



# A summary of responses to Cheshire East Council's Review of Supported Local Bus Services Consultation

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FINAL

# Executive summary and conclusions

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## Introduction

During May/July 2024 Cheshire East Council conducted a consultation to seek views on its review of supported local bus services.

In total, 2,115 responses were received including 2,074 paper / online survey responses and 41 emails.

## Respondents' use of bus services

75% of respondents indicated that they currently use timetabled bus service in Cheshire East whereas 25% do not.

Those who currently use bus services were also asked how often they use them, on which days/times they usually travel and the main purpose of their bus journey. In summary:

- 67% used bus services once a week or more often.
- The most popular time for travel was on Monday – Friday: off peak (between 9:30am 3:30pm), 74% selected this option.
- 'Travelling to /from shops' was the most selected purpose for bus journeys, 37% selected this option.

## Bus services in Cheshire East

All respondents, regardless of whether they currently use timetabled bus services in Cheshire East or not, were asked a set of questions regarding certain aspects of the bus service and how important they felt they were.

The top three reasons chosen when asked why bus services should operate were as follows:

1. 'To offer travel opportunities for people with no reasonable alternative', 80% selected this option, followed by
2. 'To improve access to health and wellbeing facilities', (41%)
3. 'To offer a more sustainable mode of transport that is better for the environment', (39%)

Reliability and punctuality were the two most important characteristics of a bus service (98% and 95% stated that these characteristics were extremely or very important respectively).

In terms of days / times a bus service should run, respondents felt that services that run on Weekdays (Monday to Friday), and throughout the day and evening (from 5:30am -7:30pm) were the most important (98% and 82% stated these were extremely or very important respectively).

Bus linking towns was seen as the most important type of bus services (90%) closely followed by connections to rail, coach and other bus services (88%) and rural and village bus services (87%).

# Views on the proposals

## Proposal 1 – Nantwich Rural Services

- 45% of respondents agreed with proposal 1 compared to 14% who disagreed (when we exclude those who answered 'unsure / don't know').
  - Encouragingly, the majority of respondents who are current passengers of the 71, 72 and 73 agreed with the proposal (65% and 63% respectively). Current passengers of the 70 were however less likely to agree (11% agreed and 57% disagreed).
- In terms of impact, 11% would use the service for the first time and 18% would use it more often whereas 5% would use it less (when we exclude those who answered 'unsure / don't know'). 21% would use the service for the same amount whilst 24% would still not use.
  - Encouragingly 47% of those who currently use the 71 & 72 bus services and 46% of those who currently use the 73-bus service stated that they would use them more if the proposal was approved. 33% would use the services for the same amount.
  - Those who currently use the 70-bus service were however more likely to state that they would use the services less (33% would use less).

Those who disagreed with the proposal were concerned about those communities in which the services would be removed / no longer cover. They feared the change would lead to rural isolation and impact negatively on those who need the service the most. Flexible transport was not seen as a suitable alternative to some, others provided suggestions for alternate routes / frequencies.

## Proposal 2 – 391/392 Macclesfield-Poynton-Stockport service

- 56% agreed with proposal 2 and 7% disagreed (when we exclude those who answered 'unsure / don't know').
  - Encouragingly 75% of those who currently use the 391/392 bus service agreed with the proposal whilst 14% disagreed.
- In terms of impact, 10% would use the service for the first time and 22% would use it more whereas 2% would use it less (when we exclude those who answered 'unsure / don't know'). 21% would use it for the same amount whilst 44% would still not use.
  - Encouragingly 46% of those who currently use the 391/392 service stated that they would use the service more if the proposal was approved, whereas 10% would use less. 33% would use it for the same amount.

A selection of respondents who disagreed with the proposal did so as they felt that the one-hour frequency should be applicable along the whole route whilst others gave alternative route suggestions. There was also a small selection of respondents who felt the increase in service was not required at all as it was an already well-connected route which could be covered by other services for example the 192.

## Proposal 3 – Flexible Transport

The top three reasons chosen when asked why flexible transport should operate were as follows:

1. 'To serve rural areas where no other public transport exists' (86%), followed by
2. 'To provide transport for those physically unable to use timetabled bus services' (76%), and

### 3. 'To serve urban areas where no other public transport exists' (50%).

In terms of the proposal:

- 69% agreed with the proposal and 11% disagreed (when we exclude those who answered 'unsure / don't know').
  - Those who are current passengers of the FlexiLink service were more likely to agree with the proposal (73% agreed whilst 8% disagreed) compared to those who are current passengers of the Go-Too service (51% agreed whilst 29% disagreed).
- In terms of impact, 21% would use the service for the first time and 22% would use it more whereas 4% would use it less. 22% would use the service for the same amount whilst 31% would still not use it.
  - Encouragingly 47% of those who currently use the FlexiLink service stated that they would use Flexible Transport more if the proposal was approved. 33% would use the service for the same amount whilst 5% would use it less.
  - Those who currently use the Go-Too service were however less likely to use the flexible service more often: 26% stated that they would use it more whilst 19% would use it less.

Those who disagreed with the proposal highlighted several concerns, most notably the cost of the service and the hours of service being too restrictive. There was also some apprehension around needing to pre-book the service, the move from a door-to-door service to pick-up points, areas the service would cover and the eligibility criteria. Some respondents were saddened with the loss of the Go-Too service whilst others simply preferred timetabled bus services.

## **Bus service Improvement Plan and further comments**

All respondents were asked what type of enhancement to local bus services they would prefer to see in the future. The option chosen by the most respondents was 'increased frequency of existing bus services', 37% chose this option.

There were many further comments provided on how bus services could be improved generally within Cheshire East, increased provision including frequency, days and reliability was mentioned the most by respondents. There was also a number of detailed comments provided for certain bus routes and areas.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Bus services (both timetabled or flexible) are seen as important for those with no alternative travel options in particular. Reliability and frequency are characteristics respondents value most alongside weekday services. Encouragingly the majority of respondents agree with the proposals including most of those who currently use the services. However, those respondents who would be most affected by the proposals (where the service would no longer serve the area) were more likely to disagree.

The Research and Consultation Team recommend that the details within this report are thoroughly reviewed and considered before finalising the recommended bus review proposals.

# Introduction

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## Purpose of the consultation

During May/July 2024 Cheshire East Council conducted a consultation to seek views on its review of supported local bus services. The last bus service review was undertaken in 2017 and much has changed in that time. The objectives for the review in summary were as follows:

- Maximise opportunities in areas of greatest need;
- Ensure services complement, not compete with commercial services;
- Develop stronger partnership working with commercial operators; and
- Identify opportunities to modernise flexible on-demand transport options.

## Consultation methodology and number of responses

The consultation was mainly hosted online however paper versions were directly sent to current passengers of the Flexi Link service whom we had a postal address for, were made available at libraries and contact centres throughout Cheshire East and were also available on request. It was promoted to:

- Residents of Cheshire East and the general public
- The Cheshire East Digital Influence Panel
- Town and Parish Councils
- Local stakeholders including relevant bus user groups, community groups and other organisations.

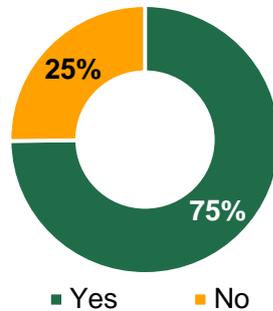
In total, 2,115 responses were received including 2,074 paper / online survey responses and 41 emails. There was a good range of response from across the borough, see Appendix 3, Map 1.

A summary of the emails received can be seen in Appendix 2, Table 5. A breakdown of survey demographics can be viewed in Appendix 4.

# Section 1: Respondents' use of bus services

Respondents were asked a set of questions regarding their use of timetabled bus services within Cheshire East including whether they currently use them or not. 75% of respondents indicated that they currently use timetabled bus service in Cheshire East whereas 25% do not, see Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Do you currently use timetabled bus services within Cheshire East?**



Base for % = 2,074

Those who indicated that they currently use timetabled bus services (1,552 respondents) were asked which services they use. Table 1 shows the full breakdown of results.

**Table 1. Which timetabled bus services do you use? (Select all that apply)**

Bus Route	Count	%	Bus Route	Count	%
3 Crewe - Alsager - Hanley	150	10%	84 Crewe - Nantwich - Chester	404	26%
3 Macclesfield - Weston Estate	60	4%	84X Crewe - Nantwich	324	21%
8 Wistaston Green - Sydney	96	6%	85 Nantwich - Crewe - Newcastle	157	10%
10 Macclesfield - Bollington	148	10%	88 Macclesfield - Knutsford - Wilmslow - Altrincham	205	13%
12 Shavington - Leighton Hospital	283	18%	89 Northwich - Knutsford - Wilmslow - Altrincham	42	3%
14, 14A Macclesfield - Moss Rose - Langley	79	5%	90 Congleton - Bromley	18	1%
19, 19A Macclesfield - Upton Priory - Prestbury/Whirley Barn	99	6%	91 Congleton - Mossley	35	2%
31 Crewe - Winsford - Northwich	131	8%	92 Congleton - Buglawton	26	2%
37 Crewe - Sandbach - Northwich	245	16%	130 Macclesfield - Handforth - Wythenshawe	199	13%
38 Crewe - Congleton - Macclesfield	372	24%	199 Buxton - Disley - Stockport	72	5%
39 Crewe - Wybunbury - Nantwich	118	8%	316 Sandbach -Cokesmere Lane	8	1%
42 Crewe - Holmes Chapel - Congleton	139	9%	317 Alsager - Sandbach - Leighton Hospital	74	5%
58 Macclesfield - Buxton	135	9%	318 Alsager - Congleton	22	1%
60, 60A Macclesfield -Kettleshulme - New Mills -Hayfield	64	4%	319 Sandbach - Goostrey	23	1%
70 Nantwich-Tiverton	35	2%	391/392 Macclesfield -Stockport	223	14%
71, 72 Nantwich-Wrenbury-Audlem-Nantwich	104	7%	Other bus service (inc. 6, 42c, 94, 109, 312, 358, 393, T2 free bus)	52	3%
73 Nantwich - Audlem-Wrenbury-Nantwich	101	7%	<b>Total Base for %</b>	<b>1,547</b>	

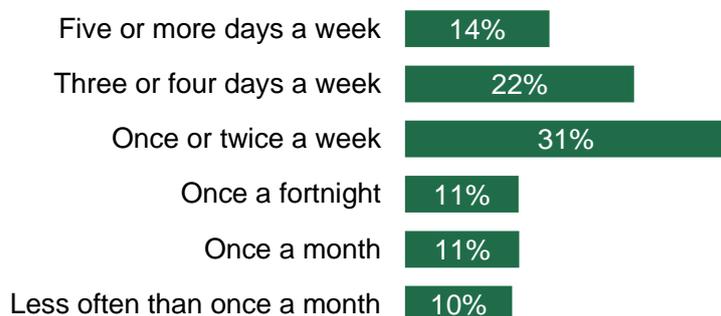
Those who currently use bus services were also asked how often they use them, on which days/times they usually travel and the main purpose of their bus journey. In summary:

- 67% used bus services once a week or more often.
- The most popular time for travel was on Monday – Friday: off peak (between 9:30am 3:30pm), 74% selected this option.
- ‘Travelling to /from shops’ was the most selected purpose for bus journeys, 37% selected this option.

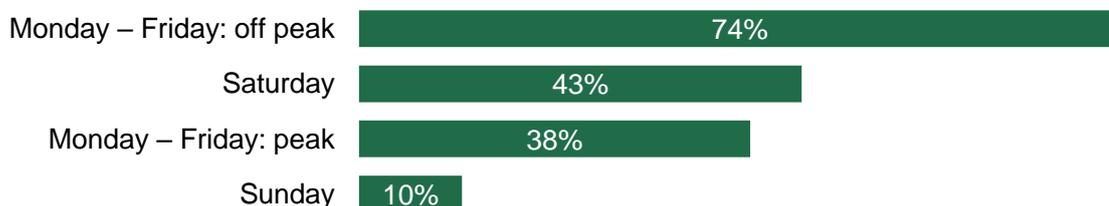
Figure 2 shows the full breakdown of response.

**Figure 2. Bus service usage of those respondents who currently use bus services.**

**How often use bus services (select one option only)**



**Days and times usually travel by bus (select all that apply)**



**Main purpose of bus journey (select one, main reason only)**



Base for % = 1,443 - 1,541

105 respondents (7%) gave an 'other' reason when asked what the main purpose of their bus journey was, the comments provided have been summarised into the following themes:

- Various reasons, most of above, main method of transport, 28 comments.
- Connecting with trains, airport, other public transport, 23 comments.
- Social purposes, to get out, to go on walks, hobbies, 13 comments.
- Evenings out, to visit pub, theatre, restaurants, and bars, 9 comments.
- For school runs, nursery pickup, 7 comments.
- To visit shops, bank, libraries, museum, church, 6 comments.
- Carer, care home visits, hospital visits, 5 comments.
- Work, volunteer purposes, 3 comments.

## Section 2: Bus services in Cheshire East

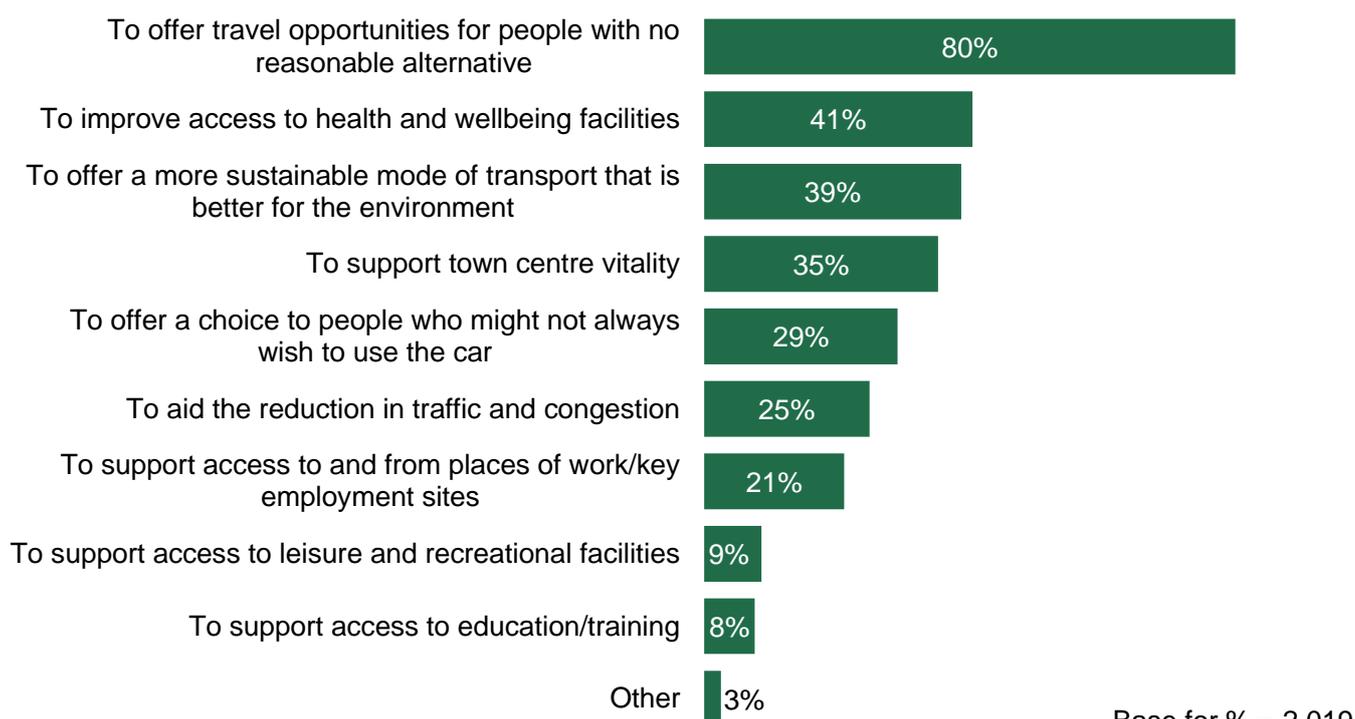
All respondents, regardless of whether they currently use timetabled bus services in Cheshire East or not, were asked a set of questions regarding certain aspects of the bus service and how important they felt they were.

Respondents were asked to choose the top three reasons as to why they think bus services should operate. The top three reasons chosen were:

1. 'To offer travel opportunities for people with no reasonable alternative', 80% selected this option.
2. 'To improve access to health and wellbeing facilities', 41% selected this option.
3. 'To offer a more sustainable mode of transport that is better for the environment', 39% selected this option.

Figure 3. shows the full breakdown of response.

**Figure 3. Please tell us the top three reasons why you think bus services should operate?**

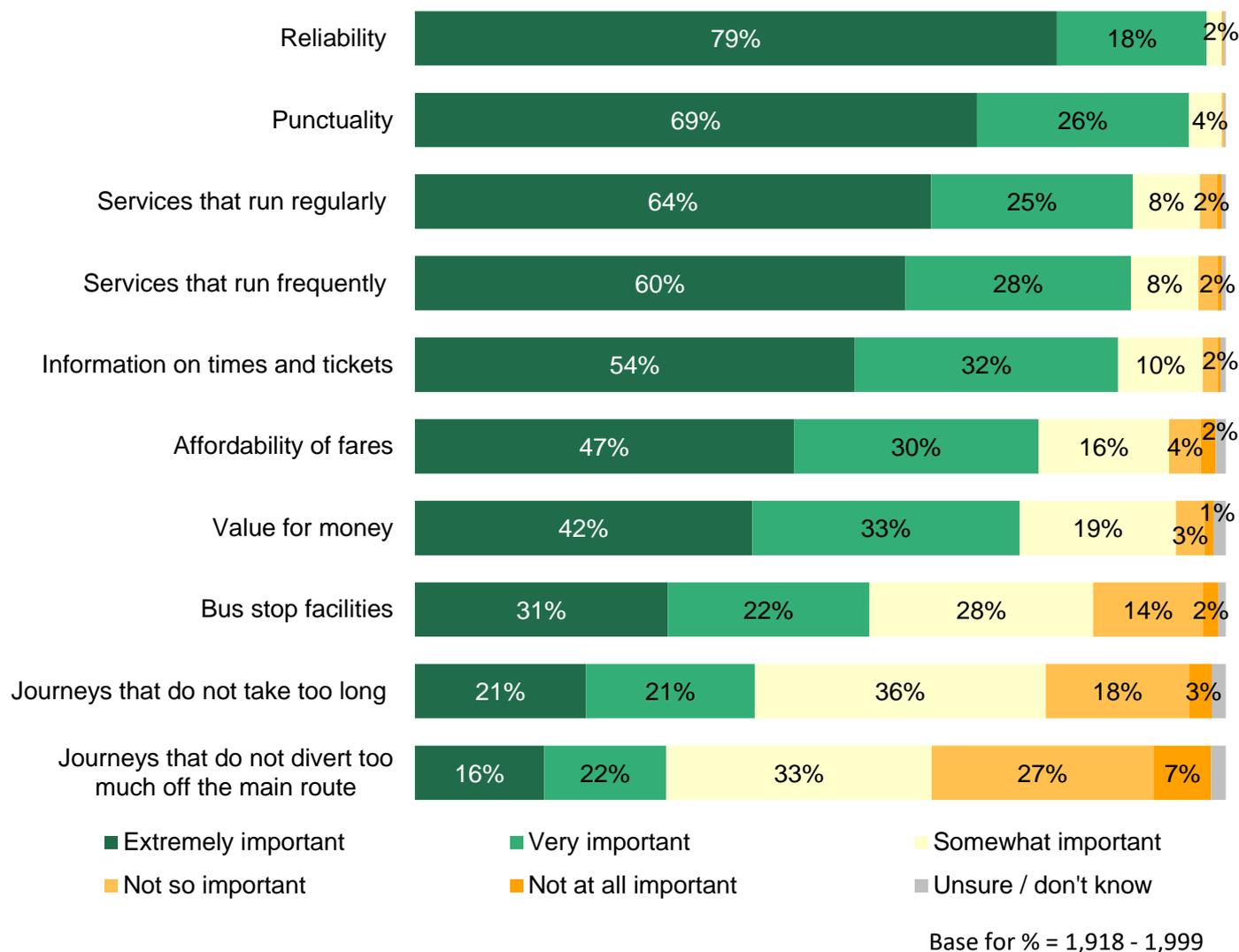


51 respondents (3%) gave another comment, the comments provided have been summarised into the following themes:

- All of the above, 10 comments.
- To reduce access inequality especially for people who cannot drive, the elderly and disabled, 10 comments.
- For onward travel connections e.g., to major rail stations, airport, 9 comments.
- To support mental wellbeing, quality of life, to visit friends, relatives & country walks, 7 comments.
- To provide a more sustainable, budget friendly option, 6 comments.
- To provide access to services for those in rural areas, 4 comments.
- They should run, to access shops, school, park and ride services, 4 comments.

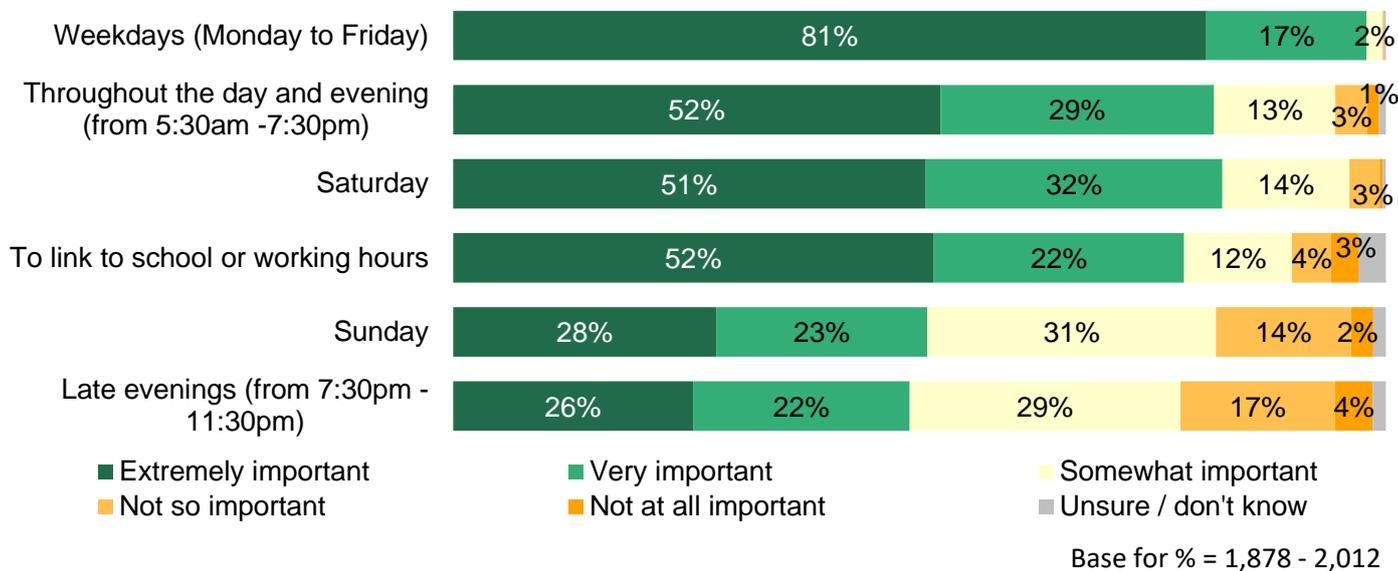
Reliability and punctuality were the two most important characteristics of a bus service (98% and 95% stated that these characteristics were extremely or very important respectively) whilst journeys that take longer / divert off the main route alongside bus stop facilities were not seen as important to respondents (42% and 31% selected extremely or very important respectively), see Figure 4.

**Figure 4. Thinking about the bus services in Cheshire East, how important do you think each of the following characteristics are?**



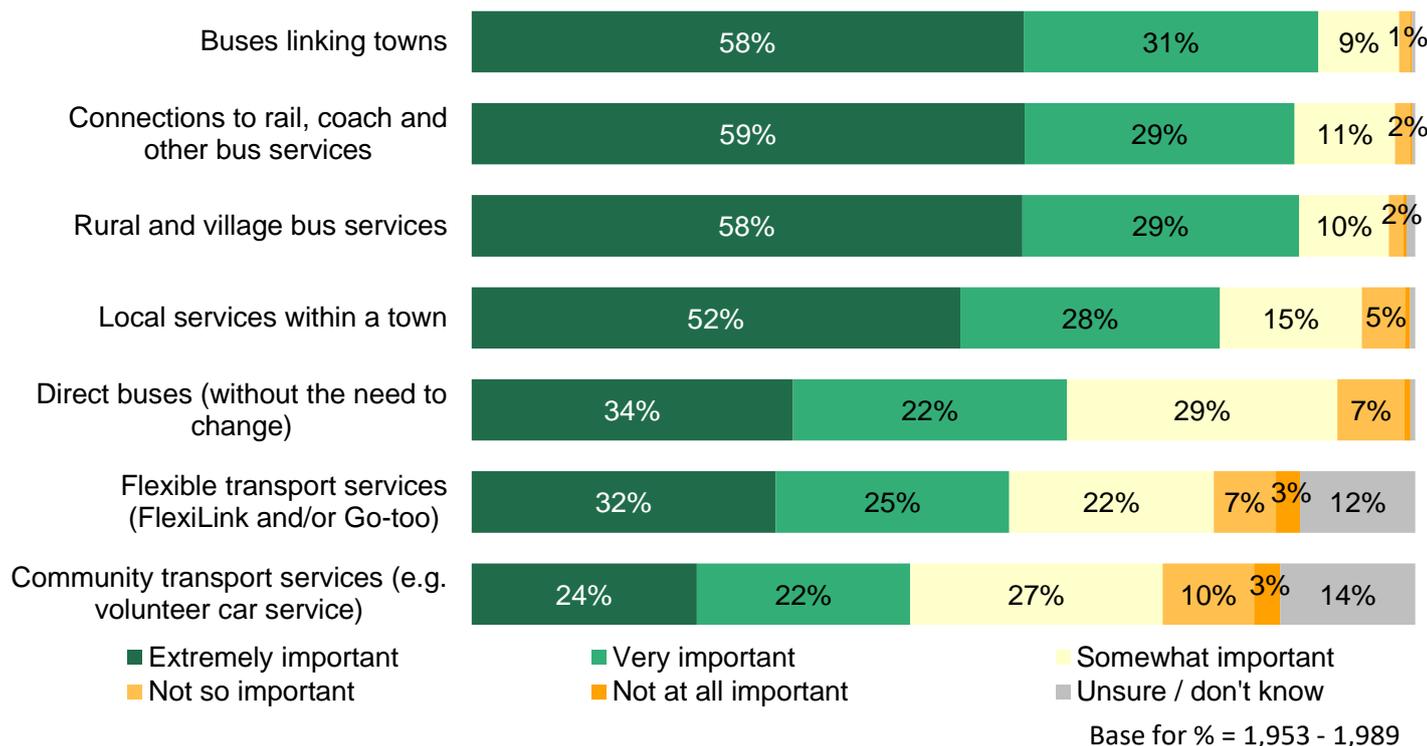
In terms of days / times a bus service should run, respondents felt that services that run on Weekdays (Monday to Friday), and throughout the day and evening (from 5:30am -7:30pm) were the most important (98% and 82% stated these were extremely or very important respectively). Services that run on a Sunday or during late evenings were not as important to respondents but still days / times the majority of respondents would consider as useful (if we include those who also stated 'somewhat important'). See Figure 5 for the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 5. How important do you think it is for bus services to run on the following days and times?**



Bus linking towns was seen as the most important type of bus services (90%) closely followed by connections to rail, coach and other bus services (88%) and rural and village bus services (87%), see Figure 6.

**Figure 6. How important do you think the following types of bus service are in Cheshire East?**



## Section 3: Views on the proposals

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Respondents were provided details of three bus service proposals and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with them.

### Proposal 1 – Nantwich Rural Services

This proposal affects services 70, 72 and 73 which operate in the rural areas to the south and west of Nantwich. In summary:

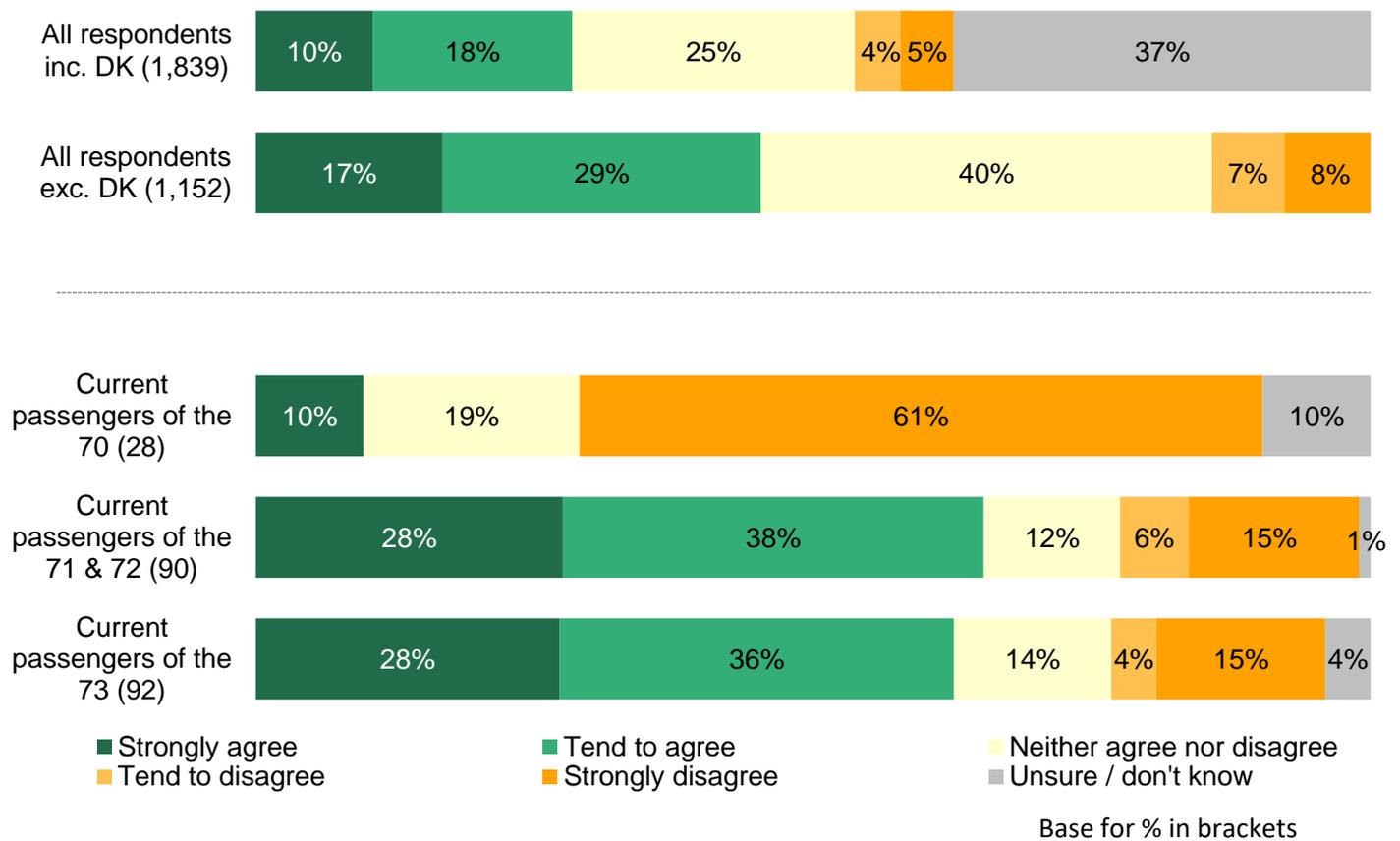
- Bus service 70, Nantwich-Tiverton would be withdrawn.
- The 72 and 73 bus services would be retained and improved on the busiest sections between Nantwich and Wrenbury and Nantwich and Audlem with many journeys extended via Middlewich Road to Leighton Hospital. Lightwood Green and Burleydam would no longer be served.
- For communities where the fixed route service would be withdrawn (i.e., Bulkeley, Bunbury, Lightwood Green and Burleydam), the proposal is to enhance the flexible transport offer (proposal 3) and thereby provide transport in a different way.

Overall, 28% of respondents agreed with the proposed change to the Nantwich rural services and 9% disagreed. A large proportion of respondents selected 'unsure / don't know' (37%, 687).

If we remove those who selected 'unsure/don't know' the overall calculation then it gives a clearer indication of those who agreed with the proposal compared to those who disagreed: 45% agreed with the proposal and 14% disagreed when those answering 'unsure/don't know' are removed.

Encouragingly, the majority of respondents who are current passengers of the 71 & 72 bus services and the 73-bus service agreed with the proposal (65% and 63% respectively). Current passengers of the 70-bus service were however less likely to agree (10% agreed and 61% disagreed). Please note that the overall base for those who use the 70 service is low (based on 28 respondents) however the results still provide a good indication of the views of respondents who use that service. Figure 7 shows the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes to the Nantwich rural services?**



Respondents were asked why they disagreed with the proposal. In total 207 respondents chose to leave a comment. The comments provided were coded into the following overall themes and sub themes:

**Services should not be reduced / withdrawn or replaced with flexible transport:**

- Disagree with services being reduced withdrawn generally, 42 mentions.
- Disagree with withdrawal of bus route 70, 32 mentions.
- Flexible transport is not a suitable alternative, 20 mentions.
- Disagree with change to bus routes 72 and 73, 15 mentions.

**Suggestions for alternatives routes / frequency of the 70, 72 or 73:**

- Suggestions for bus route 72 and 73, 14 mentions.
- Suggestion on frequency for bus service 70, 6 mentions.
- Suggestion on frequency for bus service 72 and 73, 6 mentions.

**Service not needed:**

- Extra service not needed, 3 mentions.

**Other comments:**

- Don't know / Don't use these services, 37 mentions.
- Link to hospital much needed / flexible service seems to work well / agree if service underused, 30 mentions.
- Other bus route suggestions, 13 mentions.
- Need further information / clarity, 9 mentions.

Some respondents will have referred to more than one theme therefore total mentions won't add up to the total number of respondents who left a comment. The full summary of the comments received by theme and sub theme is presented in Table 1 on the next page.

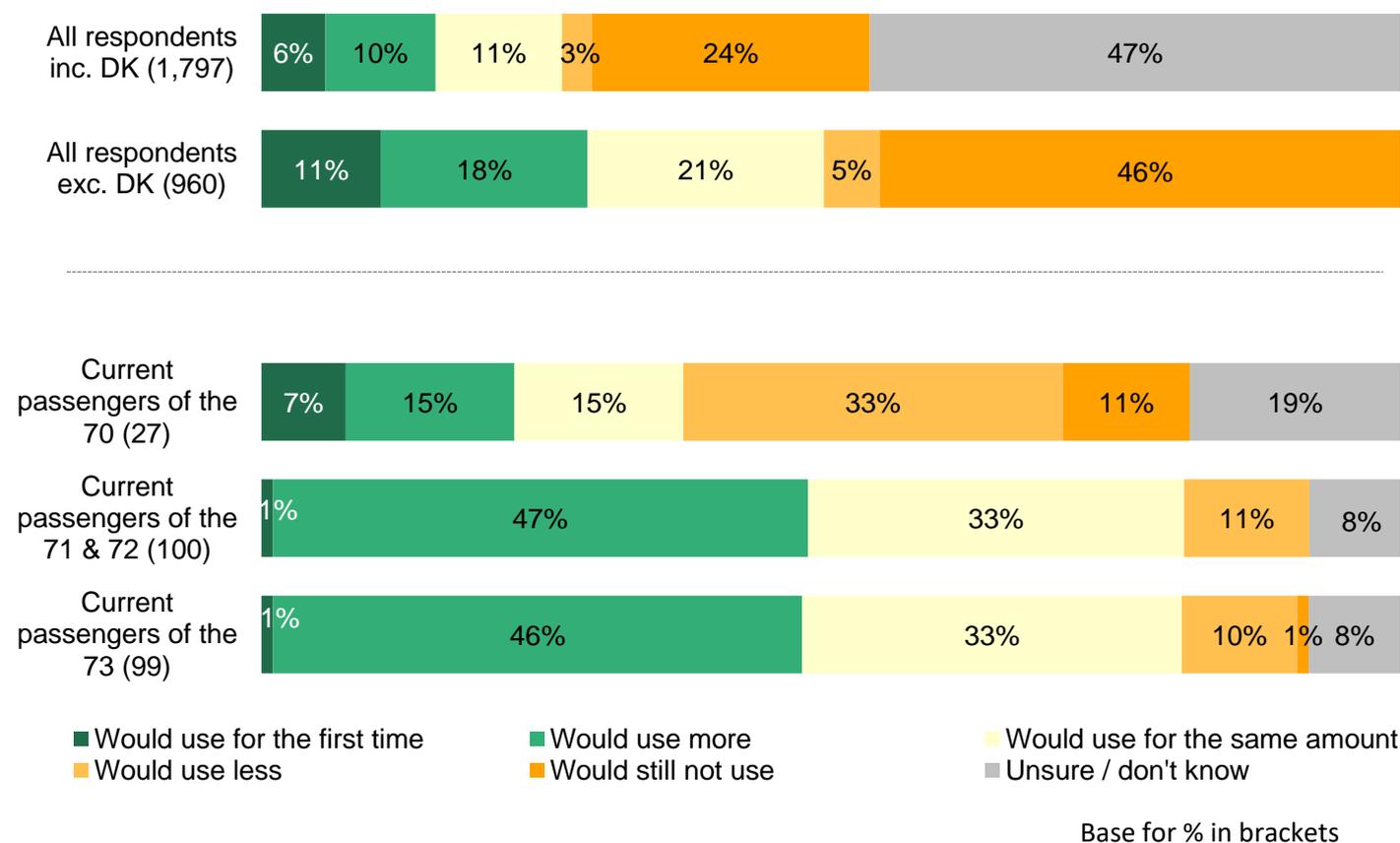
In terms of impact, 6% of all respondents stated that they would use the Nantwich Rural services for the first time if the proposed change occurred and 10% would use the service more often whereas 5% would use the service less. 11% would use the service for the same amount whilst 24% would still not use. A large proportion of respondents selected 'unsure/don't know' (47%, 837).

If we remove those who answered 'unsure/don't know' from the overall calculation it provides a clearer indication of those who said they would use the service for the first time/more often compared to those who would use it less/still not use: 11% would use the service for the first time and 18% would use it more often whereas 5% would use it less. A visual representation of these results by postcode can be seen in Appendix 3, Map 2. 21% would use the service for the same amount whilst 24% would still not use.

Encouragingly 47% of those who currently use the 71 & 72 bus services and 46% of those who currently use the 73-bus service stated that they would use them more if the proposal was approved. 33% would use the services for the same amount.

Those who currently use the 70-bus service were however more likely to state that they would use the services less (33% would use less). Figure 8 shows the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 8. How will the proposed changes to the Nantwich rural services impact how you use them?**



**Table 1: Reasons as to why respondents disagree with the Nantwich Rural Service proposals**

Theme	Summary of comments received	Number of mentions
<b>Services should not be reduced / withdrawn or replaced with flexible transport</b>		<b>109</b>
Disagree with services being reduced withdrawn generally	Service should be increased not decreased. Services should be maintained. Reduction in any service unacceptable. May affect those with no other mode of transport. Cancelling bus routes in a rural area adversely affects the most vulnerable and the elderly who need the service the most. Communities should not be isolated, it's a vital link for people.	42
Disagree with withdrawal of bus route 70	Bus service for Bunbury is vital. Withdrawing route 70 will isolate people in the Bunbury area, lead to rural isolation, impact on the elderly and those who do not drive. Rely on this service for shopping, meeting friends and appointments. The 70 is necessary for members of the ALIVE group who are elderly and have no alternative transport. It is a lifeline for teenage children to link to Chester and meet up with friends. The reason it is not used is because it runs infrequently, at inappropriate times, and was not included in the £2 fare cap. Not used from Bulkeley due to lack of maintenance at the bus stop.	32
Flexible transport is not a suitable alternative	Don't think flexible transport offers a suitable replacement, it is not what passengers want. The flexible transport service always seems to be booked up, often never arrives and has limited hours of operation. Not a good option for those digitally excluded. If you are unable to get a signal, you do not know what time the bus will be waiting for you, as the route changes you do not know how long journeys will take which can be a problem if have a set appointment or travel links to make. If plans change you still get charged. Flexible transport is not cost effective, to cover route 70 would need at least 2 extra vehicles.	20
Disagree with change to bus routes 72 and 73	No buses through Lightwood Green / Burleydam would mean being completely cut off, they are small but important communities. The break in the link between Audlem and Wrenbury is unacceptable. People who don't drive will be isolated, affecting mental health, they are a lifeline which allow independence, attend GPs, meet friends, do shopping and attend the community centre. The extension of this route to Leighton will make it unreliable due to traffic congestion on Middlewich Road.	15
<b>Suggestions for alternatives routes / frequency of the 70, 72 or 73</b>		<b>26</b>
Suggestions for bus route 72 and 73	Nantwich to Leighton hospital important but should be routed via Wistaston Green to maximise patronage / should operate via Wistaston- there are new homes in Wistaston with no bus service. Leighton section should go via Queens Park, Marshfield and Minshull New Road as well. One of the buses should be routed sown Crewe Road instead of Middlewich Road. 72 needs to run through Whitchurch. Why can't the bus from Wrenbury include Norbury and Marbury. Instead of axing the estates of both just have one of the routes go around the estates so it still retains connection for people. Any changes should not disrupt the early /late bus Audlem to Nantwich and vice versa.	14
Suggestion on frequency for bus service 70	Instead of withdrawing the 70 service it would be better if it was 2 days a week as previous (e.g., Thursday and Saturday) and shorten the route to save money. The route of the 70 should be increased to provide a decent transport service – only does 2 journeys and sits idle.	6

**Table 1: Reasons as to why respondents disagree with the Nantwich Rural Service proposals**

Theme	Summary of comments received	Number of mentions
Suggestion on frequency for bus service 72 and 73	Feel the proposed frequency of service won't be enough to get people put of cars and onto public transport. A lot will depend on frequency and interval time - need to be able to have time to shop, visit hospital – times will vary. Need a regular service from 8am until at least 6pm to be of any use. Needs to be more regular to Bishops Wood Estate.	6
<b>Service not needed</b>		<b>3</b>
Extra service not needed	Stop the service. Why are buses to Nantwich being supported when Crewe is disadvantaged. Nantwich doesn't need a service they have direct 85 to Crewe, adding buses to an already existing network.	3
<b>Other comments</b>		<b>89</b>
Don't know / Don't use these services	Would not use, don't know the area, don't use the service. Not affected, not my bus.	37
Link to hospital much needed / flexible service seems to work well / agree if service underused	Access to the hospital from Nantwich without going to Crewe is essential. Would make getting to hospital appointments much easier. Important to have bus direct to hospital as parking is a nightmare and taxis are expensive. Would reduce health inequalities by making it easier to access hospital. The flexible service seems to work well at a reasonable cost. If unused no point keeping / uneconomic route.	30
Other bus route suggestions	There should be more buses to different places, what about Wybunbury and Hough. Can Cheshire East speak to Stagecoach to extend the Crewe-Nantwich-Chester Service to serve Bulkeley, Bunbury and Tiverton. This would require 1 extra bus, avoid Taporley/Tarvin to make up time and would reduce overcrowding on the 84 route. Have to travel to Crewe via bus 12 to get but 84 from Crewe to Chester. Potential option to divert current 85 route to take to hospital, recall former 78 service for a more regular and direct route to hospital from Nantwich Town centre. Can't find any option to use the bus to commute to workplace in Audlem from Crewe. Audlem bus services are extremely infrequent. Number 37 and 38 no Sunday service.	13
Need further information / clarity	Map is incorrect – bus also serves Swanley and Ravensmoor, there is also only one bus a day in each direction not two. Retained routes look good - need to see alternative options for other villages. Need to be reviewed based on demand and success of amendments after a period of 12 months. What kind of flexible transport. Assume these buses aren't utilised much. Assume there is an existing 84 service from Crewe to Chester. Only if service to Aston is kept.	9

## Proposal 2 – 391/392 Macclesfield-Poynton-Stockport service

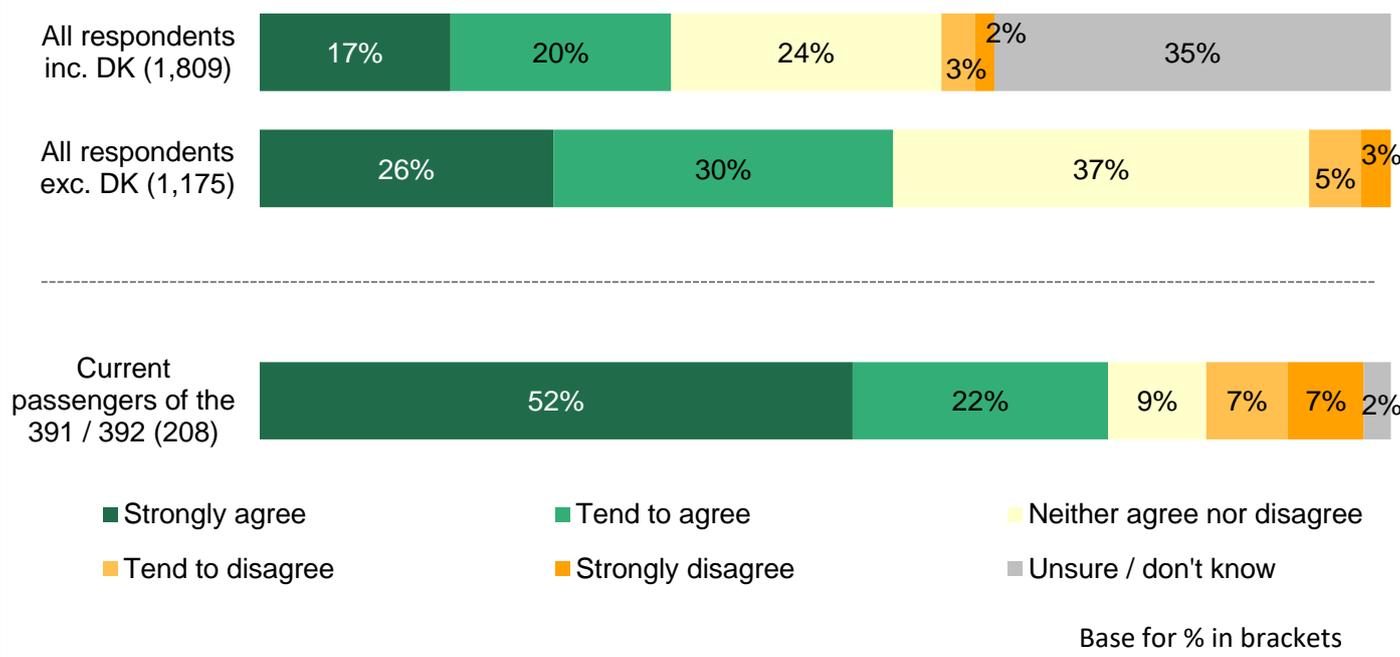
This proposal enhances the frequency of the 391/392 service to hourly between Middlewood-Poynton-Stockport (via Stepping Hill Hospital), whilst maintaining a two-hourly service between Poynton and Macclesfield to the south.

Overall, 36% of all respondents agreed with the proposed change to the 391/392 service and 5% disagreed. A large proportion of respondents selected ‘unsure / don’t know’ (35%, 634).

If we remove those who answered ‘unsure/don’t know’ from the overall calculation, then it gives a clearer indication of those who agreed with the proposal compared to those who disagreed: 56% agreed with the proposal and 7% disagreed when those answering ‘unsure/don’t know’ are removed.

Encouragingly 75% of those who currently use the 391/392 bus service agreed with the proposal whilst 14% disagreed. Figure 9 shows the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed change to the 391/392 Macclesfield-Poynton-Stockport service?**



Respondents were asked why they disagreed with the proposal. In total 153 respondents chose to leave a comment. The comments provided were coded into the following overall themes and sub themes:

### Suggestions for alternatives routes / frequency of the 391 / 392:

- Should be hourly across the whole route, Macclesfield to Stockport, 41 mentions.
- Alternative route suggestions for 391/392, 12 mentions.

### Increase in service is not needed / extend 192 service instead:

- Work with Transport for Greater Manchester to extend the 192, 11 mentions.
- Increase in service is not needed, 9 mentions.

**Other comments:**

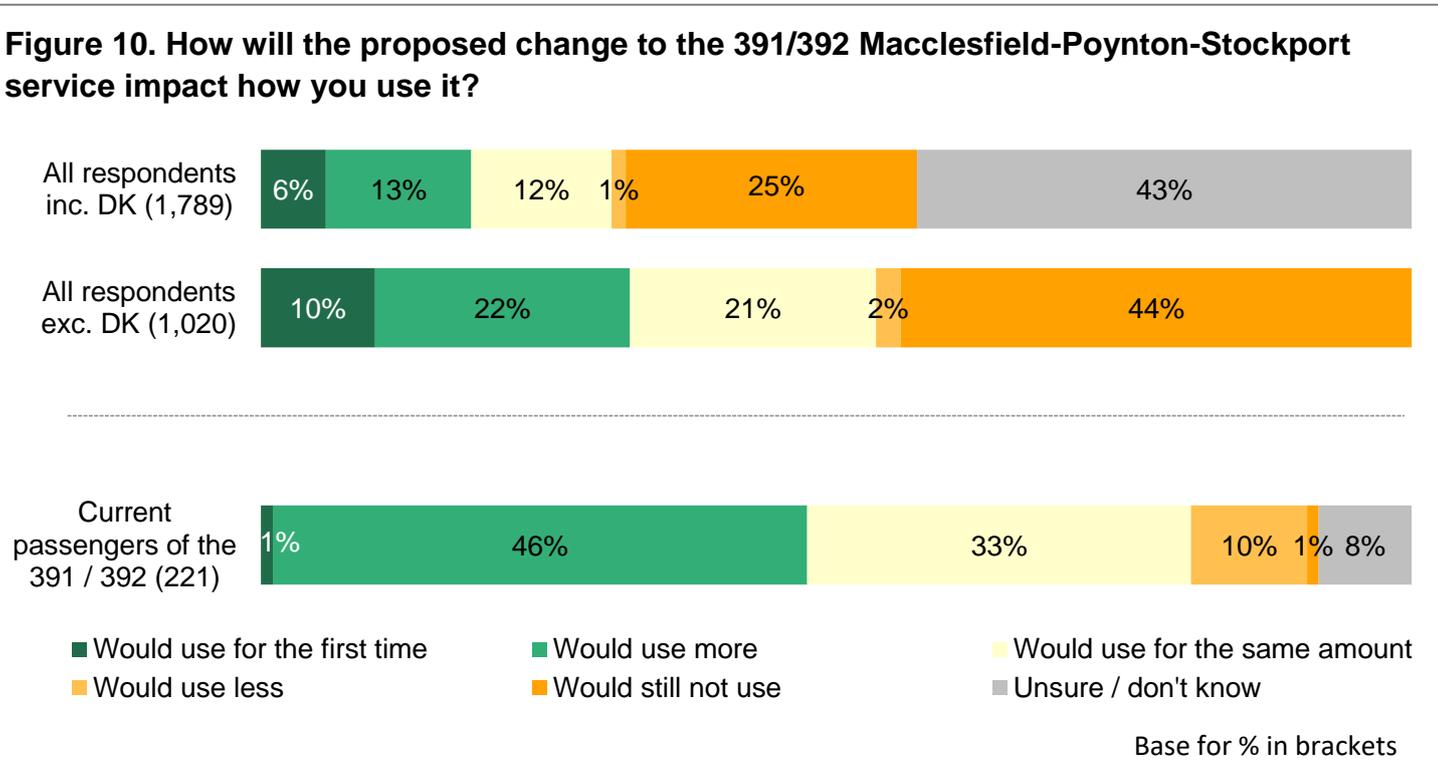
- Don't know / Don't use these services, 35 mentions.
- Good to see improvement being made / change needed, 30 mentions.
- Other bus route suggestions / improvements, 13 mentions.
- Other general negative comment, 12 mentions.

Some respondents will have referred to more than one theme therefore total mentions won't add up to the total number of respondents who left a comment. The full summary of the comments received by theme and sub theme is presented in Table 2, on the next page.

In terms of impact, 6% of all respondents stated that they would use the 391/392 service for the first time if the proposed change occurred and 13% would use it more whereas 1% would use it less. A visual representation of these results by postcode can be seen in Appendix 3, Map 3. 12% would use the service for the same amount whilst 25% would still not use. A large proportion of respondents selected 'unsure/don't know' (43%, 769).

If we remove those who selected 'unsure/don't know' from the calculation it provides a clearer indication of those who would use the service for the first time/more often compared to those who would use it less/still not use: 10% would use the service for the first time and 22% would use it more whereas 2% would use it less. 21% would use it for the same amount whilst 44% would still not use.

Encouragingly 46% of those who currently use the 391/392 service stated that they would use the service more if the proposal was approved, whereas 10% would use less. 33% would use it for the same amount. Figure 10 shows the full breakdown of results.



**Table 2: Reasons as to why respondents disagree with the 391/392 Macclesfield-Poynton-Stockport service proposal**

Theme	Summary of comments received	Number of mentions
<b>Suggestions for alternatives routes / frequency of the 391 / 392</b>		<b>53</b>
Should be hourly across the whole route, Macclesfield to Stockport	Macclesfield to Stockport should be hourly as well, not everyone can get the train. Should include the full route to Bollington and Macclesfield. Service from Macclesfield to Stockport is crucial due to the high demand for the connection. Lots of people at Macclesfield bus station need to get to Stockport quickly, access Stockport for work, need to get to Stepping Hill hospital. The reduction in service (between Poynton and Macclesfield) has impacted ability to use the service for work. Needs to also run later.	41
Alternative route suggestions for 391/392	Would be beneficial if the hourly service extended to the Boars Head bus stop. The service has now cut out Marlborough drive & Tytherington Drive. Would it be possible for the bus to go down the A523 Hazel Grove? The route takes a lot longer due to meandering around Middlewood & Poynton. The 2 hourly service from Macclesfield should be routed via the 393 route and perhaps a circular covering the Middlewood & Pedley Hill areas. For the southern sections of the 391/392, they need to run faster into Macclesfield as too slow, then have a new little town route linking into the Tytherington estates, even if it's the same frequency as now. The 392 no longer operates around Crossfield Road where there are bungalows for the elderly, why run the bus down Clarke Lane instead of Crossfield Road – please re-instate.	12
<b>Increase in service is not needed / extend 192 service instead</b>		<b>20</b>
Work with Transport for Greater Manchester to extend the 192	Should really be part of the Bee Network / TfGM Network. Cheshire East should work with TfGM to extend a 192 from Hazel Grove Station to Poynton and Disley. Increase the service from Macclesfield to 192 termini in Hazel Grove, giving a more frequent service to Stockport. Get a 192 through service to improve patronage and options for transport.	11
Increase in service is not needed	Why increase it when cutting services elsewhere, take from rural Nantwich and put in Macclesfield doesn't seem fair. Present system is sufficient. Its already served, doesn't need a third bus when there are other areas without. This area always seems to get more investment than the Crewe/Sandbach area. Railway is on that route; money should be put elsewhere. The route between Hazel Grove and Stockport is one of the best served – question whether this needs to be duplicated at the expense of taxpayers' money. Perhaps the route needs to run between Stepping Hill and Macclesfield only at an hour frequency to connect to the hospital and the 192 for Stockport to Manchester.	9
<b>Other comments</b>		<b>86</b>
Don't know / Don't use these services	Would not use, don't know the area, don't use the service. Not affected, not my bus.	35
Good to see improvement being made / change needed	Any improvement is welcome. Will help those who work out of town as the train isn't always available. Two-hour service is not practical. Bus is busy between these stops. Encourages modal shift away from cars. Hope the service change will reduce health inequalities by providing access to the hospital, better transport to Stepping Hill is needed.	30
Other bus route suggestions / improvements	More buses are needed. Having more accessible public transport would be beneficial. Better links into main county centre and hospital. Any chance of extending the peak 191 journeys to start at Middlewood, work with Derbyshire & Staffordshire	13

**Table 2: Reasons as to why respondents disagree with the 391/392 Macclesfield-Poynton-Stockport service proposal**

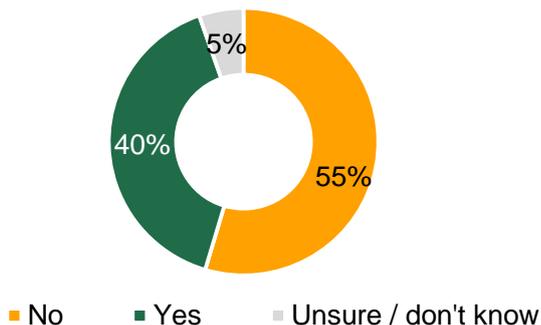
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Summary of comments received</b>	<b>Number of mentions</b>
	to reinstate the Derby-Manchester or 2 hourly 393 via Bollington. Please look at the lack of provision in Wistaston can only get to hospital via Crewe on the 84, cannot get to Dr on Rope Lane at all.	
Other general negative comment	Bus services are essential shouldn't be cut, hourly is hardly enough for public transport. There should be alternatives to the car on all routes. 391/392 service is unreliable. The flexible transport service never turns up.	12

## Proposal 3 – Flexible Transport

Respondents were asked whether they use either of the current flexible transport services that operate within Cheshire East. 15% of respondents (301) used the FlexiLink service and 9% (169) used the Go-Too service.

Those who used either FlexiLink or Go-Too were asked if they have any other transport available if they could not use FlexiLink or Go-Too, 40% stated they do whereas 55% do not as shown in Figure 11.

**Figure 11. Do you have alternative transport available if you could not use FlexiLink or Go-Too?**



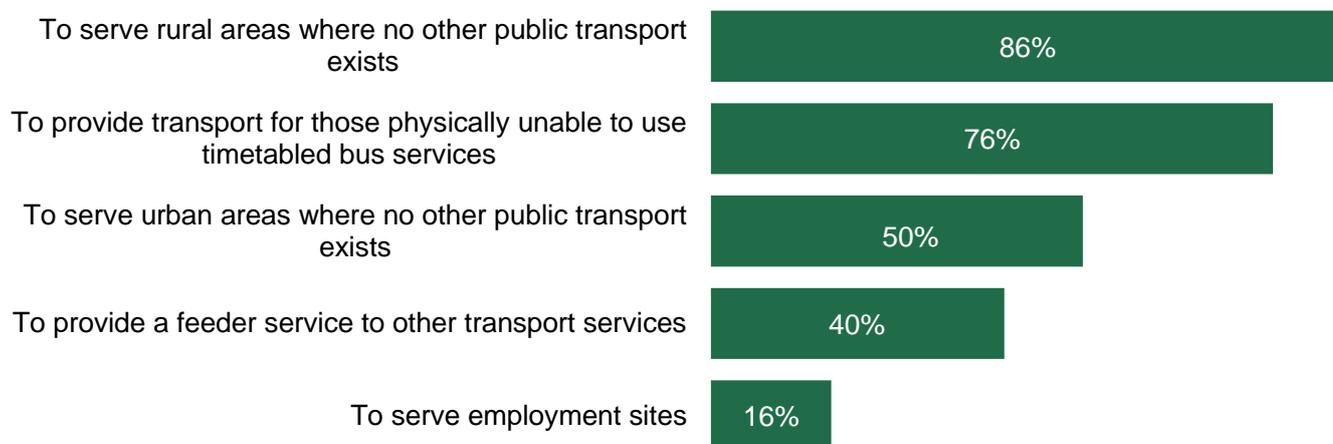
Base for % = 467

All respondents were asked to select the top three reasons as to why they think flexible transport should operate. The top three reasons given were:

1. 'To serve rural areas where no other public transport exists' (86%), followed by
2. 'To provide transport for those physically unable to use timetabled bus services' (76%), and
3. 'To serve urban areas where no other public transport exists' (50%).

Figure 12 shows the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 12. Please tell us the top three reasons why you think flexible transport should operate?**



Base for % = 1,918

In summary, the proposal is to combine the FlexiLink and Go-Too services into a single, pre-bookable service. Go-Too in its current form would cease to operate. The service will collect

passengers from defined pickup points or offer a door-to-door service based on need (e.g., to those with limited mobility) and will be:

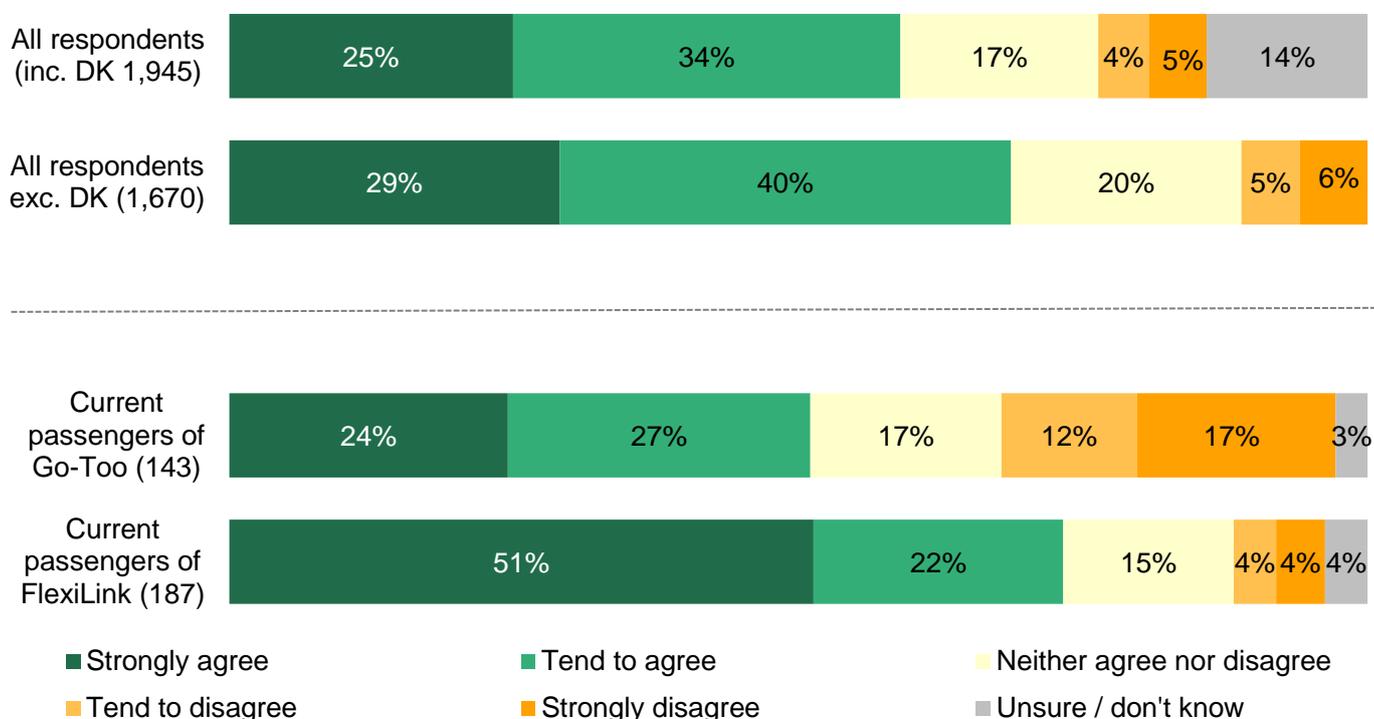
- Available to all age groups (where no alternative and/or suitable public transport is available)
- Available Monday - Friday during the day (9:30am - 2:30pm) and in the evenings (4:30pm - 9:00pm)
- Available Saturdays (9:00am - 6:00pm)
- Bookable using an online app, whilst retaining telephone booking
- Chargeable (£4 full fare - single journey and £2 concessions - single journey)

Overall, 59% of all respondents agreed with the proposed change to the flexible transport service and 9% disagreed.

If we remove those who answered 'unsure / don't know' from the overall calculation, then it provides a clearer picture of those who agreed with the proposal compared to those who disagreed: 69% agreed with the proposal and 11% disagreed when those answering 'unsure/don't know' were removed.

Those who are current passengers of the FlexiLink service were more likely to agree with the proposal (73% agreed whilst 8% disagreed) compared to those who are current passengers of the Go-Too service (51% agreed whilst 29% disagreed). Figure 13 shows the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for flexible transport within Cheshire East?**



Base for % in brackets

Respondents were asked why they disagreed with the proposal. In total 230 respondents chose to leave a comment. The comments provided were coded into the following overall themes and sub themes:

**Concerns with / suggestions for the Flexible Transport proposal:**

- Too expensive / needs to be affordable, 51 mentions.
- Hours are too restrictive, 40 mentions.
- Concern over prebooking, booking online and pickup points, 27 mentions.
- Go-Too service would be lost, 18 mentions.
- Concern over eligibility criteria, 16 mentions.
- Service should run on a Sunday, 14 mentions.
- Extend to / cover more areas, 13 mentions.

**Disagree with Flexible Transport generally:**

- Prefer timetabled bus services, 28 mentions.
- Waste of money / service unreliable, 7 mentions.

**Other comments:**

- Flexible transport service would be beneficial, 33 mentions.
- Other general negative comment, 10 mentions.
- Need further information / clarity, 6 mentions.

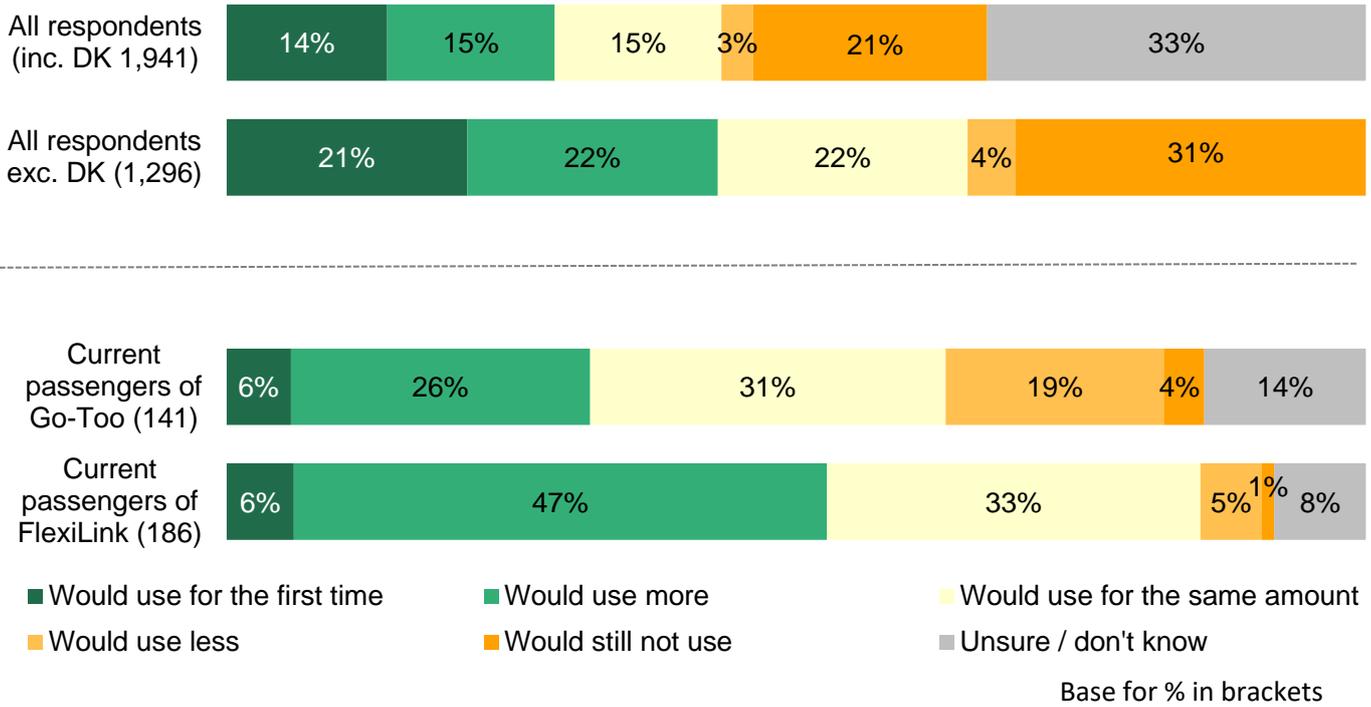
Some respondents will have referred to more than one theme, therefore total mentions won't add up to the total number of respondents who left a comment. The full summary of the comments received by theme and sub theme is presented in Table 3, on page 24.

In terms of impact, 14% of respondents stated that they would use the flexible transport service for the first time if the proposed change occurred and 15% would use it more whereas 3% would use it less. 15% would use the service for the same amount whilst 21% would still not use it.

If we remove those who answered 'unsure / don't know; (33%) from the calculation it provides a clearer indication of those who would use the service for the first time/more often compared to those who would use it less/still not use: 21% would use for the first time and 22% would use it more whereas 4% would use it less. 22% would use the service for the same amount whilst 31% would still not use it.

Encouragingly 47% of those who currently use the FlexiLink service stated that they would use Flexible Transport more if the proposal was approved. 33% would use the service for the same amount whilst 5% would use less. Those who currently use the Go-Too service were however less likely to use the flexible service more often: 26% stated that they would use it more whilst 19% would use it less. Figure 14 shows the full breakdown of response.

**Figure 14. How will the proposal impact how you use the flexible transport service?**



**Table 3: Reasons as to why respondents disagree with the flexible transport service proposal**

Theme	Summary of comments received	Number of mentions
<b>Concerns with / suggestions for the Flexible Transport proposal</b>		<b>129</b>
Too expensive / needs to be affordable	£8 for a return journey isn't cheap. Charge should be for there and back not just 1 journey. May be more expensive than a taxi at £4 per person. Would be cheaper to use a car. Needs to be affordable to those on low income. The cost would put me off. Suggest fares be in line with current price cap. There shouldn't be a charge for elderly people who can't use normal service. Concessionary travel must be available to pass holders. This is an increased cost compared to the current Go-Too service, with a reduced service.	51
Hours are too restrictive	Hours seem restrictive / inconvenient to passengers. Having a two-hour break on a weekday could cause problems. Should be available before 9am people need to get to work before this time. Should be offered on late evenings. A 6pm finish on a Saturday is far too early. Hours of service are being reduced. Needs to operate at least 8am-10pm. Flexibility should mean available all day.	40
Concern over prebooking, booking online and pickup points	Pre-booking is prohibitive for some disabled people and takes away the flexibility. Can't pre-book as partially deaf and cannot use the phone. It's not always easy to book in advance. Apps aren't always elderly friendly; they can be difficult to navigate for those not digitally aware. Elderly residents do not have access to booking services online, do not have mobile phones. The app is unwieldy and inflexible, doesn't allow booking even though bus is passing your door. Pre-booking is often impossible, often says it is full, with no availability then when manage to book it isn't full. Important for the elderly to still be able to get door pick up as pickup points might not be close enough. The nearest designated pick-up point has no pedestrian access other than walking over 400m along a busy road.	27
Go-Too service would be lost	The Go-Too service would be lost, I like the way it operates as is. Stopping the Go-Too service is not an acceptable solution. There is a need for both services. It wouldn't be as flexible as Go-Too, it would be harder to book with the shorter operating times and more people wanting to use it. Go-Too operates until 9pm on a Saturday. The Go-Too bus is a lifeline for child to get to school and back. Go-Too bus allows visits to Audlem and Nantwich and not have to drive. Go-Too should be expanded upon and made more available.	18
Concern over eligibility criteria	The criteria for using the service is far too restrictive. Service should be open to everyone who would like to use. Shouldn't be limited to areas without public transport as should be aimed at those who struggle to use. Restrictive use to those with limited mobility would inhibit that have supported the service so far. Will not be eligible as not disabled, just retired. I am below 80 but also need that option.	16
Service should run on a Sunday	Need a Sunday service. Poynton would remain isolated on Sundays. Other bus services are running on a Sunday - failing to offer a Sunday service for people with mobility difficulties could be considered disability discrimination.	14

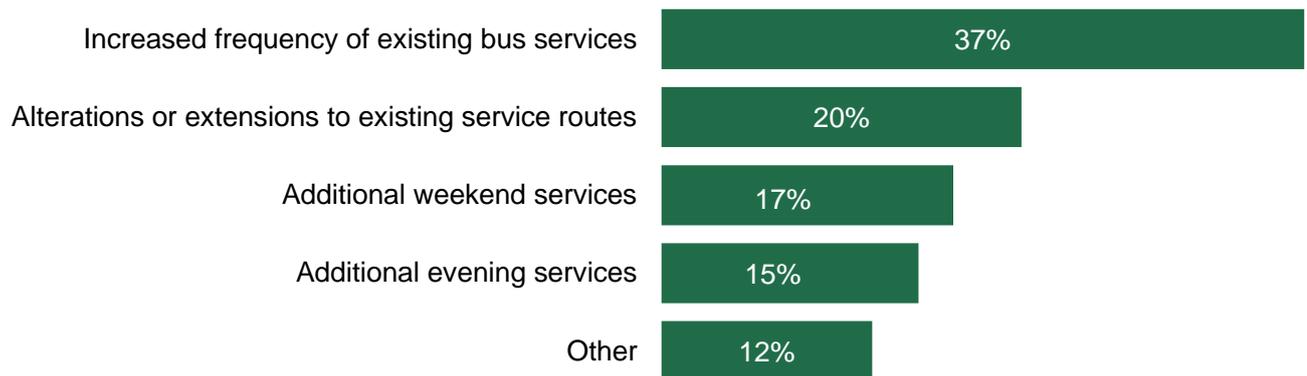
**Table 3: Reasons as to why respondents disagree with the flexible transport service proposal**

Theme	Summary of comments received	Number of mentions
Extend to / cover more areas	Not sure what areas it would serve, would the operating area be extended. Go-Too service did not cover enough rural areas. Could the service be used for medical appointments. Service in place for Nantwich only and Crewe continues to be disadvantaged, need bus to hospital and doctors within Crewe. Useful if the service was extended from Leighton hospital and Crewe railway station. Need something within Wistaston where there is no transport at all. Needs extending to Wybunbury. Please include Woleston in the area covered. Make the service bookable from the major estates in Audlem. If this was available between Macclesfield and Manchester airport it would be useful.	13
<b>Disagree with Flexible Transport generally</b>		<b>35</b>
Prefer timetabled bus services	Regular bus services are always preferable. No substitute for a proper service. Is a good idea if it runs alongside a regular 70 route/ operates as a supplementary service. Need reliable bus service not 'inflexible' flexible transport initiatives. Need to have a regular bus service that overs rural areas. Would prefer regular service from Bunbury to Chester. Might be good for the elderly and disabled but no one other than these groups would use it. Maybe follow the Wilshire model whereby the is a fixed timetable but the bus can divert between some key points if needed.	28
Waste of money / service unreliable	Waste of money, Wrenbury Go-Too bus always empty. Go-Too is unreliable, often never turns up. Too many last-minute alterations to pickup places and times. No backup in case of breakdowns or driver sickness.	7
<b>Other comments</b>		<b>49</b>
Flexible transport service would be beneficial	This is a very much needed form of transport especially for the elderly / disabled. Service vital. Flexible service sounds great. Good to connect rural areas / semi-rural areas where no bus services run. Better way to serve overall communities. Not everyone has access to a car. Need for hospital appointments.	33
Other general negative comment	Not good enough, the offer should be improved not reduced. Don't withdraw. Would take up the possibility of potential drivers for timetables services, the Go-Too is in direct competition with the services it seeks to amend. It was meant for rural not urban use. Let people use taxis as they do now.	10
Need further information / clarity	Depends on how many would use the bus. Only if you have the drivers. Would it make journey times longer having to travel round a larger catchment area. Would like to know when and where FlexiLink goes and at what times. Query how the system would work equitably – would the proposal give more or less availability?	6

## Section 4: Bus service Improvement Plan and further comments

As part of the bus service improvement plan Cheshire East Council has been awarded central government funding to enhance local bus services. All respondents were asked what type of enhancement to local bus services they would prefer to see in the future – the one they would use most if available. The option chosen by the most respondents was ‘increased frequency of existing bus services’, 37% chose this option as shown in Figure 15.

**Figure 15. What types of enhancement to local bus services would you prefer to see?**



Base for % = 1,879

212 respondents (12%) gave another comment, the comments provided have been summarised into the following themes:

- Additional bus services / routes, more direct buses, 71 comments.
- Sunday / bank holiday services, 24 comments.
- Improvements to the buses (e.g., smaller, electric, talking buses) and bus stops (e.g., digital signs), 21 comments.
- Retain services for e.g., Bus route 70,71 &73 re-instate services e.g., 2, 9, 39 & 78, 18 comments.
- Increased reliability and frequency, 13 comments.
- Earlier and later journey times for workers, 11 comments.
- Expand FlexiLink service, keep it free for passholders. Retain Go-Too service, 11 comments.
- All improvements are needed, 10 comments.
- Additional, more robust rural services, 10 comments.
- More affordable transports fares, 6 comments
- Bus services that connect to rail, airport, park & ride, 5 comments.
- Other comment e.g., happy as is, divert money into other areas, whatever the majority want, 9 comments.

Respondents were asked to provide any further details of how they considered bus services could be improved within Cheshire East. A total of 1,079 comments were left to this section which were coded into three broad themes: service route improvements, named location-based improvements and general borough wide improvements:

## **Named service improvements:**

The most frequently commented on routes were:

- 12, Shavington – Leighton Hospital: Issues with service reliability and requests to run on the evenings and a Sunday service, 26 mentions
- 84, Crewe – Nantwich – Chester: Route should be extended to include Wistaston village, needs to be more regular and run in the evenings, 17 mentions
- 130, Macclesfield – Handforth – Wythenshawe: Route should accommodate the timing needs of children travelling to Wimslow and Fallibroome Academy. Could use better integration with the 130/312 and the Tesco free bus current timings leave large gaps, 18 mentions.
- 391/392, Macclesfield – Stockport: Service should be hourly and later into the evening. Could integrate better with TfGM services, 16 mentions.

## **Location based improvements:**

The most commented on areas were:

- Nantwich: reinforced the need for a direct bus to Leighton hospital without the need to change at Crewe, 56 comments.
- Macclesfield: Improvements needed at the bus station which is very poor. Bus services to the Treacle Market would be welcome as there is no transport currently, 44 comments.
- Crewe: Better linkage to retail parks and out of town shopping needed. Routes requested from Wistaston and Willaston, 39 comments.

## **General / across borough improvements**

- Increase service provision (e.g., increase frequency, days, reliability), 403 mentions.
- Need more and /or better bus links / connections, 196 mentions.
- Improve the bus fleet/ infrastructure, 94 mentions.
- Promotion and communication, 87 mentions.
- Rely on the buses / bus services are vital, 78 mentions.
- Bus ticketing / operator comments, 37 mentions.
- Bus priority on roads / reduction in traffic, 28 mentions.
- General negative comment, 13 mentions.
- General positive comment, 8 mentions.

Some respondents will have referred to more than one theme therefore total mentions won't add up to the total number of respondents who left a comment. The full summary of the comments received by theme is presented in Appendix 1, Table 4.

41 emails were also received during the consultation 32 from individuals e.g., local residents and 9 from a group / organisation / council or councillor. There were comments within these in relation to the proposals however the majority were in relation to improvements to other bus services. The full summary of the comments received by theme is presented in Appendix 2, Table 5.

# Appendix 1: Further details of how respondents consider bus services could be improved within Cheshire East.

**Table 4: Further details of how respondents consider bus services could be improved within Cheshire East**

Summary of comments received	Number of mentions
<b>Comments naming a specific bus route</b>	
<b>3 (Crewe – Alsager – Hanley)</b>	4
Would like this bus to go to Leighton hospital instead of having to change at Crewe. Restore late evening bus services on this route.	
<b>3 (Macclesfield – Weston Estate)</b>	1
Service very unreliable, often two of the three last buses do not appear.	
<b>8 (Wistaston Green – Sydney)</b>	3
Needs to run earlier to allow access to Crewe bus station for connecting buses into Leighton hospital for 8am, needed by NHS workers. Needs to run in the evenings and weekends. Suggest the bus turns left in Henry Street instead of going under the Cumberland Bridge and then right onto Queen Street, right towards Earle Street so all the people have a chance to get off at junction retail park or carry on to the bus station.	
<b>10 (Macclesfield – Bollington)</b>	7
Should run into the evenings and also run on Sundays. Evening services finish too early as the last bus is 17:50 from Macclesfield. Should run the bus through the Crossfield Road and nearby estate, wouldn't take too much rerouting. Bus is not punctual or reliable. Review the rerouting away from Tytherington Drive seems to have been done to the benefit of no-one, could this be reverted?	
<b>12 (Shavington – Leighton hospital)</b>	26
Needs to be more reliable/ run on time, covering weekends and evenings at greater frequency. This service has become extremely unreliable with operator consistently not running services or adherence to timetables, should be duly censured. Should run in the evening and on Sundays. Do not start later than 6:28 or I cannot work. Needs to facilitate return trips from rail station. Promote Sunday/BH services between Leighton and Rope so Sunday services can extend to Shavington commercially. Links to the retail park would be welcome. Happy with this link to town and hospital. Could this route connect with the Persimmons Estate and the new Anwgl Estate to get easier travel?	
<b>14/14A (Macclesfield – Moss Rose – Langley)</b>	15
Should be combined allowing an hourly service in Lyme Green, Sutton and Langley. 14A should be restored to an hourly service, could be achieved by extending a couple of the 14A buses to go to Langley and replicated the 14A route. Vital service for Langley residents, please maintain this route. Why has Moss Rose got three buses an hour and Langley only every two. No longer a good service, takes an extra 20 minutes extra to get home now the bus goes all around the Moss Estate. Taking in the Moss Estate means more difficulty for people using wheelchairs as only one person per bus is allowed. Route should have an additional morning service and possible Sunday service to be more reliable and a big help to the villages the route serves. Extension of the 14 to Lyme Green to better serve Lyme Green area.	
<b>19/19A (Macclesfield – Prestbury)</b>	4
Needs to be more frequent than 1 an hour, makes it hard to get appointments. The changed route for the 19A going through Upton Priory instead of via Broken Cross is terrible, Upton have a regular bus in the 19 they don't need two people can no longer go into town.	

<b>31 (Crewe – Winsford – Northwich)</b>	<b>4</b>
Unreliable and hourly in insufficient for this area and makes trips very difficult. A local 30-minute service would be appreciated. Bus is always full and cannot get on with walkers. Later service. Move this service back to Underwood Lane and launch a new Leighton-Brookhouse circular to connect people and offer more services.	
<b>37 (Crewe – Sandbach – Northwich)</b>	<b>10</b>
A Sunday service. Unreliable service. Currently taking an hour to get to Winsford industrial estate from Crewe bus station, would like to see that improved in the future. Would benefit from an increase in frequency. Later service.	
<b>38 (Crewe – Congleton – Macclesfield)</b>	<b>10</b>
Unreliable service. Bring back the late service i.e., after 23:00. More than one bus an hour in the morning for warehouse staff. Link into the Congleton circular buses with sufficient time to make the connection. Sunday services on this route. Would benefit from running every 30 minutes rather than an hour as it is used by a large number of people.	
<b>39 (Crewe – Wybunbury – Nantwich)</b>	<b>8</b>
This is a vital route. Increase the frequency of this bus service. Run this bus on Sundays. Service takes too long to get to Nantwich to Shavington, a more straightforward route would be more acceptable. Route is extremely important for those with no other means of transport, an extension of the hours would encourage more use. Offer a second bus on the opposite hour to the 39 via Brookhouse, Jack Mills Way, Shavington then Newcastle Road to Nantwich, could help with punctuality on the 39.	
<b>42 (Crewe – Holmes Chapel – Congleton)</b>	<b>15</b>
Larger buses at school times for the 42 bus, often too many kids standing or not allowed on as the bus is too small. Need more buses on this route. Stop at Holmes Chapel train station 15 minutes before the train to the airport. Sunday service needed. A bus every hour would be better. Saturday timetable should be the same as Mon-Fri. This bus is a lifeline for people in rural areas such as Brereton Heath. This service is essential and should be maintained to reasonable service levels.	
<b>58 (Macclesfield – Buxton)</b>	<b>2</b>
Should be diverted to serve Teggs Nose Country Park. Why does the service change on a Sunday going down Buxton Road instead of a long Black Road and Windmill Street, people must miss out on Sunday service.	
<b>60/60A (Macclesfield - Kettlethulme - New Mills – Hayfield)</b>	<b>1</b>
Why does this bus travel to the New Mills – Hayfield which is not in East Cheshire and not to Disley.	
<b>70 (Nantwich – Tiverton)</b>	<b>9</b>
Do not axe current service. Keep the route going if only 2-3 days a week as not running it will cause isolation and will be totally lost without this bus. Tweak the route to run on different days with at least two hours in Nantwich. Rural services are essential for older people without own transport. Cancellation of the service will lead to rural isolation and reduce the ability of Bunbury to function as a local service centre in the Local Plan hierarchy. It seems disgraceful to propose to axe a service when you are receiving extra government funding to improve buses.	
<b>71/72 (Nantwich - Wrenbury - Audlem – Nantwich)</b>	<b>2</b>
The 72 needs to be more frequent, it does not cater for people who have no other means of transport. Extending the 72/73 services to Leighton hospital.	
<b>84 (Crewe – Nantwich – Chester)</b>	<b>17</b>

**Table 4: Further details of how respondents consider bus services could be improved within Cheshire East**

Summary of comments received	Number of mentions
<p>Bus to go through Willaston on a Sunday and after 18:00 in the evenings. All late buses to go through Willaston. Buses having issues at Willaston Stores Corner due to parking, perhaps parking enforcements need to be applied to help buses navigate this part of the route. Punctuality is a bit of an issue. Buses should run more frequently. Bus needs to continue through Willaston. This route should be extended to come through Wistaston village to open up the service to more people, there are already unused bus stops on Church Lane near the school. Needs to be more regular, two hour wait if one is cancelled. Service is rarely on time and needs to be a double decker bus. 84X to continue running on Sunday. Please stop this bus going down the narrow roads of Wistaston Road and Coppice Road it can carry on up Nantwich Road, it's not far to walk down to get the bus and it rocks house foundations. Run until 11PM.</p>	
<p><b>85 (Nantwich – Crewe – Newcastle)</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p>
<p>Increase the reliability and frequency of this route. Additional early morning and evening services for workers. Service takes too long. Sunday service needed, work with Staffordshire to operate every two hours.</p>	
<p><b>88 (Macclesfield – Knutsford – Wilmslow – Altrincham)</b></p>	<p><b>12</b></p>
<p>Punctuality, often the bus either misses Bank Square stop in Wilmslow driving straight from the train station to Water Lane, or it doesn't turn up at the interchange to Altrincham to go to Wilmslow, no communication when this happens. Running every half hour like it used to be. The most unreliable service. 1st bus starts at 6:50AM and then 8:15AM if the timing of the second bus could be changed a bit earlier i.e., to 7:50AM it would allow people to get to work before 9AM which would be good. Work closely with TfGM to introduce a 30 minute service during peak hours as this route has significant numbers of travellers from Greater Manchester and East Cheshire. Allow connection with the 312 from Wilmslow to Handforth Dean, the 312 leaves 3 minutes before the 88 arrives leaving passengers with a one hour wait before the next bus. Timetabled to pass Chelford station in line with the railway timetable to provide commuting links with Barclays, Radbroke Hall, Knutsford. Could reduce the times it runs in the day, frequently see empty buses. Stop interworking between 88/89/188, the current arrangement has long gaps and doesn't suit the needs of commuters or people attending Macclesfield hospital. Could be altered to run from Macclesfield to Warrington via Knutsford as the route from Knutsford to Altrincham is served by the 89 from Northwich.</p>	
<p><b>89 (Northwich - Knutsford - Wilmslow – Altrincham)</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>
<p>Extend the 89 service so Pickmere is served more regularly into late afternoon and evenings on all days. Current times are too early or too late for work/school/shopping/entertainment.</p>	
<p><b>92 (Congleton – Buglawton)</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>
<p>Service does not connect with other services at all. 6PM finish isolates Buglawton. Returning from Crewe rail or Congleton is not possible after teatime.</p>	
<p><b>130 (Macclesfield – Handforth – Wythenshawe)</b></p>	<p><b>18</b></p>
<p>Should carry on in the evening for hospital visits, needs to run more frequently especially on a Saturday. Service does not accommodate the timing needs of children traveling to and from Wilmslow to Fallibroome academy, could be fixed with a small tweak around school times. Could this service detour to Mottram St Andrew and answer the problem of this area not having a bus service. Service should run past 5:45PM and on Sundays. Why no 130 bus from Macclesfield during evening rush hour? Try and sort a more convenient and economical route combining the 130/312 and the Tesco free bus Wimslow to Handforth Dean. The 312 leaves 53 mins to the hour, a few minutes before the free bus. The 130 leaves at 3 minutes past, why not space out to provide a half-hourly service? Extend to Manchester.</p>	
<p><b>199 (Buxton - Disley – Stockport)</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>
<p>Service is very unreliable not running to time or not turning up at all. Buses are often crowded, maybe buses doing shorter route, or a circular route would be better.</p>	
<p><b>317 (Alsager – Sandbach – Leighton hospital)</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>

**Table 4: Further details of how respondents consider bus services could be improved within Cheshire East**

Summary of comments received	Number of mentions
Last bus from Leighton is 17:15 after that a taxi is needed, need a Saturday and Sunday service to allow better access. Route needs to be amended to include a stop at the pink church, the road is too dangerous to walk, the parish council has regularly asked to get this service restored. Saturday and Sunday service to facilitate travel to the football/cricket club.	
<b>319 (Sandbach – Goostrey)</b>	<b>5</b>
Service only available two mornings per week which makes it unusable for appointments. Needs to operate more days in a week. Service would be improved by operating Mon-Sat. Service is essential to residents living in villages along this route.	
<b>391/392 (Macclesfield – Stockport)</b>	<b>16</b>
Online tracking for this route. Later service to allow use in the evenings, should be 23:00 to facilitate social activities. Reduce the wait time, 2 hours is stupid, should be hourly. Keep this service to join Macclesfield and Stockport daily. Service would be improved by making it all an hourly service between Macclesfield and Stockport. Could integrate between with Aquinas Sixth Form College as waits for buses can be too long. Why does the 391/392 not terminated at the 192 terminus in Hazel Grove? This would allow the same number of buses and allow a better connection to the 199. Should terminate at Stepping Hill and come to a transfer arrangement with TfGM. Use smaller but more accessible buses on this route, vehicles currently used are too big for country roads on the route to Macclesfield. This doesn't look like a bus, very easy to miss the vehicle with a small note in the window saying 391.	
<b>FlexiLink / Go-Too</b>	<b>38</b>
Positive comment about the drivers. Needs to be advertised more as a service. Would like the hours extended to 4pm to allow attendance and return from a veteran's club. FlexiLink is a lifetime / great service as do not drive any more. If service is not needed should be replaced by community-based volunteer services, seek local advice on what is necessary. Couldn't manage without FlexiLink. Query of the flexible bus criteria. Disagree with asking people with bus passes to pay to use this service, why penalise them? A FlexiLink service from Wilmslow to Macclesfield hospital would be most welcome. FlexiLink ends too early in the afternoon; an extended service would be welcome. Retain Go-Too service for small villages where there are no timetabled options / don't change time / restrict time of the Go-Too bus. Expand Go-Too areas. Card payment on Go-Too. Go-Too is essential in rural areas. Increase FlexiLink provision, currently only once a week. More destinations for FlexiLink and longer time at locations. Booked in advance but was cancelled 10 minutes before, poor service. Flexible transport needs to run throughout the day and not have gaps, makes it an 'inflexible' service which defeats the point.	
<b>Removed routes</b>	<b>6</b>
Bring back number 2 bus to serve Thornton Square area of Macclesfield. Bring back the 78 that went down Birchin Lane. Used to use the 78 to get to Leighton hospital but that has stopped, we need a bus again rather than going to Crewe bus station and back out. Return the 6 from Leighton to Shavington. Bring back the 8 for Sydney, would be cheaper than flexible transport. Bring back the 11 which did not have to negotiate a route which is a nightmare for the drivers and keep the 391 to the main road, no wonder the drivers keep leaving.	
<b>Comments naming a specific area</b>	
<b>Audlem</b>	<b>9</b>
Leighton hospital and Crewe railway station are two locations not currently available via the timetabled or flexible services to people living here. A Saturday service to Whitchurch and Nantwich would be good, has been missed by many since it was taken off. Buses on Sunday from Audlem to Nantwich. Bus to Market Drayton even if only one a week on market day. More regular service which would increase usage.	
<b>Alsager</b>	<b>4</b>
A shopping bus. Alsager is somewhat remote and needs better links to local places such as Rode Heath, Congleton and Holmes Chapel. The route traveling through Hassell Green is missed.	

<b>Crewe</b>	<b>39</b>
<p>Would like a bus service on Church Lane to Crewe – Nantwich. Run to Chester to Crewe service in the evening every hour, better service from Crewe to Chester needed especially at weekends. Both provided services are bad and arrive at the same time. Sunday service to connect Crewe and Betley. Stop needed outside ASDA as the bus station is a fair walk away for those with shopping. Route from Leighton – Crewe – Brookhouse – Jack Mills Way hourly.</p> <p>Need a bus service from Crewe – Nantwich -Sandbach to Leighton hospital. Urgently need bus service from Crewe to Leighton on a Sunday. Bus service from Leighton to Nantwich and Macclesfield. Reinstate the bus from Leighton from Marshfield. Improved services for Weston. Improved services for Wistaston. If outlying villages South of Nantwich can have a bus surely Wistaston can be incorporated into existing services, link needed to Rope medical centre and Crewe town centre. A bus that goes from Willaston to Ropegreen medical centre.</p> <p>Open the bus stop by Next on Grand Junction retail park and run into Crewe town centre. Have a bus that runs from the rail station to the bus station and back. Ensure all buses to Crewe town go via the railway station. Circular route from the bus station to the retail park to the new Lidl and Tesco. Later buses provided between Crewe and Nantwich. Victoria Avenue/ Wistaston Road is one of the main roads into Crewe town centre yet there are no buses along this road and no buses to Leighton hospital the other way. Would like better connections between communities rather than just into large centres such as a service that runs from Crewe to Haslington, Weston and Shavington in a loop.</p>	
<b>Congleton</b>	<b>12</b>
<p>Congleton has no bus service at all on a Sunday and the frequency of the train services are also poor. Additional service to Crewe or Macclesfield would allow people to travel further or use facilities/shopping in those towns.</p> <p>Better links from West Heath to Congleton railway station and from West Heath to other parts of Congleton. Link to the airport which is just 25 minutes away. More links from Congleton to the north, there is no service to Alderley Park, Wilmslow or the airport despite many that travel this way for work/leisure. Residents of West Heath and Lower Heath need a regularly service, even if it meant reducing others to hourly to spread service about. Bus to Barn Road shopping area needed. No link to Castaway or Little Moreton Hall.</p> <p>The new commercial and housing developments on Viking Way, Hulme Walfield next to Congleton Tesco is not serviced by a bus route, similar issue on the A34 from the ambulance station to the new Quarry roundabout including many developments and a proposed school on the Redrow site. These need linking to Congleton, Macclesfield, the airport and the hospitals. Shelter at Congleton hospital should be closer to the hospital rather than further away.</p>	
<b>Handforth</b>	<b>2</b>
<p>Poorly served with bus services. The estate near the bypass has no bus service, would be nice if this could be added to the 312 or 130 route.</p>	
<b>Holmes Chapel</b>	<b>7</b>
<p>Would use services to Macclesfield or Knutsford if available, provide a service along the A50 to Knutsford to allow use of the links there. Services to cover Northwich. Cranage and Allostock. Need a bus service to Nantwich or Crewe shopping centre if possible. Bus service that operates weekdays to Macclesfield hospital and return.</p>	
<b>Knutsford</b>	<b>11</b>
<p>Reinstate the service between High Legh and Knutsford, this was previously coordinated with Warrington via Lymm. Bus services are poor, bring back the circular bus. Better links to places such as Goostrey. Route from Crewe to Knutsford without the need to change on an already lengthy route. Work with neighbouring councils to extend bus service from Altrincham to Knutsford via Tatton Park with a stop at Gauntlet Birds of Prey. Link Manchester airport to Knutsford via Altrincham. No service connectivity with Lower Peover and Plumley with Knutsford. Provide regular services linking Knutsford, Lymm and High Legh. Better links to Macclesfield and Macclesfield college to support employment.</p> <p>A route from Knutsford, Mobberley, Wilmslow to the airport and employment centres would pay for itself after a few months. Links to Holmes Chapel.</p>	

<b>Macclesfield</b>	<b>44</b>
<p>Would be good to have an evening connection between Macclesfield and Wilmslow. Provide a direct fast link / more frequent between Bollington – Macclesfield – Manchester airport. A bus service to the airport that is regular and doesn't take hours. Reinstate the service between Macclesfield and Buglawton, it was used a lot until it became unreliable. More buses running in the centre of Macclesfield, the stops in the centre have been closed. Sunday service into Macclesfield needed. A bus service down Chester Road would be nice, no buses on this side of town. Evening/ Sunday bus service in Bollington. A service that drops off at Barracks Mill. Make buses run on estates not just the shortest route to the town. Bus stop on Adlington Road or near to newer estate on Browns Park. Provide a school bus from Tytherington to Fallibroome. Provide extra services for market days and on the Treacle Market, there is no transport on a Sunday.</p> <p>We need a bus service bought back to the Hurdsfield estate, it's too far to walk for the 10. People don't go out since the services has stopped and would also help the environment. Not enough bus stops in Macclesfield. Macclesfield Town Council is working hard to revitalise the town centre with the Sunday Treacle Market and investment in the nighttime economy, the bus service must support this. Still no direct bus from Disley to Macclesfield via Poynton. A shuttle bus from Hazel Grove to Macclesfield every half hour would be an improvement. Go from the 192 terminus stop and stay on the main road to Macclesfield bus station. Links to Leek and Bosley needed. Macclesfield train station buses that serve Hurdsfield at peak hours (morning 8-10 and afternoons 4-6.30)</p> <p>Improvements to Macclesfield bus station including television screens on next services and which bay they go from. Replace the netting with proper glass panels to improve insulation. No information point provided and no staff available to help. Toilets should be reopened even if you had to pay would be beneficial.</p>	
<b>Middlewich</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>Reinstate the bus stop on Elm Road, the Warmingham Lane bus stop has a very bus road to cross to use, spend a little of the money to improve bus services on the Elm Road bus stop. D&amp;G keep taking this service off. Services to Northwich.</p>	
<b>Nantwich</b>	<b>56</b>
<p>Need a good bus service/ direct/ regular bus service between Nantwich and Leighton hospital, asking people to travel to Crewe and change is no good and car parking can be a nightmare at Leighton. Going via Crewe bus often do not fit in with appointment times. Following the old 28 bus through Willaston, Wistaston, Crewe would work for this.</p> <p>A link to Tarporley in the evenings to allow workers to use it. A direct service to Sandbach would be really useful. A bus that serves Worleston would be helpful. A direct bus from Nantwich to Crewe railway station. A route that would take in Church Minshull directly to Nantwich. Local service to and from the new Kingsbourne housing estate to Nantwich.</p> <p>Too many buses use Crewe Road Nantwich as a route compared to Mill Lane Nantwich via Newcastle Road/London Road, yet the other route has only a few buses a day passing even more housing that Crewe Road. Crewe Road is well serviced, London Road isn't.</p>	
<b>Poynton</b>	<b>15</b>
<p>1 bus linking Poynton to Hazel Grove is not enough. If you can't provide proper services let us join Stockport. Quicker route needed from Poynton to Disley. Direct bus to Manchester from Poynton, trains are overcrowded at peak times. Sunday services needed. There needs to be service along London Road North to connect to the 191 service at Hazel Grove. There is no route from Carpet World along A523 into Poynton but bus stop markings all along the road. A link between Poynton and Wilmslow.</p> <p>Priority should be more frequent buses, links to Stockport bus and train station, park and ride, a service to Wilmslow and Sunday service. Link from Poynton to Macclesfield is poor. Important to have good connections to students travelling to Aquinas college and Stockport college. Reinstatement of some of the bus stops not in use such as Dicken's Lane where there are new housing developments and no operating stops.</p>	
<b>Sandbach</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>Please provide some form of transport through Sandbach to Crewe, Winsford and Macc on a Sunday. There are no buses at all on a Sunday or bank holiday.</p>	

<b>Shavington</b>	<b>16</b>
Weekend / Sunday and bank holiday services for Shavington. More frequent service / easier service to Nantwich, be useful to have an evening service to Nantwich, a service to Nantwich without having to go via Crewe. Crewe – Shavington – Nantwich direct and return bus, more regular buses between Shavington and Crewe. Should have an evening service through 106 funds from Persimmon (Shavington Park Estate), where is that (see planning reference 12/3114N)	
<b>Stockport</b>	<b>2</b>
Improved service to Stockport/Manchester. Used to travel on the 378 service to Stockport but this no longer operates.	
<b>Wilmslow</b>	<b>12</b>
Area is poorly served with buses, must change routes at larger hubs. Would like a link to Stockport and beyond. Need a route that goes down Adlington Road to join the transport options into Manchester, Crewe and Macclesfield. Needs a joined up plan with Greater Manchester transport, especially in the evening to allow travel to Manchester for events. Would be nice to have buses later in the day/evening. A route covering Great Warford/ Chelford area to Wilmslow. Access to Stockport, Poynton, Chester, Cheshire Oaks, Parris Wood, Cheadle and Cheadle Royal.	
The T2 and 312 duplicate each other, funding from the T2 could be an example to other retailers for a joint funding. BSIP money might be used to connect to Cheadle and Cheadle Royal. Need a bus service from Handforth to Wilmslow before 9AM for school services.	
Expand the TfGM services 42C and 42B to Wilmslow to improve overall connectivity.	
<b>Other area</b>	<b>16</b>
The 310 to go through Styal, we have no bus service and trains are frequently cancelled. Cannot walk out of Styal village as it is too dangerous. Mere has no accessible bus service.	
No service to Quarry Bank Mill any more. Provide a service which runs from Bunbury to Chester. Link Disley to other places in Cheshire. Comments on Northwich and Winsford service. No service to Mottram St Andrew. Keep the T2 free bus, will be much missed! Need a link between Bunbury and Tarporley. Bus to the National Trust at Lyme, either new or modified existing service to reduce congestion on the A6. Bus service to Brereton Green.	
Further stops in Chelford to allow school children to get to Knutsford High School and Wimslow.	
<b>General / across borough improvements</b>	
<b>Increase service provision (e.g., increase frequency, days, reliability)</b>	<b>403</b>
Increase frequency of buses, should be hourly/ half hourly. Increase frequency and hours to rural areas. Important to have frequent buses to avoid mental health problems. At peak times/school times need to run more buses or double decker buses.	
Reinstate weekend services, should have 7 days a week service. Sunday buses a priority as no alternative on a Sunday, even at a reduced service. Better running times (both earlier and later services).	
Buses need to be more reliable and on time, especially if they only run two-hourly, too long to wait if one doesn't show up. Combination of low frequency and unreliability of routes makes them unworkable.	
<b>Need more and /or better bus links / connections</b>	<b>196</b>

Links to employment sites, e.g. AstraZeneca. Better links to the hospitals / doctors, especially to fit in with visiting times. Links to community hubs, affordable transport to and from local day services. Provide bus services for events and activities such as party in the park, pop up markets, National Trust sites, and transport festivals.

Direct links between towns to reduce travel times. Rural provision / rural villages should be a priority and do not need to operate at a profit to exist. Alter existing routes to encompass poorly provided villages. Bus service to link with out-of-town stores / supermarkets such as Tesco, Boots, M&S and B&M and retail parks. Direct links to schools from out-of-town locations.

Bus services to connect with train timetables and other buses where possible. Express service to all airports within 60 miles. Integration with GM services / cross-border Bee Network routes / Chester/ Cheshire West, including road, rail and tram. Better joined up services to other buses, too many buses are running together on the same route.

**Improve the bus fleet/ infrastructure**

**94**

Look at renewing the bus fleet, some vehicles are old and dirty. Unreliability of bus fleet causing issues on D&G and High Peak routes. Would like to see electric buses. Use smaller vehicles, especially on very rural routes / would smaller buses be more cost-efficient?

Better accommodation of mobility scooters /walking aids often can't get on suitable vehicles. More spaces for carrying bikes on buses/ allow bikes. Easy access buses needed as some struggle to climb up and down multiple steps to get on and off the bus. Ensure bus pass readers are working, many times they are not so it appears few passengers are onboard than there actually are. Need more bus shelters, especially ones with seating as many bus users are elderly and disabled. Timetables need updating and cleaning as do bus shelters. Better lighting at bus stops, especially for winter. Unable to walk to the nearest bus stop. Cannot use buses as am blind and won't know where I am as there are no spoken bus stop announcements.

More comfortable vehicles. Vehicles which don't break down / better servicing of buses. Updates to the bus station. Some bus stops have no signs, especially on the main road so you're not sure where to get on and off the bus. Policing of bus policies by drivers such as passengers smoking, swearing and other anti-social behaviour on buses. General code of conduct for bus passengers to follow. USB charging ports very useful on buses.

**Promotion and communication**

**87**

Cheshire East to promote bus services to increase patronage rather than cuts being implemented. Communicate alterations to bus services and promote new services. Promote and advertise more, especially around the £2 fare. Updates if a bus is cancelled / information when waiting for buses that don't come, especially when due to scheduled road works/ road closures.

Print timetables / timetables in large print available e.g., in libraries, not everyone has access to the internet/smartphone. Ensure up to date information and timetables at all bus stops. Serious issue with timetable information, some dated from 2017/2018. Live tracking to be made available for all buses/ real time information / app that shows where services are. Improve publicity for FlexiLink to increase usage, most people have never heard of it. Visit schools and colleges to speak to students.

**Rely on the buses / bus services are vital**

**78**

Preserve public transport for the vulnerable and elderly people in outlying communities for whom it is a vital resource. Buses are a vital service within the niche they operate. Bus vital for social habits and to improve local shopping, contribute to the wellbeing of rural residents. Don't use buses frequently but would use/rely on in the future. Rely on buses to meet caring duties. Anxiety and stress caused by buses either not showing up, running late or leaving individuals stranded. Miss withdrawn bus service, go out less now. Stop removing already infrequent services, results in added hardship for elderly people affected. Lack of transport is a real concern for some, especially in rural areas. Rural areas at risk of isolation.

Can't afford taxis, don't have a car / unable to drive. Taxis not always available. No other way of getting into town other than walking which wouldn't be possible while carrying shopping. Train alone is not suitable alternative for all journeys or for everybody. Difficult to run a car due to the introduction of car park charges.

<b>Bus ticketing / operator comments</b>	<b>37</b>
<p>Allow day tickets it should be transferable on all routes. Allow cross/multi operator tickets. Return tickets should be valid with all operators. Allows the use of cards not contactless. Price rises to be reasonable. Continue with the £2 fare. Arriva offered a 46 week pass for £250 the D&amp;G equivalent is a 52 week pass for £450. Minimum fare for short rides, e.g., 2/3 stops to make buses competitive with taxis. Remove the 9:30AM starting time for the bus pass. Buses should be cheaper for children / children's tickets for school travel. Introduce bus passes for 16–25-year-olds like the rail cards. Bus passes for carers.</p> <p>Since Arriva left the buses have been more unreliable. Ask Stagecoach to take up some routes as they are more reliable and don't breakdown all the time like D&amp;G. Glad D&amp;G took over the bus services rather than them being removed. Buses should be re-nationalised. Customer service training needed for bus drivers. Complaints about D&amp;G customer service. Drivers do not stop at scheduled stops, need training. Security needed on buses. Lobby for more government money to provide for services. When two operators have similar routes would prefer better spacing of times between different operators. Allow dogs on buses.</p>	
<b>Bus priority on roads / reduction in traffic</b>	<b>28</b>
<p>Introduce parking restrictions on bus routes to help with timings. More bus lanes. We should be driving less and using buses, need to get people out of their cars. Stop highway engineers from favouring motorists, provide some bus only access in places and give buses priority over other traffic. Rural areas need buses to reduce traffic, which is dire, services should increase to improve quality of life. If you're serious about climate change improvement there should be a lot more buses. Keep fares low to get people to switch from the car.</p>	
<b>General negative comment</b>	<b>13</b>
<p>Public transport is inadequate and expensive. Why if there's funding are you decimating rural routes? You are withdrawing routes and then asking what routes could be altered/extended – totally illogical. Transport should not be subsidised by taxpayers money. Operate within your means why expand services that may cost more and set services up to fail long term. Liquidate ANSA. Other general negative comment about the Council or consultation.</p>	
<b>General positive comment</b>	<b>8</b>
<p>Current service suitable / ok. Routes used are very efficient. Important that current service continues. Talking to neighbours and friends there is a lot of enthusiasm for the proposals.</p>	

## Appendix 2: Email responses

**Table 5: Summary of Email comments received**

### Individual responses e.g. local residents

#### Removal of the 70 bus service (3 mentions)

Removal of the 70-bus service will be very difficult for older generation who have no transport and need to get to Nantwich for appointments. Cannot get into town for shopping, have no computer or mobile phone. Will be isolated, please do not take this lifeline away completely, cannot afford taxis. Agree it has low levels of use, rather than withdrawing the service suggest the frequency be reduced instead, would make sense to run the service Tue-Thurs and Sat like before, it was well used. Don't need it every day - twice a week will do.

#### Extension of the 72 & 73 bus service (3 mentions)

The plan for a direct bus from Nantwich to Leighton Hospital needs to be prioritised. This will ensure that vulnerable individuals, including the elderly, can attend appointments. Would use this service on a regular basis to attend appointments at Leighton Hospital as it is impossible to find a parking place. For residents of Nantwich the ability for the elderly to get into town or keep medical or dental appointments has been dire.

#### Go-Too / FlexiLink Service (3 mentions)

The Go-Too service is excellent and has opened up a lifeline for rural communities. However, the service provision is poorly communicated. The major obstacle to the transport is that it is not integrated with other key transport hubs so utilising it as an alternative to the car is not possible. Extended hours of operation and connections to key destinations would greatly enhance the offering and gain greater patronage. Please can you allow Go-Too users to bring their dog on board, after a long walk one way, would be nice to catch the bus back home. The Dial A Ride service has to be booked in advance and people who have used it say that it is not always reliable.

#### Updates to bus services generally

Would use the buses more often if they were reliable. Would like to see the Chester Road bus reinstated. If the buses to Leek were more frequent than every two hours would use more often. Buses running later in the evening would be an asset. Macclesfield bus station needs updating, it is cold waiting for buses and no public toilets is a great concern.

Please consider changing the times for bus service 130, so that it has better start and finish times for 9:30am to 5:30pm workers.

Previously could use no 8 bus to travel directly into town from Hungerford Road (journey time approx. 10 mins) but now the bus travels into town via other estates. Please revert to original journey time. The outward journey is excellent, on time and friendly caring drivers.

Bring back the smaller buses that used to travel around Alsager and surrounding villages. This was a great service, would encourage me to leave the car at home.

Would like either the No. 39 bus or the No. 12 bus to go to Nantwich more frequently - preferably every hour in the daytime.

After the no. 2 Service was withdrawn in Macclesfield it left many people without a bus service, please consider the following:

1. The existing no. 3 service turns onto Congleton Rd. at the Flowerpot Pub and goes turns into Thornton Av. and then turns again into Valley Rd and then turns back onto Ivy Lane and continues its normal route. This could be reversed on its return journey.
2. The no. 3 route again turns onto Congleton Rd. Thornton Av. but then continues up Thirlmere, Kenilworth av. Kendal Rd. and the back onto Ivy Road and keeps to its existing route, again this would be reversed on its return journey.

## Table 5: Summary of Email comments received

Route B - Crewe rd. Nantwich after The Peacock & route A Newcastle rd. after Cheerbrooks - is it not possible to have a few buses diverted from Crewe Rd., to go down Newcastle Rd. instead as with extra housing it means a good 20-minute walk for the elderly to get into town easily. Use the buses daily, but with a disability now it is proving more difficult, as not every bus stop has a seat, and cannot stand for long

In terms of Middlewich larger buses are needed for schools. Bus's unreliable, late or don't turn up and no one is tracking or monitoring. Weekend services are needed to reduce car usage. Holmes chapel high school and Sandbach high school journeys have lots of issues. Bus stops near new houses are needed. Bus stops nearer bungalows and nursing homes. Would be nice to have bus every 30 min, as its always late anyway. Needs to be a bus that goes directly to Northwich instead of all round the houses to Winsford first. There is no bus service on Sundays. Return to the half hourly service for the 37 at busy times please.

Disappointed that there are no bus services to and from the town centre from the Kingsbourne Estate in Nantwich

Use the No.12 Route at least 3 times per week to travel into Crewe and onto Leighton Hospital and rely on the service a great deal.

Support initiative for the No12 bus to be available on Sundays to Rope & for the Bus 84 to service Willaston at late nights. Vote for the frequency of the bus No. 12 & 84 services, & the extensions of the existing bus routes. Hope to see that buses maintain hygienic conditions; seats are improved & that drivers are more considerate to the elderly passengers.

The greatest limiting factors to bus use, are: Ticketing. Customers must pay separately on each bus. There is no 'through ticket' or day pass, which is valid on all routes Day passes and weekly tickets need to cover all routes within the region, so that people can get to where they want to go without paying twice. Routes. In Crewe, almost all buses use Edleston Road, Edleston Road is slow, delays occur. This right turn could be banned to cars, which can use the next road (High St) to make their right turn. Also, no bus goes directly along Nantwich Road, from Crewe Railway station to Aldi. All deviate to the town centre & back. This discourages passengers from Nantwich & Wistaston areas from using the bus to get to the railway station. Lack of Bus priority lanes. There are few, not enough, the bus needs to be faster and cheaper than the car. Parked cars. So many routes have to navigate parked cars, to help keep road clear for buses, is essential.

Please run a service to Didsbury again as do not drive and unable to see family who live there very much.

The bus 92 to Buglowton along Buxton Road may need to go further down with Buxton Road uptown the new estate Hudson meadows. It's a long walk on a steep terrain.

Pleased that the 130 Sunday service has been reinstated. Very satisfactory when I used it, driver on time and very pleasant.

Would use the service more if it returned to every hour and a half, or better still, hourly as it once was. Travel from Hazel Grove to Poynton to do some shopping and have to stay in Poynton each time for 2 hours and 45min, as there is no alternative bus service to return home.

Is there any good reason why the distance between the successive bus stops at the Free Life Church/Westbury Close and corner of Whirlow Road/Laidon Avenue is at least twice the distance between other adjacent bus stops? Why is there no stop in the vicinity of the Fuller Drive/Chalfield Close corner?

Willaston C84 bus service does not have a last nightly bus in the village. This bus could be from Nantwich at a later time than at present. It would allow us to watch a film at the civic hall and return by public transport.

I live in Holmes Chapel, and we have a very limited bus service to Congleton and Crewe. With an ageing population we need more and better services, particularly to Northwich, Knutsford, Altrincham and Wilmslow.

When train schedules were disrupted, I was unable to go to Greater Manchester by train. Instead, I realised there are bus connections. From Macclesfield to Wilmslow, by 130 bus. Then onto Handforth where one can get a connecting service 42C from shopping centre and on to Manchester. Also, one can go on the 130 service to Manchester airport to connect to buses/trams.

## Table 5: Summary of Email comments received

The new bus station/car park is already perfect, however, there might be a few additions that would make it more so e.g. have one or two recycle-bins inside the waiting area, a self-operating service search, some Sunday bus services, new bus routes may be introduced, which would be very useful serving supermarkets, hospital visitors.

Crewe Grand Junction only served by 1 bus route, bus station to retail park takes too long (25 minutes) would make sense to operate the Elm Drive/Sydney part of the urney as a circular service. Sometimes use 85 service but if I miss the bus, it is a 1 and a half hour gap until the next one. Suggest the it be split at Crewe into two separate routes Crewe-Nantwich and Crewe-Newcastle to enable to Nantwich route to operate on an hourly pattern. Endorse re-instatement of 78 Nantwich – Leighton bus route has a good chance of being viable.

Preserve rail bus links previously supplied by trains services, in support of the rail link restoration group.

### Group / organisation / council or councillor responses

#### ALIVE group

The elderly who use the bus state it is their only means of getting to Nantwich. The Go-to bus has to be booked online or by phone and payment is made on line. Updates about pickup times are on your smart phone. None of the ALIVE group would be able to do this. What happens about their bus pass. The Go-to costs £4 for a return journey so the elderly are being penalised. If the Go-to service is extended to include Leighton hospital a cut off time of 2.30pm would exclude afternoon appointments. Bunbury appears to be forgotten - cannot even get to Tarporley from the village.

#### Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council

Improve the No. 39 bus service and implement the evening service, which was funded through S106 money, in connection with Shavington Park. Consider improvements to ticketing by implementing through-ticketing principles. This will help avoid multiple charges and encourage bus use. Consider various highway improvements, such as implementing one-way systems and adding double yellow lines in selected areas, to improve bus mobility and provide better service to residents, ultimately encouraging more bus use.

#### Knutsford Town Councillor

Have concerns about the lack of bus service in our town and to/from our town. In Knutsford we have a wonderful bus station which is lacking only in buses. If you work in Northwich the 89 service doesn't service needs, not early or late enough. Similarly, the 88 service is restrictive and not nearly often enough. If we had buses every 15 minutes which cost £1 per journey I believe they would be well used by people. Also need a well-established town bus which will take people around town and into the main shopping area, doctors, library, schools which costs £1 per journey.

#### Poynton Town Council

Welcome the increase to an hourly service between Middlewood, Poynton and Stockport. Ideally the Town Council would like to see an hourly service to Macclesfield and later evening and Sunday services but appreciate that this might not be possible at this time. In addition, the Town Council welcomes the improvement in the Flexible bus service.

**Table 5: Summary of Email comments received**

**Bunbury Councillor**

It is very much in my own and the Councils interests not to isolate the rural ward of Bunbury. More than happy to meet to work through any possible ideas.

1. Residents would like to keep the public transport with the opportunity to travel to both Tarporley and Nantwich more frequently.
2. Residents do not wish to rely on the Go-Too service. It does not accept concessionary travel, more complicated to use, subject to availability giving reduced options to plan ahead, and does not go out of borough. Problems with the Go-Too service in that disabled passengers have reported replacement services do not have wheelchair access. Digital exclusion for passengers subject to rural lack of broadband and telephone facilities. Concessionary users feel aggrieved that having paid taxes all their lives, they can't use the passes on the flexible system proposed.
3. Bunbury village suffers from a lack of walkable school routes. Many school transport buses enter and leave the village but there is no facility for those to be used by residents.
4. There are no bus shelters in the village. This is a deciding factor for vulnerable residents as to whether they can travel in the winter or bad weather days.
5. Connection to the existing 84 bus is only a few miles away, but currently not available.
6. Removal of a dedicated service would remove it from further government grant funding that might become available.
7. Residents are rightly wary of giving out bank card details over the phone or online. Age UK proactively advise against this and not enough has been communicated to residents to increase assurance.
8. Bunbury medical centre is partnered with Tarporley medical centre. Bunbury residents have access to Tarporley War Memorial Hospital, but without public transport to get there.
9. School children predominantly attend Tarporley High School. Meeting with friends can be difficult and they often feel disconnected during school holidays.
10. Town centres need visitors – excluding rural communities without the means to travel independently. Market Day in Nantwich is especially popular.
11. A large part of the south of the borough would have no public transport which is against our own CEC open, fair, green policy.
12. I arranged a village get together with CEC representative from several services in January of this year. We ran a survey and lack of public transport came out as top of that survey.
13. The ALIVE group for the over 50's in Bunbury village is run by two volunteers who regularly provide transport to doctors and hospital appointments in Tarporley, Nantwich and Leighton. This is not a sustainable solution.

**Cranage Parish Council**

Losses of regular local bus services in recent years can cause social isolation and also prevent rural living for residents who cannot drive. The return of the 319-bus service to a frequent and regular Monday – Friday service is requested, to provide connectivity into Holmes Chapel and from there on to Crewe and Congleton.

**Holmes Chapel Parish Council**

Holmes Chapel Parish Council supports the plan to introduce more Demand Responsive Transport, particularly noting that it would be inclusive of all ages with fixed fares and reduction for concessions. This would need to be complementary to the fixed timetable service. This approach would be welcomed in the area around Holmes Chapel. From an environmental perspective we believe that the Council should move to make the town centred bus service, an all-electric bus fleet. We would finally urge that serious consideration is given to an APP based real-time bus tracker that provides users with the information they need to plan and use local bus services with confidence.

**Table 5: Summary of Email comments received**

**Congleton Town Council**

The Town Council congratulates Cheshire East on securing an additional £3.455m to improve bus services across the borough and for the improvements already made on the 38 route.

Proposal 3. Congleton Town Council welcomes the proposals for the FlexiLink/ Go Too merger and increasing the offer of these services by extending the hours to include the evenings and Saturdays and making the service available to all age groups where there is no alternative or suitable service. Key points: the definition of no alternative or suitable service needs to be made clear. Increasing the prices to £2 for concessions and £4 for full fare-payers may be too much too quickly and it would be better to offer reduced fares (half this price) to establish the service. The service needs greater promotion. Service user eligibility should be kept under review. The booking process needs to be as easy as possible.

Improvements to buses in Congleton: The growth of Congleton Town and the surrounding parishes means many areas of Congleton are not within a 10-minute walk of a bus stop. We would like to see extensions and changes to the local bus services. Extend and improve the round-town services so that it reaches more areas of Congleton. Review routes so they go further into estates (like Henshall Hall and Bath Vale) so no house is more than 500m away, Add a West Heath circular route, add new round-town services for new housing estates e.g. off Manchester Road and Back Lane. Add services to industrial estates like Radnor Park and Viking Way to facilitate local employment travel, add a bus service between the shopping centres in Congleton (Town Centre, Barn Road, West Heath), Offer more mini-buses aligned with needs e.g. lunch clubs, blood clinics, and on-demand services, Implement connecting services from every part of town to the station without changing buses, to fit with key commuter trains from 7-9am and 5-7pm, Align buses at Macclesfield and Holmes Chapel train stations to link with the last trains back from Manchester, Create day/week/monthly passes that can be used for bus travel, regardless of the company, Invest in tap-in, tap-out technology for travel, Have clear information at the bus stops about the buses servicing that stop, Have clear information about bus timing, ideally real-time information at the stop, but if not well-advertised bus apps with the real-time information. Ideally, we would like to see all buses being able to take wheelchairs and power chairs. There was also concern about how to flag down a bus when you are visually impaired and struggle to distinguish the noise of a bus from other large vehicles and concern about the positioning and clarity of information at bus stops.

**Bollington Town Council**

The Number 10 and 391/392 bus services are widely used and relied on by a significant number of Bollington residents, particularly for transport to Macclesfield and to a lesser extent to Stockport on a daily basis.

Proposal 2. We consider it most important that the current level of these services for the southern leg through Bollington is maintained on at least an hourly basis.

Proposal 3. FlexiLink provides an important service but is somewhat restricted in availability at present. With the projected increase in numbers of persons aged over 65 in future years we suggest that this service be developed to allow for persons over 65 and that the service be made more flexible in booking arrangements. We would prefer to see more effort made to introduce linked local shuttle services in those towns identified as local service centres. The proposal to provide an improved Flexilink service collecting passengers from prescribed pick-up points or door to door on need is supported but the booking arrangements must be flexible and preferably same day with say 2-hour notice. We believe that there would be an increase in usage with an improved more flexible service. to serve urban areas where public transport is inadequate.

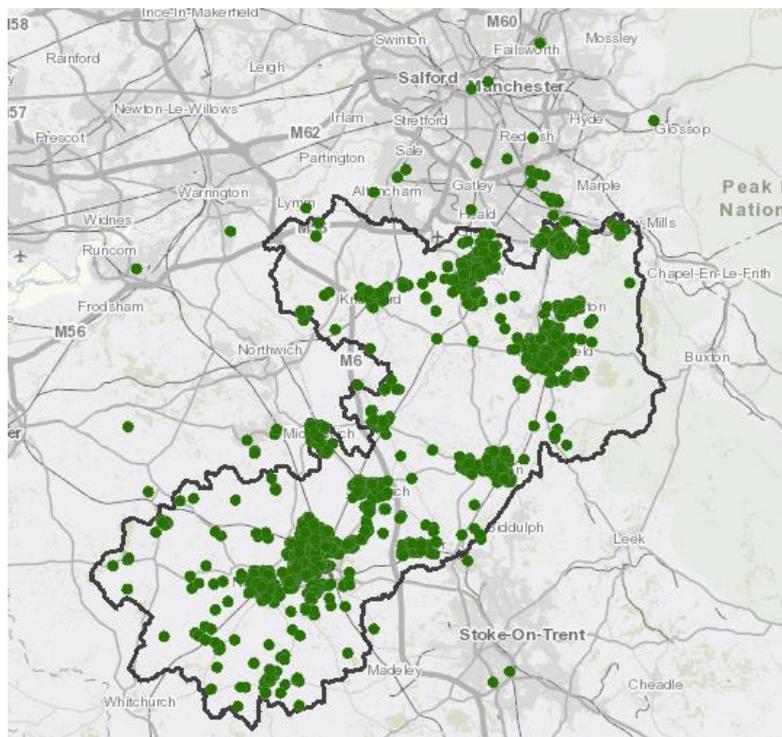
The increase in central government funding of £3.455 m is a welcome improvement – of the options offered we would prefer to see this used to restore Sunday services, extend evening services and to fund extensions to existing service routes to cover services to Macclesfield District Hospital and to the Barracks Mill Retail Park.

With increasing emphasis on climate change it is important to encourage people to use public transport where possible and convenient. To do this, the bus service must be available on a regular and reliable basis throughout the day at a reasonable cost. Support must be provided for the increasing numbers of elderly people which inevitably will include more people with mobility and health issues. The present bus service can be improved by ensuring that it is available all day and every day including Sundays.

# Appendix 3: Supporting maps

**Map 1: All respondent postcodes**

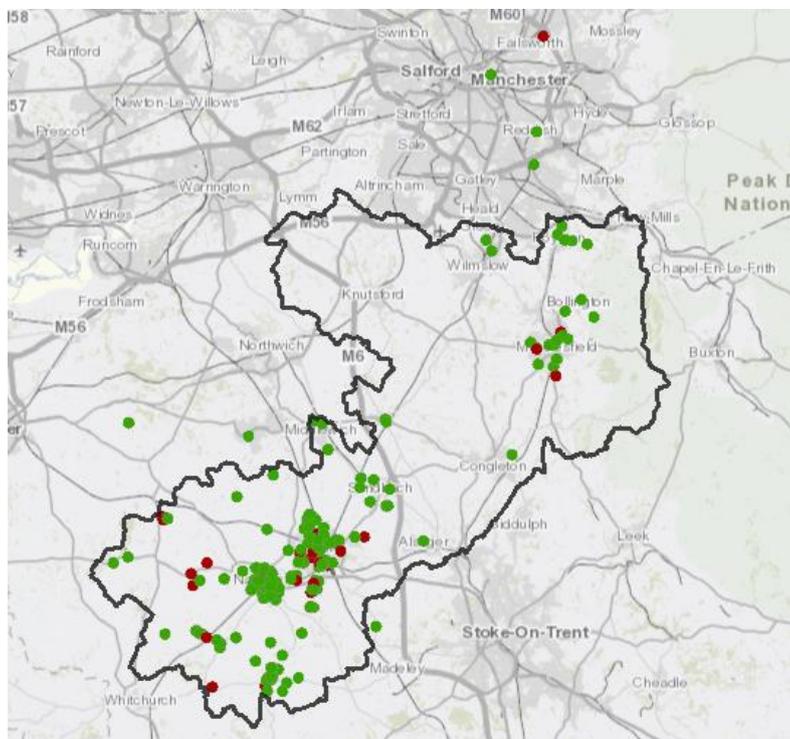
This map plots all respondent postcodes that were provided as part of the consultation. There was a good spread of response from across the borough and some response from neighbouring areas.



**Map 2: Impact on how respondents would use the Nantwich Rural services if the proposed changes occurred by postcode.**

This map plots respondent postcodes by those who stated that they would use the service for the first time or more often than they do now – indicated by the green dots compared to those who stated that they would use the service less – indicated by the red dots.

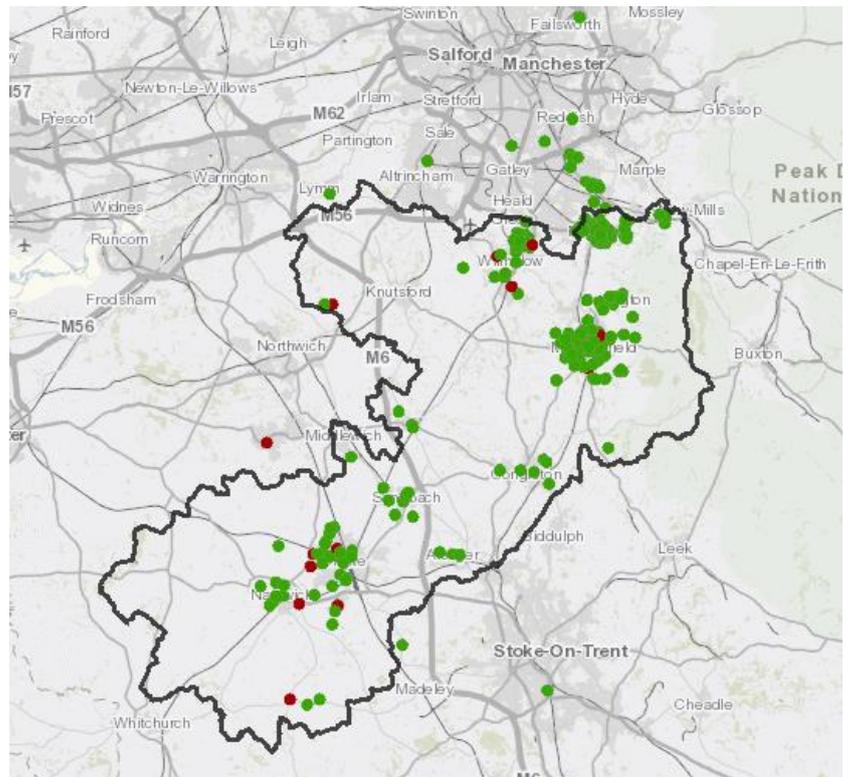
Those who indicated that there would be no change in service (those who answered for the same amount or would still not use) are not included within the map.



**Map 3: Impact on how respondents would use the 391/392 service if the proposed changes occurred by postcode.**

This map plots respondent postcodes by those who stated that they would use the service for the first time or more often than they do now – indicated by the green dots compared to those who stated that they would use the service less – indicated by the red dots.

Those who indicated that there would be no change in service (those who answered for the same amount or would still not use) are not included within the map.



## Appendix 4: Demographic breakdowns

A number of demographic questions were asked at the end of the survey to ensure there was a wide range of views from across different characteristics. All of the questions were optional and therefore won't add up to the total number of responses received.

**Table 6: Number of survey respondents by representation**

Category	Count	Percent
As an individual (e.g., local resident)	1,978	96%
As an elected Cheshire East Ward Councillor, or Town/Parish Council / Clerk /Councillor	33	2%
On behalf of a group, organisation or club	16	1%
On behalf of a local business	6	< 1%
Cheshire East staff member / employee	< 5	< 5%
Other e.g., bus operator, on behalf of child / family member who takes the bus, health employee	16	1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,055</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 7: Number of survey respondents by gender**

Category	Count	Percent
Male	755	40%
Female	1,082	57%
Other gender identity	< 5	< 5%
Prefer not to say	50	3%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,890</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8: Number of survey respondents by age group**

Category	Count	Percent
16-24	74	4%
25-34	81	4%
35-44	143	7%
45-54	216	11%
55-64	287	15%
65-74	452	24%
75-84	435	23%
85 and over	170	9%
Prefer not to say	52	3%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,910</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 9: Number of survey respondents by ethnic origin**

Category	Count	Percent
White British / English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / Irish	1728	92%
Any other White background	31	2%
Asian/Asian British	17	1%
Black African/Caribbean/Black British	10	1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	9	< 1%
Other ethnic origin	< 5	< 5%
Prefer not to say	88	5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,885</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 10: Number of survey respondents by religious belief**

Category	Count	Percent
Christian	1088	58%
No Religion	542	29%
Buddhist	7	< 1%
Hindu	5	< 1%
Muslim	5	< 1%
Jewish	< 5	< 5%
Other religious belief	17	1%
Prefer not to say	205	11%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,877</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 11: Number of survey respondents by limited activity due to health problem / disability**

Category	Count	Percent
Yes, a lot	487	26%
Yes, a little	393	21%
Not at all	886	47%
Prefer not to say	136	7%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>100%</b>

Report produced on 24/07/2024 by the Research and Consultation Team, Cheshire East Council, Email [RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk) for further information.