

**DARLINGTON TOWN CENTRE CYCLE SURVEY
NOVEMBER 2007**

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A. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1. The purpose of the survey 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 that of 'shopping', with 60.6% of respondents giving this as their main reason for visit. A further 15.8% of respondents were visiting mainly for work purposes.
3. Although the largest minority of respondents, (39.2%), said that they had travelled to the town centre by car, 31.6% said that they had travelled by bus.
4. Just under a third (32.1%) of the total sample said that they had a cycle available for use had they wished to cycle into town. With the addition of the 5.9% who had cycled this makes a total of 38% of respondents who did or could have cycled into town.
5. The majority (60.6%) of respondents claimed to be unaware that cyclists are allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time. However, 35.6% were aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre.
6. Just over three in five (61.8%) of the total sample said that they had seen someone cycling in the town centre, whilst 38.2% had not.
7. Amongst the 243 respondents who had seen someone cycling in the town centre, over a quarter (26.7% 'yes') had experienced problems because of people being allowed to cycle there.
8. Those 65 respondents who had experienced problems because of people being allowed to cycle in the town centre considered the main problems to be that it was frightening and/ or dangerous (33.8% of those who made comments), that people were cycling too fast (24.6%), and that on occasion they had been/ nearly been run in to (23.1%).
9. An overall majority (53.9%) of the total sample indicated that they were in favour of cycling in the town centre continuing as it is now, rising to more than two thirds of respondents aged under 40 years, and of respondents that do have a cycle available for their use.
10. However, 44.8% of all respondents would like to see a change to the current regulations in respect of cycling in the town centre, rising to over half of those aged 50+ years.
11. The principle reasons given by those 212 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' (39.6% of those who offered comments), that cycling was an easy and/ or cheap means of travel (16.5%), and 'healthy/ good exercise' (10.8%).

12. The 176 respondents who said that they wanted a change to the current situation of cyclists being allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time were asked which of a list of alternative options they preferred. Nearly two thirds (64.2%) of those who want a change (28.8% of the total sample), would prefer there to be no cycling allowed in the town centre at all, with only relatively small minorities preferring the other options listed: 14.8% cycling on the road in the bus areas only, 13.6% cycling all day in restricted locations only, and 5.7% cycling allowed before 10am, and after 5pm only.
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/ concerns about safety' (51.1% of those who offered comments).
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 (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 this year it was agreed that cyclists be allowed to use the town centre for a trial period of six months. 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 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.2 Therefore, the purpose of the survey was to understand and gather the views of the general public on cycling in the town centre. 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.3 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.4 Interviewing was carried out over two weeks, (10th to the 26th November) on the days and at the times indicated below. Twelve interviewer sessions were undertaken with a total response of 393 completed questionnaires.

Days worked						
Monday 19 th	Tuesday 20 th	Wednesday 14 th	Thursday	Friday 16 th	Saturday 10 th	Sunday 11 th
7.30 to 13.30	11.30 to 17.30	8.30 to 14.30		11.30 to 17.30	10.00 to 16.00	10.00 to 16.00
Monday 26 th	Tuesday	Monday 12 th	Thursday 15 th	Friday 16 th	Saturday 17 th	Sunday 18 th
11.30 to 17.30		11.30 to 17.30	8.30 to 14.30	8.30 to 14.30	10.00 to 16.00	10.00 to 16.00

- B.5 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).

B.6 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.7 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

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.8 Subsequent to the initial analysis, Darlington Borough Council sent NWA Research ninety-seven additional questionnaires that had been completed online. As above, the data from these additional questionnaires was entered into SPSS and tables of frequencies produced (**Appendix 5**). Results for this web-based survey appear in italics at the end of each relevant section of the report.

B.9 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 below 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.

Profile of Sample				
			50%/50% split	90%/10% split
		Number	+/-%	+/-%
Car/van in household	Yes	270	6.0	3.6
	No	123	8.8	5.3
Illness/disability	Yes	66	12.1	7.2
	No	327	5.4	3.3
Gender	Male	183	7.2	4.3
	Female	210	6.8	4.1
Age group	16 to 29	116	9.1	5.5
	30 to 39	48	14.1	8.5
	40 to 49	74	11.4	6.8
	50 to 59	65	12.2	7.3
	60 to 69	48	14.1	8.5
	70 and over	42	15.1	9.1
Day of interview	Weekday	179	7.3	4.4
	Weekend	214	6.7	4.0
Cycle available	Yes	149	8.0	4.8
	No	244	6.3	3.8
Total		393	4.9	3.0

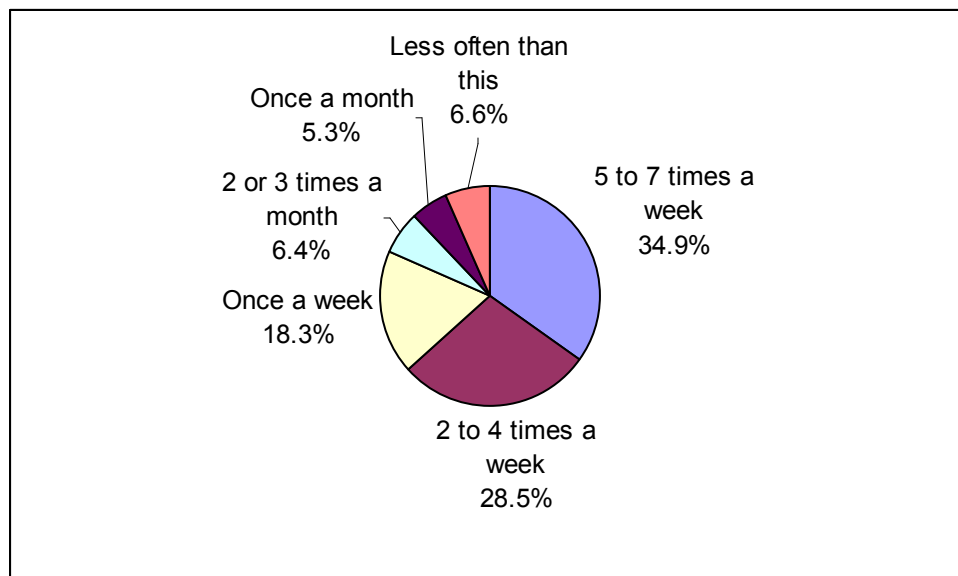
C. SURVEY FINDINGS

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 As noted in the previous section, respondents were interviewed during the week and at weekends, and at various times during the day. Only 4.3% 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. 36.6% were interviewed between 9am and 12 noon, 53.9% after 12 noon and before 5pm and 5.1% after 5pm. Again potential respondents appeared reluctant to stop when on their way home.
- 1.2 45.5% of respondents were interviewed on a weekday and 54.5% on a weekend. Just over a third of all respondents, (34.9%), said that they visit the town centre five to seven times a week, with 28.5% saying that they visit two to four times a week. 18.3% of respondents visit once a week. (i.e. 81.7% are regular visitors to the town centre).

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



- 1.3 *The great majority (89.7%) of web-based respondents said that they visit Darlington town centre at least once a week, whilst 6.2% visit '2 or 3 times a month', and only 3.0% visit once a month or less often than this.*

2. Purpose of visit

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

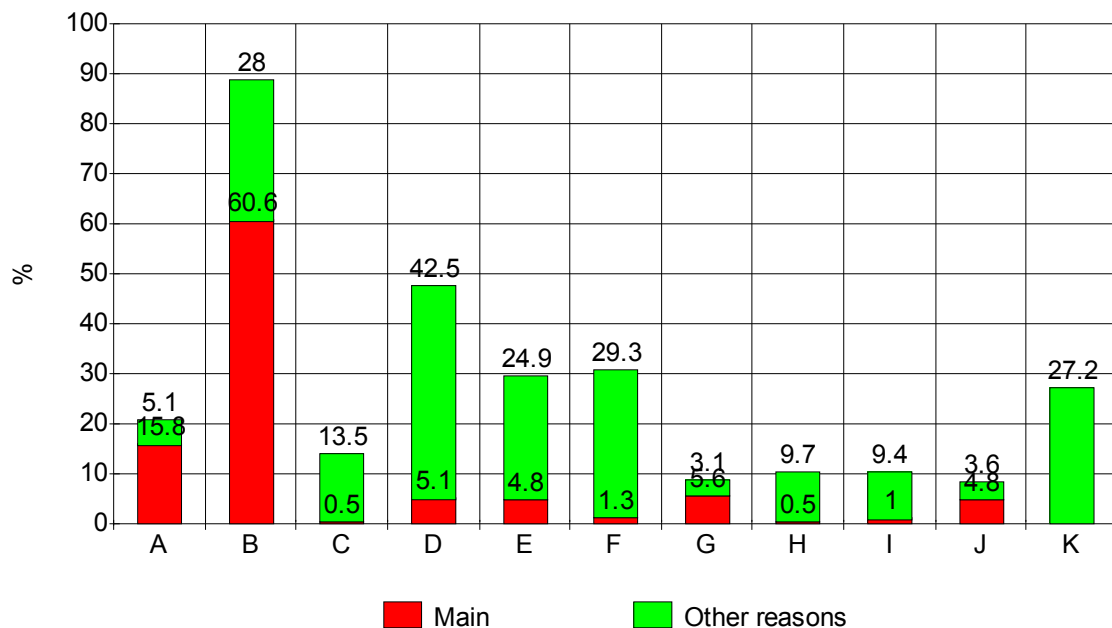
Q3: Have you visited the town centre for any other reasons in the last 6 months?

(Appendix 3 - pages 4 to 6 refer)

2.1 The most frequently mentioned 'main reason' for visiting the town centre was that of 'shopping', with 60.6% of respondents giving this as their main reason for visit. This rises to 66.4% of visitors at a weekend, with 53.6% visiting for shopping during the week. Women were more likely to state their main reason as being shopping, (65.2%), than were men, (55.2%).

2.2 15.8% of respondents were visiting for work purposes with this being highest in the younger age groups, (16 to 29 years – 20.7%, 30 to 39 years – 20.8%). Women were less likely than men to be visiting the town centre for work purposes, (women – 13.8%, men – 18%).

Reasons for visiting town centre



		Main	Other reasons
work	A	15.8	5.1
shopping	B	60.6	28
leisure	C	0.5	13.5
bank etc.	D	5.1	42.5
meet friends	E	4.8	24.9
pubs/restaurants	F	1.3	29.3
education	G	5.6	3.1
medical	H	0.5	9.7
hair/nails	I	1	9.4
other	J	4.8	3.6
no other than main reason	K		27.2

- 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 was 'visiting bank/ building society/ Post Office' (42.5%). Other reasons mentioned by more than one-in-ten respondents were: visiting restaurants/ pubs (29.3%), shopping (28%), meeting friends (24.9%), and visiting leisure facilities (13.5%).
- 2.4 Fewer than one in ten respondents mentioned 'visiting GP, dentist, other medical' (9.7%), 'visiting hairdresser/ nails etc.' (9.4%), 'work' (5.1%), and 'attending educational establishments' (3.1%) as other reasons for visiting the town centre in the last 6 months, whilst 3.6% gave 'other' diverse reasons (listed at Appendix 4), and 27.2% gave no other reason apart from their main reason at Question 2.
- 2.5 *Amongst web-based respondents, the most frequently mentioned main reason for visiting the town centre was 'shopping' (51.5%), followed by 'work' (20.6%), 'visiting bank/ building society' (13.4%), and 'visiting leisure facilities' (5.2%). No other 'main' reasons were referred to by more than 3% of web-based respondents.*
- 2.6 *'Other' reasons for visiting the town centre given by more than one-in-ten of web-based respondents were 'shopping' (35.1%), 'visiting bank/ building society' (22.7%), 'visiting restaurant/ pubs' (18.6%), and 'visiting leisure facilities' (11.3%).*

3. Method of travel into Town Centre

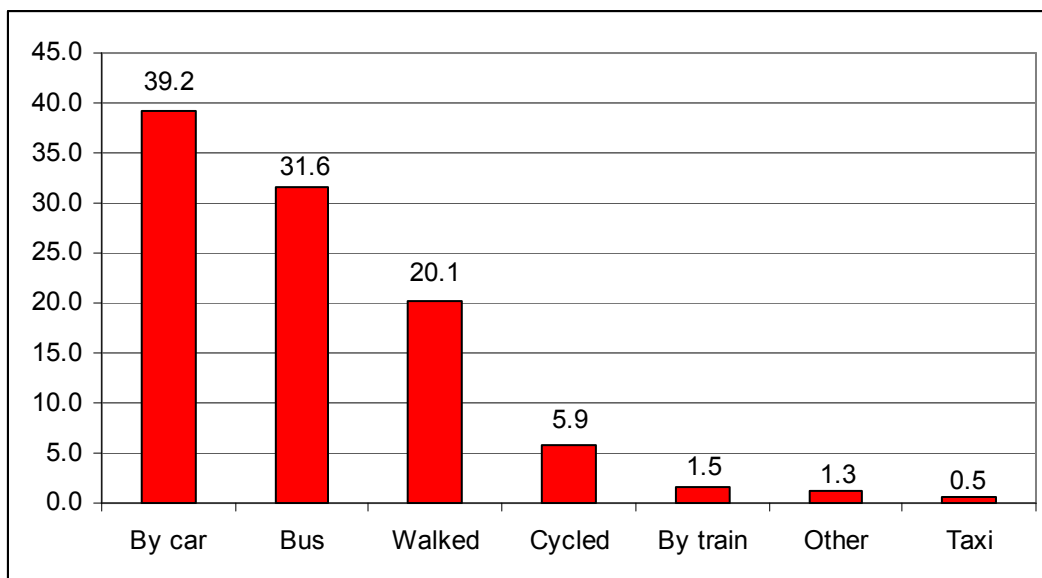
Q4: How did you travel here today?

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 Although the largest minority of respondents, (39.2%), said that they had travelled to the town centre by car, 31.6% said that they had travelled by bus. Use of the bus increases with age from 18.8% of those aged 30 to 39 years to 57.1% of those aged 70 years and over. (36.2% of those aged 16 to 29 years travelled to the town centre by bus).

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



- 3.2 One in five respondents, (20.1%), walked to the town centre and 5.9% cycled into the town centre on the day of interview. 3.3% travelled by other means, (1.5% by train, 0.5% by taxi and 1.3% gave various other means of transport). Only 15.4% of those who have a bicycle available to them used this to visit the town centre on the day of interview.

- 3.3 Just under a third (32.1%) of the total sample (34.1% of those who had not cycled into town) said that they had a cycle available for use had they wished to cycle. With the addition of the 5.9% who had cycled this makes a total of 38% of respondents who did or could have cycled into town.

Q5) Do you have a cycle available for you to use had you wished to cycle?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	126	32.1	34.1
	No	244	62.1	65.9
	Total	370	94.1	100.0
Missing	(Cycled into town)	23	5.9	
Total		393	100.0	

- 3.4 *The largest group of web-based respondents (42.3%) said that on their last visit to the town centre they had 'walked', whilst 30.9% had travelled by 'car', 14.4% had 'cycled', 10.3% had used the bus, and 2.1% had hired a 'taxi'.*
- 3.5 *Over half (54.6%) of all web-based respondents (63.9% of those who had not cycled into town) said that they had a cycle available for use had they wished to cycle.*

4. Cycling in the Town Centre

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

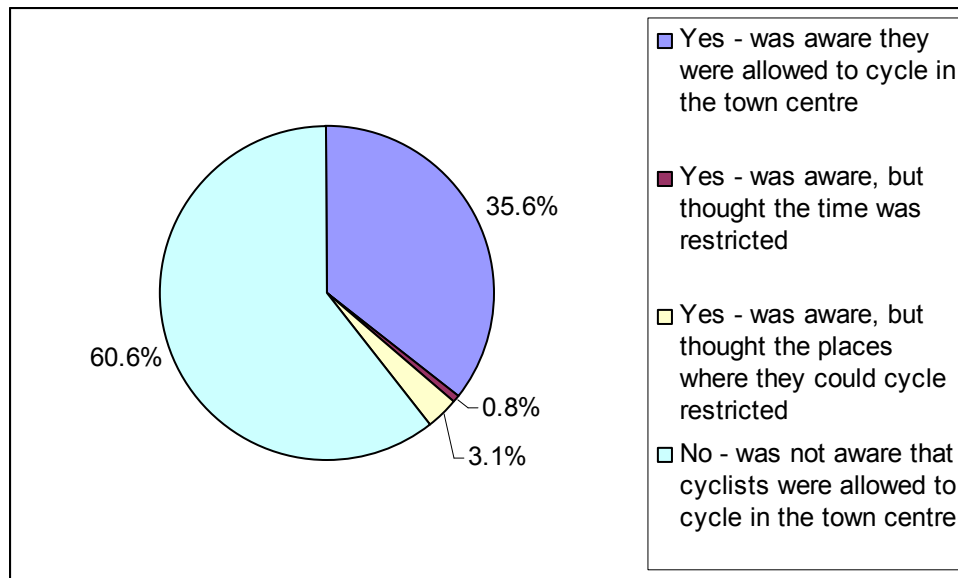
Q7: Have you seen anyone cycling in the town centre?

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 11 refer)*

- 4.1 The majority (60.6%) of respondents claimed to be unaware that cyclists are allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time. However, 35.6% were aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre, with 0.8% thinking they were allowed to do so but that it was time restricted and 3.1% that the places they could cycle were restricted. Females (66.2% 'not aware') were more likely to be unaware that cycling was allowed in the town centre than males (54.1% 'not aware').

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



- 4.2 Awareness also varied by age group, with respondents aged 18 to 29 years (69% 'not aware') more likely not to be aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre compared to those aged 60+ ('60 to 69 years' 52.1% not aware, '70+ years' 47.6% not aware). In addition, those respondents who were not suffering from a limiting long-term illness/ disability were more likely to be unaware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre (63.9% 'not aware') than those who did suffer from such an illness/ disability (43.9% 'not aware').
- 4.3 Just over three in five (61.8%) of the total sample said that they had seen someone cycling in the town centre, whilst 38.2% had not. The proportion of respondents who had seen people cycling in the town centre was highest amongst those with a limiting long-term illness disability (77.3% 'yes'), and those aged 60+ years ('60 to 69 years' 66.7% yes, '70+ years' 71.4% yes).
- 4.4 Amongst the 243 respondents who had seen someone cycling in the town centre, over a quarter (26.7% 'yes') had experienced problems because of people being allowed to cycle there. This figure rose to a third or more amongst respondents aged 60+ years ('60 to 69 years' 50.0%, '70+ years' 33.3%), and those suffering from a limiting long-term illness/ disability (33.3% 'yes').

- 4.5 Those 65 respondents who had experienced problems because of people being allowed to cycle in the town centre considered the main problems to be that it was frightening and/ or dangerous (33.8% of those who made comments), that people were cycling too fast (24.6%), and that on occasion they had been/ nearly been run in to (23.1%). A further 13.8% of respondents referred to cyclists in the town centre as a nuisance, and 4.6% (3 respondents) mentioned other problems that they had encountered. Please refer to Appendix 4 for full details of respondents' comments.

		Count	Col %
Q9) (If experienced problems) Please could you tell me about these?	Frightening, dangerous	22	33.8%
	Speed/too fast	16	24.6%
	Nearly/ run in to	15	23.1%
	Nuisance	9	13.8%
	Other	3	4.6%
Total		65	100.0%

- 4.6 *More than two thirds (69.1%) of web-based respondents were aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time, with a further 3.1% thinking they were allowed to do so but that it was time restricted and 14.4% that the places they could cycle were restricted. Only 13.4% of respondents were not aware that cyclists were allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time.*
- 4.7 *Two in five (40.2%) of web-based respondents said that they 'have cycled in the town centre', and just over nine in ten (90.7%) had 'seen others cycling in the town centre'.*
- 4.8 *Amongst those 88 web-based respondents who had seen others cycling in the town centre, more than half (58%) had not personally experienced any problems because of people being allowed to cycle there. However, 42.0% had experienced problems due to people cycling in the town centre – please refer to Appendix 6 for a verbatim list of the problems experienced.*

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?

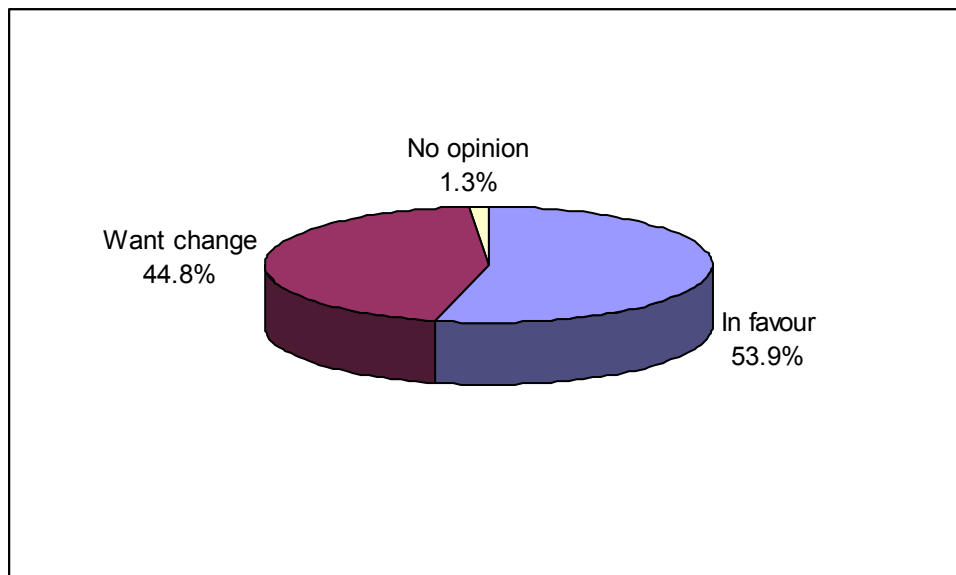
Q12: (If want a change) Which of these options do you prefer?

Q13: Why do you say this?

(Appendix 3 - pages 12 to 14 refer)

- 5.1 An overall majority (53.9%) of the total sample indicated that they were in favour of cycling in the town centre continuing as it is now, rising to more than two thirds of respondents aged under 40 years (16 to 29 years, 70.7% 'in favour': 30 to 39 years, 68.8% 'in favour'), and respondents that do have a cycle available for their use (68.5% 'in favour').

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



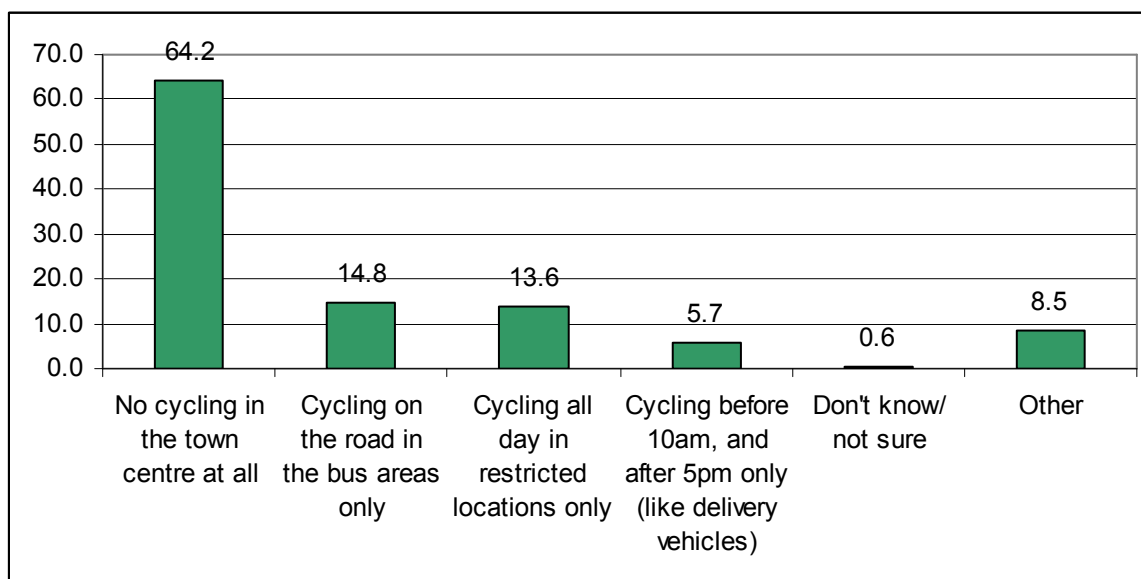
- 5.2 However, 44.8% of all respondents would like to see a change to the current regulations in respect of cycling in the town centre, rising to over half of those aged 50+ years ('50 to 59 years' 55.4%, '60 to 69 years' 58.3%, '70+ years' 73.8%), and those suffering from a limiting long-term illness (53.0% 'want change'). The majority of respondents that did not have a cycle available for their use (54.1% 'want change') and that did not have a car/ van in their household (55.3% 'want change') would also like to see a change in the current regulations.

5.3 The principle reasons given by those 212 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' (39.6% of those who offered comments), that cycling was an easy and/ or cheap means of travel (16.5%), and 'healthy/ good exercise' (10.8%). Fewer respondents pointed out that cycling was environmentally friendly (9.9%), and reduces congestion (9.9%), whilst 7.1% were 'in favour' despite some reservations, and 6.1% gave 'other' reasons. All the comments made by respondents can be found in Appendix 4.

		Count	Col %
Q11) (If in favour) Why do you say this?	no problems with this	84	39.6%
	easy/cheap means of travel	35	16.5%
	healthy/exercise	23	10.8%
	environmentally friendly	21	9.9%
	reduces congestion	21	9.9%
	Some reservations expressed	15	7.1%
	Other	13	6.1%
Total		212	100.0%

5.4 The 176 respondents who said that they wanted a change to the current situation of cyclists being allowed to cycle in the town centre at any time were asked which of a list of alternative options they preferred. Nearly two thirds (64.2%) of those who want a change (28.8% of the total sample), would prefer there to be no cycling allowed in the town centre at all, with only relatively small minorities preferring the other options listed: 14.8% cycling on the road in the bus areas only, 13.6% cycling all day in restricted locations only, and 5.7% cycling allowed before 10am, and after 5pm only (like delivery vehicles). A further 8.5% of those who 'want a change' gave 'other' responses, listed at Appendix 4, whilst 0.6% were 'not sure'.

If want change to current cycling regulations, which of these options do you prefer?
(Q12: % response – all those who 'want a change' – Base No. = 176)



- 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' (51.1% of those who offered comments). Smaller minorities said that the town centre should be for 'pedestrians only' (16.5%) or referred to 'nuisance issues' (12.5%), whilst 19.9% gave 'other' diverse reasons. Please refer to Appendix 4 for a verbatim list of respondents' comments.

		Count	Col %
Q13) Why do you say this?	'Dangerous', concerns about safety	90	51.1%
	Pedestrians only	29	16.5%
	Nuisance issues	22	12.5%
	Other	35	19.9%
Total		176	100.0%

- 5.6 *More than half (53.6%) of web-based respondents said that they were 'in favour' of cycling in the town centre continuing as it is now, whilst 46.4% would like to see this change. A verbatim list of the reasons why cycling in the town centre should continue as it is now, given by those 'in favour' of the current cycling regulations, can be found at Appendix 6.*
- 5.7 *Amongst the 45 web-based respondents who want the current town centre cycling regulations to change, more than two thirds (68.9%) felt that cycling should be allowed to continue in the town centre, but in a more restricted way: 31.1% 'cycling on the road in the bus areas only', 31.1% 'cycling before 10am, and after 5pm only', and 6.7% 'cycling all day in restricted locations only'. However, 22.2% said that there should be no cycling allowed in the town centre at all, whilst 6.7% gave 'other' responses (listed at Appendix 6), and 4.4% were 'not sure'.*
- 5.8 *Please refer to Appendix 6 for full details of the reasons given by respondents for wanting a change in the current cycling regulations.*

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 15 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 (20.4%) of the total sample indicated that they had had such problems, with 43.8% of those 80 respondents who described problems they had experienced referring to 'parking issues', 30.0% to 'mobility scooters', 18.8% to 'traffic safety/ dangerous driving', and 7.5% to 'other' problems. Please refer to Appendix 4 for full details of respondents' comments.

		Count	Col %
Q15) (If experienced problems) Please could you tell me about these?	Parking issues	35	43.8%
	Mobility Scooters	24	30.0%
	Traffic safety/ dangerous driving	15	18.8%
	Other	6	7.5%
Total		80	100.0%

6.2 *Almost two in five (39.2%) of web-based respondents had experienced 'problems because of people driving or parking cars, vans, lorries, or mobility scooters' in the town centre. Full details of the problems experienced are listed verbatim at Appendix 6.*

7. Profile of respondents

Q16: Which of these age groups do you fall into?

Q17: Which of these best describes your employment status?

Q18: Gender

Q19: With pram/ with wheelchair?

Q20: Do you suffer from a long-term illness or disability?

Q21: Do you have a car or van in your household?

(Appendix 3 - pages 16 to 21 refer)

- 7.1 Over half (53.4%) of all respondents were female, and 46.6% were male.
- 7.2 Three in ten (29.5%) of all respondents were aged 16 to 29 years, whilst 12.2% were 30 to 39 years, 18.8% were 40 to 49 years, 16.5% were 50 to 59 years, 12.2% were 60 to 69 years, and 10.7% were aged 70 years and over.
- 7.3 Nearly half (48.9%) of the overall sample were in paid employment (34.9% 'full-time' + 12.5% 'part-time' + 1.5% 'self-employed'), whilst 19.1% were wholly retired from work, 11.7% were looking after their family/ home, 8.1% were unemployed and available for work, 7.6% were in full-time education, 2.8% were permanently sick/ disabled, 1.5% were in Government supported training, and 0.3% were 'doing something else'.
- 7.4 When the interview took place, one in ten (9.9%) of all respondents had a pram or pushchair with them, 2.3% had a wheelchair, and the remaining 87.8% had neither of these.
- 7.5 One in six (16.8%) of all respondents said that they were suffering from a limiting long-term illness or disability.
- 7.6 Over two thirds (68.7%) of all respondents indicated that they did have access to a car or van in their household, whilst 31.3% did not.
- 7.7 *Half (50.5%) of all web-based respondents were male, and 48.5% were female (1.0% 'not given/ refused').*
- 7.8 *Three in ten (5.2%) of web-based respondents were aged 16 to 29 years, whilst 26.8% were 30 to 39 years, 27.8% were 40 to 49 years, 20.6% were 50 to 59 years, 16.5% were 60 to 69 years, and 3.1% were aged 70 years and over.*
- 7.9 *More than two thirds (69.1%) of web-based respondents were in paid employment (45.4% 'full-time' + 17.5% 'part-time' + 6.2% 'self-employed'), whilst 11.3% were wholly retired from work, 6.2% were looking after their family/ home, 3.1% were permanently sick/ disabled, and 3.1% were 'doing something else'.*

- 7.10 *13.4% of all web-based respondents said that they were suffering from a limiting long-term illness or disability.*
- 7.6 *Over four in five (81.4%) of web-based respondents said that they did have access to a car or van in their household, whilst 16.5% did not (2.1% did not give a response).*