

Richard Huish College

Summary Report: Student and Staff Travel Survey 2021



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Introduction

In 2020, the College produced a Travel Plan to help improve access for students and staff travelling to the main campus in Taunton and to improve sustainability of travel options against a growing climate change and decarbonisation agenda. The Plan sets out a range of actions which the College is seeking to pursue on a continuous basis.

One action identified in the Plan is a need to have better baseline data to inform and support positive change and actions both on the College campus site and off-site with regard to travel options and influencing measures which are the responsibility of other bodies.

In April / May 2021, a student survey was undertaken, followed by a survey issued to staff in June 2021. Copies of the survey questions are appended. The student survey was issued to returning Upper Sixth students and students who were known to be starting as first years in the 2021/22 academic year at that time. The staff survey was issued to all staff.

It should be noted that students coming into the first year in 2021 / 22 answering the survey are likely to give *perceived* answers to the questions as most would not have yet done a regular full journey to and from the College. Many answers from incoming first years could therefore be based on a combination of being informed, researching their journeys in advance and their own perception.

This report provides a brief summary analysis of the data. It is not intended to provide a detailed analysis or suggest solutions or actions as a result. It has been made available to Somerset County Council to inform and aid monitoring of the understanding of key issues relating to transport challenges, with the College one of the main destinations in the town during term time in terms of number of trips. On that basis it also demonstrates added value on a wider community basis with the data helping to inform the prioritisation of improvements to the cycling and walking / pedestrian network. This and subsequent similar reports can also play a role in information wider spatial planning and travel issues.

A travel survey is likely to be undertaken on an annual basis to help establish trends and help to test the results of measures put in place, over time, to help students and staff overcome barriers to getting to and from College, improve their journey and assess the College's support of active and sustainable travel methods.

Summary Analysis

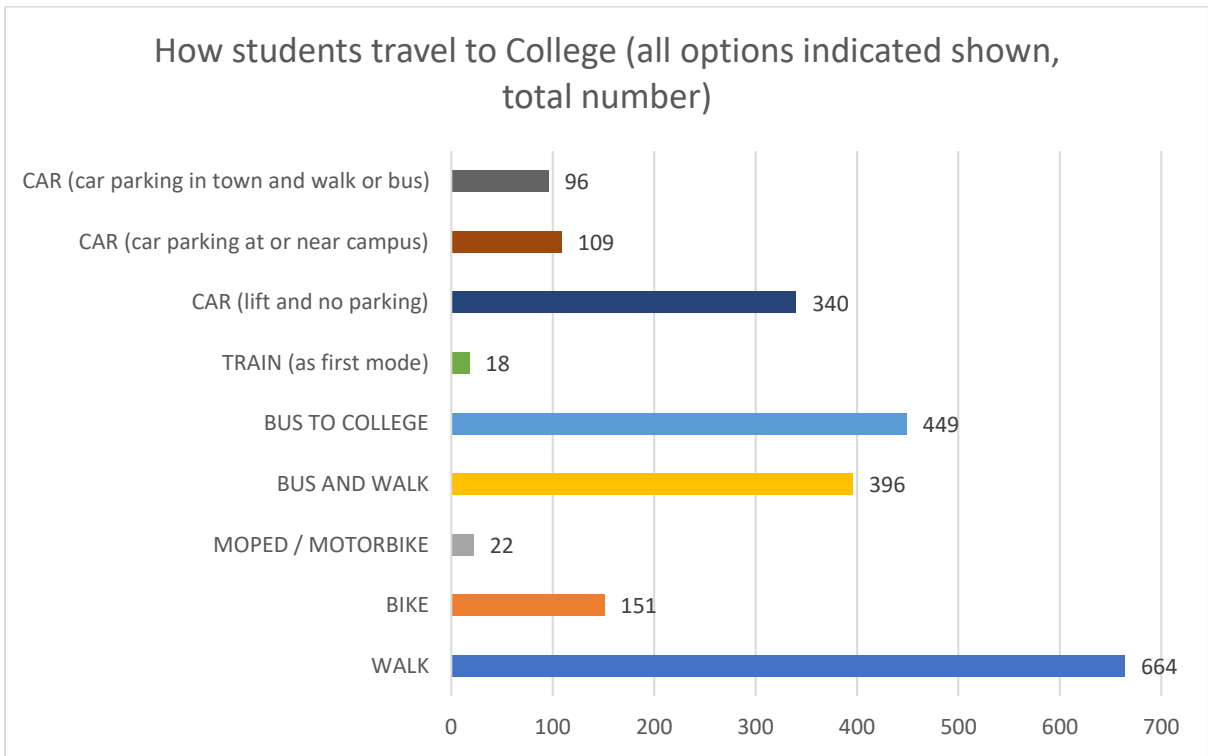
Student Survey

Responses were received from 1,119 students, representing around half of all students returning to Upper Sixth and starting new in September 2021. Response numbers were reasonably split with half from Upper Sixth and half from new students and there was a good geographic dispersal of responses.

How students travel to College

Students could select more than one answer for this question given that they may travel more than one way to and from College during any given term-time week.

The figures demonstrate that most students walk to College or their mode involves a bus journey. From those driving or getting a lift to College, there appears to be potential for increased travel by bus, foot and bike, although analysis by distance would also need to be done to quantify potential.

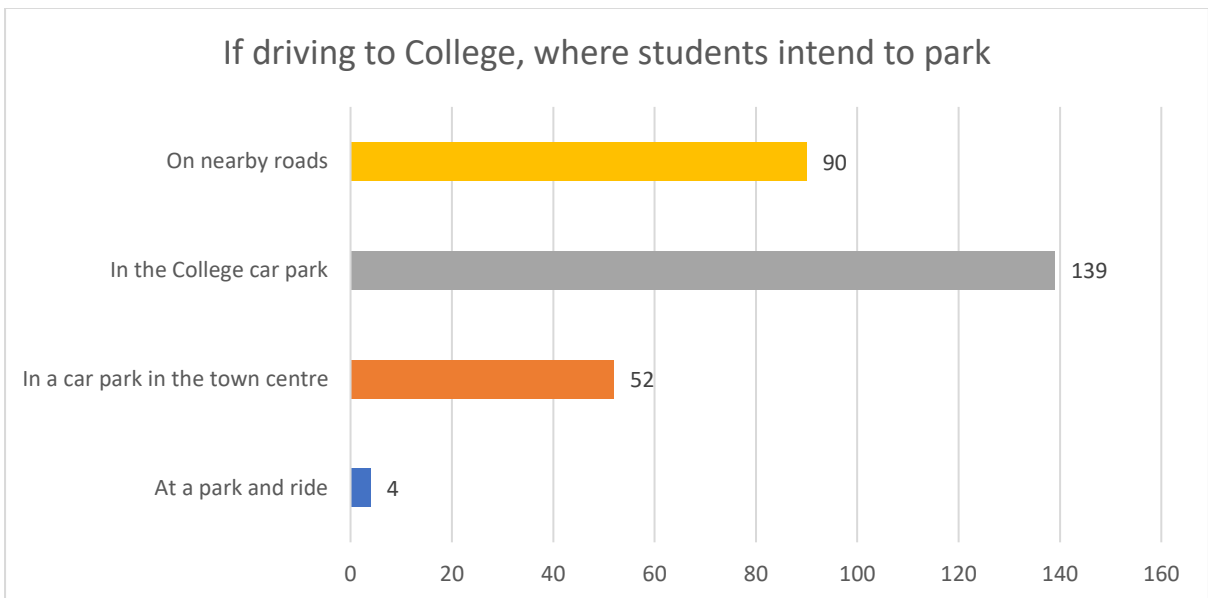


Student parking choice (perceived and real)

Students could select more than one answer for this question.

Of those driving to College, the majority said that they would park or intend to park on campus. This number could be accommodated in College car parks, although permits are limited to students outside of the TA1 postcode who are Upper Sixth.

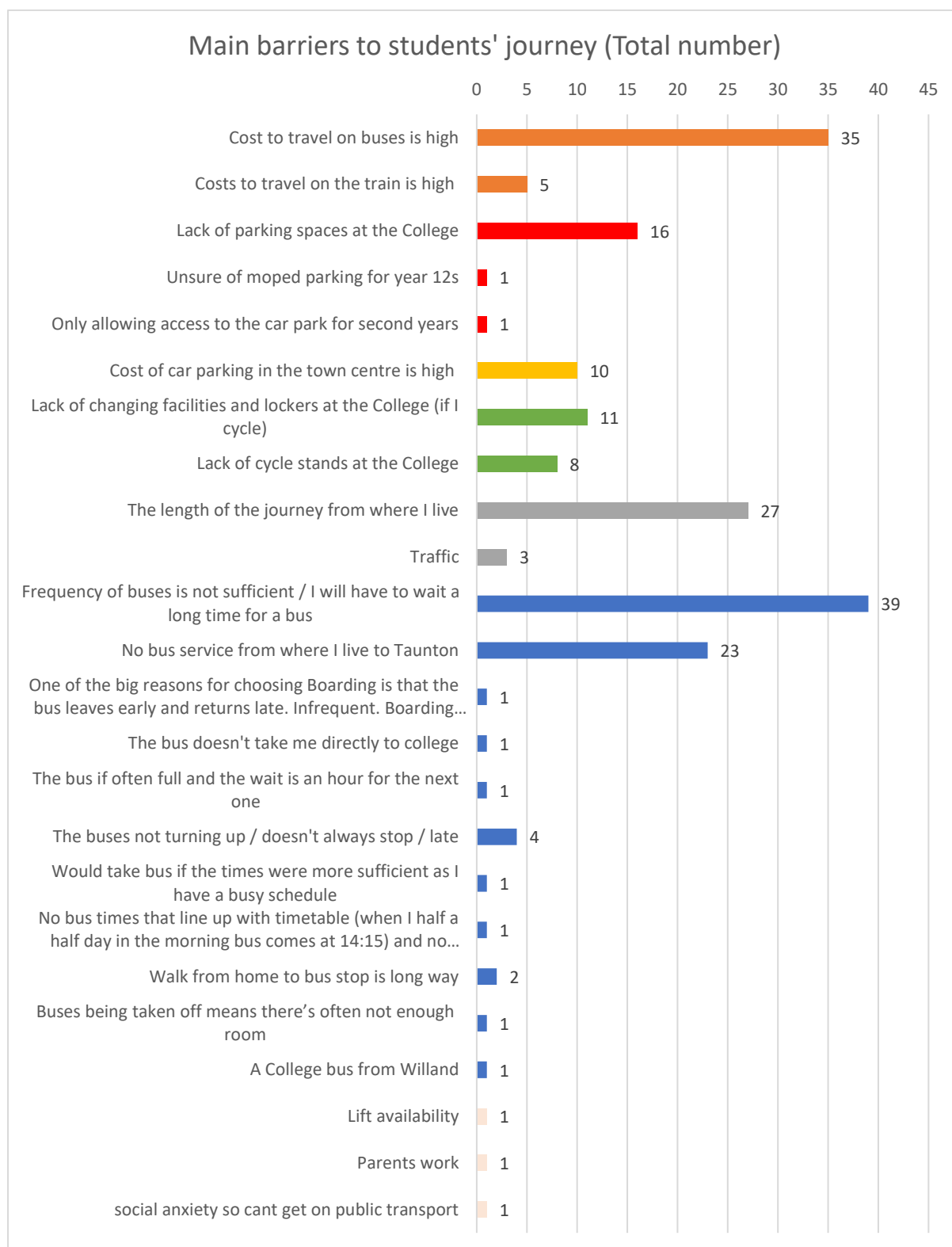
Exploring the available data further, of the students who said they would park on nearby roads, 20 were incoming first years and are likely to not be aware of the limitations of parking close to the College. Of those saying that they would park in the College car park, 42 are new first years students who would not be eligible for a parking permit. These 42 also said they may park on nearby roads if they could not park in the College car park.



Barriers

Students could select more than one answer for this question.

Data confirms perception that bus travel is a main barrier for most students, both in terms of service cost, frequency, absence and reliability.

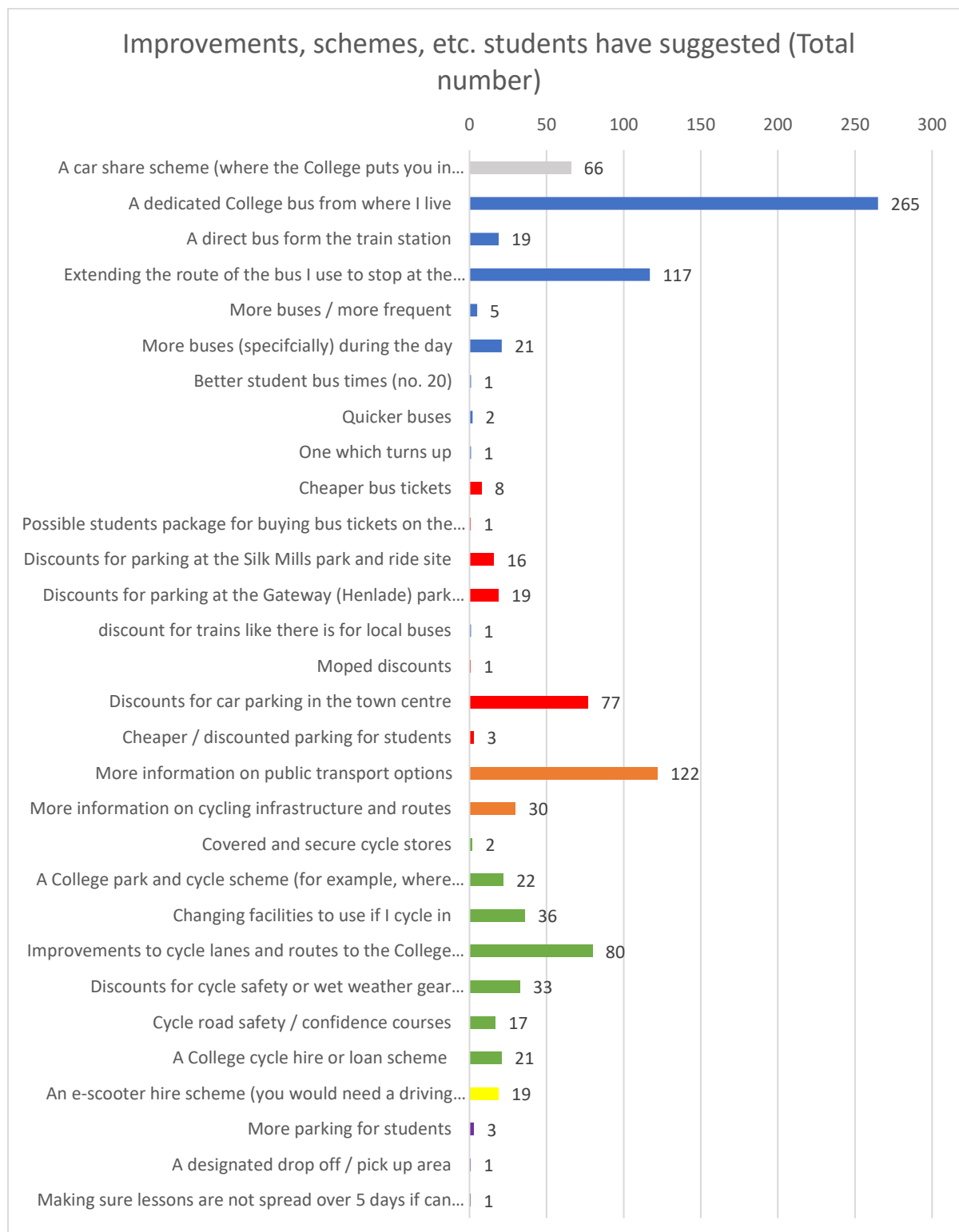


Improvements and Scheme Ideas

Students could select more than one answer for this question.

Buses and public transport as a whole featured heavily in suggestions for improvements, correlating with the answers to the previous question on main barriers.

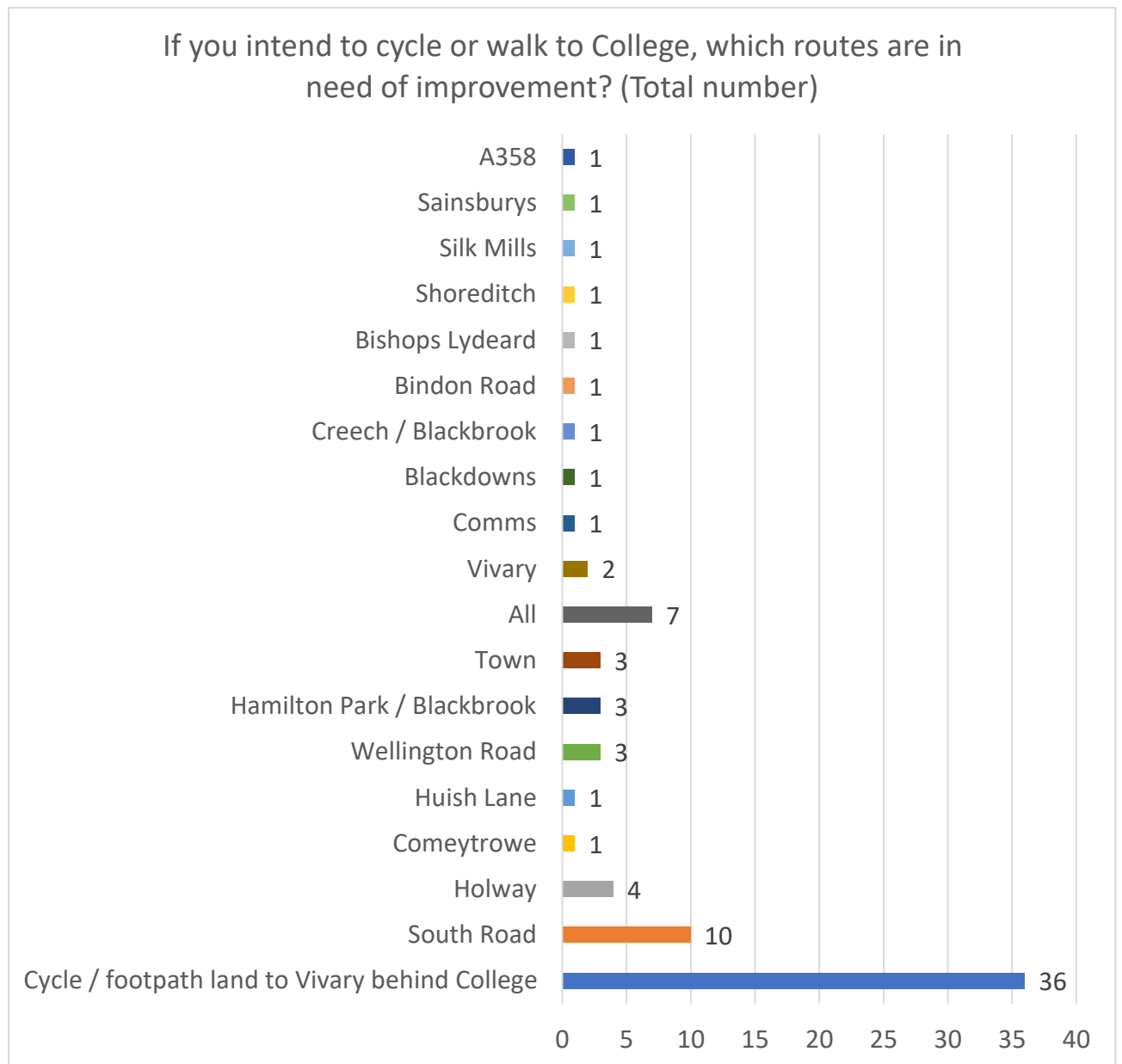
Suggestions highlighting cycling provision and incentives featured strongly.



Routes in Need of improvement (cycle and foot)

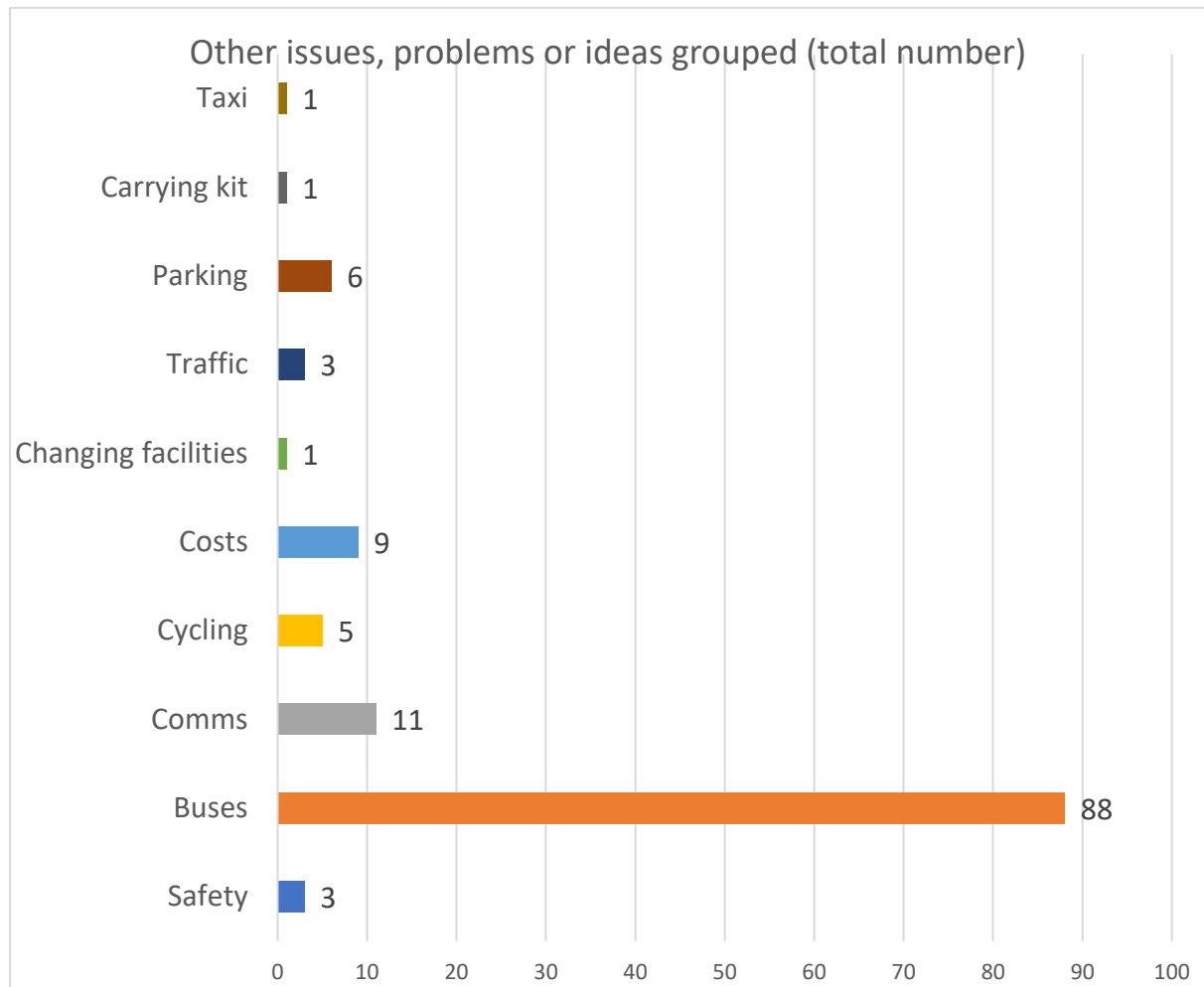
Students could select more than one answer for this question.

The overwhelming response to routes which are in need of improvement was for the path behind the College that runs to Vivary Park is in need of improvement for cycles and pedestrians alike.



Other Issues

The graph groups similar answers together. Again, buses feature highly amongst the most common problems and issues experienced by students, confirming again that it is an area where improvements could be required.



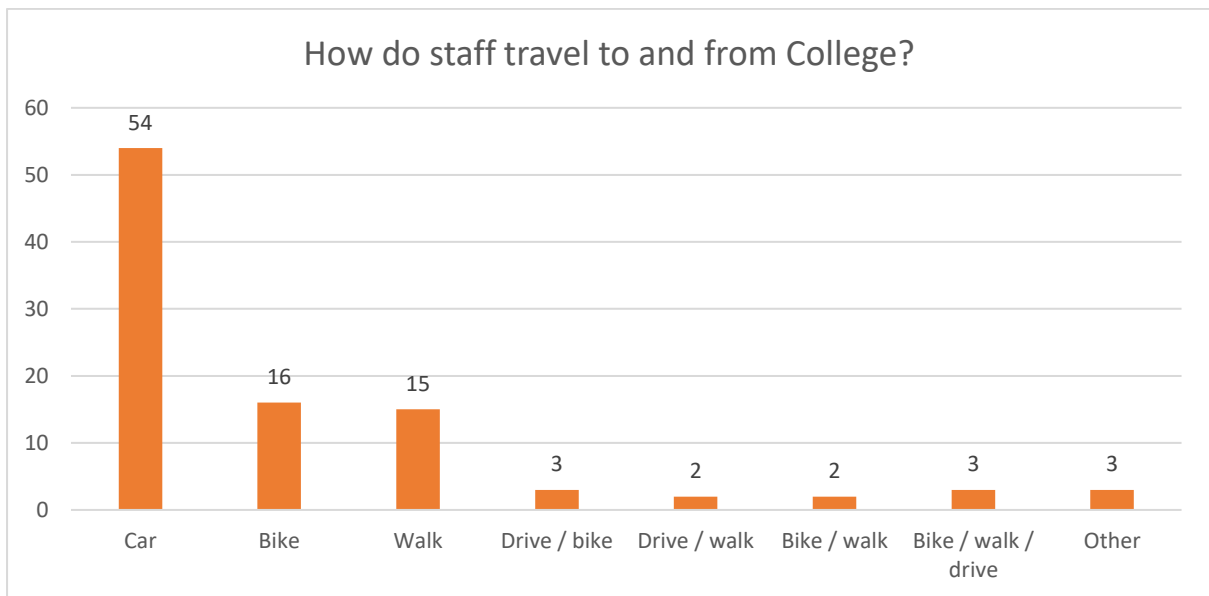
Staff Survey

The response rate was almost 40%, 98 members of staff and there was a good geographic dispersal of responses.

Travel Mode

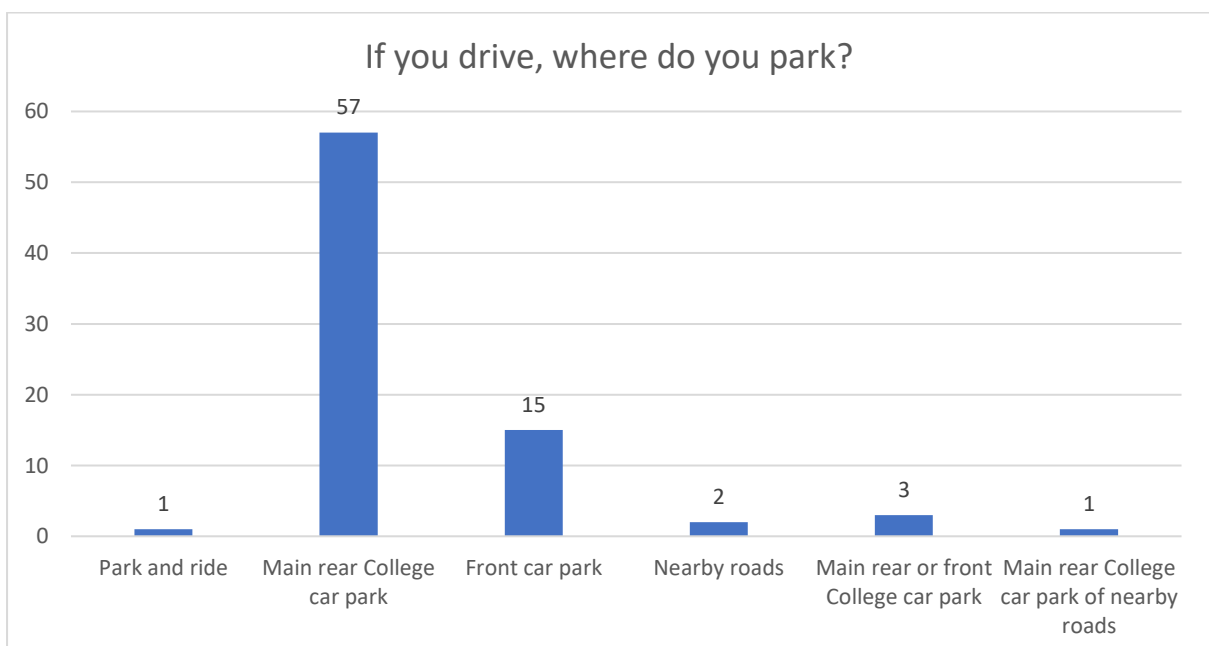
Staff could select more than one answer for this question.

As expected, more staff who responded travel by car than any other single mode.



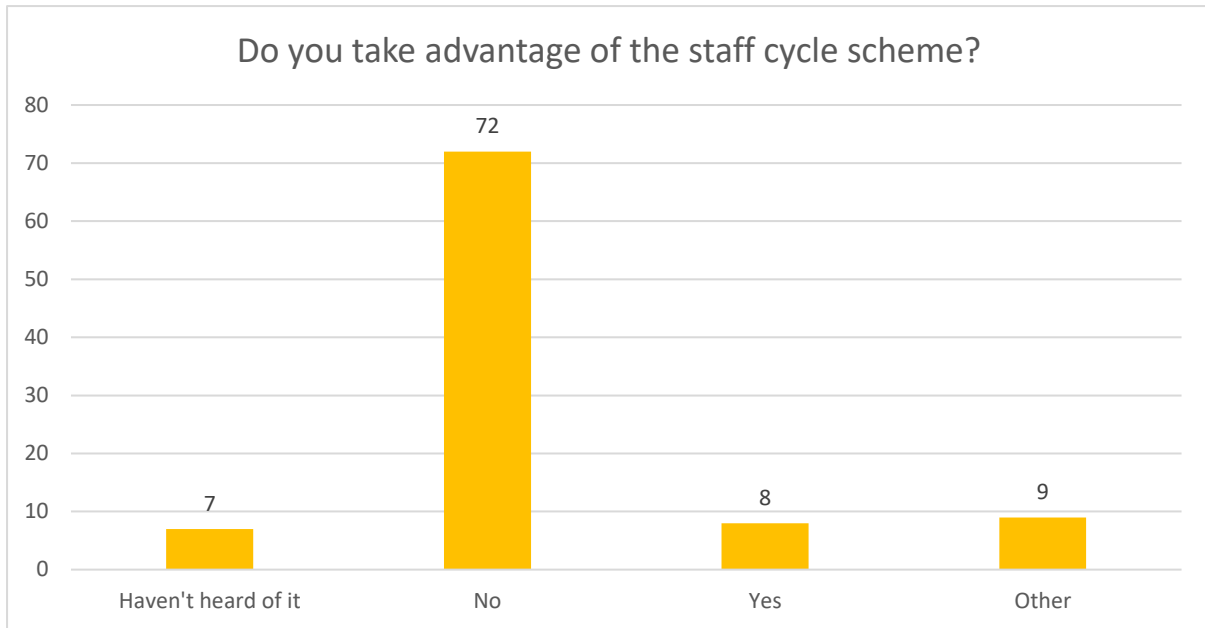
Parking Choice

Most of those staff driving into College park in the car parks on campus. Few use park and ride or park on nearby roads.



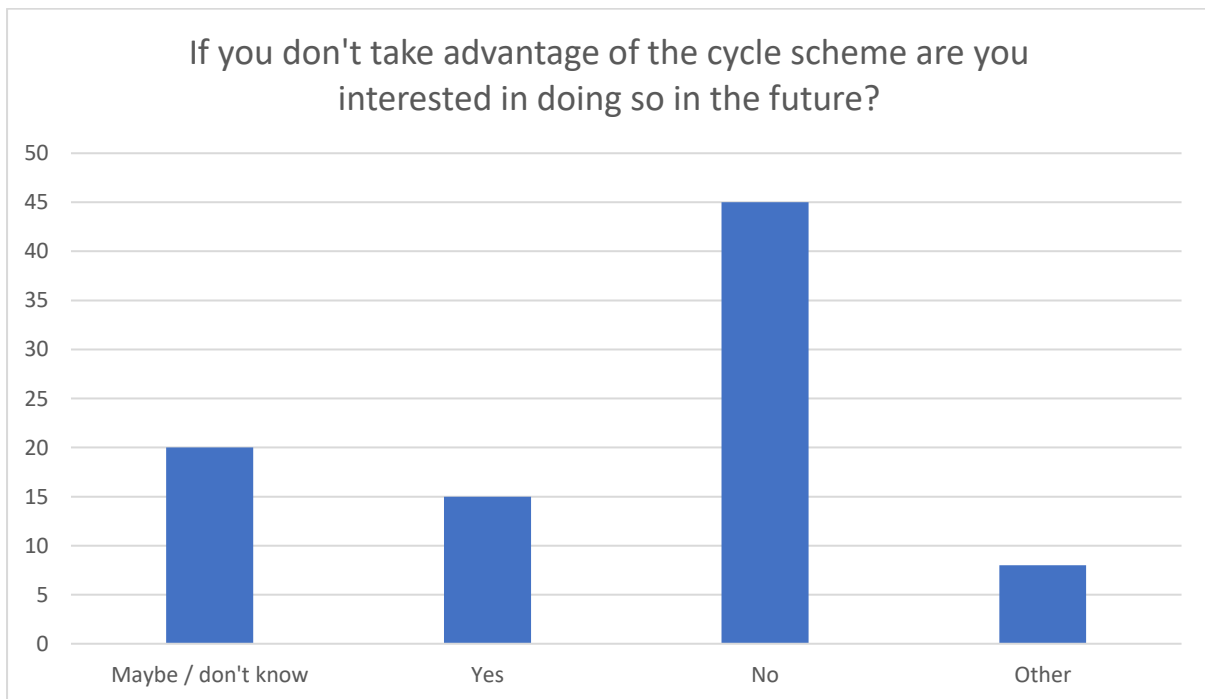
Staff Cycle Scheme

Most respondents do not make use of the cycle scheme, numbers correlating with the number of staff driving to College.



Future Interest in Staff Cycling Scheme

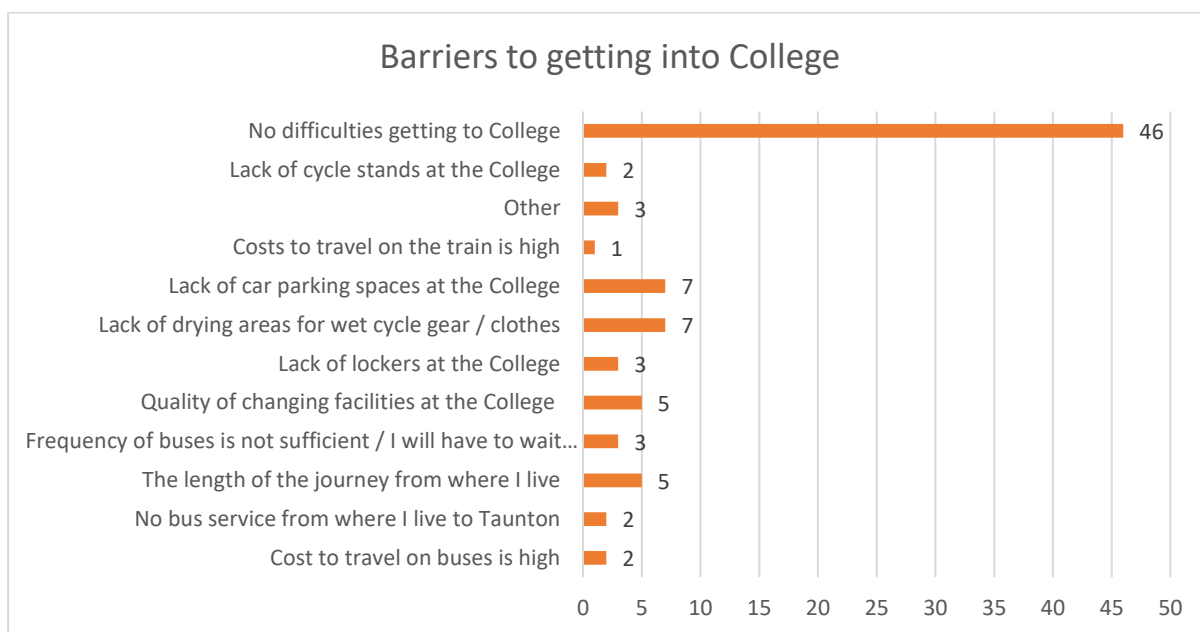
Interestingly, around 15 members of staff expressed an interest in taking advantage of the cycle scheme in the future.



Barriers

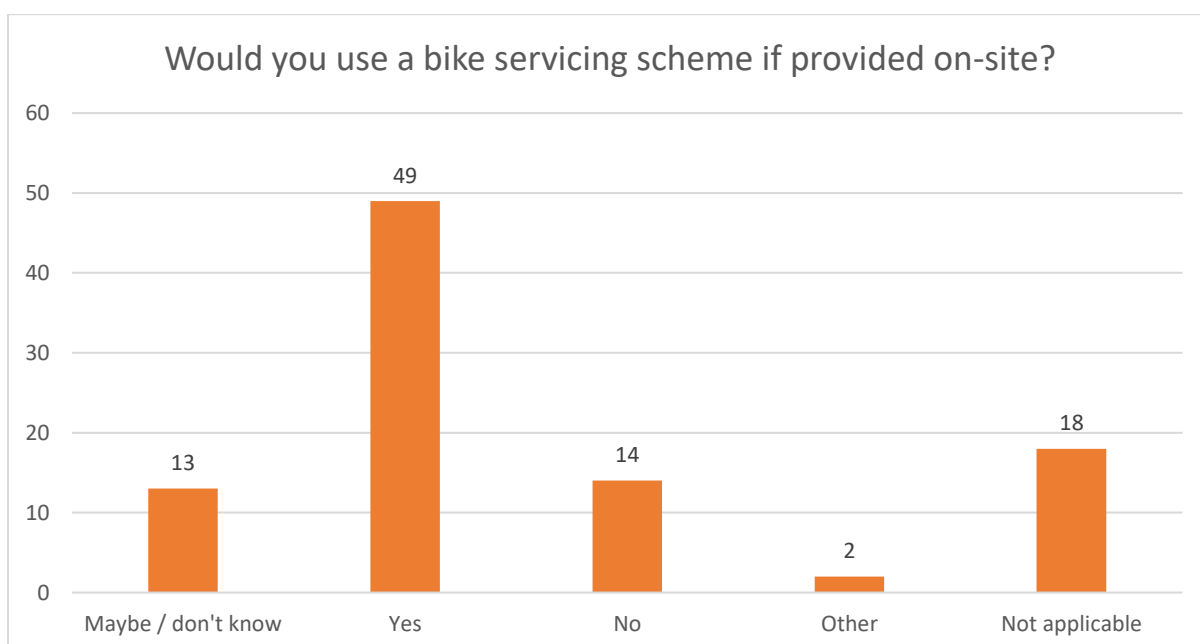
Staff could select more than one answer for this question.

Just over half of the answers to this question indicated no problems getting into College. Other responses gave a range of issues with 17 responses relating to a need to improve infrastructure at the College to support cycling (lockers, changing facilities, drying areas for clothes and cycle stands). A small number of respondents suggested lack of parking at the College is an issue (7).



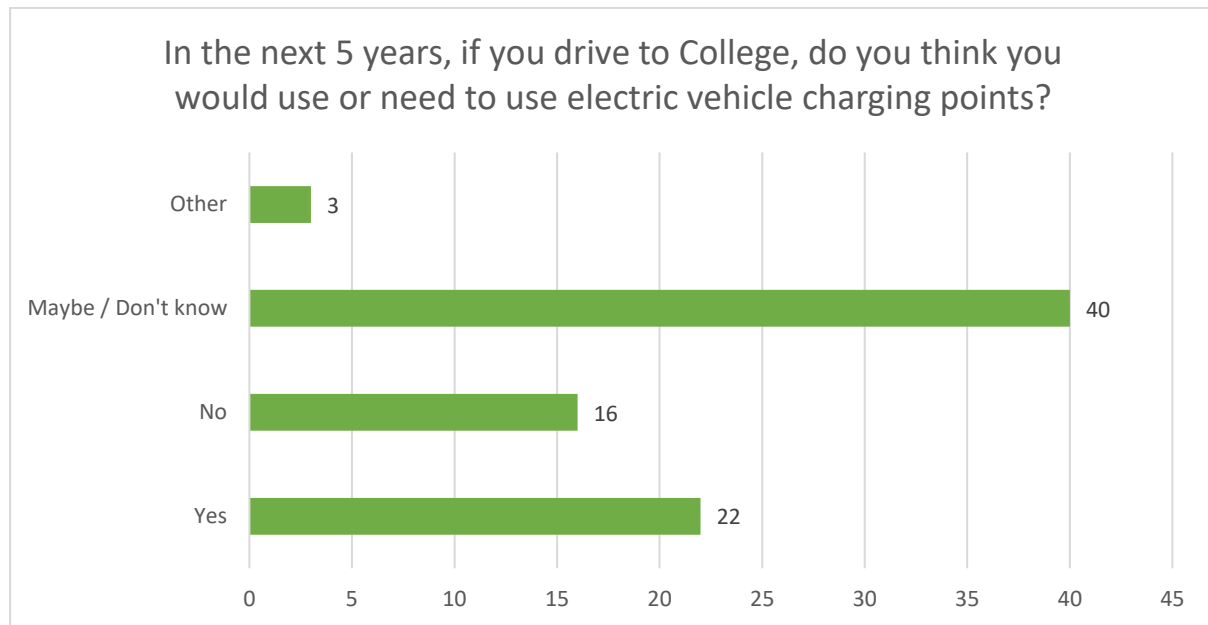
Bike Servicing Scheme

Responses indicate a very positive response to the question about bike servicing on-site with 49 respondents suggesting that they would use a bike servicing scheme if provided on-site.



Future and EV Charging Points

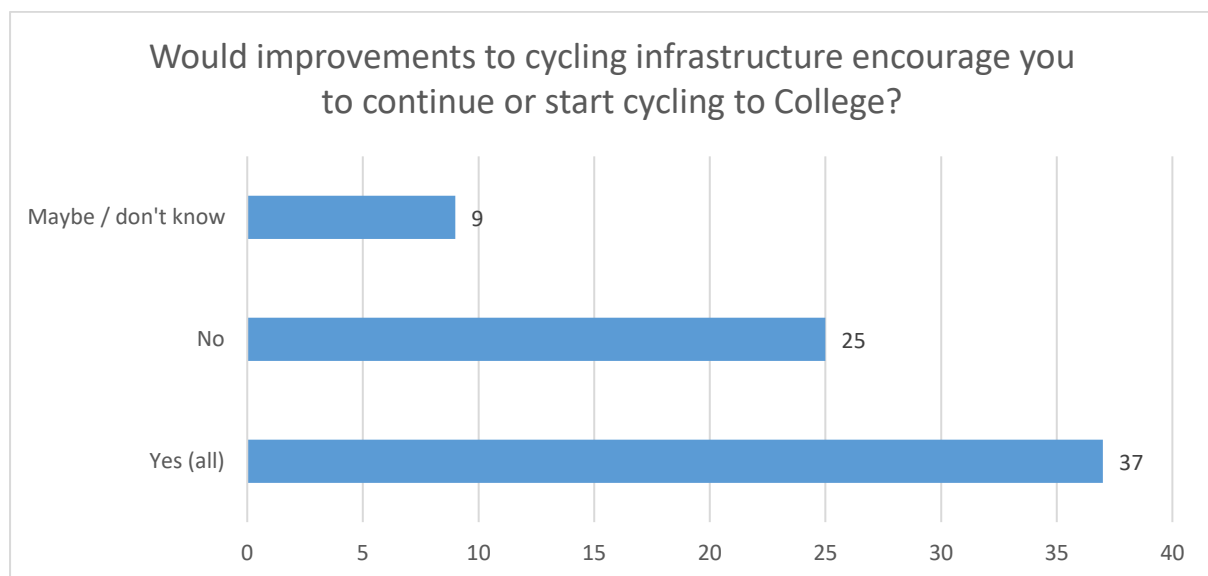
Of the 81 responses to this question from staff who drive to College, 22 said that they would use electric charging points in the next 5 years. Somewhat predictably, the majority of answers were “maybe / don’t know”.



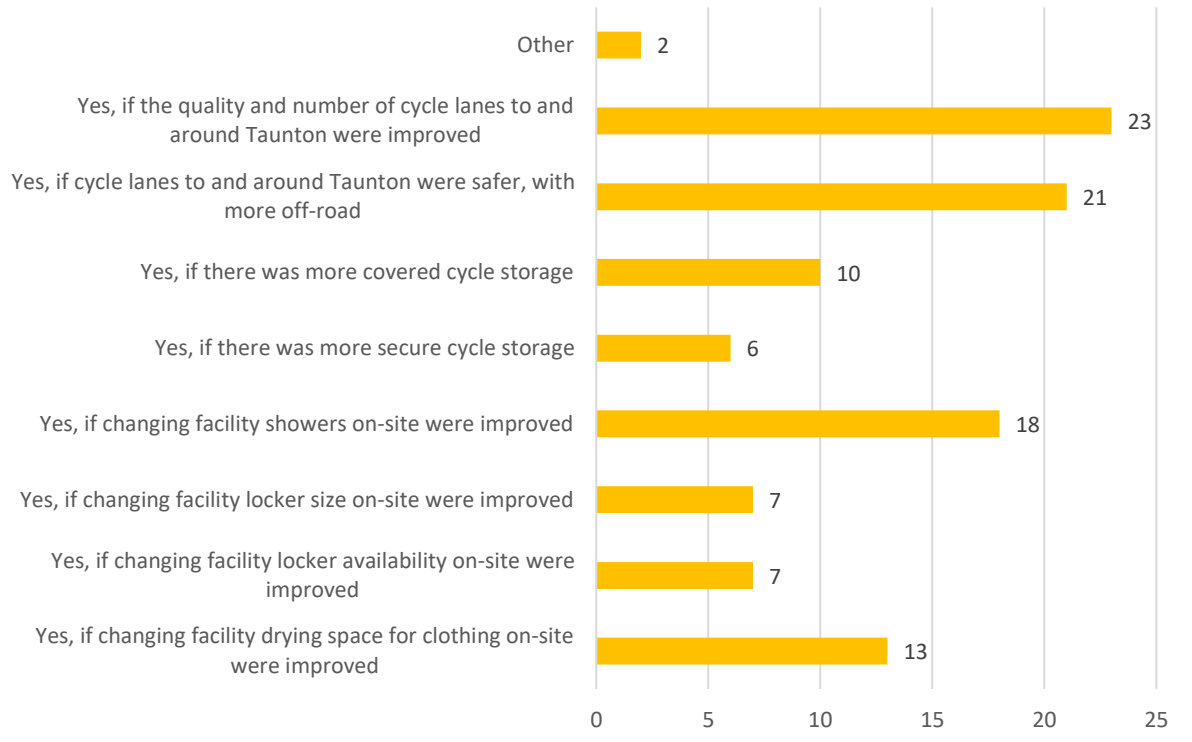
Cycling Infrastructure Improvements and their Influence

Staff could select more than one answer for these questions.

Of the 71 responses given to this question, 37 indicated that improvements to cycling infrastructure would encourage them to continue or start to cycle to College. Answers to the question asking respondents to identify which measures require improving suggested a split between those which the College could directly influence (such as those on-campus) and those off-site such as safer cycling routes.



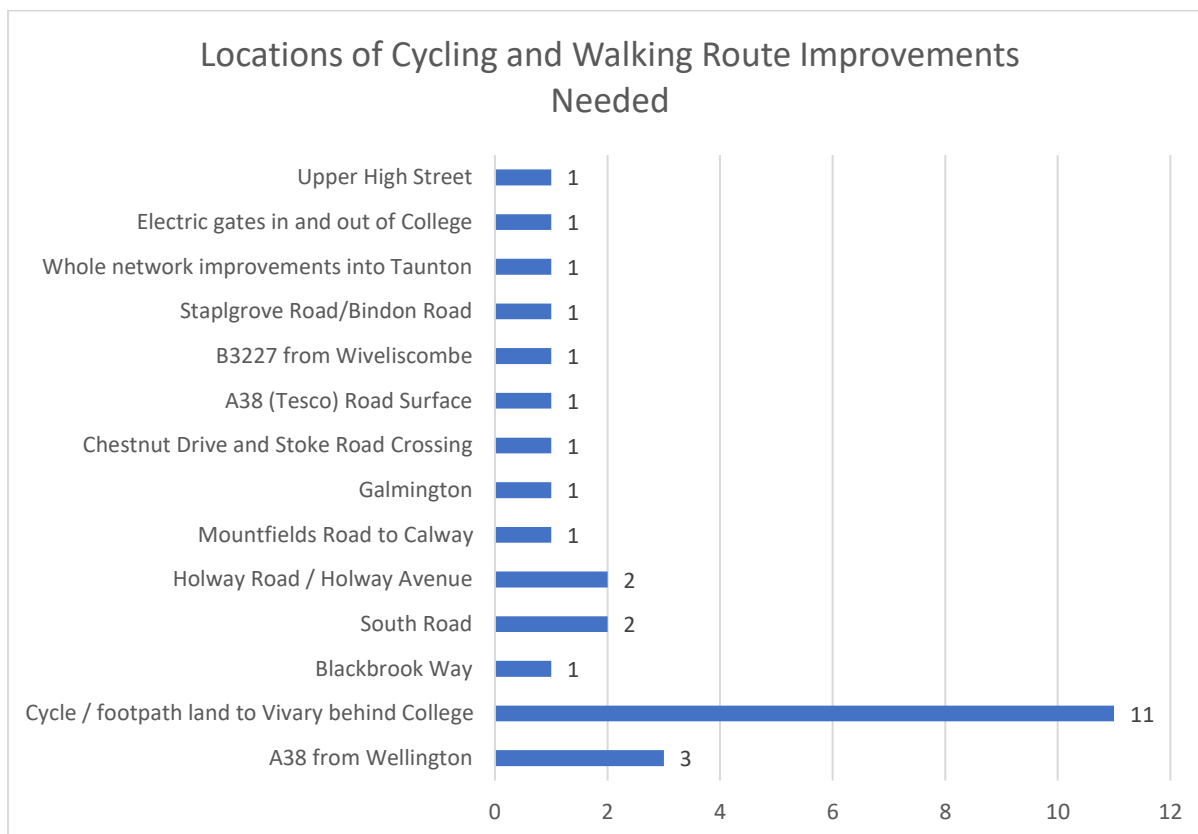
Would improvements to cycling infrastructure encourage you to continue or start cycling to College? (If so, which?)



Routes in Need of improvement (cycle and foot)

Staff could select more than one answer for this question.

Of the response given to identify which routes require improvements, the majority of responses, as in the students' survey, was for the lane behind the College which runs to Vivary Park.



Implications of the Data

The data provides some useful steer and support for some of the measures currently being explored by the College through the Travel Plan. For example:

- The main barriers to students related to bus services. The College is continuing to explore improvements to services with partners such as bus service providers and the County Council. The data provides the evidence to support anecdotal understanding of the locations and service issues which cause problems for students. This includes gaps in services from some parts of Somerset and beyond and the journey time.
- New incoming first year students could benefit from more information at an earlier stage on travel options. While many seemed to suggest that they would travel by car and possibly park at the College or on nearby roads, parking on-site is not prioritised for first year students and there is limited off-street parking in nearby roads. The survey in 2022 for returning students will provide an opportunity to compare the perceived ability to park at and around the College with reality. An additional question could be asked to compare perceived modes of travel in this year's survey with how those students actually travelled after starting College.
- The data is helpful in identifying both on-site and off-site challenges and improvements which could be made to encourage more and sustain existing cycling to the College. This is both on the student and staff side. The responses legitimise the College's forward thinking which is continuing to support an increase in travel by this mode for both staff and students by seeking improvements to accommodate bicycles, staff and students. The data about off-site improvements needed further emphasises that the work the College has been doing to establish a regular and continuing dialogue with both the County and District Councils, with regard to influencing infrastructure improvements which directly benefit students and staff getting into College, and which also provide a wider community benefit, is important.

- Data demonstrates that there is an active interest in increasing more cycling to the College, particularly for shorter journeys within Taunton and from its edge¹. This is encouraging and also fits with the College's interest in engaging positively with both the active travel and decarbonisation agendas. Staff interest in electric vehicle charging points is also positive, although at the current time it is difficult for many to know how soon they might switch to plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles. Alongside this, there is merit in the College exploring support for electric charging points for e-bikes.
- The data also points towards improvements which can continue to be made to messaging and relaying pertinent information to students about travel options, such as earlier and more information on public transport options, parking availability and cycle infrastructure. The College already does much to communicate this type of information to students and will continue to explore other ways of keeping students informed.

The data summarised and analysed in this report provides a summary analysis. Data can be further scrutinised by the College to help support further work on overcoming the travel challenges faced by students and opportunities which could be pursued to improve the position. Further surveys in subsequent years will help to show trends and patterns of change against a useful baseline and also to help measure the success of improvements and changes brought about.

¹ A position also supported by the very successful and well-attended College Bike Day held in September 2021 where students and staff engaged with presence of Somerset County Council Road Safety, Police Security Marking Team, Taunton Area Cycling Campaign and On-Your-Bike, who provided Doctor Bike servicing.

Appendix 1: Student Survey Questions

Richard Huish College Student (1st year returners / new starters) Travel Views Survey

1. Where will you usually be travelling from when you start College in September (in other words, where's home all or most of the time)?

2. On most days that you attend College, how will you be travelling into College? (tick as many as apply)

Walk

Bicycle

Electric Bicycle

Scooter

Electric scooter

Bus to town centre and walk

Single direct bus straight to College

More than one bus straight to College (e.g. change in town centre)

Train and bus

Train and walk

Train, bus and walk

Car – lift from family member straight to College

Car – sharing with fellow student straight to College

Car – driving yourself

Car and bus (e.g. parking in town)

Car and walk (e.g. parking in town)

Taxi

Other Free form text box

3. On most days that you attend College, how will you be travelling back home? (tick as many as apply)

Walk

Bicycle

Electric Bicycle

Scooter

Electric scooter

Bus to town centre and walk

Single direct bus straight to College

More than one bus straight to College (e.g. change in town centre)

Train and bus

Train and walk

Train, bus and walk

Car – lift from family member straight to College

Car – sharing with fellow student straight to College

Car – driving yourself

Car and bus (e.g. parking in town)

Car and walk (e.g. parking in town)

Taxi

Other Free form text box

4. If you will be driving a car to College, where do you anticipate parking?

In the College car park

On nearby roads

In a car park in the town centre

At a park and ride site i.e. Silk Mills or Gateway (Henlade)

5. If you have a mobility impairment or consider yourself disabled in any way, do you think that this will make it more challenging for you to travel to College?

Yes

No

Not applicable

6. If yes, what would make your journey easier?

Free form text box

7. If you think it will be difficult to get to the College and return home, what are the main barriers or problems that you think you will face? (tick as many as apply)

No bus service from where I live to Taunton

Frequency of buses is not sufficient / I will have to wait a long time for a bus

Cost to travel on buses is high

Costs to travel on the train is high

Cost of car parking in the town centre is high

The length of the journey from where I live

Lack of cycle stands at the College

Lack of changing facilities and lockers at the College (if I cycle)

Lack of parking spaces at the College

Other Free form text box

8. Are there any improvements, incentives or schemes that the College could explore which might help you get into College easier? (tick as many as apply)

A College cycle hire or loan scheme

Cycle road safety / confidence courses

Discounts for cycle safety or wet weather gear (helmets, high vis, lights, waterproofs, etc)

Changing facilities to use if I cycle in

Improvements to cycle lanes and routes to the College (e.g. safer routes, more cycle lanes)

More information on cycling infrastructure and routes

A College park and cycle scheme (for example, where you can park in the town centre and use a College bike to cycle the remainder of the journey)

An e-scooter hire scheme (you would need a driving licence to use these)

Extending the route of the bus I use to stop at the College

A dedicated College bus from where I live

A direct bus from the train station

More information on public transport options

Discounts for car parking in the town centre

Discounts for parking at the Gateway (Henlade) park and ride site

Discounts for parking at the Silk Mills park and ride site

A car share scheme (where the College puts you in touch with someone who drives in so that you can share costs)

Other (please state) Free form text box

9. If you intend to cycle or walk to College, which routes do you think are in need of improvement?

Free form text box

10. Are there any other issues, problems, ideas or suggestions in relation to your journey to College and back that you can think of that you would like to tell us about?

Free form text box

11. So that we can ensure we have the right context for your answers, can you tell us your home postcode?

Postcode: Free form text box

I would rather not say

Appendix 2: Staff Survey Questions

Richard Huish College Staff Travel Views Survey

1. Where do you usually travel from when you come to College? (please insert your postcode)

Insert postcode

2. On most days, how do you get to and from College? (tick as many as apply)

Walk

Bicycle

Electric Bicycle

Scooter

Electric scooter

Bus to town centre and walk

Single direct bus straight to College

More than one bus straight to College (e.g. change in town centre)

Train and bus

Train and walk

Train, bus and walk

Car – lift from family member straight to College

Car – sharing with fellow student straight to College

Car – driving yourself

Car and bus (e.g. parking in town)

Car and walk (e.g. parking in town)

Taxi

Other Free form text box

3. If you drive a car to College, where do you usually park?

In the main (rear) College car park

In the small (front) College car park

On nearby roads

In a car park in the town centre

At a park and ride site i.e. Silk Mills or Gateway (Henlade)

Other Free form text box

4a. If you have a mobility impairment or consider yourself disabled in any way, do you think that this makes it more challenging for you to travel to and from College?

Yes

No (Go to Q5)

Not applicable (Go to Q5)

Rather not say (Go to Q5)

4b. If yes, what would make your journey easier?

Free form text box

5. If you have difficulties getting to and from the College, what are the main barriers or problems that you will face? (tick as many as apply)

No bus service from where I live to Taunton

Frequency of buses is not sufficient / I will have to wait a long time for a bus

Cost to travel on buses is high

Costs to travel on the train is high

Cost of car parking in the town centre is high

Lack of car parking spaces at the College

The length of the journey from where I live

Lack of cycle stands at the College

Quality of changing facilities at the College

Lack of lockers at the College

Lack of drying areas for wet cycle gear / clothes

Other Free form text box

Not applicable

6. The staff cycle to work scheme provides tax break savings on purchasing bikes and accessories. Do you currently take advantage of the staff cycle to work scheme?

Yes

No

Haven't heard of it

Other (please state) Free form text box

7. If you don't take advantage of the cycle to work scheme, are you interested in doing so?

Yes

No

Maybe / don't know

Other (please state) Free form text box

8. Would you get your bike serviced or repaired on-site if a cycle maintenance / servicing scheme was provided?

Yes

No

Maybe / don't know

Not applicable

Other (please state) Free form text box

9. Are there any improvements, incentives or schemes that the College could explore which might help you get to and from College easier? (tick as many as apply)

A College cycle hire or loan scheme

Cycle road safety / confidence courses

Discounts for cycle safety or wet weather gear (helmets, high vis, lights, waterproofs, etc)

Improved changing facilities (for example, if you cycle in or would do if facilities were better)

Improvements to cycle lanes and routes to the College (e.g. safer routes, more cycle lanes)

More information on cycling infrastructure and routes

A College park and cycle scheme (for example, where you can park in the town centre and use a College bike to cycle the remainder of the journey)

An e-scooter hire scheme (you would need a driving licence to use these)

Extending the route of the bus I use to stop at the College

A dedicated College bus from where I live

A direct bus from the train station

More information on public transport options

Discounts for car parking in the town centre

Discounts for parking at the Gateway (Henlade) park and ride site

Discounts for parking at the Silk Mills park and ride site

A car share scheme (where the College puts you in touch with someone who drives in so that you can share costs)

Other (please state) Free form text box

No, there are no improvements which would make my journey easier

10. In the next 5 years, if you drive to College, do you think you would use or need to use electric vehicle charging points?

Yes

No

Maybe / don't know

Not applicable

Other (please state) Free form text box

11. Would improvements to cycling infrastructure encourage you to continue or start to cycle to and from College for all or part of the way? (tick as many as apply)

Yes, if the quality and number of cycle lanes to and around Taunton were improved

Yes, if cycle lanes to and around Taunton were safer, with more off-road

Yes, if changing facility showers on-site were improved

Yes, if changing facility locker size on-site were improved

Yes, if changing facility locker availability on-site were improved

Yes, if changing facility drying space for clothing on-site were improved

Yes, if there was more secure cycle storage

Yes, if there was more covered cycle storage

Other (please state) Free form text box

Maybe / don't know

No

Not applicable

12. If you cycle or walk to College, which routes do you think are in need of improvement?

Free form text box

13. Are there any other issues, problems, ideas or suggestions in relation to your journey to College and back that you would like to tell us about?

Free form text box