



# **Chelmsford's Future Transport Network**

## **Summary of Responses to Questionnaire**



## Introduction

This document collates and summarises comments and feedback received during our public engagement campaign for Chelmsford's Future Transport Network.

There were 842 online responses and 24 paper responses to the Chelmsford's Future Transport Network survey. A copy of the questionnaire used can be found at annex A.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Chelmsford's Future Transport Network Public Engagement Document that can be found [here](#). The Public Engagement Document also contains the questionnaire to which this summary responds.

The key messages and feedback received from the questionnaire responses can be summarised as follows:

- Experience of unreliable and long journey times, a lack of alternative transport options, and road safety issues were highlighted as particularly concerning for people travelling around Chelmsford;
- The majority of respondents who provided an answer agreed that buses should have priority on the network over other motorised vehicles;
- When asked what would encourage people to take the bus instead of driving for distances less than 5km, more reliable bus services and quicker journey times were amongst the most influential factors mentioned;
- Most respondents who provided an answer agreed that facilities for pedestrians and cyclists should be improved in order to encourage people to walk and cycle more. Improved safety, security and lighting of cycle routes and the introduction of more segregated cycle routes were amongst the most influential ways to encourage respondents to walk and cycle more frequently;
- The majority of respondents were concerned about the impact of poor air quality on their health; and
- More than three quarters of respondents agreed that the corridors identified in the engagement were the right ones to focus on.

## Summary of responses

- The majority of respondents agreed with the County Council's vision for Chelmsford's transport system as set out in the engagement literature. There were many comments that suggested that they agreed with parts of the vision or with the vision in principle. Where respondents did not agree, reasons given included:
  - plans were too vague and lacked policy details or solutions;
  - opposition to the expansion of Chelmsford all together, in particular the development of new homes without the necessary infrastructure already being in place;
  - the need to focus on bus service reliability and the bus service in general rather than park and ride;
  - the focus needs to be on park and rides;
  - the cost of using public transport in comparison to driving;
  - insufficient funding;
  - previous negative experiences with Council schemes which have not reflected public opinion; and
  - the lack of reference to motorcycles
  
- Respondents tended to agree or strongly agree or be neutral or undecided that the objectives presented would achieve the vision if future schemes were designed with these in mind; however again there were comments that these schemes had been too vague, that there was not enough information to properly comment on. Three respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed and provided additional comments:
  - Plans again being too vague
  - That motorists will use their cars until there are physical or financial restraints to congestion in the town
  - Good alternative facilities are needed (Trains and buses)
  - Opposition to housing developments when the roads in Chelmsford have 4% capacity space
  
- The most important factors identified as important when considering travel on a daily commute were cost, convenience, reliability and frequency. Other factors mentioned were safety, journey time, lack of viable alternatives and provision of direct and well maintained routes.
  
- The most common areas of concern on impacts of traffic, based on rankings, included unreliable journey times, longer journey times, lack of alternatives and road safety. It was notable that many also included the impact on emergency services. Other suggestions were also given including health, stress/anxiety, reliability/quality of public transport and safety.
  
- The majority of respondents agreed that buses should have priority on the road network over other motorised vehicles.
  
- When asked what would convince respondents to take the bus for short-medium distances the most popular responses were cheaper ticket prices, more reliable services and quicker journeys. Other suggestions included travel card payment systems like the oyster card system in London, if the bus service began earlier and ended later and the use and promotion in smart technology (such as real time boards).

- Respondents agreed that users of the railway station should walk or cycle to the station rather than drive.
- Most respondents agreed that they would like to see improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians to encourage greater walking and cycling.
- More segregated routes, improved safety, security and lighting of routes and better connectivity/integration between existing routes were identified as the most popular ideas to encourage the respondent to walk or cycle more frequently. Other suggestions offered included the creation of cycle superhighways such as those in London, bike rental schemes and safe facilities to lock a bike.
- Many respondents were concerned about the impact of poor air quality on their health.
- The approach to achieving the vision and objectives was based on a zonal approach. There was a fairly evenly split between people who agreed and people who were undecided with the zonal approach to achieving the vision set out in the documents.
- Respondents were also asked about each zone (outer, middle and inner) and what were the most important elements of each individually. Additional park and ride sites and promotion of these sites were identified as the most important of the outer zone. Improved public transport network to encourage increased bus usage and extended and upgraded cycle network with promotion of its use were both seen as important in the middle zone. Improved pedestrian routes and increased cycle parking facilities were indicated as the most important of the inner zone.
- The corridors identified in the documents were also suggested to be the right ones to focus improvements on.
- When asked to prioritise the identified corridors for improvement the most frequently ranked were Parkway, Baddow Road, Springfield Road and Broomfield Road.
- Many respondents gave additional considerations in response to question 19, which asked if there were any other areas to consider
  - Park and ride
    - Many were keen on the park and ride schemes, with several comments asking for more of them in certain locations. Some suggested that park and rides do not stay open long enough for some commuters and that the bus service leading from it is unreliable which discourages its use for people commuting to work on time.
  - Bus routes
    - Some responses talked about the routes the buses take. Particular attention was given to Broomfield Hospital and the access to it. Also mentioned were inadequate bus facilities, unmaintained stops, the station size, the station environment and access for disabled users.
  - The school run traffic
    - Many responses talked about the school run creating much of the traffic in Chelmsford with some suggesting school buses as an alternative as well as opportunities to encourage walking.
  - Cost
    - Bus cost was noted often, as well as ideas for schemes such as travel cards (oyster card) which allow you to use a range of different transport on your journey. It was noted several

times that if more than one person is going into Chelmsford it is cheaper to drive and park all day than use public transport.

- Areas of concern
  - Many responses had suggestions of other locations that are of concern, as well as solutions they feel would address some of the problems. Regular areas include the Army and Navy roundabout and Baddow Road.
- Train service
  - Many had comments regarding railway stations and train services, as well as access to these services.
- Transport ideas
  - Other considerations put forward were tram lines, speed limits, car sharing, car park restrictions, congestion charges and monorail.
  - There was also suggestion that large businesses (50+ employees) should encourage sustainable travel.
- Bike Hire
  - The responses were particularly keen on bike hire schemes like those active in London, as well as the idea of a park and cycle to encourage people to travel from mid to inner zones on bikes rather than buses. Many suggested specific routes which either need cycle routes or need them upgraded/maintained.
- Safety
  - Many noted that they are reluctant to cycle due to safety issues suggesting separation of cars and cyclists with dedicated super highways or cycle lanes.
- Walking
  - Frequent comments were about safety, lighting and maintenance of pavements. There were also comments regarding pedestrian crossings and attention to be paid to areas with schools.
- Out of scope
  - Problems with current bus services.
  - Disappointment that further development of Chelmsford had been green lit before the necessary infrastructure had been in place.
  - Some respondents wanted bicycle registration and taxation.

***Specific comments relating to private car use:***

- Congestion at the Odeon Roundabout;
- Provision of an additional entrance to the Chelmer Retail Park to take pressure off the existing entrance;
- Army & Navy Roundabout and roads in its vicinity (e.g. Baddow Road);
- Parkway traffic and the Broomfield Road gyratory system, and motorists using alternative routes currently to avoid this junction;
- Miami Roundabout and environs;
- Broomfield Hospital and surrounding roads;
- Speed limit review across the city area;
- Car park access-only routes, and restrictions on car parking in the city centre, with the exemption of those to whom it is absolutely essential;
- School run related traffic congestion; and

- The distribution and spread of taxi ranks across Chelmsford.

***Specific comments relating to public transport:***

- Pressing need for a new railway station at Beaulieu Park, alleviating the existing demands on Chelmsford station, and other longer term improvements to improve capacity on the Great Eastern Mainline;
- Park and Ride sites – suggestions around how to make better use of the existing locations through changes to the service provision and ticketing, and requests for more locations elsewhere (e.g. to the south/west of Chelmsford);
- Existing routes that Chelmsford's buses take – whether these are as efficient as they could be or missing potential demand;
- Chelmsford Bus Station – it is too small for the number of buses at the moment and feels an inconvenient and sometimes dangerous place;
- Poorly maintained and insufficient bus facilities across the city, and access to buses/on-board facilities for disabled users and the elderly;
- Bus ticket costs make its use unattractive to many; and
- 'Park and Cycle' car park areas on the periphery of Chelmsford.

***Specific comments relating to cycling and walking:***

- Many respondents suggested bike rental/hire schemes and a 'park and cycle' initiative to encourage people to travel by bike from the periphery of the city, provided the cycling infrastructure to and from the city is also improved;
- Suggestions of specific routes which either need cycling infrastructure or need to be upgraded/maintained;
- Larger businesses (50+ employees) should encourage sustainable travel by their staff;
- Safety, lighting and maintenance of pavements for walkers needs improving;
- Thought and consideration needs to be given to the reality that pedestrians and cyclists do not mix;
- Improvements required to the Public Rights of Way network, linking up routes cut off by development and enhancing off-road cycling connections from villages to the city centre;
- Expansion of the 'Mid Zone' as shown in the Engagement document, focusing on cycling improvements, to encourage potential converts to cycling or even walking into Chelmsford from within that larger area;
- Proposed public realm enhancement to Moulsham Street further south needs to continue; and
- Safer sustainable travel routes to primary schools should be implemented.