

**DARLINGTON TOWN CENTRE SURVEY
OCTOBER 2008**

DARLINGTON TOWN CENTRE CYCLE SURVEY

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A. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1. In October 2008 NWA undertook a tracking survey of visitors to Darlington Town Centre. The initial survey took place in November 2007. The purpose of the surveys was to understand and gather the views of the general public on cycling in the town centre.
2. The most frequently mentioned '**main reason**' for visiting the town centre was again that of '**shopping**', with 57.7%, (2007 - 60.6%), of respondents giving this as their main reason for visit.
3. Most notable in the comparisons between 2008 and 2007 is the reduction in the percentage of respondents who said that the main reason they were visiting the town centre was for work purposes with this reducing from 15.8% in 2007 to 9.9% in 2008.
4. When respondents were asked about their 'other' reasons for visiting the town centre in the last 6 months, the reason most commonly referred to remains 'visiting bank/ building society/ Post Office' (46.9% compared with 42.5% in 2007 for those giving 'other' reasons).
5. There has been a **reduction on the percentage of respondents who travel to the town centre by car and a slight increase in those cycling to the town centre**. (By car - 2008 - 33.0% - 2007 - 39.2%). (Cycle - 7.6% - 2008, 5.9% - 2007). Of those who had a cycle available to them 19.1% (cf 15.4% in 2007) used this to visit the town centre on the day of interview.
6. **Just under a third of the total sample**, a similar figure to 2007, (32.3% - compared with 32.1% in 2007) **said that they had a cycle available for use** had they wished to cycle into town.
7. **The majority (53.6%) of respondents were aware that cyclists are allowed to cycle in the town centre** with 48.3% being aware this is allowed at any time. **This is an increase on the results of 2007 when only 39.4%** claimed to be aware and only 35.6% were aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time.
8. There was also an increase in the percentage of respondents who had seen someone cycling in the town centre from 61.8% in 2007 to 77.8% in 2008.
9. Amongst the respondents who had seen someone cycling in the town centre, 30.0% (26.7% 'yes' in 2007) said that they had experienced problems because of people being allowed to cycle there.
10. **Nearly two thirds of all respondents, (62.1%), were in favour of cycling in the town centre continuing as it is now. This is a statistically**

significant increase on the response in 2007 when 53.9% were in favour of it continuing. There was a consequent reduction in the percentage of respondents who wanted change from current cycling permissions from 44.8% in 2007 to 36.3% in 2008.

11. The principle reasons given by those respondents who were in favour of cycling in the town centre continuing as it is now were that they had 'no problems with the current arrangements' (45.5% of those who offered comments), that cycling was 'environmentally friendly', (14.5%) or that it 'reduces congestion', (9.5%).
12. Of those who wished to see a change the majority, (58%) would prefer there to be no cycling in the town centre at all. This is a slight reduction on the 2007 findings when 64.2% would prefer there to be no cycling at all, (21% of the total sample as compared with 28.8% of the total sample in 2007).
13. The principle reason given by those respondents who wanted a change to current cycling regulations in the town centre was that it was 'dangerous' or they had 'concerns about safety' (41% in 2008 compared to 51.1% in 2007).
14. Respondents were asked whether or not they had experienced any problems because of people driving or parking cars, vans, lorries or mobility scooters in the town centre. One in five (21% - similar to 2007 when 20.4%) of the total sample indicated that they had had such problems.

B. INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

- B.1 When pedestrianisation of Darlington town centre was completed in June of 2007 it was agreed that cyclists would be allowed to use the town centre for a trial period of six months. This was extended in February of 2008 until November of this year. A survey of users of the town centre was undertaken in November of 2007 and this was tracked in 2008 using the same questionnaire.
- B.2 The areas in which cycling was to be allowed were those used by pedestrians and no restrictions on the times at which they could cycle had been made. The second trial period is about to come to a close and the Council wishes to hear the views of users of the town centre before deciding whether cycling should continue in the town centre or not.
- B.3 The purpose of the survey was to understand and gather the views of the general public on cycling in the town centre, tracking the results from the previous survey. It was important to hear the views of a mix of pedestrians and cyclists and from visitors to the town centre on different days of the week, from different age groups and gender.
- B.4 Specifically information was required on the following issues:
- Awareness of right to cycle in the town centre
 - Any problems experienced because of this
 - Whether respondents were in favour of continuing with cycling in the town centre
 - If not in favour, which of a number of alternative options was preferred
- B.5 Interviewing was carried out over three weeks, (6th to 26th October) on the days and at the times indicated below. Twelve interviewer sessions were undertaken with a total response of 433 completed questionnaires.

Days worked – week one						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8.30 to 14.30	11.30 to 17.30	7.30 to 13.30		11.30 to 17.30	10.00 to 16.00	10.00 to 16.00
Days worked – weeks two/three						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
11.30 to 17.30		11.30 to 17.30	7.30 to 13.30	8.30 to 14.30	10.00 to 16.00	10.00 to 16.00

- B.6 The questionnaire was designed in conjunction with the client and a copy of this questionnaire is included as **Appendix 1** to this report (marked-up with

overall results for the 2007 and 2008 surveys). No changes were made to the questionnaire between 2007 and 2008 surveys.

- B.7 Data from the completed questionnaires has been entered and analysed by NWA using SPSS (Version 15). Frequency counts (showing counts and count percentages) were produced for all questions. These frequency counts are attached to this report as **Appendix 2**.
- B.8 Tables were then produced for each question, for the overall sample and for the following sub-groups:
- Do you have a car or van in your household? – Yes/ no
- Limiting long-term illness or disability – Yes/ no
- Gender – Male/ female
- Age group – 16 to 29 years; 30 to 39 years; 40 to 49 years; 50 to 59 years; 60 to 69 years; 70+ years
- Do you have a cycle available? – Yes/ no
- Employment Status – Full time, Part time, Self employed, Unemployed and seeking work, Wholly retired, Full time education, Looking after home and family, Permanently sick or disabled, Doing something else
- Pram/wheelchair – Yes/no
- B.9 The above tables are attached as **Appendix 3** to this report. A full verbatim listing of all respondents answers to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire is shown in **Appendix 4**.
- B.10 All survey results are subject to a 'margin of error' ('Confidence Interval'). This is based on both the sample number and the proportion of respondents giving a particular response. The table overleaf can be used as a guide to give an indication of the Confidence Interval at the '95% Confidence Level' relating to the overall sample and/ or sample sub-groups for the 2008 survey.
- B.11 For differences to be statistically significant between the 2007 and 2008 survey then the difference in response that would need to be observed would be 6.8% where results are 50%/50% and 4.1% where there is a 10%/90% split.

Profile of Achieved Sample and Confidence Intervals				
			50%/50% split	90%/10% split
		Number	+/-%	+/-%
Car/van in household	Yes	285	5.8	3.5
	No	148	8.1	4.8
Illness/disability	Yes	75	11.3	6.8
	No	358	5.2	3.1
Gender	Male	220	6.6	4.0
	Female	213	6.7	4.0
Age group	16 to 29	130	8.6	5.2
	30 to 39	60	12.7	7.6
	40 to 49	58	12.9	7.7
	50 to 59	66	12.1	7.2
	60 to 69	74	11.4	6.8
	70 and over	45	14.6	8.8
Day of interview	Weekday	285	5.8	3.5
	Weekend	148	8.1	4.8
Cycle available	Yes	173	7.5	4.5
	No	260	6.1	3.6
Time of day	Before 9am	26	19.2	11.5
	9am to 12 noon	170	7.5	4.5
	After 12 noon to 5pm	219	6.6	4.0
	After 5pm	18	23.1	13.9
Total		433	4.7	2.8

Comparison between 2008 and 2007 surveys			
		% 2008	% 2007
Car/van in household	Yes	65.8	68.7
	No	34.2	31.3
Illness/disability	Yes	17.3	16.8
	No	82.7	83.2
Gender	Male	50.8	46.6
	Female	49.2	53.4
Age group	16 to 29	30.0	29.5
	30 to 39	13.9	12.2
	40 to 49	13.4	18.8
	50 to 59	15.2	16.5
	60 to 69	17.1	12.2
	70 and over	10.4	10.7
Day of interview	Weekday	65.8	45.5
	Weekend	34.2	54.5
Cycle available	Yes	40.0	37.9
	No	60.0	62.1
Time of day	Before 9am	6.0	4.3
	9am to 12 noon	39.3	36.6
	After 12 noon to 5pm	50.6	53.9
	After 5pm	4.2	5.1

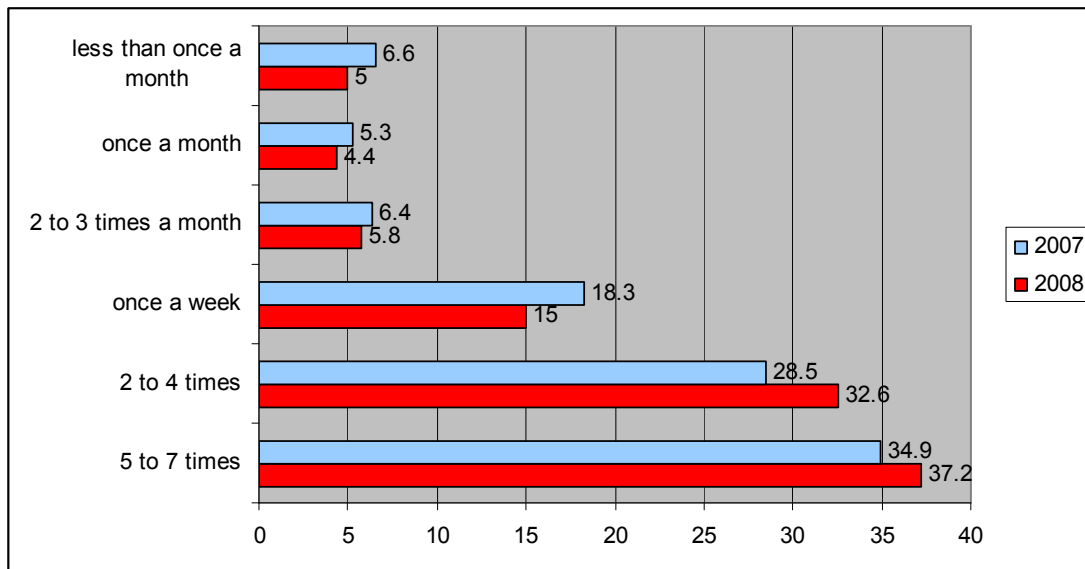
C. SURVEY FINDINGS

1. Time and Frequency of visiting Darlington Town Centre

*Q1: About how often do you visit Darlington Town Centre?
(Appendix 3, pages 1 to 3 refer)*

1.1 Respondents were interviewed during the week and at weekends, and at various times during the day. Only 6.0%, (4.3% in 2007), of the overall sample was interviewed prior to 9am, this being due to potential respondents being reluctant to stop for interview so early in the morning. 39.3%, (36.6% in 2007), were interviewed between 9am and 12 noon, 50.6%, (53.9% in 2007) after 12 noon and before 5pm and 4.2%, (5.1% in 2007) after 5pm. Again potential respondents appeared reluctant to stop when on their way home.

About how often do you visit Darlington Town Centre?
(Q1: % response – all respondents 2007 and 2008)



1.2 As can be seen from the chart above the frequency of visiting Darlington town centre remains broadly the same as in 2007 with 37.2% visiting 5 to 7 times a week, (34.9% in 2007); and 32.6% 2 to 4 times a week, (28.5% in 2007).

2. Purpose of visit

Q2: What is the main purpose of your visit today?

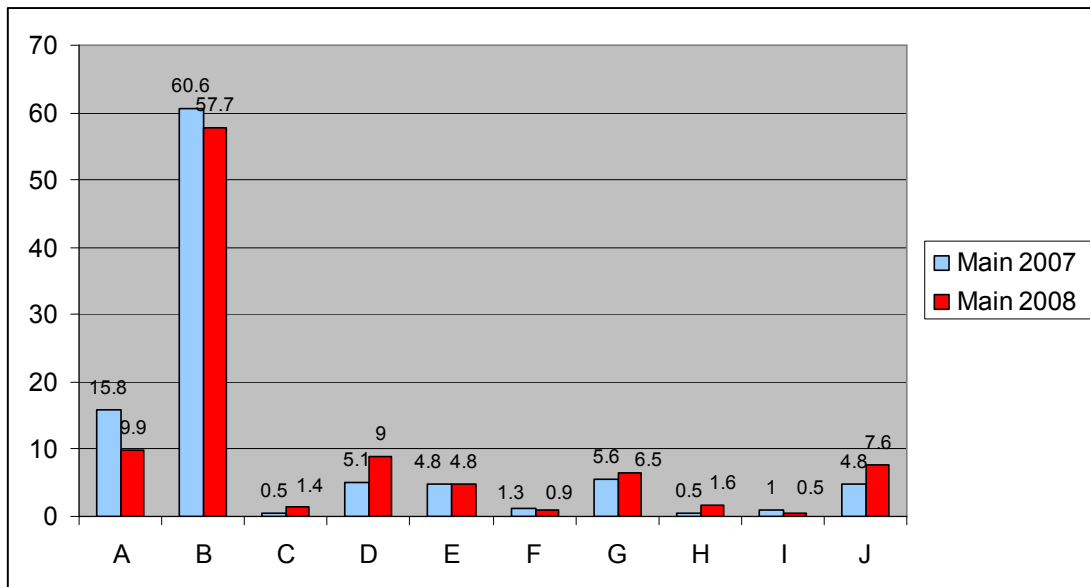
Q3: Have you visited the town centre for any other reasons in the last 6 months?

(Appendix 3 - pages 4 to 6 refer)

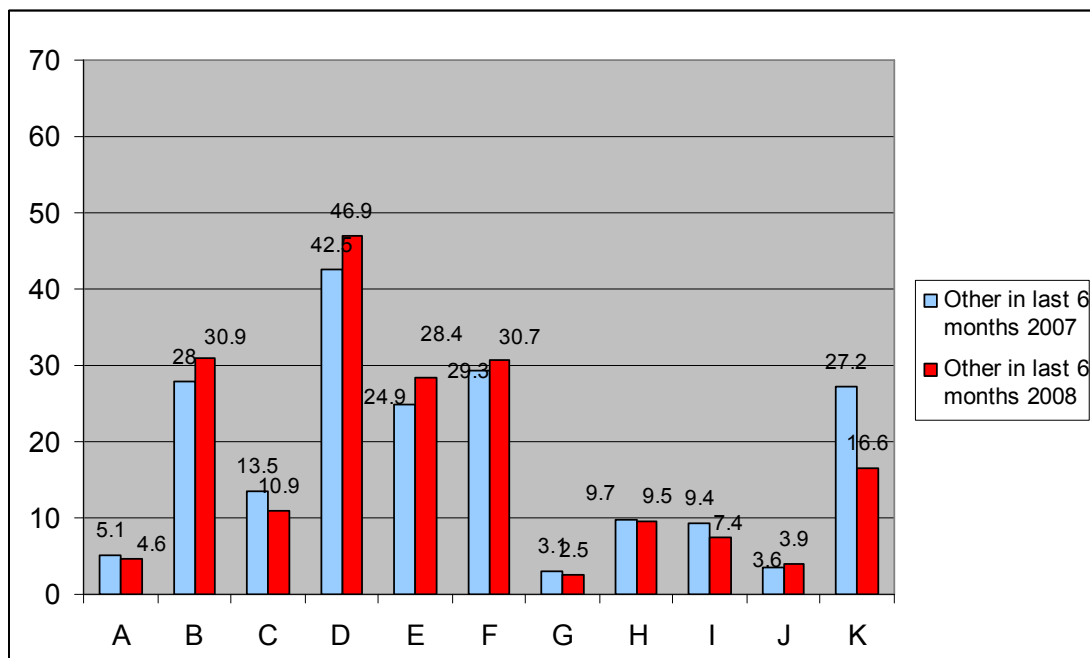
2.1 The most frequently mentioned 'main reason' for visiting the town centre was again that of 'shopping', with 57.7%, (2007 - 60.6%), of respondents giving this as their main reason for visit.

2.2 Most notable in the comparisons between 2008 and 2007 is the reduction in the percentage of respondents who said that the main reason they were visiting the town centre was for work purposes with this reducing from 15.8% in 2007 to 9.9% in 2008.

Q2: Main Reason for Visiting Town Centre
% All respondents



Q3: Other Reasons for Visiting Town Centre in the last 6 months
% All respondents



CODE: A – work, B – shopping, C – leisure, D – bank, etc. E- meet friends/family, F – visit pubs, restaurant, - G – attend places of education, H – medical, I – hair, nails, beauty, J – other, K – only for the main reason at Q. 2

		Main 2007	Main 2008	Other	Other in last 6 months 2008
		%	%	%	%
work	A	15.8	9.9	5.1	4.6
shopping	B	60.6	57.7	28	30.9
leisure	C	0.5	1.4	13.5	10.9
bank etc.	D	5.1	9	42.5	46.9
meet friends	E	4.8	4.8	24.9	28.4
pubs/restaurants	F	1.3	0.9	29.3	30.7
education	G	5.6	6.5	3.1	2.5
medical	H	0.5	1.6	9.7	9.5
hair/nails	I	1	0.5	9.4	7.4
other	J	4.8	7.6	3.6	3.9
no other than main reason	K			27.2	16.6

2.3 When respondents were asked about their 'other' reasons for visiting the town centre in the last 6 months, the reason most commonly referred to remains 'visiting bank/ building society/ Post Office' (46.9% compared with 42.5% in 2007 for those giving 'other' reasons). 'Other' reasons mentioned by more than one-in-ten respondents were: visiting restaurants/ pubs (30.7%), shopping (30.9%), meeting friends (28.4%), and visiting leisure facilities (10.9%).

2.4 As with the previous survey fewer than one in ten respondents mentioned 'visiting GP, dentist, other medical' (9.5%), 'visiting hairdresser/ nails etc.' (7.4%), 'work' (4.6%), and 'attending educational establishments' (2.5%) as other reasons for visiting the town centre in the last 6 months. 3.9% (2007 - 3.6%), gave 'other' diverse reasons (listed at Appendix 4), and 16.6%, (2007 - 27.2%), gave no other reason apart from their main reason at Question 2.

3. Method of travel into Town Centre

Q4: How did you travel here today?

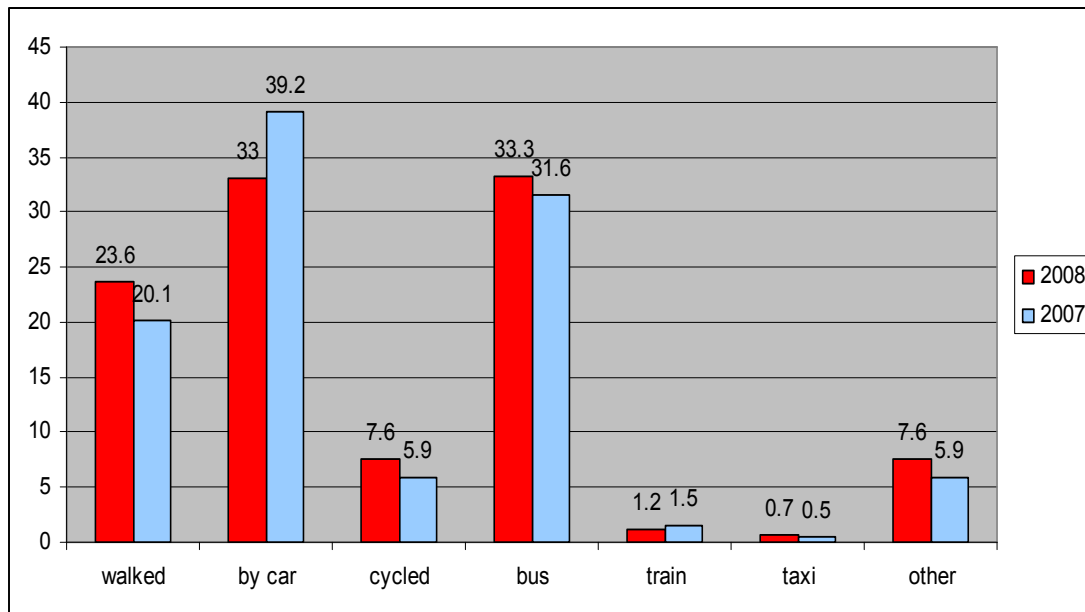
Q5: (All who did not cycle into the town centre) Do you have a cycle available for you to use had you wished to cycle?

(Appendix 3 - pages 7 and 8 refer)

3.1 The largest minority of respondents, (2008 - 33.0% & 2007 - 39.2%), said that they had travelled to the town centre by car. Whilst this is not statistically significant at the 5% level, this is just marginally below the difference whereby it would be significant.

3.2 The percentage of respondents traveling into Darlington town centre by bus, (33.3%), remains virtually the same as in 2007, (31.6%).

How did you travel into the Town Centre today?
(Q4: % response – all respondents – 2007 and 2008)



- 3.3 Nearly one in four respondents, (23.6% cf 2007 - 20.1%), walked to the town centre and 7.6%, (5.9% - 2007), cycled into the town centre on the day of interview.
- 3.4 Of those who had a cycle available to them 19.1% (cf 15.4% in 2007) used this to visit the town centre on the day of interview.
- 3.5 Just under a third of the total sample, a similar figure to 2007, (32.3% - compared with 32.1% in 2007) said that they had a cycle available for use had they wished to cycle into town.

4. Cycling in the Town Centre

Q6: Were you aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time?

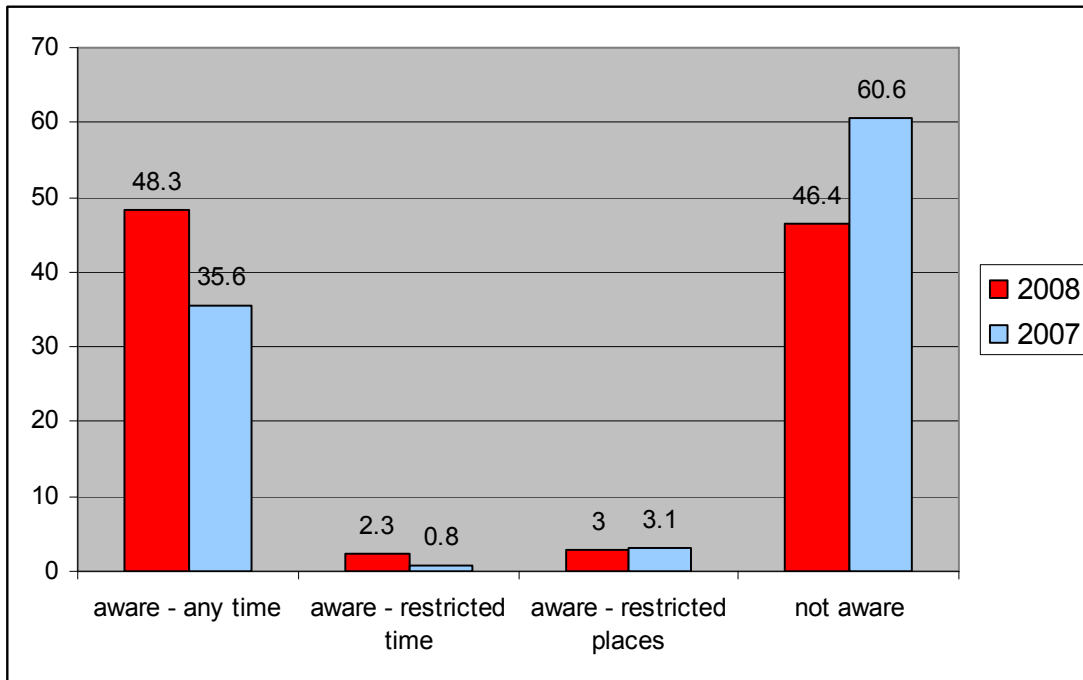
Q7: Have you seen anyone cycling in the town centre?

Q8: Thinking about the cyclists you have seen in the town centre, have you personally experienced any problems because of people being allowed to cycle in the town centre?

Q9: (If experienced problems) Please could you tell me about these?
(Appendix 3 - pages 9 to 12 refer)

- 4.1 The majority (53.6%) of respondents were aware that cyclists are allowed to cycle in the town centre with 48.3% being aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time. This is an increase on the results of 2007 when only 39.4% claimed to be aware and only 35.6% were aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time.

Were you aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time/
(Q6: % response – all respondents)



4.2 52.6% of those who have a cycle available to them were aware that cyclists are allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time compared to 45.4% of those without a cycle.

4.3 There was an increase in the percentage of respondents who had seen someone cycling in the town centre from 61.8% in 2007 to 77.8% in 2008.

4.4 Amongst the 337 respondents who had seen someone cycling in the town centre, 30.0% (26.7% 'yes' in 2007) had experienced problems because of people being allowed to cycle there. This figure rose to 51.7% of those aged 60 to 69 years and 47.4% of those aged 70 years and over.

Q9) (If experienced problems) Please could you give details about these?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Speed/too fast	31	7.2
	Nearly/ run in to	32	7.4
	frightening, dangerous	10	2.3
	nuisance	16	3.7
	other	12	2.8
	Total	101	23.3
Missing	No problems experienced	332	76.7
Total		433	100.0

5. Should cycling continue in the Town Centre?

Q10: Are you in favour of cycling in the town centre continuing as it is now, or would you like to see this change?

Q11: (If in favour) Why do you say this?

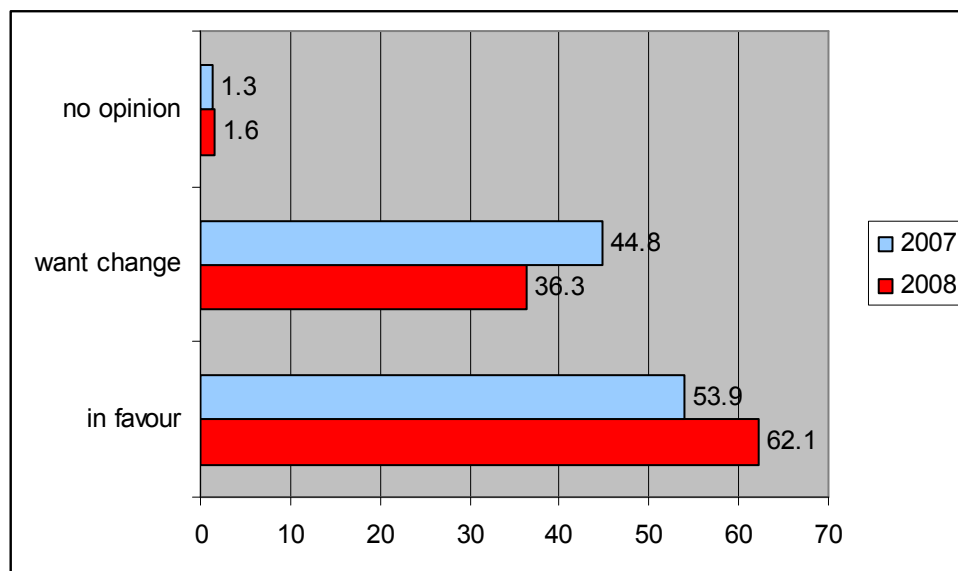
Q12: (If want a change) Which of these options do you prefer?

Q13: Why do you say this?

(Appendix 3 - pages 13 to 15 refer)

- 5.1 Nearly two thirds of all respondents, (62.1%), were in favour of cycling in the town centre continuing as it is now. This is a statistically significant increase on the response in 2007 when 53.9% were in favour of it continuing. Support diminishes by age from 81.5% of those aged 16 to 29 years being in favour reducing to only 31.1% of those aged 70 years and over.

Are you in favour of cycling in the Town Centre?
(Q10: % response – all respondents)



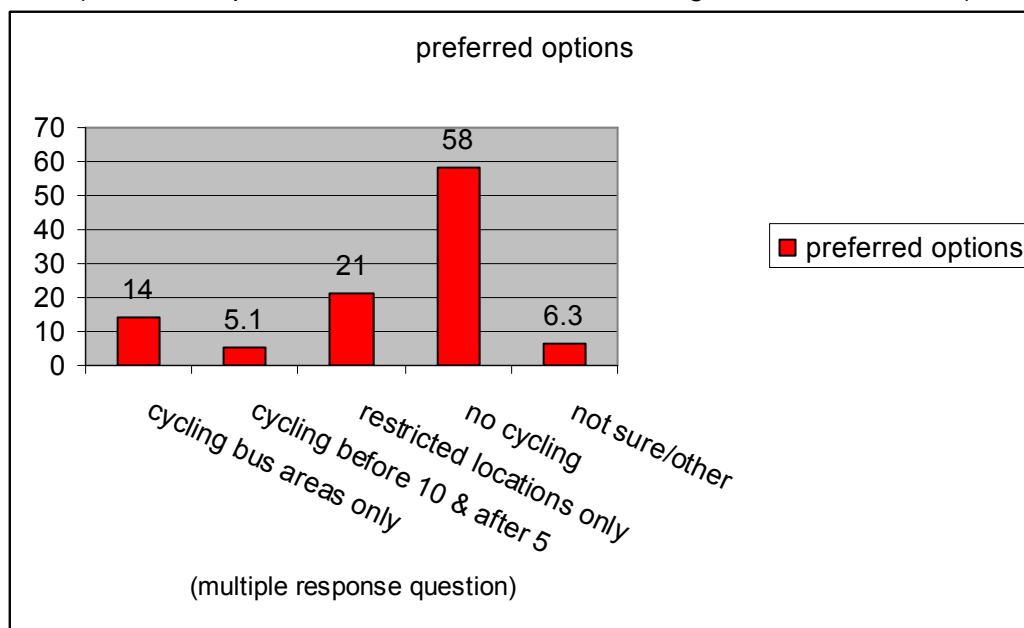
- 5.2 There was a consequent reduction in the percentage of respondents who wanted change from current cycling permissions from 44.8% in 2007 to 36.3% in 2008.

- 5.3 The principle reasons given by those respondents who were in favour of cycling in the town centre continuing as it is now were that they had 'no problems with the current arrangements' (45.5% of those who offered comments), that cycling was environmentally friendly, (14.5%) or that it 'reduces congestion', (9.5%).

		Count	Col %
Q11) (If in favour) Why do you say this?	no problems with this	125	45.5%
	Some reservations expressed	45	16.4%
	environmentally friendly	40	14.5%
	reduces congestion	26	9.5%
	healthy/exercise	17	6.2%
	easy/cheap means of travel	12	4.4%
	Other	10	3.6%
Total		275	100.0%

5.4 Of those who wished to see a change the majority, (58%) would prefer there to be no cycling in the town centre at all. This is a slight reduction on the 2007 findings when 64.2% would prefer there to be no cycling at all, (21% of the total sample as compared with 28.8% of the total sample in 2007).

If want change to current cycling regulations, which of these options do you prefer?
(Q12: % response – all those who ‘want a change’ – Base No. = 157)



5.5 The principle reason given by those respondents who wanted a change to current cycling regulations in the town centre was that it was ‘dangerous/ concerns about safety’ (41% in 2008 compared to 51.1% in 2007). 43.2% considered that there should be a separation of cyclists and pedestrians and 5% spoke of other ‘nuisance’ issues.

		Count	Col %
Q13) Why do you say this?	dangerous/safety issues	57	41.0%
	separate pedestrian/cyclist	60	43.2%
	nuisance issues	7	5.0%
	other	15	10.8%
Total		139	100.0%

6. Problems with motor vehicles in the Town Centre

Q14: Have you experienced any problems because of people driving or parking cars, vans, lorries or mobility scooters?

*Q15: (If experienced problems) Please could you tell me about these?
(Appendix 3 - pages 16 refers)*

- 6.1 Respondents were asked whether or not they had experienced any problems because of people driving or parking cars, vans, lorries or mobility scooters in the town centre. One in five (21% - similar to 2007 when 20.4%) of the total sample indicated that they had had such problems. The problems experienced are listed in Appendix 4 and relate, as in 2007 to issues such as parking.