

Report of Transport User Surgeries Held in Croydon and Romford

May 2010

Report on Transport User Surgeries held by London TravelWatch



London TravelWatch is the official body set up by Parliament to provide a voice for London's travelling public.

Our role is to:

- Speak up for transport users in discussions with policy-makers and the media;
- Consult with the transport industry, its regulators and funders on matters affecting users;
- Investigate complaints users have been unable to resolve with service providers, and;
- Monitor trends in service quality.

Our aim is to press in all that we do for a better travel experience all those living, working or visiting London and its surrounding region.

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Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Croydon Transport Users Surgery.....	2
3	Romford Transport User Surgery.....	4
4	Travel Survey Findings.....	6
5	Conclusions.....	222
	Appendix.....	23

1 Introduction

As part of its stakeholder engagement work during 2009/10 London TravelWatch held two events to engage with transport users. These were inspired by Bus Users' UK's successful and long-running 'bus surgeries'. They were a way to speak face-to-face to users of transport services, explain how London TravelWatch could help them and learn more about transport users journey patterns and concerns in different parts of London.

Transport User Surgeries

To fit with London TravelWatch's strategic priorities for 2009/2010 of outer London and interchanges, that the first event was held in Croydon. A large outer borough to the south of London with an ethnically diverse population, Croydon has a huge amount of commuting both into Croydon and out of Croydon into London. There is also a very large shopping centre and a market, which is open every day except Sunday. There are also a secondary school and a college nearby, as well as some major employers.

After the success of Croydon, the event was repeated in Romford, to the east of London in the London Borough of Havering. Romford is less busy than Croydon and has a market which is held on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. We held the event on a Friday for this reason. A nearby major employer is Havering Borough Council.

At both surgeries, we handed out London TravelWatch-branded items, an explanatory leaflet about our work and role, along with local bus and rail maps. We also handed out surveys about transport behaviour to help us to learn more about how people travel around specific areas, and to develop a contact database for individual passengers.

London TravelWatch was joined by representatives from Transport for London (TfL), the bus companies operating the local services, local rail companies and from Tramlink, who listened to complaints, suggestions (and praise!) and spoke to passengers about concerns over specific routes and specific problems with particular local knowledge. We also advised people on how to use ramps on the buses, and gave them advice on fares and journey choices. Problems and complaints that came up were recorded during the day, and passed on to the relevant transport provider if appropriate. Both London TravelWatch and TfL took actual complaints on the day, after each event to help us build up a picture of any patterns or specific concerns.

2 Croydon Transport Users Surgery

The first transport user surgery took place on 17 November 2009 in Croydon. A bus, kindly provided by Arriva London, was parked in North End between 10am and 4:30pm. This is a central location within the town centre close to shops and the market. Representatives from London TravelWatch, TfL, Tramlink, local bus and rail operators and the borough council were available to answer transport users' questions and hear views on any aspects of travelling in and around Croydon.



Transport User Feedback

Croydon was very busy all the time that London TravelWatch were there and we spoke to over a thousand people on the day, including a wide range of the travelling public – bus users, motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, as well as tram and rail users. At Croydon, the public were generally positive about transport in their area which was encouraging, and the complaints and concerns were usually about specific problems, rather than an over-arching pattern. We heard about problems with ramps on buses, and the local bus operators spent time explaining to people what the problems were and how they could try to overcome this. When particular bus routes were mentioned, the operators, in the main, already

knew of the problems – usually congestion or routeing. It was also clear how treasured people’s Freedom Passes were to them. A local radio station and local newspaper covered the event, and Bus Users UK wrote an article in its members’ newsletter about the event which can be found in the Appendix.

Several people in both Croydon and Romford were unaware that a lot of public transports, particularly buses, are accessible to people in wheelchairs. The bus was used to give demonstrations on how a wheelchair was accessible and we handed out TfL maps highlighting fully accessible stations across London.

3 Romford Transport User Surgery

The second Transport User Surgery took place on 5 March 2010 in Romford. A bus was parked at the South Street end of the Market Place from between 10am and 3pm. Representatives from London TravelWatch, TfL, local operators and the council were available to answer transport users' questions and hear views on any aspects of travelling in and around Romford.



Transport User Feedback

Romford was less busy than Croydon, and we spoke to more people who never used public transport. In Romford, we found people less satisfied, generally, with the provision of transport in their area. We also heard repeatedly about problems with the specific bus routes owing to roadworks, short turning buses and crowding. We also heard problems about the pedestrianisation of part of the town centre making the buses less convenient. We heard frequent confusion about whether new Freedom Passes could be used immediately. We issued a press

release confirming that they could after the surgery to try and ease confusion. We did a broadcast interview on a local radio station before the event.

4 Travel Survey Findings

At the transport surgery London TravelWatch handed out surveys to transport users. The aims of this survey were to establish the travel patterns of transport users in Croydon and Romford. As boroughs outer London, London TravelWatch wanted to understand the nature of their usage of the transport network in order to be able to better represent their specific needs. The numbers of surveys handed out and returned were as follows:

- Croydon – 1,000 surveys handed out, 236 returned, a response rate of 24%
- Romford – 880 surveys handed out, 112 returned, a response rate of 13%

The surveys provide a snapshot of transport users in outer London. The findings of the survey are not statistically significant but provide an interesting insight into the travel patterns and needs of transport users on two specific days in Croydon and Romford.

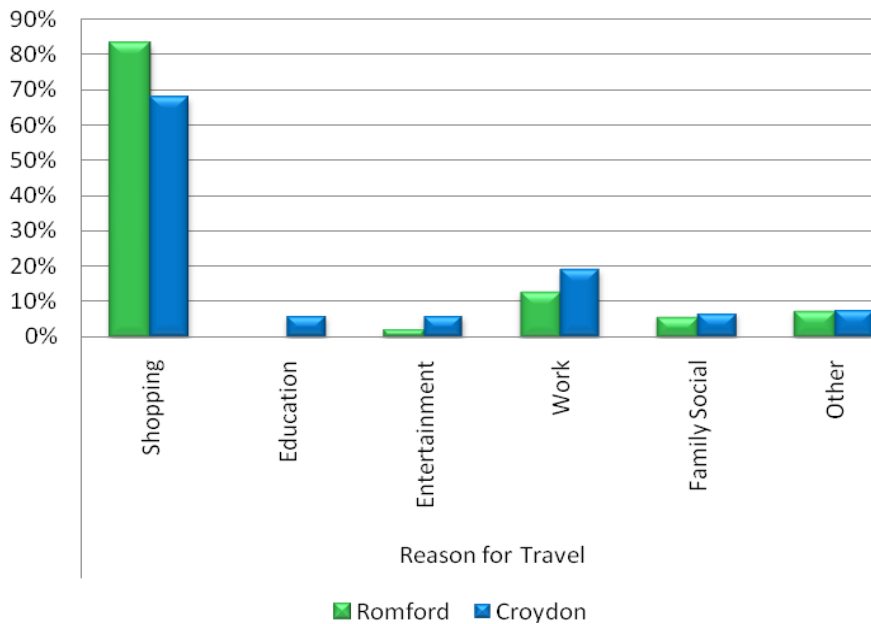
There was a prize draw to incentivise participants to return the survey of a £50 Oyster card donated by TfL.

Journey purpose, frequency and modes of transport

The first section of the survey looked at the reasons for travelling, how frequently people travel and the mode of transport they use and why.

The majority of respondents' reason for travel was leisure activities. This comprised either shopping, entertainment or family and social activities. A minority of respondents were travelling for work or education. There was a difference in time of day that the surveys were handed out in the two town centres which may explain some of the differences in journey purpose. In Romford the surveys were handed out between 10:00 and 15:00 whereas in Croydon they were handed out between 10:00 and 16:30. The extra hour and half may explain the greater numbers of people reporting work and education as their journey purpose.

Graph 1 – Respondents reason for travel on the day of the survey¹

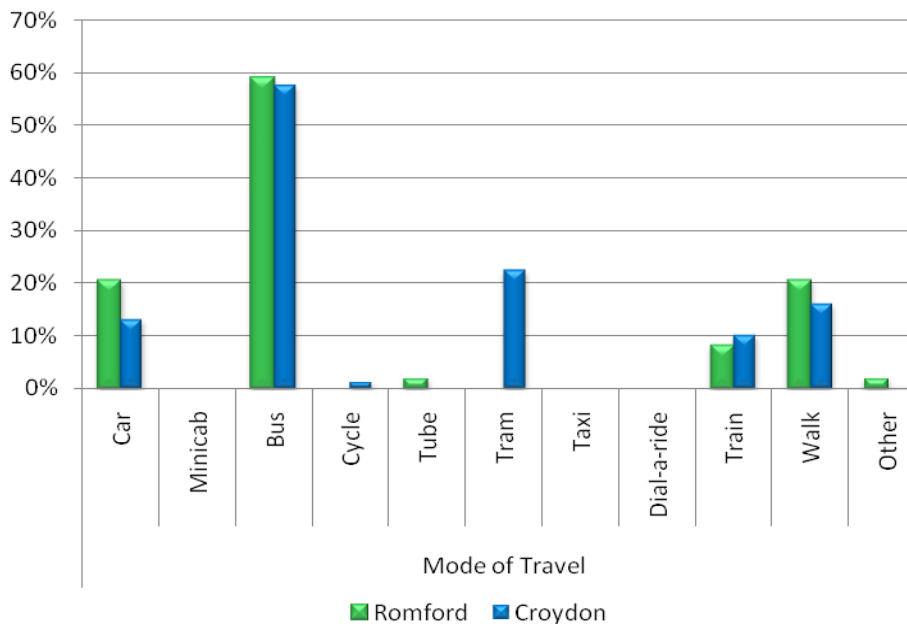


¹ Croydon 235 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed
Romford 112 responses of 880 surveys distributed

The majority of survey respondents had travelled by bus on the day of the survey. The next most used form of public transport was the tram, which is a mode of transport confined to the south London area and is centred on Croydon.

In Romford the percentage of car users and walkers was higher than in Croydon. In Croydon the percentage of public transport use was greater and the majority of this difference is accounted for by Tram usage. It should also be noted that the public transport network serving Croydon particularly, from areas that are outside London, is much more comprehensive than in Romford. It was noted by London TravelWatch that car parking charges in Romford were lower than in Croydon. This price difference may be a factor in the higher car usage that was recorded in Romford.

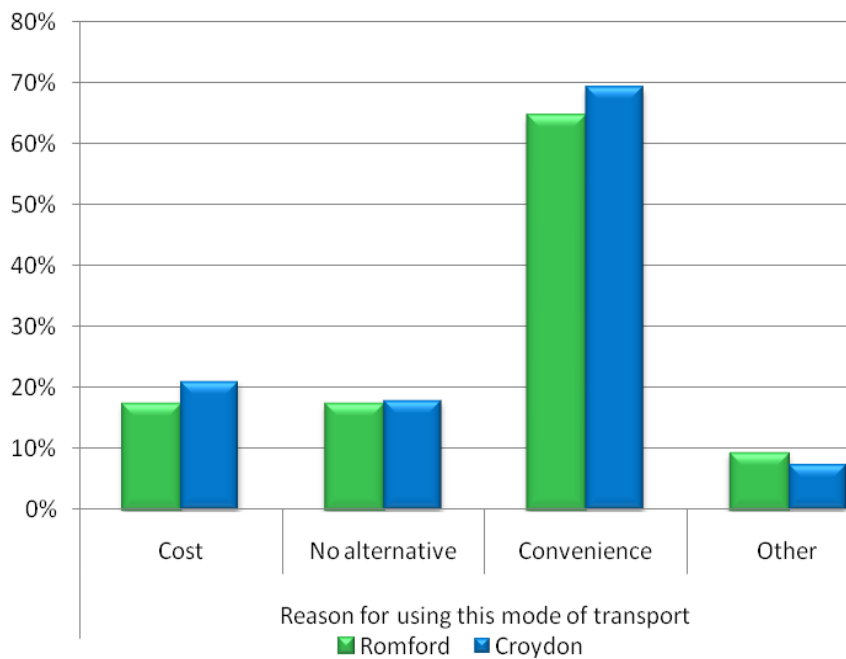
Graph 2 – Modes of travel used by respondents on the day of the survey²



² Croydon 234 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed
Romford 112 responses of 880 surveys distributed

The results of the survey for both Croydon and Romford were very similar with respect to the reason for the choice of mode of transport. For over 60% of respondents the reason was convenience. Cost did not seem to be a major factor and the absence of alternatives also did not score highly in peoples choices, this suggested that for the majority of those surveyed the bus represented the most convenient mode of transport for their journey.

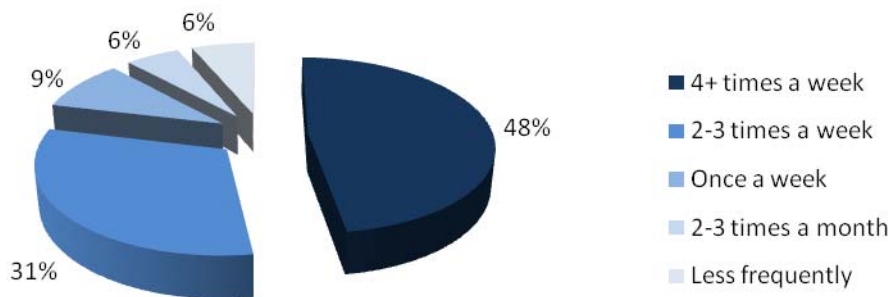
Graph 3 – Reason for choosing these modes of travel by survey respondents³



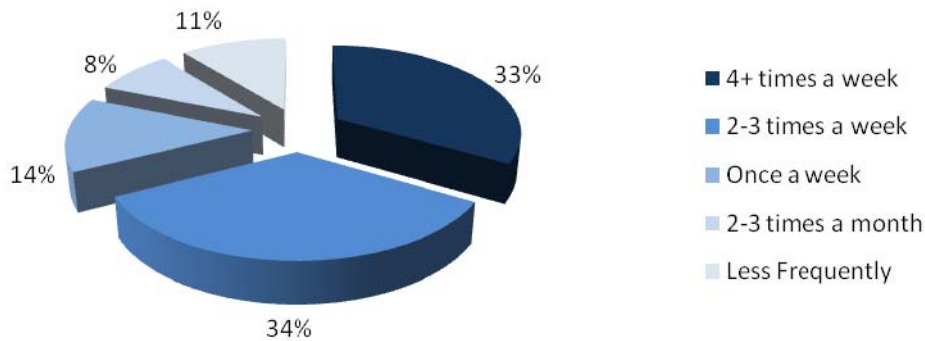
³ Croydon 228 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed
Romford 110 responses of 880 surveys distributed

The frequency of travel was higher for respondents in Croydon, with a more even distribution of travel frequency in Romford. This may reflect the higher numbers of people responding that their trip purpose was for education or work in Croydon. In both locations the majority of peoples' journeys were more frequent than two to three times per week.

Graph 4 – Croydon Frequency of travel by survey respondents⁴



Graph 5 – Romford frequency of travel by survey respondents⁵

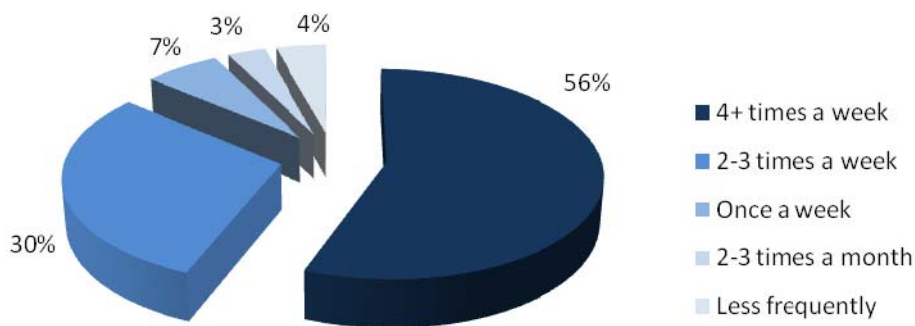


⁴ 234 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed

⁵ 111 responses of 880 surveys distributed

London TravelWatch analysed the survey results for frequency of journey by the age profile of the respondents. The graph below shows the frequency of travel of those respondents who were over the age of 60 in Croydon. This shows that in Croydon this group of transport users actually made more frequent journeys than the average in our survey response. The difference in Romford was not so marked from the average so is not shown.

Graph 6 – Croydon Frequency of travel by survey respondents who were over 60⁶

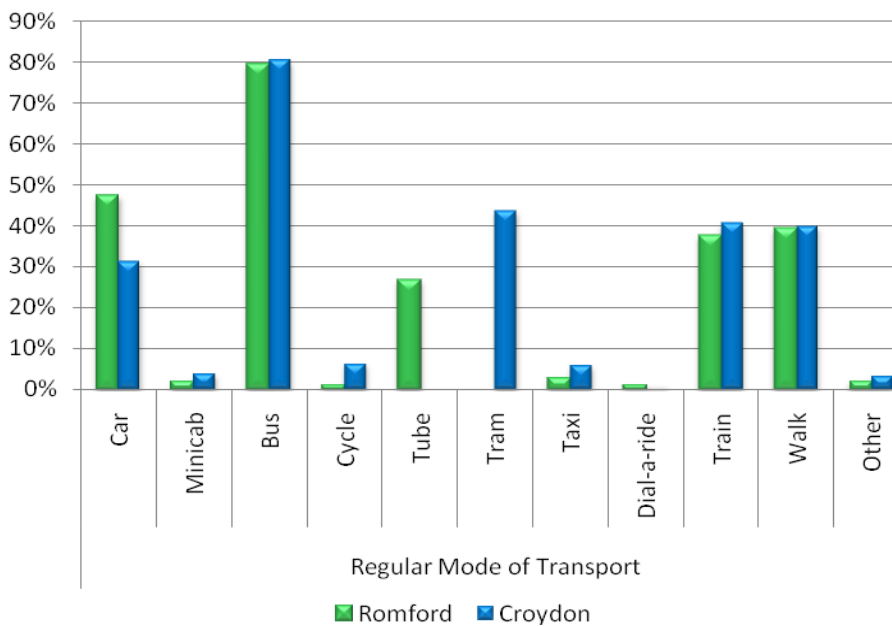


⁶ 94 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed

The answers to the question about the regular mode of transport of respondents were similar to that of Graph 1. In both Croydon and Romford the bus represented the main form of transport. As with Graph 1 car usage was higher in Romford and public transport usage was greater in Croydon. This largely reflects the range of public transport available in Croydon through which the only tram system in London runs, along with better bus and rail links to areas immediately outside of London than Romford. A possible additional factor in Romford was the level of parking charges in comparison to Croydon.

The numbers of cyclists in Croydon was greater than in Romford. The volume of walkers was roughly equal between both locations. In Romford all walkers combined their journey with at least one other mode of transport, in Croydon the figure was 98%. This figure illustrates the importance of interchange even for comparatively straight forward journeys.

Graph 7 – Regular mode of transport used by respondents to the survey⁷

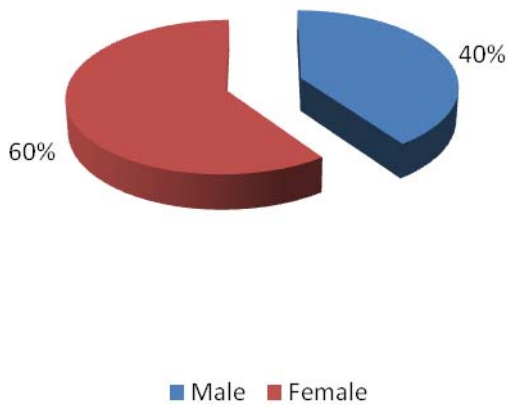


⁷ Croydon 235 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed
Romford 112 responses of 880 surveys distributed

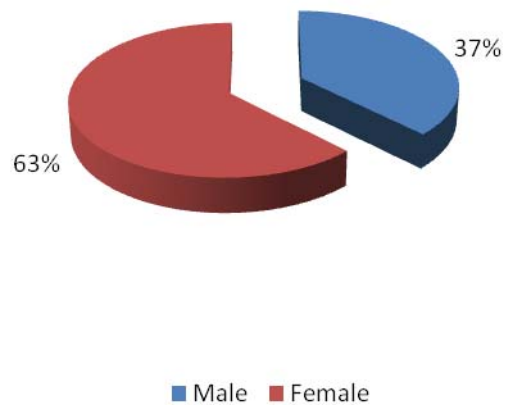
Profile of respondents to the survey

The gender profile of the respondents was very similar in both Croydon and Romford. In both cases there was a clear majority of female respondents. This result may be affected by the time of day which the surveys were undertaken.

Graph 8 – Croydon, gender of respondents⁸



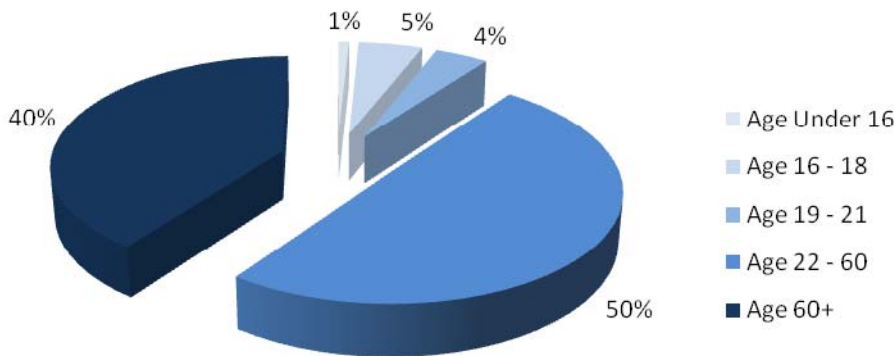
Graph 9 – Romford, gender of survey respondents⁹



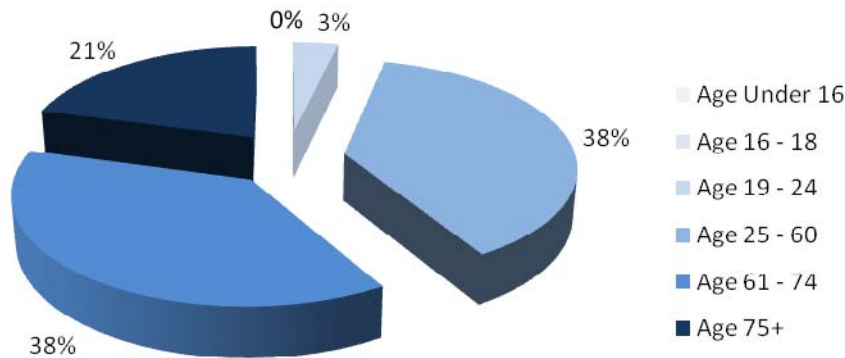
⁸ 111 responses of 880 surveys distributed
⁹ 233 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed

London TravelWatch varied the question relating to age between the two surveys and therefore some of the results are not directly comparable. An additional category was added to the Romford survey to include the over-75s and also to break down the under-25 category. This was done because it was felt that there are different transport requirements for sections of both the under-25s and the over-60s and that a differentiation was important. In Croydon there were a larger percentage of under-25s represented and this is reflected in the responses about journey purpose relating to education. There are a number of schools in the centre of Croydon and many pupils travel through central Croydon each day. In Romford there was a greater percentage of the over 60s who accounted for 59% of respondents.

Graph 10 – Croydon Age profile of survey respondents¹⁰



Graph 11 – Romford age profile of survey respondents¹¹

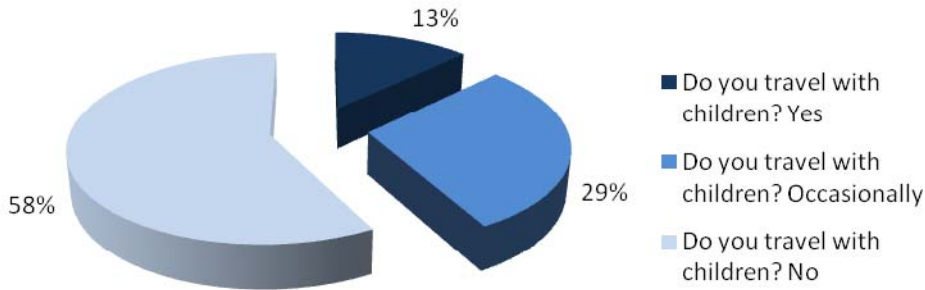


¹⁰ 235 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed

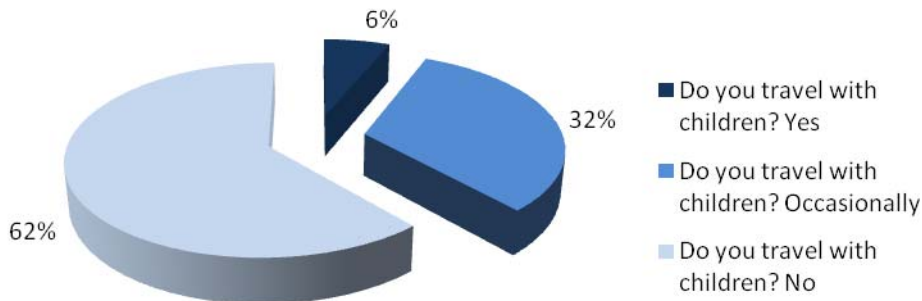
¹¹ 111 responses of 880 surveys distributed

The percentage of respondents travelling with or without children was relatively similar in both Croydon and Romford. Overall a marginally greater percentage was travelling with children in Romford than in Croydon.

Graph 12 – Croydon survey respondents travelling with or without children¹²



Graph 13 – Romford survey respondents travelling with or without children¹³

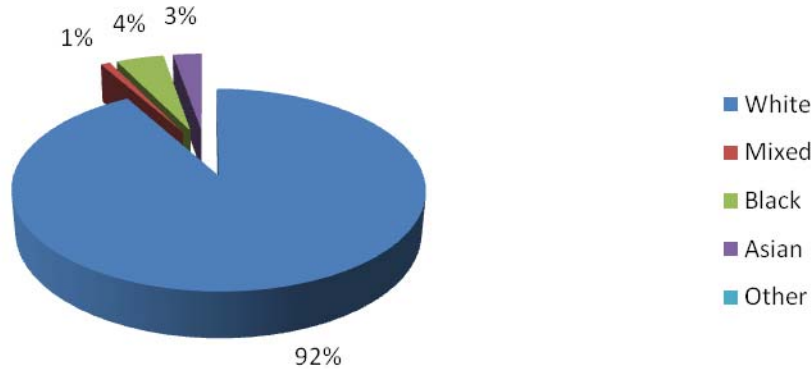


¹² 233 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed

¹³ 112 responses of 880 surveys distributed

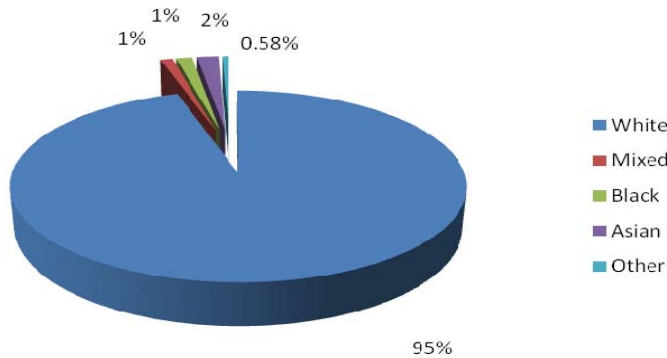
For the Romford survey London TravelWatch included a question about ethnicity which had not been asked in the Croydon survey.

Graph 14 – Romford percentage of survey respondents by ethnic group¹⁴



London TravelWatch compared the survey responses to the 2001 census for the London Borough of Havering. London TravelWatch’s survey responses had a similar ethnic group profile to the borough as a whole, however, it should be noted that the origins and destinations of those surveyed was wider than just the immediate borough.

Graph 15 – London Borough of Havering 2001 census by ethnic group¹⁵

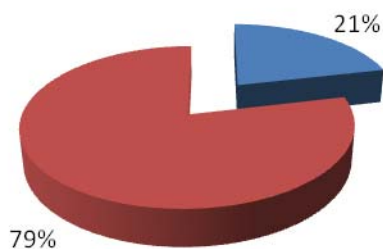


¹⁴ 112 responses of 880 surveys distributed
¹⁵

<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=276758&c=havering&d=13&e=16&g=336938&i=1001x1003x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1273504588645&enc=1&dsFamilyId=87>

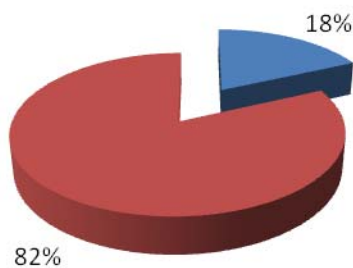
In both Croydon and Romford the percentage of people who responded that they had difficulty walking was similar at around 20%. The percentage was slightly higher in Croydon but only marginally so. The figure of 20% of respondents, who said that they did have difficulty walking, reinforces the importance of accessible transport particularly when further breakdown of the data in Graph 18 shows that most respondents who had difficulty walking had travelled to the town centres by bus.

Graph 16 – Croydon percentage of survey respondents who do or do not have difficulty walking¹⁶



■ Do you have a walking difficulty? Yes ■ Do you have a walking difficulty? No

Graph 17 – Romford percentage of survey respondents who do or do not have difficulty walking¹⁷



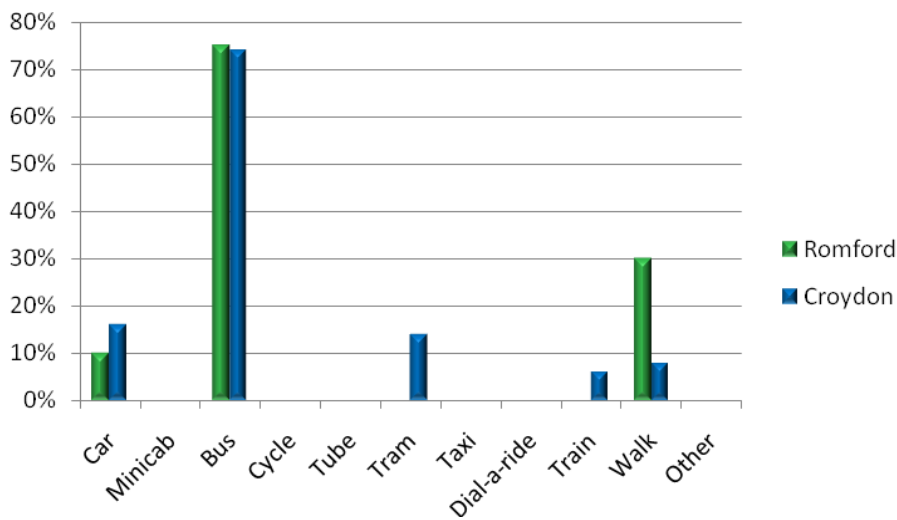
■ Do you have a walking difficulty? Yes ■ Do you have a walking difficulty? No

¹⁶ 234 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed

¹⁷ 110 responses of 880 surveys distributed

There were no train users in Romford who reported that they had difficulty walking and this may be a reflection of the only partially accessible nature of the station. The lower number of train users generally at Romford, also reflects the much lower levels of rail services, and the range of destination there are compared to Croydon. In both locations, of those who said that they had difficulty walking, the numbers of walkers was lower, in Croydon the number of walkers was substantially lower at less than 10% compared to around 15% in Graph 2.

Graph 18 – Mode choice of those who responded ‘Yes’ to the question, ‘Do you have difficulty walking?’¹⁸



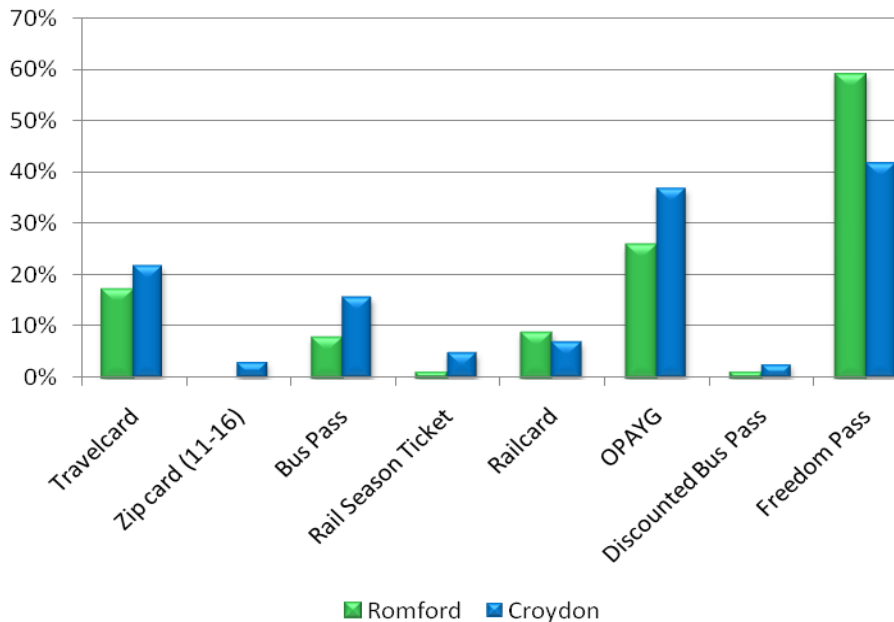
¹⁸ Croydon 50 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed
Romford 20 responses of 880 surveys distributed

Ticket types used by respondents and distance travelled

The ticket types of respondents varied between the Romford and Croydon survey response. In part this may reflect the different age profiles of the two surveys. The greater percentage of the over-60s in Romford probably accounts for the larger percentage of freedom pass holders. In Croydon the greater representation of the under 18s is illustrated by the response rate to the zipcard which is a ticketing product for 11 to 16 year olds.

In Croydon there was a greater use of Oyster Pay as You Go, travelcards, bus passes and rail season tickets. In Croydon the longer hours of the survey, and the greater number of offices in the town centre meant that there were more respondents who responded that their journey purpose was for work. Workers are more likely to purchase the products, such as season tickets, that were represented to a greater extent in Croydon. In both Croydon and Romford the age profile of respondents meant that the predominant form of ticketing was the freedom pass.

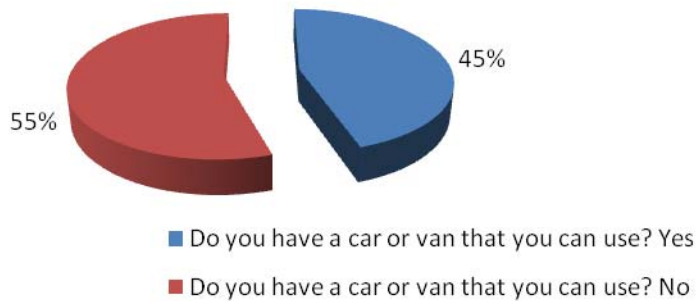
Graph 19 – Ticket types used by survey respondents¹⁹



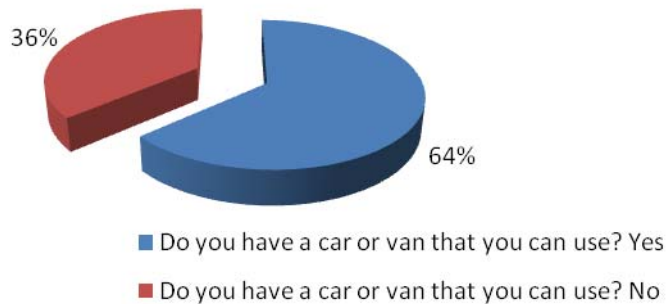
¹⁹ Croydon 230 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed
Romford 105 responses of 880 surveys distributed

In both survey questions about mode of transport, the car was more widely used in Romford than Croydon. It is not therefore surprising the access to private vehicles was greater in Romford with 64% of people having access to a car or van compared with only 45% in Croydon.

Graph 20 – Croydon survey respondents travelling who do or do not have access to a car or van²⁰



Graph 21 – Romford survey respondents travelling who do or do not have access to a car or van²¹

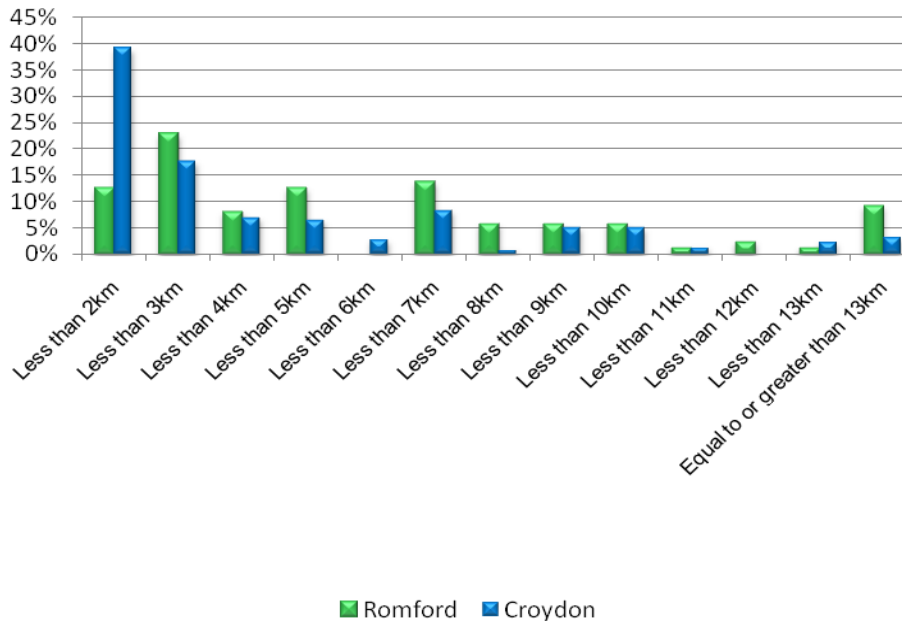


²⁰ 110 responses of 880 surveys distributed

²¹ 110 responses of 880 surveys distributed

The distribution of distance travelled from home to the point of survey varied between Croydon and Romford. The majority of people had travelled less far to Croydon than to Romford. This result might in part reflect the mode of transport used to reach the town centre. The greater car usage from the Romford survey might also explain the greater distances that respondents had travelled to reach the town centre.

Graph 22 – Distance travelled by survey respondents from home to the location of the transport user surgery in Croydon²²



²² Croydon 212 responses of 1,000 surveys distributed
Romford 88 responses of 880 surveys distributed

5 Conclusions

The passenger events give London TravelWatch a chance to speak to transport users directly and give them an opportunity to tell us any everyday concerns, as well as telling us when things are working well, which we can take back to the transport provider to resolve or use as a best practice example. We reached people that we do not normally get to speak to directly

The events are also a way of raising London TravelWatch's profile and explaining what we do and what we can do for the travelling public within specific areas, especially amongst people who may not fit the profile of our usual complainants.

While the surveys are not necessarily statistically significant, they do provide an interesting snapshot of travel patterns on two days in outer London town centres.

Appendix A: Selection of comments from event

The following are a selection of comments made on the day:

Croydon

George Street tram stop is over crowded

There is no bus stop near Epsom Road at the top of the hill

157 is very unreliable

Buses are infrequent in Addington village on Sunday

197 often delayed

Hygiene on buses

Route 403 – poor frequency. Needs times of service at bus stops

Route 403 – not enough buses

157 and 75 crowded

289 doesn't stop near the kerb

410 hard to get on at peak times

Romford

Poor service, always late and never answer calls

After 9pm buses stop in Romford. Need to stop in Victoria Road. None which go to Collier Road. Feel unsafe in Market place. No bus which stops opposite Asda towards anywhere except Harrow Hill and Gidea Park, have to change at Romford Station.

Bunching of buses

No clear info at stratford for rail replacement buses, no qualified staff to direct to rail replacement buses.

Over crowded, lack capacity, need more buses

Not enough buses on a Sunday

No buses to Romford and Upminster as the service has been withdrawn.

Buses often terminate at Tescos without notice

Low frequency of service from Brentwood

Weekend rail service is terrible, no information at Romford Station

Bus stops are crowded

Not frequent enough, not enough buses from Harold Hill

No timetable and poor frequency, no space for shopping trolleys

Not frequent enough, not enough buses from Harold Hill

No timetable and poor frequency, no space for shopping trolleys

No buses that go to Essex anymore. Used to be able to get to Southend, Epping and North Weald market.

Buses not going full route after 9pm

Rainham buses wouldn't stop until they got to fire station

Has zone 2-5 travel card but when there are disruptions she has to go into zone 1 and pay extra. Doesn't think this is fair.

Hail and Ride, needs timetable at stops

More buses to London from Romford needed

Unreliable

Short turning of buses

Western Road bus stop is chaos – 17 buses at one stop.

Additional buses are not consistent, put on for 1 week then taken off.

Open gates at rail station on Friday and Saturday night for youngsters, why should people pay when others go free.

Not enough buses

To full and often doesn't stop as overcrowded

North Street to Chase Cross says Havering instead of Havering Road. Needs correct bus announcements.

Very poor service and unreliable on Sundays.

The jobs have closed down the town centre route for buses

Appendix B – Survey Questionnaire

12) Do you use any of the following types of public transport ticket/pass?

- Travelcard Oyster Pay As You Go
 Zip card (11-16) Discounted Bus Pass
 Bus Pass Freedom Pass
 Rail Season Ticket
 Railcard (Young, Senior, Family, Network, HM Forces)

13) Do you have a driving licence?

- Yes No

14) Do you have a car or van that you can use?

- Yes No

Contact information

Complete this section if you wish to be entered into our FREE prize draw.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

We would like to be able to contact you in the future to ask your views on transport related issues. Please indicate if you would be happy for us to do this. We will not share your details with anyone else. Yes No

Thank you for completing this survey.

Any comments you have made will be kept confidential, but will be included in an analysis of all the responses we receive.

This analysis will be available on www.londontravelwatch.org.uk

Moisten here



Freepost RLYG-JAUZ-SLZU
London TravelWatch
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LONDON
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The voice of transport users

Travel Survey

finding out more about your journey patterns and concerns



London TravelWatch
is the capital's
passenger watchdog
for transport users.

We're holding this local surgery so
we can find out more about your
journey patterns and concerns.

To help us do this, we would be
pleased if you could complete the
short survey opposite and either:

- hand it back to one of our staff today
- or return it using freepost

If you wish to enter our prize draw please
don't forget to fill in your contact details.

Any other comments

Travel information

1) Why have you come here today?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational | <input type="checkbox"/> Family/Social |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
- (please use space below to describe)

2) How did you come here today? (Tick all that apply)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minicab | <input type="checkbox"/> Dial-a-Ride |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Train |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cycle | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tube | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
- (please use space below to describe)

3) Why did you use this mode of transport?

(Tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> Convenience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No alternative | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
- (please use space below to describe)

4) How often do you make this journey?

(Tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4+ times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times a week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times a month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less frequently | |

5) Which type of transport do you use regularly?

(Tick all that apply)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minicab | <input type="checkbox"/> Dial-a-Ride |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Train |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cycle | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tube | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
- (please use space below to describe)

6) If you don't often use public transport, can you tell us why?

Personal information

7) Are you?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Female |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|

8) How old are you?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19-24 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-60 | <input type="checkbox"/> 61-74 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 75 |

9) Do you consider yourself?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed | <input type="checkbox"/> Black |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please use space below to describe) | |

10) Do you travel with children?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|

11) Do you have difficulty walking?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|