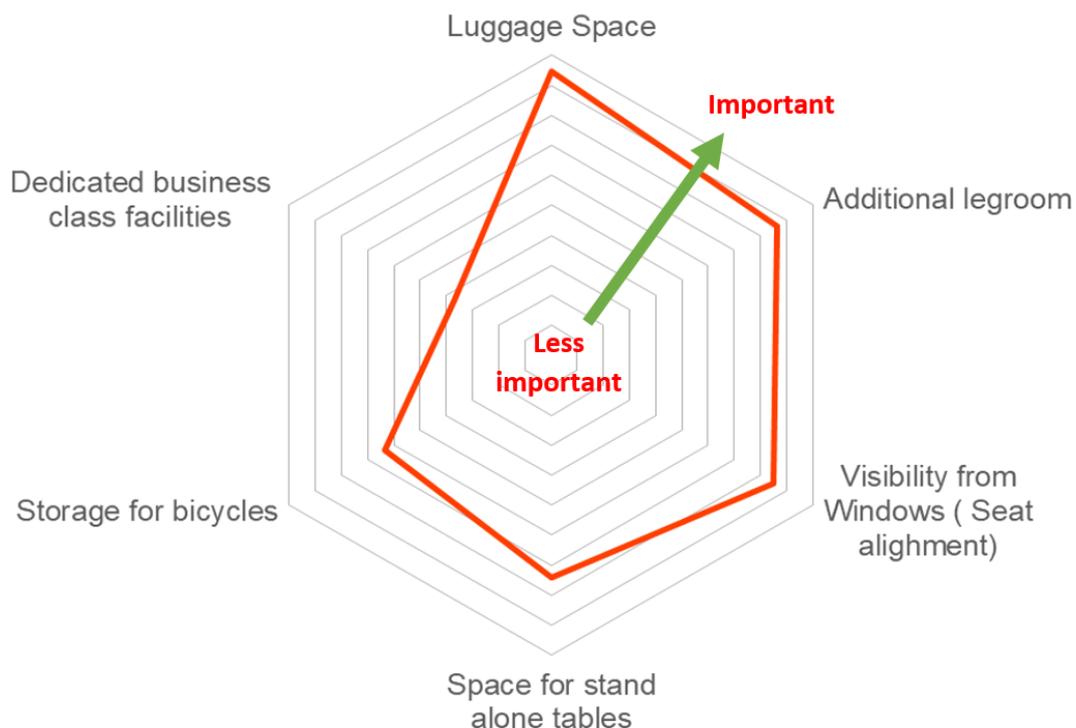


Figure 1 – Using space effectively

We received a high number of suggestions on how we could maximise space for passengers whilst accommodating cyclists with their bikes, particularly at peak times. These suggestions have been grouped into themes in figure 2 below. The most popular suggestions were dedicated carriages designed specifically to carry cyclists, many also suggested that better carriage design with more flexible seating would provide adequate space.

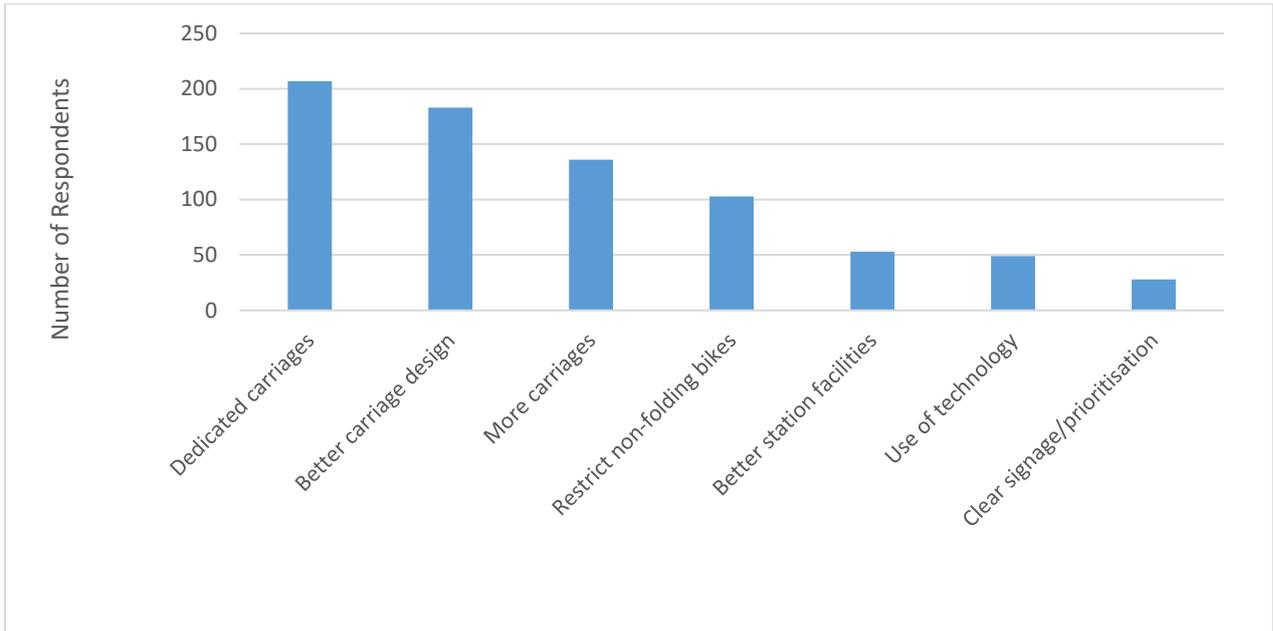


Figure 2 – Accommodating cyclists with their bikes

We asked how important it is to have a second member of staff on the train. Figure 3 below shows how people responded to this question, both in terms of the Wales and Borders and Metro areas. Over 90% of respondents said that a second member of staff was either quite important or essential in the Wales and Borders region and Metro but in slightly different proportions.

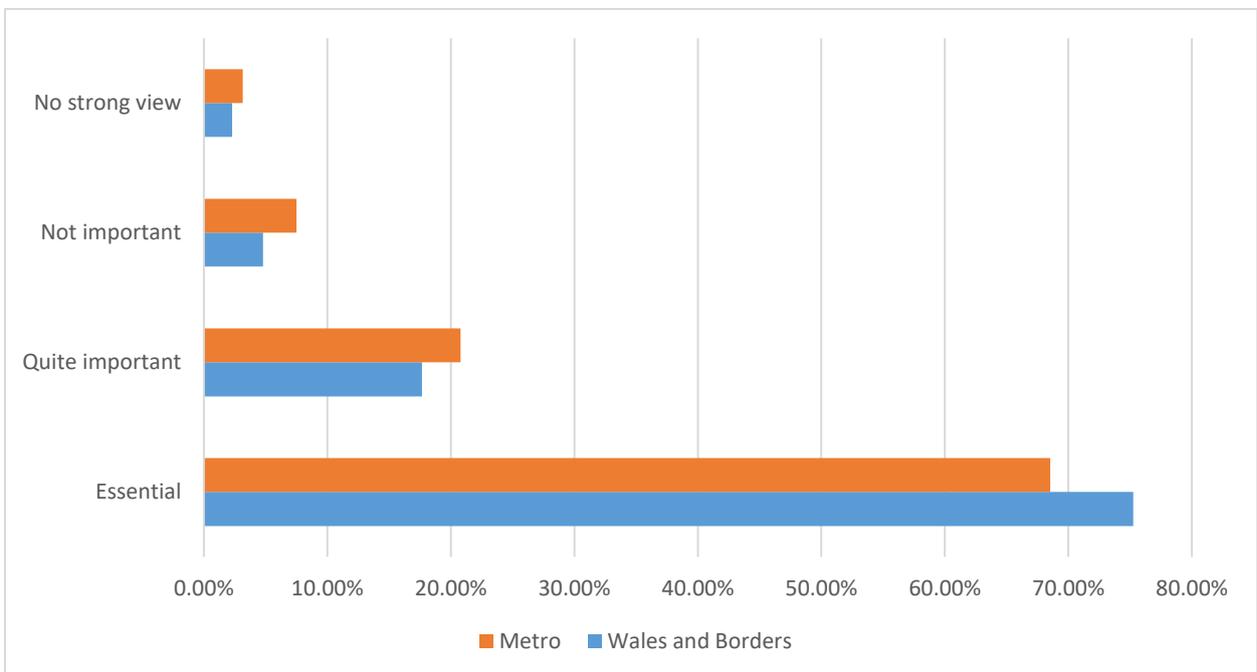


Figure 3 – How important a second member of staff is considered to be.

We asked what respondents thought the role of the second member of staff should be. Figure 4 below shows how many respondents said each thing. The groupings are based on the language used by respondents. Health, safety and security were seen to be the most important role for the second person. Delegates at the events also

mentioned safety, dealing with anti-social behaviour and revenue protection as the most important tasks for the second member of staff.

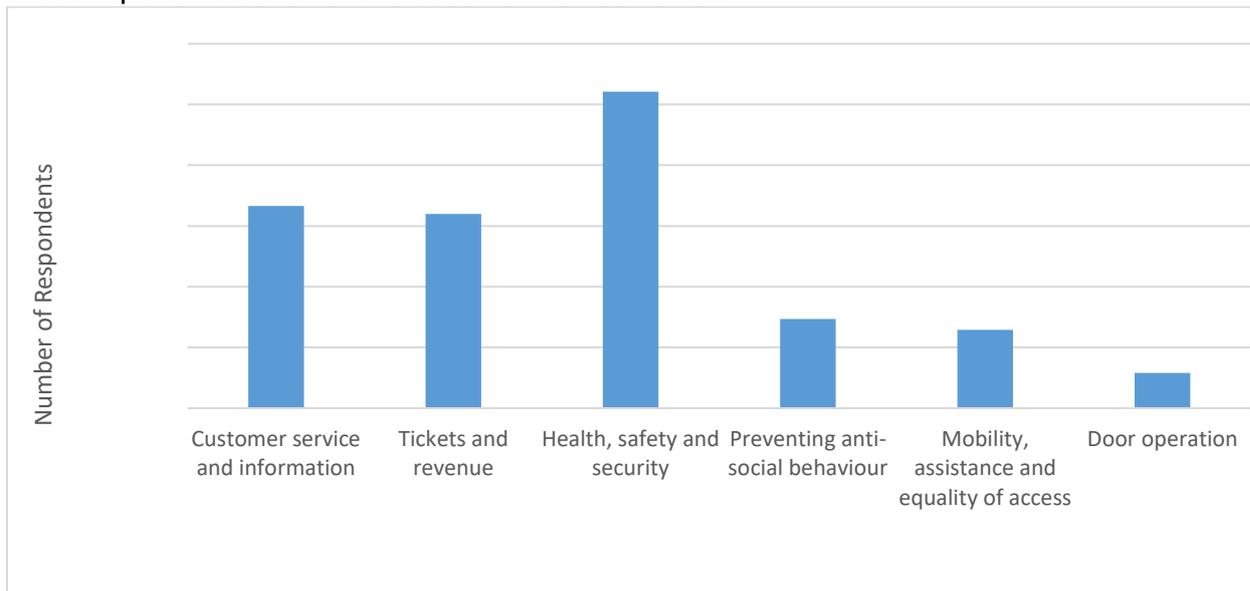


Figure 4 – Role of the second member of staff

### Stations for passengers and the community

In this section, we wanted to understand how respondents would prioritise the introduction of any new facilities and services into stations. In larger stations, as shown in figure 5 below, toilets, station staff and covered waiting areas were considered as most important. In smaller stations and in stations in the Metro area, covered waiting areas and CCTV were considered the most important facilities, as shown in figure 6 below.

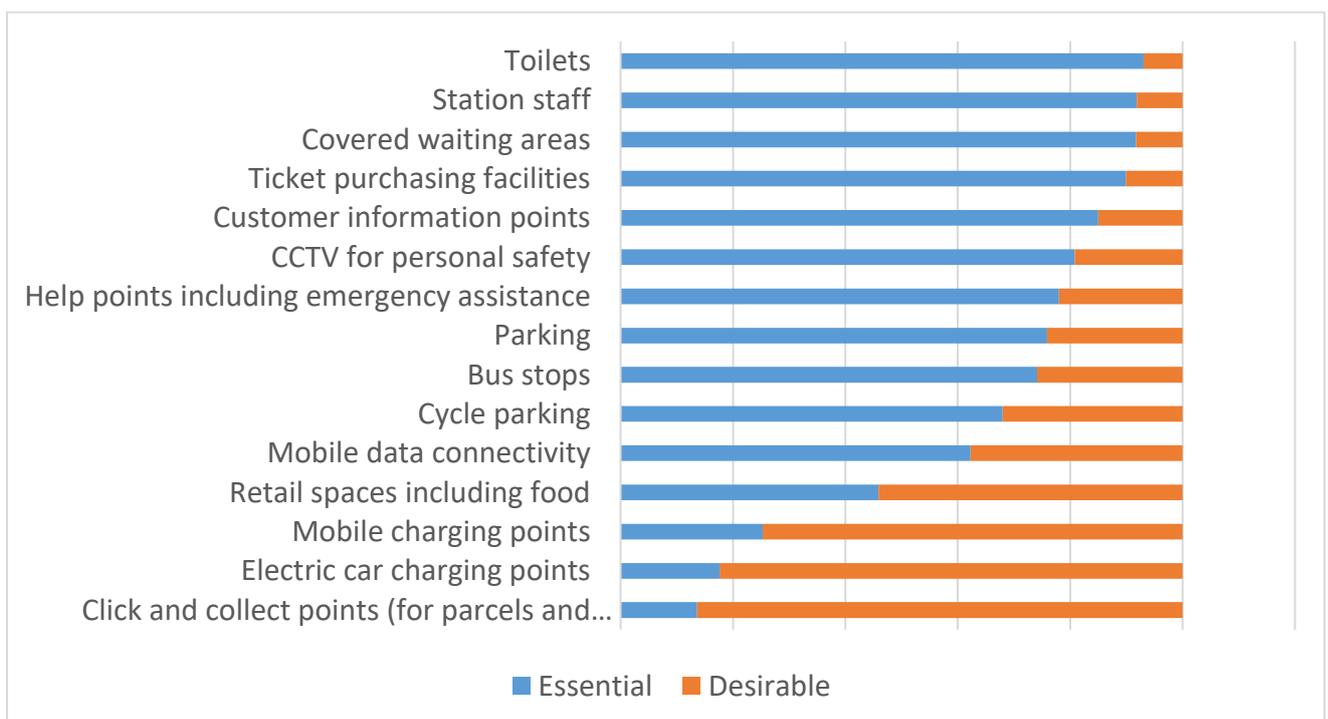


Figure 5 – Priorities at larger stations

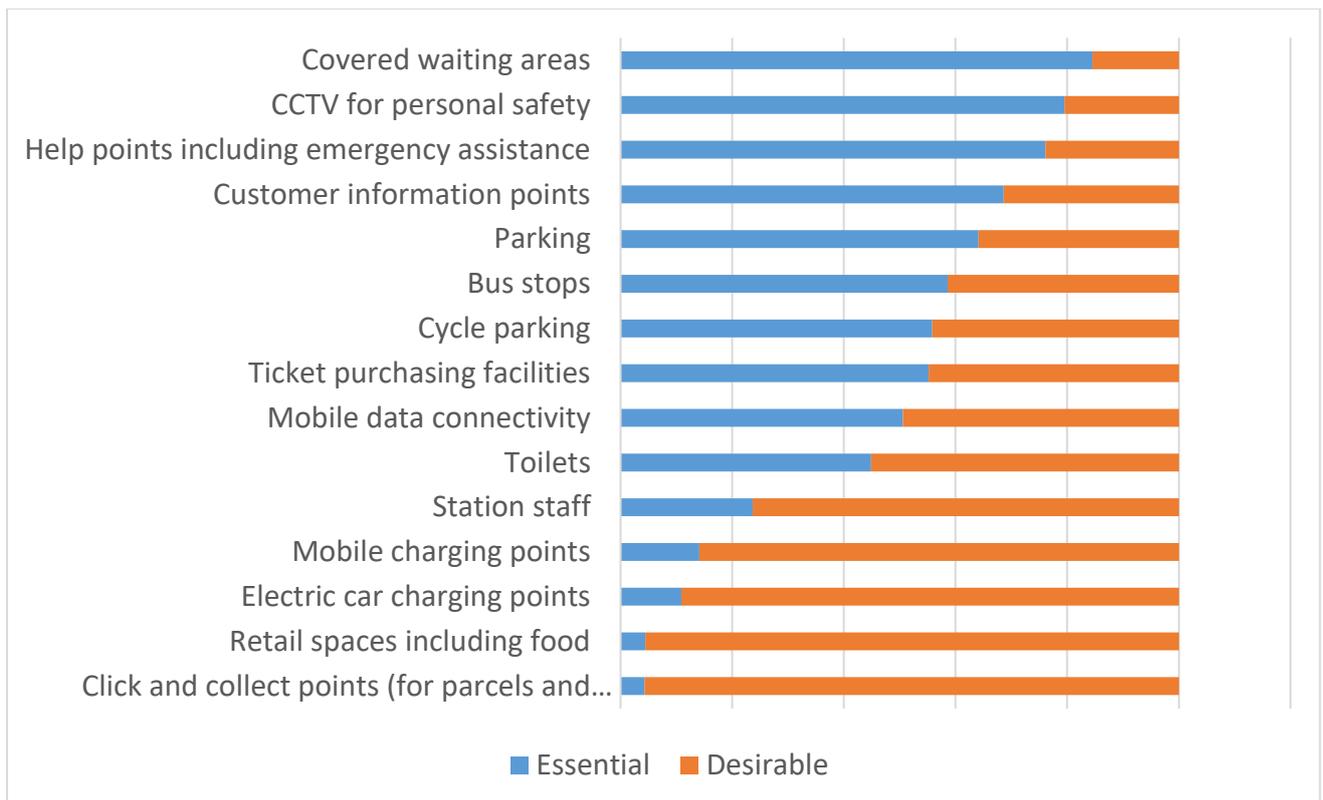


Figure 6 – Priorities at smaller stations and Metro area stations

We received many suggestions on how the community can get involved in their local station. Station adoption by volunteer groups (schools, community councils etc.) was a popular idea among respondents. Many suggested that the local community could maintain flower beds, local information points and retail facilities including cafes, crèches and bike hire schemes. Others suggested that civic facilities such as libraries and council hubs could be situated at stations. Some respondents thought that responsibility should sit with the rail operator to provide paid jobs to the local community. Another consideration noted was the need for community groups to be motivated enough to be involved

We asked respondents if they would be prepared to pay for parking if this resulted in improved facilities. As shown in figure 7 below, over 60% of people responded that they would be prepared to pay for parking. Discussion at the events centred around making parking free for those using the train by offsetting parking charges against the price of the ticket.

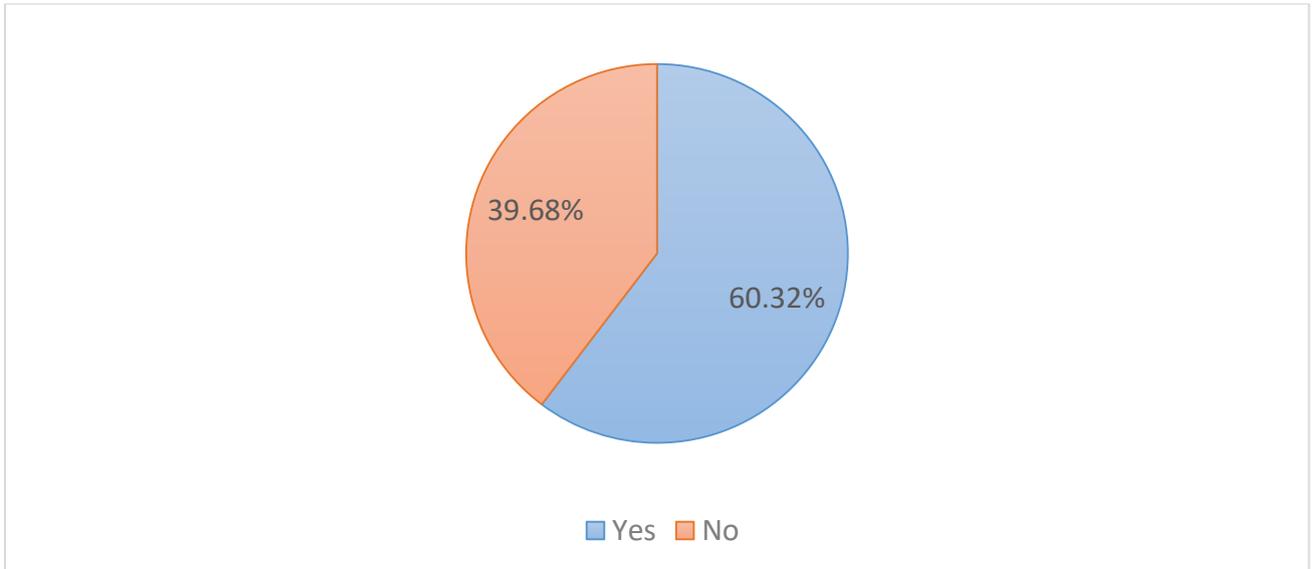


Figure 7 – Those who would be prepared to pay for parking

### Better services

In considering how network capacity could be used more efficiently, we asked what would be of most value to those responding. Figure 8 below shows that respondents both in the Wales and Borders and Metro area thought that more frequent services at both peak and off-peak times were needed. A later last train was a more popular option than an earlier first train. Much of the feedback at the events highlighted the need for a full Sunday service, which is not reflected in the data captured through the main consultation document.

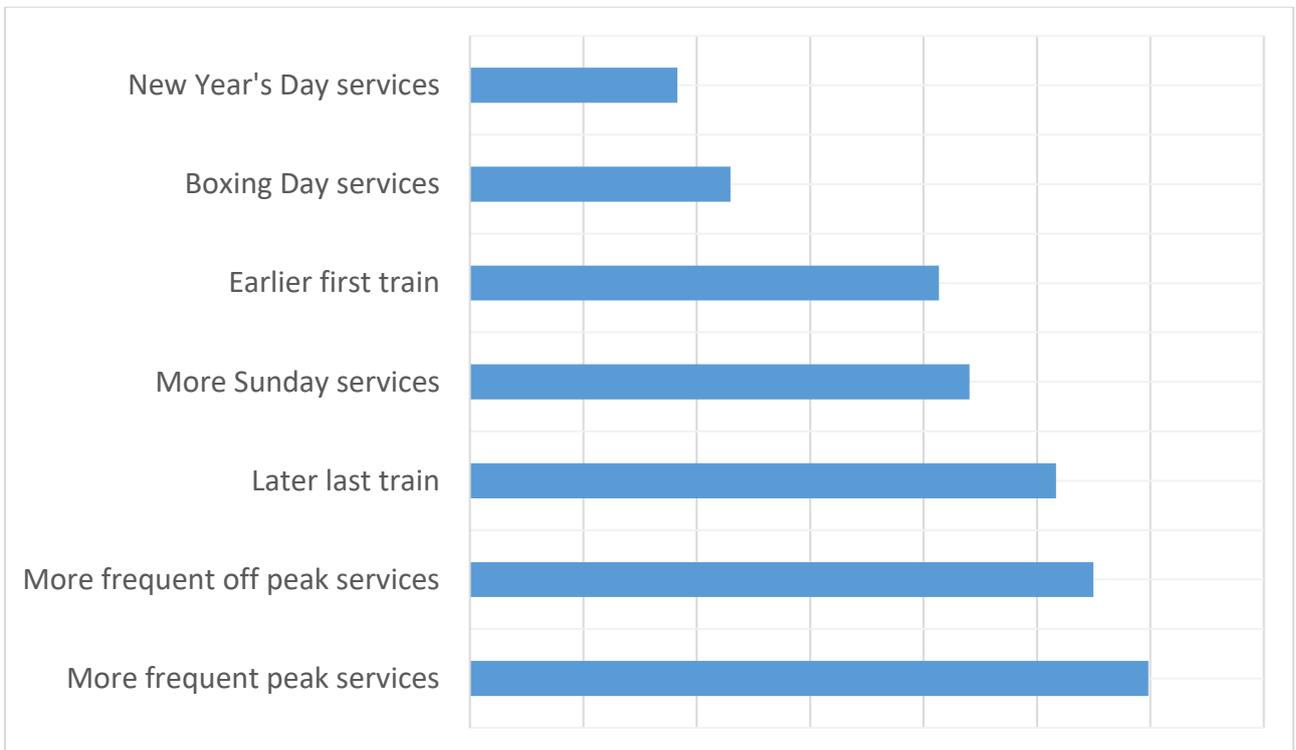


Figure 8 – Priorities for using network capacity

We asked what was the priority in terms of improving services. More reliable services were considered to be the most important aspect of service improvement in both the Wales and Borders and South Wales Metro areas. Figure 9 shows how the different items were rated. More reliable services were rated as most important.

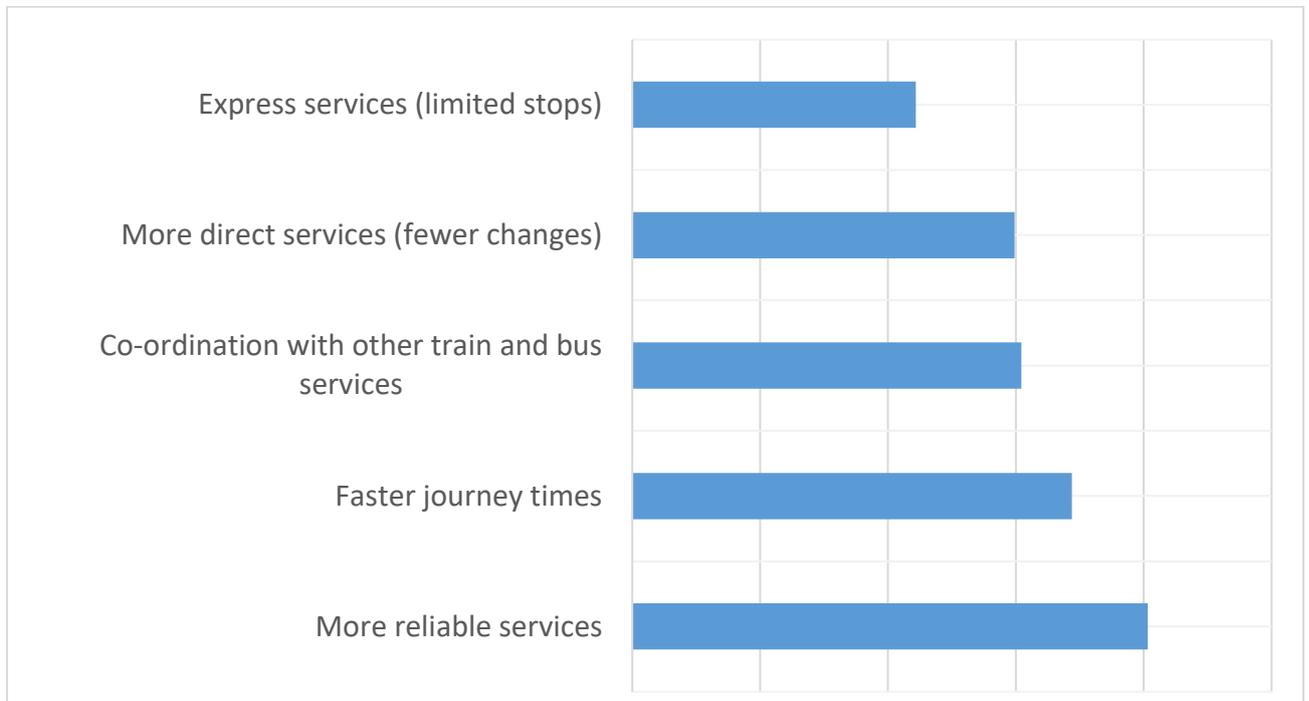


Figure 9 – Priority for improvements in Wales and Borders and Metro

We asked what difficulties people face in changing trains or changing from train to bus and we received a large number of responses.

The main difficulty outlined by respondents was the coordination between modes of transport, including timetabling, ticketing and availability of information. Respondents also noted difficulty making connections due to service disruptions and/or the distance between connecting modes of transport. These issues were further compounded for those that already face barriers to their mobility and/or those with pushchairs.

### **Cross border services: Services and stations in England**

We asked questions about the future of the service in stations in England. Figure 10 below shows that 75% of respondents disagreed that consideration should be given to transferring the three largest stations, Hereford, Shrewsbury and Chester, to another service. 88% agreed that the smaller stations should remain with the Wales and Borders Service as shown in figure 11 below.

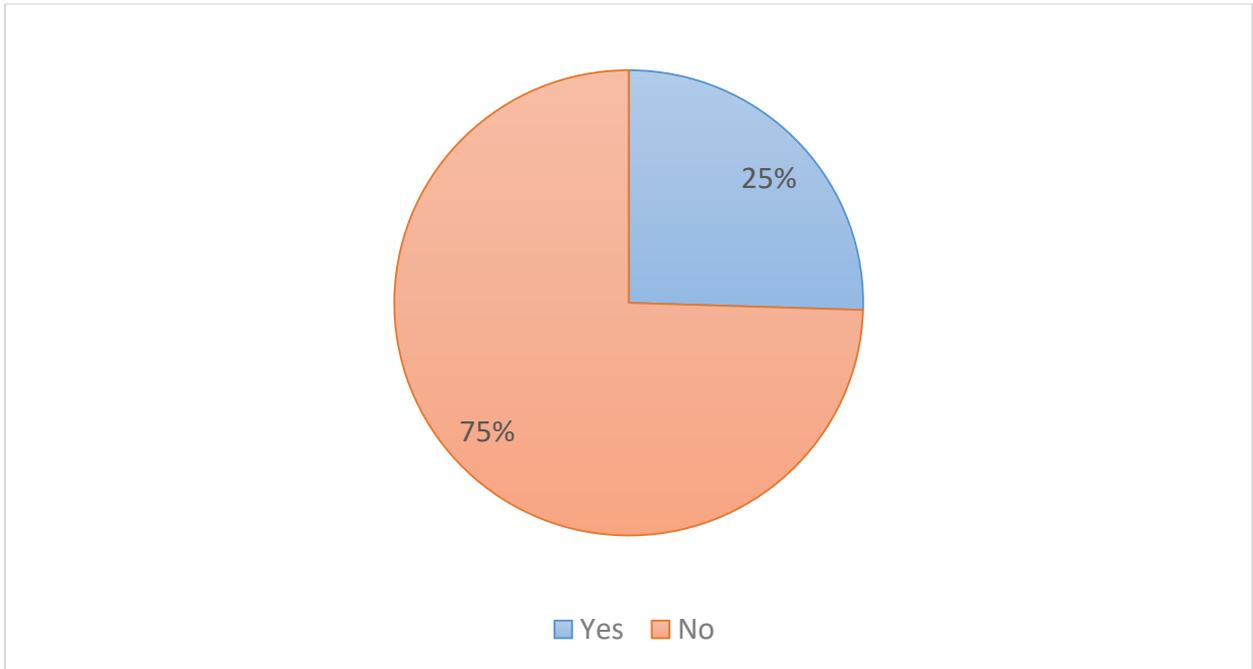


Figure 10 – Should the three largest stations be transferred to another service?

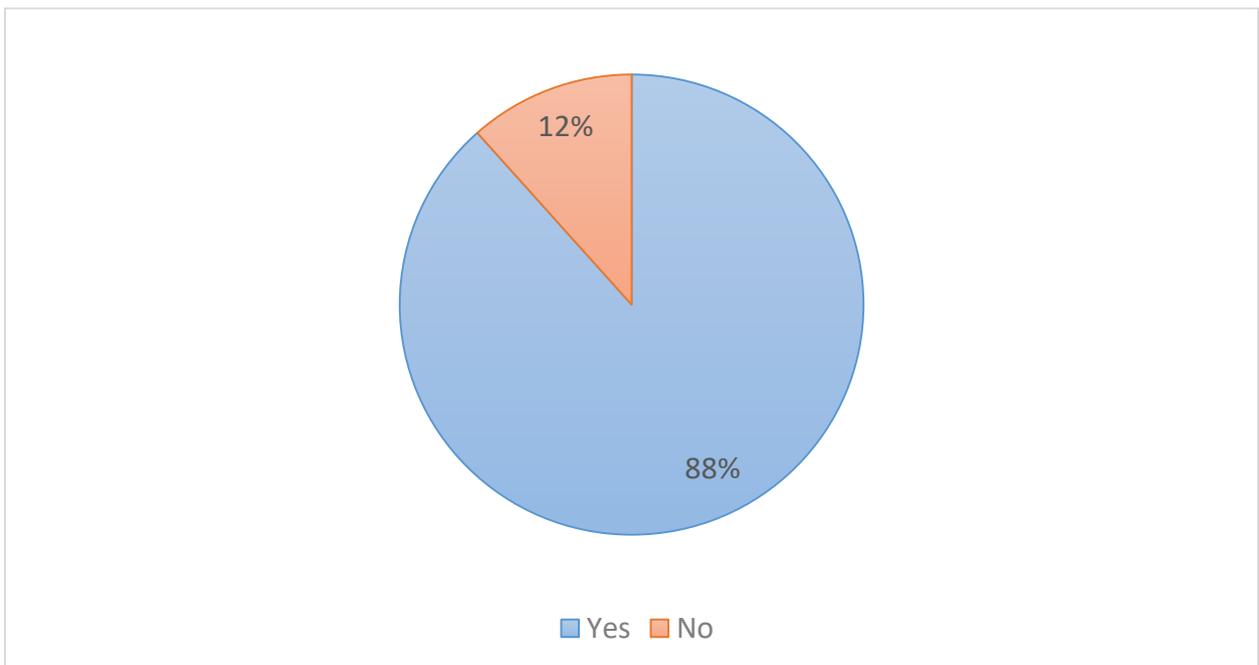


Figure 11 – Should smaller stations along the border stay with the Wales and Borders Rail Service?

### Fares and tickets to facilitate train travel

We wanted to know how we should improve ticketing to make it easier for people to travel. Figure 12 below shows the ticket options respondents think would encourage more journeys by train. A higher proportion of respondents thought that a simpler fare structure would be of highest priority in encouraging more people to use the trains. This was also echoed at the consultation events.

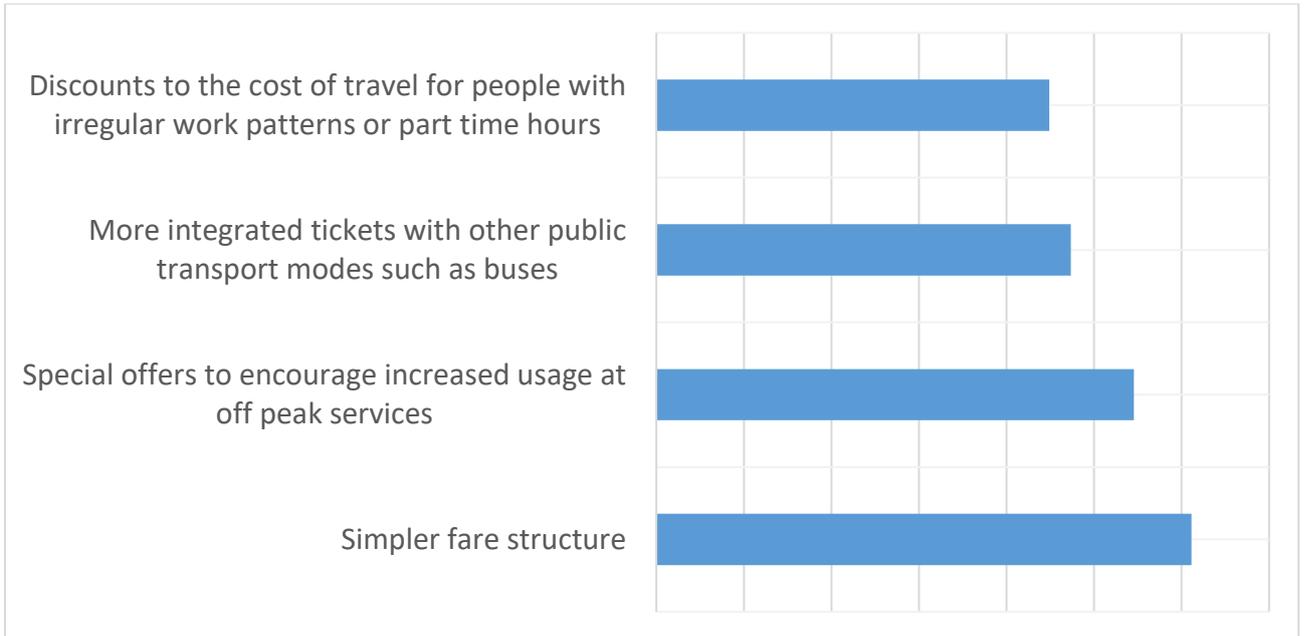


Figure 12 – Encouraging journeys by train

We also asked for suggestions for other tickets offer that should be considered. We received many ideas including 10-journey tickets and discounted season tickets for part time workers and those working night shifts.

### Providing better information

We asked how people would prefer to receive information. A website was consistently rated as the best place to get information. However, the provision of hard copy information and informed staff at stations were also considered important, this was especially the case at the events. Figure 13 below shows how people responded.

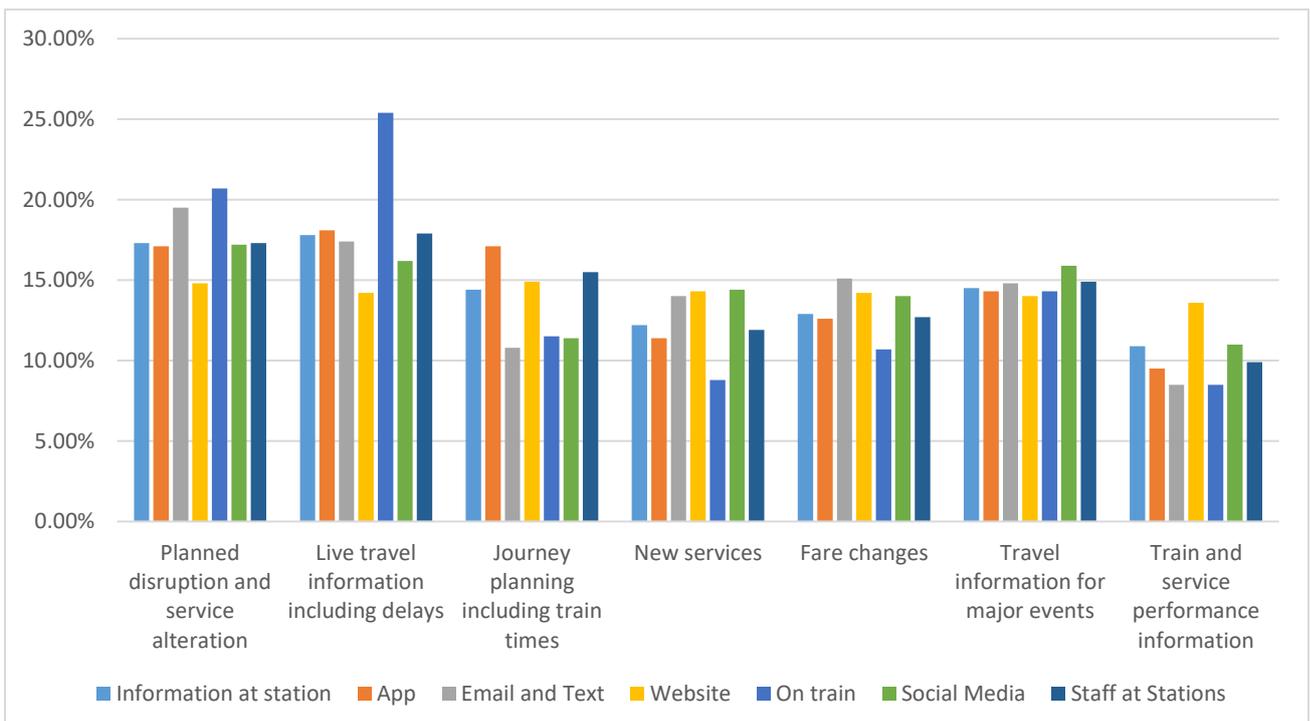


Figure 13 – Preferred methods of communication

## SOUTH WALES METRO

The following only includes a summary analysis of the responses in relation to questions we specifically asked about the South Wales Metro area.

We set out a number of statements in relation to maximising space for passengers through the consultation. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with each statement. Figure 14 below shows how people responded.

A large majority of respondents disagreed with the statement that toilets are not required on trains. Most also disagreed that toilets aren't required on trains if there are more at stations. Access to clean, toilet facilities on trains and at stations were also discussed at all consultation events and focus groups. There was also a clear consensus amongst respondents that there should be level access to trains.

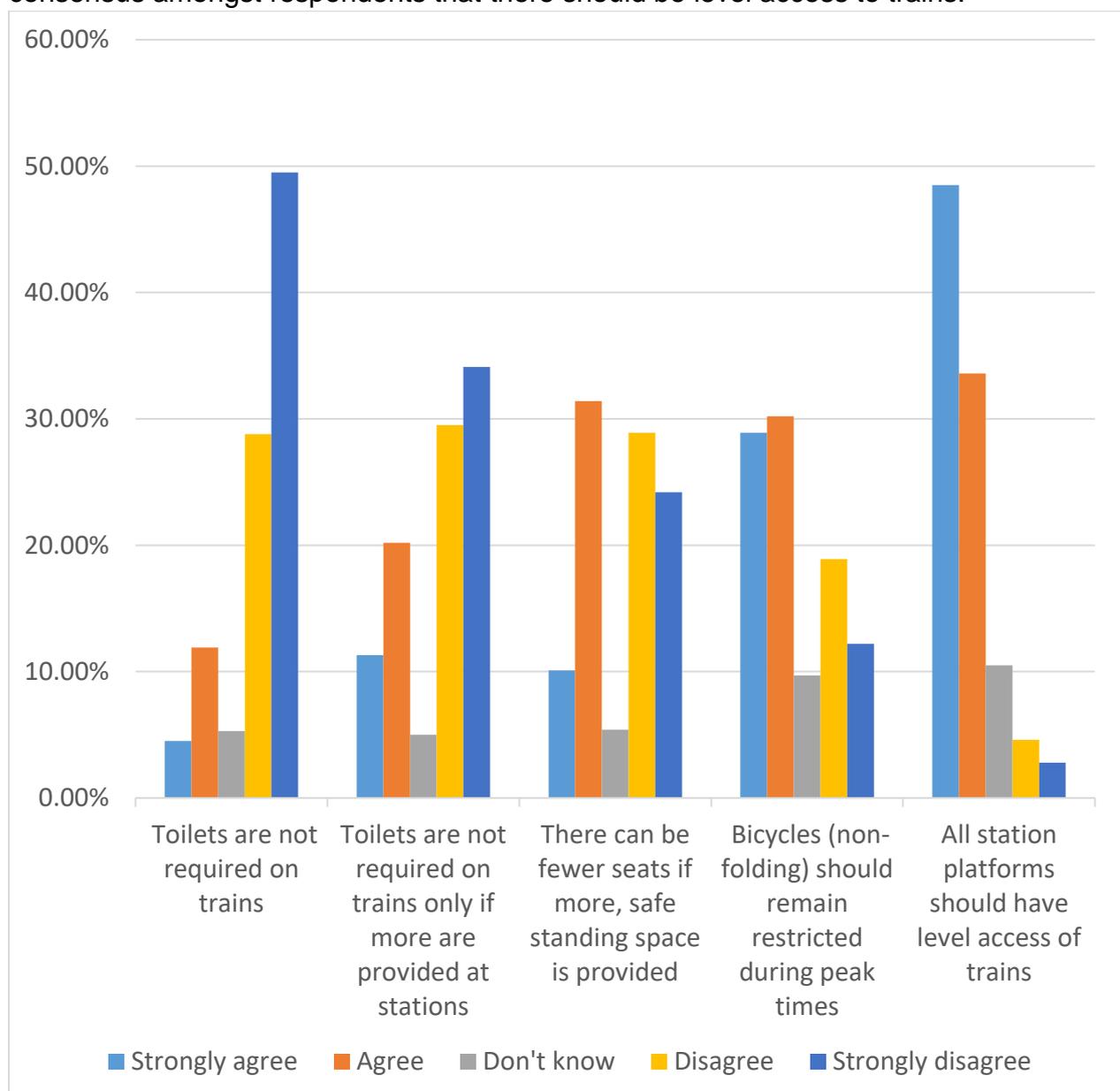


Figure 14 – Priorities for the Metro area

## Freight

We asked about the decline in the amount of freight using the railway and whether the capacity should be dedicated to passenger trains even if this meant that it was no longer able to be used by freight. A slight majority felt that the spare capacity should be dedicated to passenger trains. Figure 15 below shows the response.

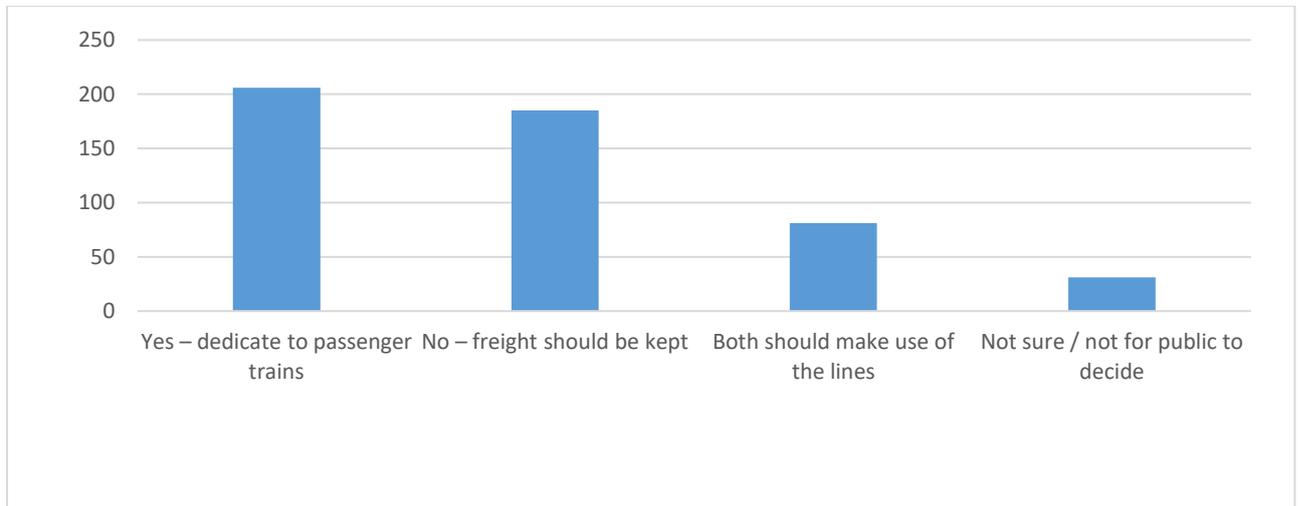


Figure 15 – Use of capacity for freight

## Construction

We asked about how construction works for the Metro should be managed. The responses, in figure 16 below, show a near even split between a blocked closure period, meaning the shortest construction period and limiting work to evenings and weekends, which would result in the longest construction period.

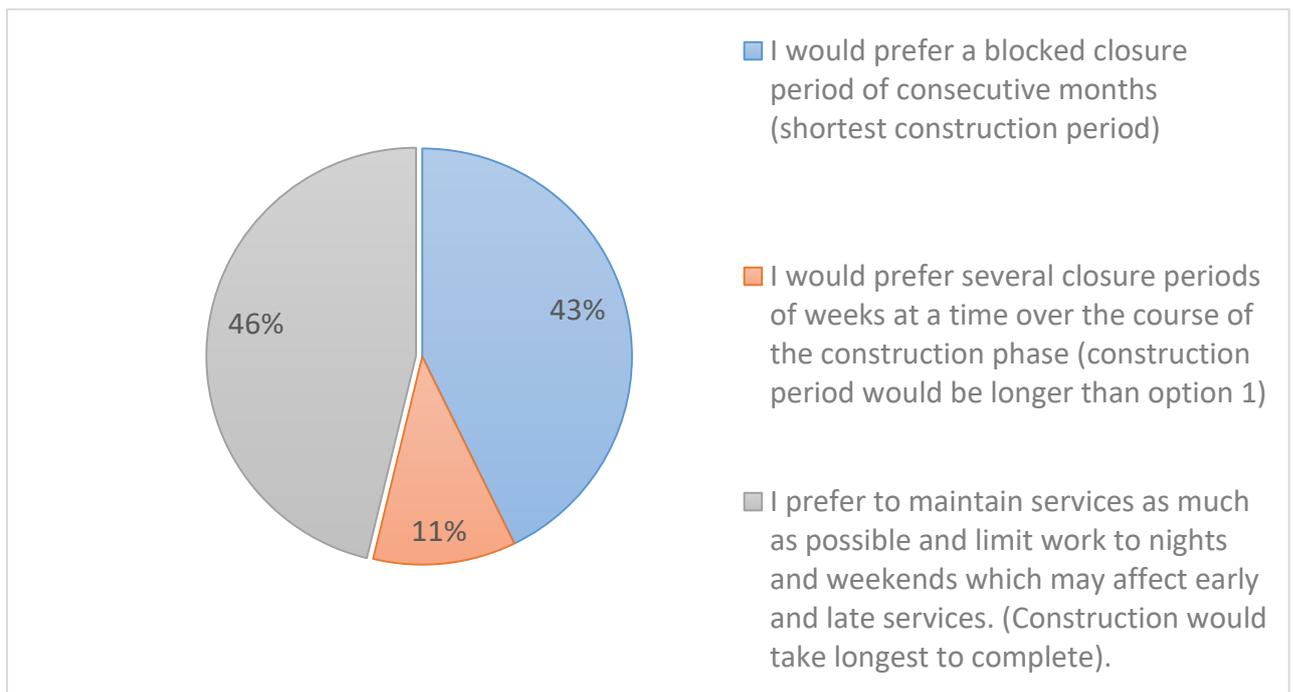


Figure 16 – Managing Metro construction

Following this, we asked about the forms of communications that would be most useful in the case of planned disruption and urgent work. Unfortunately, a technical issue with this question meant that data wasn't captured correctly in the online survey. However, in considering the paper based responses, discussions at the events and focus groups we can make the assumption that preferences would be in line with those shown in the graph in figure 13 on page 12. Many respondents find online methods of communication including websites and social media useful, however some people are not able to access these services and rely on hard copy information and staff at station to provide up-to-date.

## GENERAL COMMENTS

We received many comments and views on other areas which are included below.

### Accessibility

There was an overall feel from individual and organisations responding that people, especially older people and those with disabilities, need to feel confident that the support and facilities they need to travel are in place throughout their journey.

At the events, there was considerable discussion around the accessibility of stations for those in wheelchairs and accessible information provision for those with sensory loss. In the Metro area, comments were received on ensuring that the Metro is fully accessible to ensure that a 'turn up and go' service is available to all. Below are examples of the comments received.

*I am disabled and have missed connections when the train suddenly pulls in to a different platform than the one announced. I am unable to drag my suitcases up a flight of stairs, along an overhead connection way and down the next flight of stairs and have to wait for the lift to take me up and down."*

*"There is too much reliance on tannoy announcements, for example why a train is delayed, deaf people do not get clear access to this information".*

*"[I have] social anxiety so for me, minimal crowding on trains, clear signage at stations and access to toilets are important."*

*"Area needed for guide dogs."*

*"[Staff] should also be trained in Deaf Awareness and Disability Awareness so people can be treated with respect."*

We received a high number of comments about accessibility on trains, particularly around there being sufficient space for wheelchairs and other mobility aids, bikes and pushchairs.

*More wheelchair spaces. Have you ever tried travelling by train with a couple of friends who also use a wheelchair? It's impossible.*

## Welsh language

Welsh language provision through the whole service was a priority, with bilingual information and announcements available at stations and on board the train.

Welsh and local culture. Correctly pronouncing the Welsh place names, providing tourist information and availability of Welsh produce at stations were all suggestions on how to promote local culture.

*“Tickets should be bilingual with the Welsh names first.”*

*“[Welsh language is important] for both Welsh speaking customers and in respect of providing tourists with the all important 'sense of place' when visiting our region by rail.”*

*“It is irritating to book trains to Welsh stations from an English station to be met with constant laughing at Welsh names and the "oh I can't pronounce that" attitude.... If a company serves an area they should train the staff to respect the area, and pronounce the place names or confusion ensues.”*

### **Comments regarding station facilities:**

*“Opportunity to use Welsh”*

*“Signs in English and Welsh”*

*“The use of the Welsh language needs to be improved”*

## Next steps

Thank you to everyone who took part in the consultation. The high numbers of responses mean that we have a real understanding of what people want and expect from the next rail service. The information you gave us is already informing the procurement process in ongoing discussions with the four bidders. There will be more engagement opportunities, further information about these will be provided in due course. We will be updating our website as the project progresses and follow us on Twitter for the latest updates (@transport\_wales) or if you would like to be added to our email list to received regular newsletters, please email [contact@transportfor.wales](mailto:contact@transportfor.wales).

