

Lostwithiel Transport Survey 2016

Report for the Lostwithiel Neighbourhood Plan.

May 2016



The survey was undertaken in March-April 2016 through a questionnaire distributed at a public consultation meeting and through the local Community Newsletter. Questionnaires could be returned via a FREEPOST address or via collection boxes in community locations. The questionnaire was individually completed, though with some questions asking about the transport use of the wider household. A total of 108 questionnaires were returned, representing 185 residents. Some respondents came from the wider surrounding rural area and are treated as Lostwithiel transport users for the purposes of this survey. Two additional responses from residents in Par and Bodmin were not included in the general tabulations but are referred to below for the views of local visitors to the town.

While the respondents do not form a statistically representative sample of the town population, they do represent the views of those most interested in and enthusiastic about transport and travel issues. Appendix One shows the demographic structure of the respondents and compares them with the total town population.

Travel to Work or Education

51 people reported a current place of work or education. More than a half of these worked in Lostwithiel itself and the majority of these walked to work. Those who used a car or van were typically those who lived in outlying areas or travelled around the parish as part of their work. The next most frequent places of work or education were St Austell and Bodmin. The most distant place of work was South Wales, a person who also worked from home. Tables 1 and 2 present the full results.

Table 1 Place of Work or Education

Place of work	Number of people
Lostwithiel	24
St Austell	9
Bodmin	6
Par	2
Truro	2
Plymouth	2
Lerryn	1
Roche	1
Upton Cross	1
South Wales	1
Various locations around the county	2

Table 2 Travel to Work

Most used	Respondent	Others in household
Car	32	23
Train	3	5
Bus	0	5
Cycle	0	1
Taxi	0	2
Walk	15	11

32 people, two thirds of those replying, used their car to travel to work and a further 23 members of the households surveyed also travelled by car to work, school, or college. The train was used by very few people, even those working in St Austell or Bodmin. This is perhaps surprising as work-time rail services are generally good, but lack of usage probably reflects the fact that changing work patterns mean that many people start work later in the day, when it is more difficult—and often impossible—to find a convenient train service. For those working in Bodmin, the Parkway station is not convenient as it is located some miles out of town.

As might be expected, given the lack of bus services, few people travel by bus for work or education. Those few bus users are children using the school buses and, perhaps, a small number who are able to use the National Express coach service to Plymouth.

When asked if improved passenger transport would lead them to switch from car to bus or train, a large majority said that they would. Of those responding to this question, 20 said that they would prefer to use bus or train and 10 said that they would continue to travel by car even if services were improved. The reasons given for wanting to switch away from car use were ‘environmental’ (4 people) and a desire to avoid parking problems at their destination (1 person). Those who would not change to public transport said that this was because they had difficult or ‘unsocial’ working hours (3 people), they worked in remote or rural locations that would not be conveniently served by buses (3 people), or they needed to convey tools or work materials to their place of work. A frequent comment was that trains and buses needed to be timetabled at convenient times for work if they were to be used for work travel and so need to reflect actual work times and patterns.

Travel for shopping and leisure

When asked what mode of transport is most often used for shopping or leisure, the dominance of car use was again apparent. 89 of the 108 respondents relied on a car for these purposes. There were, however, 12 train users. These people were disproportionately found in the older age groups—only 1 is under 50—and all except 2 are Bodmin shoppers: Bodmin shops are not conveniently served by trains or buses. Only 1 person regularly used a bus for shopping or leisure; this was presumably one of the limited supermarket bus services on offer.

Table 5 Transport for Shopping and Leisure

Most used	Number of people
Car	89
Train	12
Bus	1
Lerryn Minibus	2
Taxi	1

Respondents were asked where they shopped when not shopping within Lostwithiel itself (see Table 6). Most frequently mentioned was Bodmin: visited by 93 of the 108. St Austell was mentioned by 48 of the respondents. For less everyday items of shopping, it was Truro (mentioned 58 times) and Plymouth (mentioned 23 times) that were most popular. These frequently visited towns—all located on the mainline railway—were invariably visited by car, reflecting the lack of train services at convenient shopping times.

Table 6 Places for Shopping

Place for shopping	Number of times mentioned
Bodmin	93
Truro	58
St Austell	48
Plymouth	23
Liskeard	7
Wadebridge	7
Saltash	5
Exeter	4
Fowey	2
Falmouth	2
Newquay	2
Launceston	1
The Internet	3

Other places visited for shopping that are off the main rail line or not easily reached by bus include Wadebridge and Newquay on the north coast and Fowey and Falmouth on the south coast. Although served by branch lines, train connections to Newquay and Falmouth are not at convenient times for shoppers. 3 people reported that they use the internet most frequently for shopping.

People were asked which places in Cornwall and Devon they would like to visit by bus or train if convenient services were available (Table 7). Bodmin, Fowey, and Wadebridge were the most desired places to visit. Many places on the north coast (Padstow, Newquay, Bude, St Agnes) and the far west (St Ives, Helston, Penzance) were mentioned, and all of these are currently difficult to access by public transport. A striking 25 of the respondents said that they wished to visit

‘Cornwall generally’, ‘the north coast’, ‘the beaches’, ‘West Cornwall’, or ‘everywhere’. This indicates a wide desire to explore the whole county by public transport rather than by car.

Table 7 Places to Visit

Place to visit	Number of times mentioned
Bodmin	16
Fowey	16
Wadebridge	12
Padstow	7
Truro	7
Newquay	3
St Ives	3
St Austell	2
Par	2
Falmouth	2
Looe	2
Penzance	2
Bude	2
Polperro	2
St Agnes	2
Helston	1
Mevagissey	1
Launceston	1
Eden Project	1
Cornwall generally	25
Plymouth	11
Exeter	5
Totnes	2
Barnstaple	1
Dartmouth	1
Dartmoor	1
Tavistock	1

Use of Public Transport

The inconvenient or absent public transport in Lostwithiel was noted by a large number of residents. Over a half of respondents (59 people) hold a concessionary travel card (‘bus pass’) giving free travel by bus after 9.30. There are currently no bus services in Lostwithiel on which this pass can be used and a number of respondents noted that they were unable to take advantage of the pass. One respondent noted that ‘You need to drive to a bus stop to use your pass’. Some older qualifying residents said that they had not taken up the concessionary card because there was no possibility of using it.

For significant parts of the day—most notably in the morning and late evening—there are no trains stopping at Lostwithiel. Three quarters of all respondents (77 people) reported that they

had travelled to par or Bodmin by car in order to catch a train that had not stopped at Lostwithiel. A number of respondents added that they had done this ‘frequently’. People were asked how they found out about the times of trains and buses in Lostwithiel (Table 8). The most frequently used source of information was the internet and Apps available on smart phones, but 40 people still liked to use printed timetables. The service provided by the Community Centre was welcomed, with people consulting printed information or asking staff at the Community Centre. Interestingly, 29 people said that they relied on timetables at bus stops. Bus companies currently provide no timetables at bus stops, so this must be the timetables compiled by the Lostwithiel Town Forum for the small number of local services.

Table 8 Sources of Information on Public Transport

Source of information	Number using
Internet/smart phone	82
Printed timetable	40
Information at bus stops	29
Telephone	19
Community Centre	12
Don't look	3
Other	1

When asked which forms of public transport they would most like to see improved, almost two thirds of respondents (66 people) wanted to see both rail and bus improvements. Among those saying that they wanted just one of these improved, 20 said buses and 16 said trains. This underlines a conclusion apparent from many responses that there is a strong preference for the use of buses rather than trains. Those preferring buses were disproportionately the over 60s. A general preference for buses perhaps reflects the fact that buses can potentially reach parts of the county that are not located on the railway lines.

Table 9 Desired Transport Improvements

Need to improve	Number stating
Bus	20
Train	16
Both	66

Respondents were asked to specify the particular kinds of transport improvements that they would like to see. These are shown in Table 10. The single largest response was that more of the trains passing through Lostwithiel should stop at the station. Further comments in relation to this issue were that there was a particular need for late evening return trains from Truro and Plymouth to allow people to attend theatre and cinema shows and trains in the current gap between 8.00 and 10.45 in the direction of Plymouth. It was also noted that the weekend service was in need of improvement, as there are many fewer trains stopping on Saturday and Sunday. 4 people specifically stated a wish that the ‘up’ sleeper service to London would stop at Lostwithiel. This desire for more stopping services was complemented by the expressed desire for a footbridge over the railway; non-stop trains and long intercity trains involve a considerable down-time for the level-crossing gates with consequent disruption for pedestrians and difficulties in changing platform to catch a train.

7 people specifically noted the need to improve the rolling stock on the local stopping services. It was noted that these were too short when passengers transferred from intercity trains at Plymouth, they had little luggage space for tourists, and they were generally dirty and unpleasant. One respondent noted “The current ones are from a “Third World””. Other improvements specifically mentioned were the need to do something about the gap between train and platform on the ‘down’ line, which causes difficulties for elderly and disabled passengers.

Table 10 What main improvements in public transport are wanted?

	Number of people citing this
RAIL IMPROVEMENTS	
More trains to stop at Lostwithiel	48
Later return trains in evening from Plymouth and Truro	13
Improved weekend train service	5
Upgrading of rolling stock	7
Up sleeper to stop at Lostwithiel	5
Passenger rail service on Fowey line	4
Footbridge over railway	2
Later service from London to Cornwall	1
Plymouth rail departure between 8.00 and 10.45	1
Rectify gap between platform and train	1
Commuter service to Bristol	1
Request stops at Lostwithiel station	1
BUS IMPROVEMENTS	
Regular bus services	43
Padstow/Wadebridge to Fowey bus link	3
Hoppa bus/town bus	2
Buses suitable for shoppers	2
Buses for Bodmin Hospital	2
Buses suitable for day trips	1
Buses to connect with Par/Bodmin Parkway	1
Free bus to St Austell	1

There was also a clear desire for regular bus services. The 43 respondents expressing this wish were generally aware of the current absence of significant bus services and wanted *some* buses. However, many specifically added that there should be a ‘regular’ or ‘frequent’ service. It was noted that the services that have been provided in the past were timetabled in such a way that it was impossible to have a sensible return journey: travellers to St Austell would have to return almost immediately or the following week. As one person said ‘You can get somewhere but not get back’. The request for a regular service indicated that provision must map onto the journeys that people actually wish to make.

Table 11 Specific Bus Services Requested

	Number of people requesting
Bodmin centre	25
St Austell	10
Fowey	4
Wadebridge	4
Plymouth	3
Truro	3
Liskeard	1

Evidence from previous questions and from Table 11 shows the overwhelming wish for services to Bodmin town and St Austell, especially for shopping, but specific suggestions for routes included a recognition that cross-country routes were desirable, rather than simply these main connections. Respondents wished for connections to Padstow/Wadebridge and to Fowey, and another noted specifically that services were required that would allow day excursions rather than simply supermarket shopping visits. The wish for buses to Fowey complements the wish for a re-opening of the Lostwithiel to Fowey rail line for passenger traffic, indicating the importance of connections with Fowey.

Car Use and Parking

The great majority of respondents were car owners: 91 out of 108. Although four fifths of car owners said that they would not give up their car if a convenient car rental scheme were available, 13 people indicated that they would consider this. Most car owners had off-street parking for all their household cars, but one fifth of respondents reported that they were unable to park their cars on their own property and relied on street parking.

Table 12 Car Ownership

	Number of respondents
Own a car or van	91
Has off-street parking	73
Would not use car rental scheme	77

Respondents were specifically asked about how any increased costs of the old Cattle Market car park should be met. Table 13 shows that, of the choices offered, 56 favoured meeting this through an increase in Council Tax and 37 favoured the introduction of parking charges: a ratio of 3:2 in favour of retaining parking that is completely free at the point of use. There was no difference between car owners and non-owners on this question. However, there was a tendency for the over 60s to prefer parking charges to Council Tax increases, reflecting the greater sensitivity to Council Tax in this age group. It should be noted that the question asked about *additional* costs being met in these ways but respondents may have answered on the basis of a general preference for Council Tax as against parking charges.

Table 13 How Should Increased Parking Costs be Covered?

	Number stating
Council tax	56
Parking charges	37

Respondents were asked if they thought that there were ways of increasing the total number of parking places in the town and 65 said that there were such possibilities. The suggestions are shown in Table 14. Three locations topped the list: the railway sidings, the industrial estate, and Second Island Park. Those mentioning the railway sidings generally referred to both the land beside the ‘down’ platform and the railway-owned land adjacent to the industrial estate. Those mentioning the industrial estate generally referred to the part adjacent to the railway land, but some were also referring to the railway-owned land itself. There was only a limited recognition that the industrial estate was in private ownership, some people seeming to think that it was in the ownership of the Town Council and that major parts of it could be simply converted to parking.

Table 14 How Could Parking be Increased?

Location or method	Number suggesting
Railway sidings	18
Industrial estate	18
Sculpture Park/Second Island	15
King George V Park	13
Coulson Park	10
2-car parking for all new homes	5
Redundant land/Brownfield sites	4
Parade, under trees/by Drill Hall	3
Land opposite Industrial Estate (A309)	3
On site of River Brasserie	2
‘Build a car park’/‘Make more car parks’	2
Nose-in bays at Monmouth Square/Parade	2
LTC land off Bodmin Hill	1
Multi-storey at Cattle Market	1
Parking permits for residents	1
Lay-by parking on A309 at Community Centre	1
Old Cemetery	1
Commercial premises overnight	1

The next most popular area for converting to car parking was the Second Island Park (the Sculpture Park), which was frequently noted as currently a ‘dog toilet’ and wasted space. 3 people also mentioned the possibility of parking on the adjacent land on the opposite bank of the river (opposite the industrial estate entrance), though there was no mention of its current ownership. Parking in the King George V Park was suggested by 13 people. Those who amplified on this generally referred to land at the south west of the park, with one suggestion to culvert the leat as the basis for parking. The final open area to be mentioned for parking was Coulson Park, supported by 10 people. Most commonly, people referred to the area at the northern end of the

park, but in a number of cases it was the area immediately around the railway bridge that was being referred to.

Other sites referred to were the area of Monmouth Square and the Parade (people not often distinguishing the two). 2 people thought that the derelict River Brasserie should be demolished and the land turned over to parking, 2 people thought that nose-in bays and improved markings could increase parking in the area, and 3 people thought that the Parade itself should be completely given over to parking, leaving only the war memorial.

Walking and Cycling Around the Town

41 people reported that they or someone in their household cycles for leisure. The main improvements that these cyclists would like to see are shown in Table 15. There was a desire for cycle lanes on main roads, but a number of people said that these were unrealistic because of the width of the roads and the speed of the traffic. There was, however, a wish to see speed restrictions on the main roads, perhaps with speed cameras, and warning signs to increase the safety of cyclists. A larger number of cyclists preferred provision of dedicated cycle trails connecting to regional cycle networks, and 6 people stressed the importance of a cycleway to Bodmin Parkway and Lanhydrock. One further suggestion was a cycleway along the Fowey clay line. There was strong support for the provision of cycle racks in town, especially near the Co-op.

Table 15 Cycling Improvements

	Number suggesting
Cycle trails and connectivity	8
Cycle lanes on main roads	6
Cycle racks in town	4
Reduce speed/speed cameras	3
Allow cycling in Respryn/Restormel Woods	2
Tarmac path to nature reserve	1
Warning signs as lanes impractical	1
'Less uphill'	1

Three quarters of respondents included comments on environmental improvements and specifically those required for those walking around the town (see Table 16). Top of the list was the need for repairs to pavements, which were reported to be in a bad shape and being both unattractive and dangerous. Most frequently mentioned was the pavement in Fore Street, and other specific places mentioned were South Street, Bodmin Hill, Castle Hill, and Monmouth Lane. Second in importance was the provision of pavement and/or street lighting were none currently exists. Specific places mentioned were the main Liddicoat Road (mentioned by 5 people as dangerous), Quay Street by Coulson Park, Castle Hill, Bodmin Hill by the school, Coffee Lake Meadow, and Victoria. The problems with Liddicoat Road were amplified in remarks about the need for verge cutting and clearing of dog mess on this road. There was also a mention of the need for traffic calming in this area. This was clearly identified as an area in need of improvement for pedestrian safety.

Table 16 Improvements for Walking and the Environment Around Town

Improvement	Number suggesting
Pavement repairs and improvement	26
Lighting and/or pavement needed	17
Dog bins and clear-up	8
Tidying of specific streets	6
Public toilets	6
Yellow and white line repainting	4
Signage	4
A-boards outside premises are nuisance	3
Better use of Parade	2
Road repairs	2
Enforce parking restrictions	2
Tidy up derelict buildings	2
Bunting in summer	2
Bulb on bridge too bright/too dim	2
Speed limit reduction/pedestrian priority Fore street	2
Stop flooding into station car park/Brunel Quays	1
Street sweeping of side streets	1
Stop cars parking on pavements	1
Extend 30 mph limit to Downend	1
Too many cars parked on Bodmin Hill	1
Rubbish on land off Edgumbe Hill	1
Streetlights to go off after 2.00am	1
Footpath needed on golf course by Cott Road	1
Plant more trees	1
One-way on Bodmin Hill/Duke Street	1
Hanging baskets	1
Box junction at North Street/Duke Street	1
Recycling bins	1

General tidying was mentioned by 6 people, with 8 people linking this specifically to dog mess. In general people were mentioning the need to tidy the areas outside their own homes, but there was an awareness of difficulties in the principal public areas. There was a mention of the bridge area by Coulson Park. The problem of general litter was added to the problem of dog mess, with suggestions for extra dog bins, for warning notices, and for the employment of a dog warden. Linked with this were positive suggestions of additions to beautify the town: suggestions of hanging baskets, tree planting, and for the hanging of bunting in the summer months.

People wished to see improved parking enforcement. This included the re-painting of yellow lines and white lines on roads, which were often not visible, enforcement of parking restrictions, stopping cars from parking on pavements, and pedestrian priority in Fore Street. Particular difficulties were mentioned with the number of cars parked on Bodmin Hill, with another suggestion of a one-way system covering Bodmin Hill and Duke Street to increase traffic flow and pedestrian safety.

General Comments

Few people took up the option to add general comments, probably because of the need to attach a separate sheet of paper. Points raised by these few people and not covered above were:

- People using the train should not park in the Cattle Market car park (2 people)
- Introduce parking charges but with residents' permits. (2 people) [Unfortunately the Council decided not to include a question on the acceptability of residents' permits].
- Operate a community bus (1 person).

Report on a survey of transport and
travel use prepared by John Scott
for the Neighbourhood Plan
Steering Group. May 2016.

Appendix One

The respondents are detailed in the tables below. The most important point is that older people were disproportionately represented in the respondents. 42% of the population of Lostwithiel are aged 60 or over, while 67% of respondents fell into this category. There was also an imbalance in sexual composition with female respondents outnumbering males by two to one. 52% of the population of Lostwithiel is female, but 67% of respondents were female.

Table 17 Sex Composition

Sex	Number of respondents
Male	34
Female	71
Not stated	3

Table 18 Age Structure

Age	Number of respondents
Under 18	0
18-29	1
30-39	2
40-49	11
50-59	20
60 and over	72
Not stated	2

Table 19 Household Size

Household size	Number of respondents
1	31
2	49
3	17
4	9
Not stated	2