



The voice of transport users

Report of the transport users' engagement events held in Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green

April 2014



London TravelWatch is the official body set up by Parliament to provide a voice for London's travelling public. We are funded by and accountable to the London Assembly.

Our role is to:

- Speak up for transport users in discussions with policy-makers and the media
- Liaise with the transport industry, its regulators and funders on matters affecting users and respond to their consultations
- 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 for all those living, working or visiting London and its surrounding region.

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1 Background

Transport user events

The experience of travelling in and around London is very different from the rest of the country. Away from the centre of London, the picture can vary considerably across the capital and depends both on the transport options available and the characteristics of local towns and populations. Transport user events provide important opportunities to meet and engage with local people and help us to keep in touch and build up a better understanding of the experience of using transport in different parts of London. Targeting these events in areas with particular transport issues such as poor bus services, a lack of accessible transport and new franchise competitions can be helpful.

Two such events were held in 2013/14 – in Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green, and this report summarises what we learned.

Bexleyheath

Bexleyheath, in the London Borough of Bexley is identified in the [London Plan](#) as one of 35 major centres in Greater London. The Borough of Bexley has a population of 232,000, with around 25% under 19; around 58% between 20-65 and around 16% over 65. Bexleyheath has seen a large amount of expansion in recent years. The modern part of the town centre is dominated by the Broadway Shopping Centre. In the 1990s the road adjacent to the shopping centre was pedestrianised after the construction of two minor bypasses (Arnsburg Way and Albion Way).

Bexleyheath Station serves the town with frequent (Southeastern) services to London Charing Cross, London Victoria via Peckham Rye and to London Cannon Street. Services also run to Dartford and Barnehurst (East) and Welling (West). There are many Transport for London bus services that serve the town to major areas including Thamesmead, Bromley, Lewisham, North Greenwich, Woolwich, Sidcup, Orpington, Crayford, Dartford and Bluewater.

The Bexleyheath transport users event

It was originally decided to hold an event in Bexleyheath, to gauge views on key local transport issues including the Southeastern rail franchise which had been due for renewal.

The event took place in the pedestrianised area in the town centre outside the Broadway Shopping Centre between 10-2pm on Wednesday 30 October 2013. The aim was to speak face-to-face with residents and visitors and to learn more about transport users' journey patterns and concerns in a busy part of outer London.

We adapted the format of the event for our visit to Bexleyheath, drawing on our experiences and feedback gained at previous events. Given that we already have

much contact with commuters through our casework (and they are also targeted by the local operator, Southeastern at their 'meet the manager' sessions), we decided to hold the event during half term in order to reach people travelling during the day with whom we would not normally have as much contact.

Experience of previous events showed that providing a transport forum is the opportunity for people to raise particular queries. Very few people wanted to raise casework issues with us so our emphasis shifted to seeking more general feedback about local transport services and providing information and advice.

Other attendees apart from London TravelWatch staff and one Board member included several local councillors and a TfL representative.

Bexleyheath town centre was very busy throughout the time that London TravelWatch was there. We spoke to around 300 people and they were generally positive about transport in their area.

Edmonton Green

The London Borough of Enfield is based around an historic market town which has become a residential suburb on the outskirts of London with a population of 314,000. Major redevelopment work, which is still ongoing, began in the Edmonton Green area in 1999, including the shopping centre, and adjacent municipal housing over a wide area.

The western part of Enfield is largely residential, with shopping centres in Southgate, Palmers Green and Cockfosters. In 2007, a large redevelopment project was completed in Enfield town centre.

Although the Borough of Enfield borders the Home Counties of Hertfordshire and Essex, some parts of the borough such as Edmonton share many of the characteristics of an inner-city area like the neighbouring constituencies of Tottenham and Hornsey and Wood Green. Some wards in the Borough now rank among the 10% most deprived in England. While the national unemployment rate has dropped to just above 7%, almost 30% of the workforce around Edmonton Green is currently out of a job. Demographically, the area has a very diverse and culturally mixed population with significant Turkish speaking, Greek Cypriot, Bangladeshi, African and Afro-Caribbean communities.

Eastern Enfield is disadvantaged by what the [Guardian has called](#) 'some of the worst public transport links anywhere in north London', with no tube and only two trains from some stations into the city every hour.

Enfield is served by the Piccadilly Line, with stations at Arnos Grove, Southgate, Oakwood and Cockfosters (where services terminate). Suburban National Rail services are provided by First Capital Connect and Greater Anglia also operate on several lines in the borough.

The main roads running through the borough include the North Circular Road, the M25, Green Lanes, the A10 and the old Hertford Road (A1010). TfL run a number

of bus services throughout the borough which are operated on their behalf by Arriva.

The Edmonton Green transport users event

It was decided to hold an event in the London Borough of Enfield, to engage with residents on key local transport issues including the two rail franchises which cover the area. Our plan had been to base ourselves by Enfield Town station but the event was held in Edmonton Green at the suggestion of the local council.

We were based opposite the local leisure centre and on the routes between Edmonton Green rail station, bus station and shopping centre on 22 March 2014. It offered an opportunity to speak face-to-face with users of transport services and to learn more about transport users' journey patterns and concerns in a busy part of outer London.

As in Bexleyheath, we aimed to seek more general feedback about local transport services, particularly local bus services and to use the event to provide the public with information and advice. In addition to our generic survey, we asked two bus-related questions; do local bus services generally take you where you want to go? and do you find buses to be overcrowded? (defining this as not being able to get on the first bus).

All seven Board members attended for part of the event along with local representatives of the Metropolitan Police; several councillors, including Councillor Levy, who chairs Enfield Public Transport Consultative Group; a council officer and a representative of local rail operator, Abellio Greater Anglia.

Edmonton Green was reasonably busy throughout the time that London TravelWatch was there. We spoke to around 250 people and they were generally positive about transport in their area although people did seem less willing to stop and talk than at previous events. This may have had something to do with the fact that the weather was very cold and windy.

At both events, we handed out our Oyster card holders and inserts, pens, copies of our money saving tips and our travel survey which people could either fill in on the day or take away and post back. As an incentive to fill in the survey, transport users were entered into a prize draw.

2 Travel survey findings

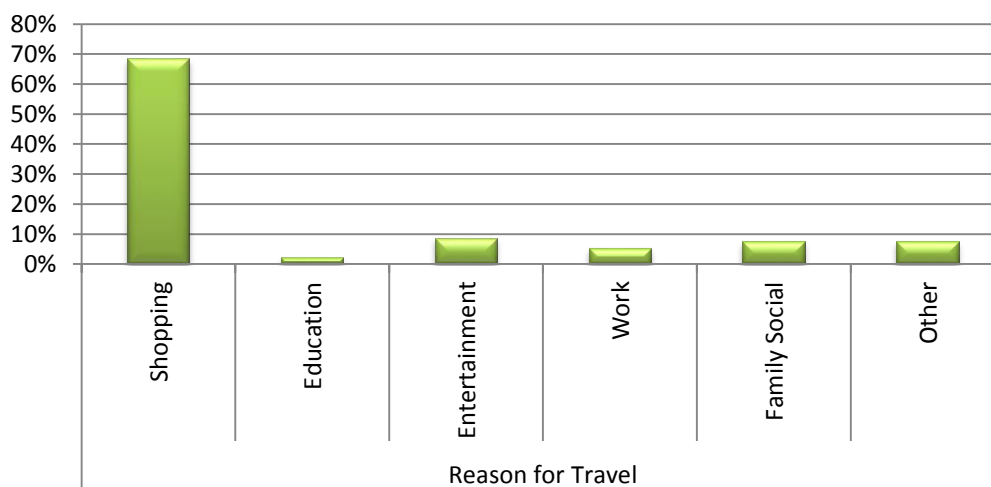
At the Bexleyheath engagement event, London TravelWatch handed out around 130 surveys to transport users. In Edmonton Green, we handed out around 250 surveys, asking two additional questions which focused on local bus services. The aims of the survey were to establish the travel patterns of transport users and gain an understanding of key public transport issues for people living in the area. A total of 78 completed surveys were returned to us from the Bexleyheath event, either on the day or by post; a response rate of around 60%, significantly higher than the response rates from all our previous events although far fewer in number. 130 surveys were returned from the Edmonton Green event, a response rate of 52%.

The surveys provide a snapshot of transport users' experiences in two busy parts of outer London. The findings are not statistically significant but provide an interesting insight into the travel patterns and needs of transport users in Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green. There was a prize draw to encourage participants to return the survey with a £50 Oyster card for the winner. The survey is available online at: www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/transportsurvey

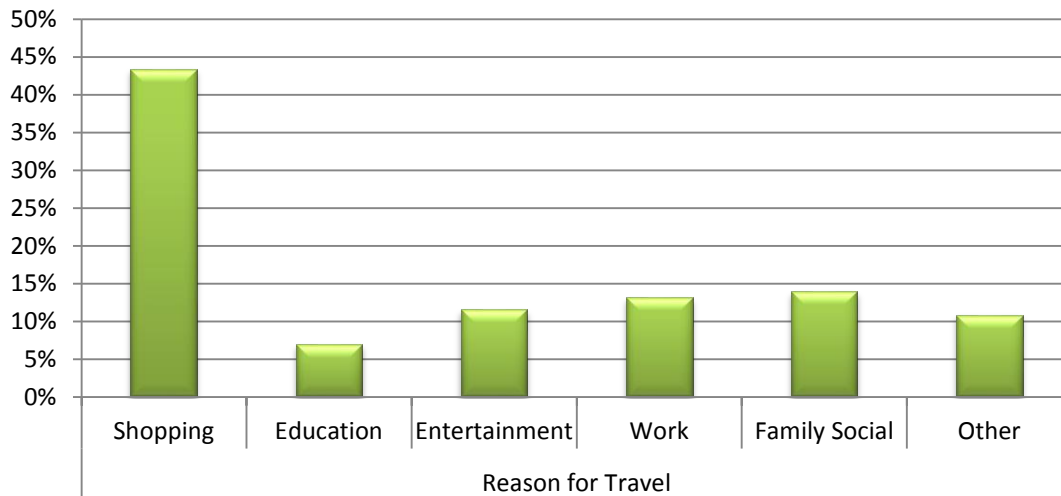
Journey purpose, frequency and modes of transport

The first section of the survey looks at the reasons for travelling, how frequently people travel, the mode of transport they use and why. In both Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green, respondents' main reason for travel was shopping (68% and 43% respectively), followed by entertainment (9% and 12% respectively). In Bexleyheath, the percentage of people travelling to do shopping was similar to the Lewisham, Romford and Croydon events, while the lower figure from Edmonton Green was closer to the figures we got in Tooting and Stratford.

Graph 1 – Respondents' reason for travel on the day of the survey in Bexleyheath

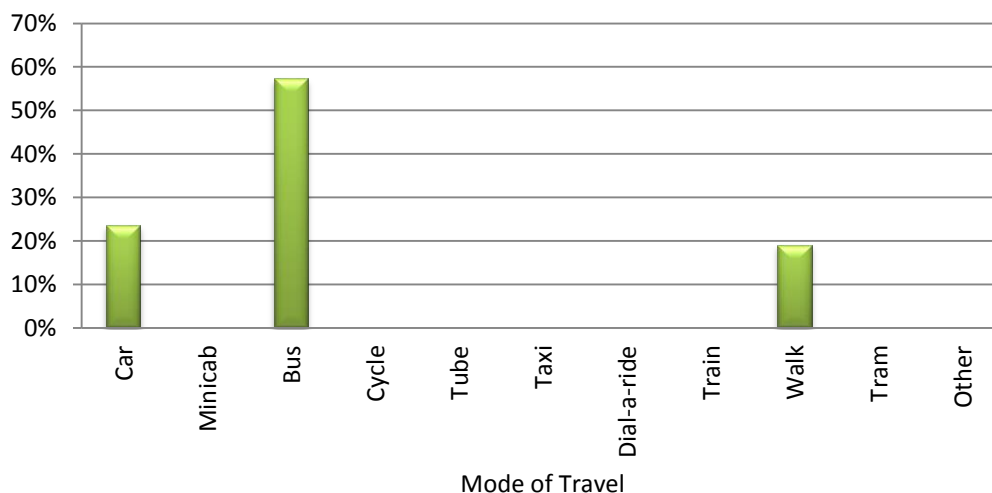


Graph 2 – Respondents’ reason for travel on the day of the survey in Edmonton Green

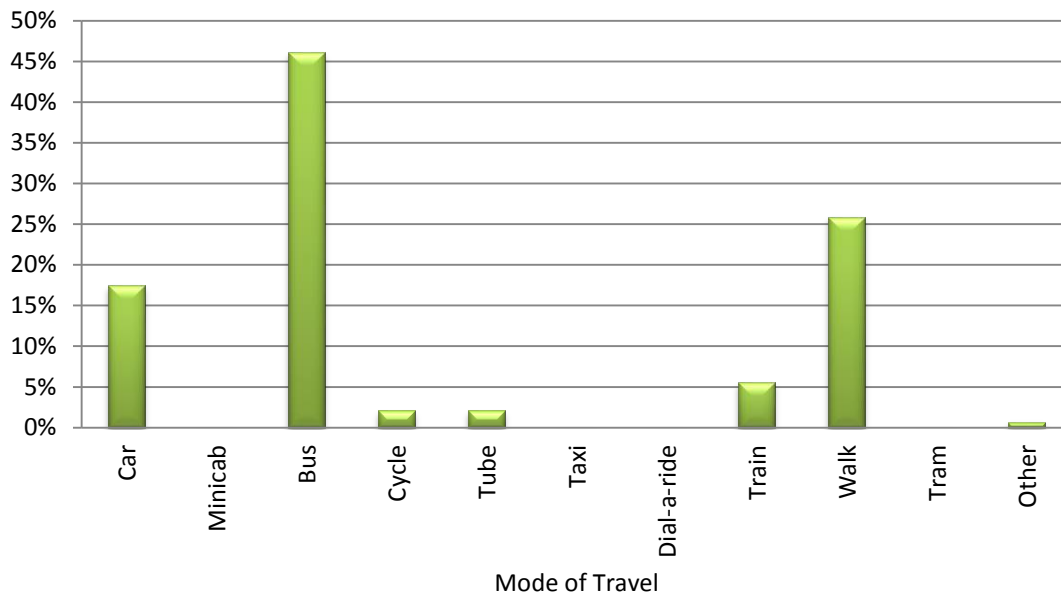


In contrast to surveys carried out in other areas, where a large range of transport modes were used, only three modes of travel were used by respondents in Bexleyheath although it should be noted that there are no tube stations or tram stops in the area. 57% of people surveyed had used the bus to travel into Bexleyheath town centre, a larger percentage than in Edmonton Green (46%), and similar to the percentage in Romford, Harrow and Croydon but lower than in Lewisham and Newham. In both Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green, a significantly higher percentage of people used a car (24% and 17%) than in almost all the previous surveys. A similar percentage of people (19% and 26% respectively) walked into the town centre as in previous areas we had visited.

Graph 3 – Modes of travel used by respondents on day of the survey in Bexleyheath

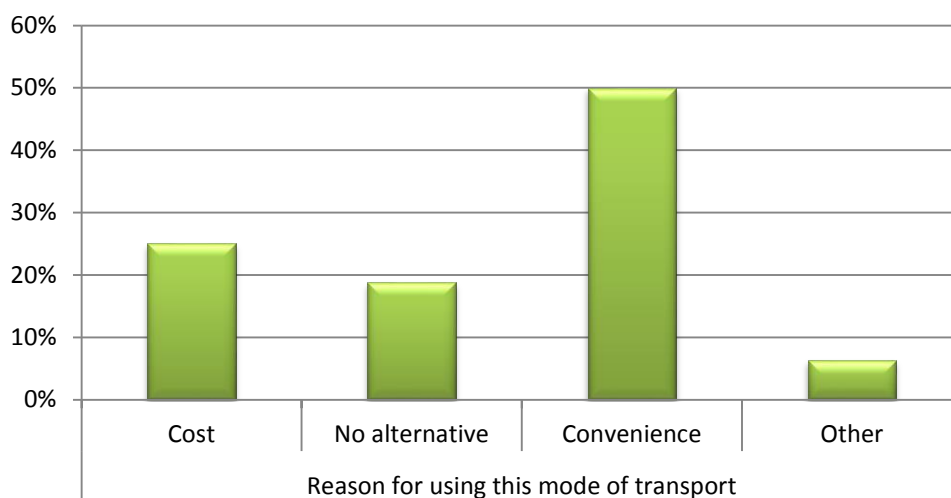


Graph 4 – Modes of travel used by respondents on day of the survey in Edmonton Green

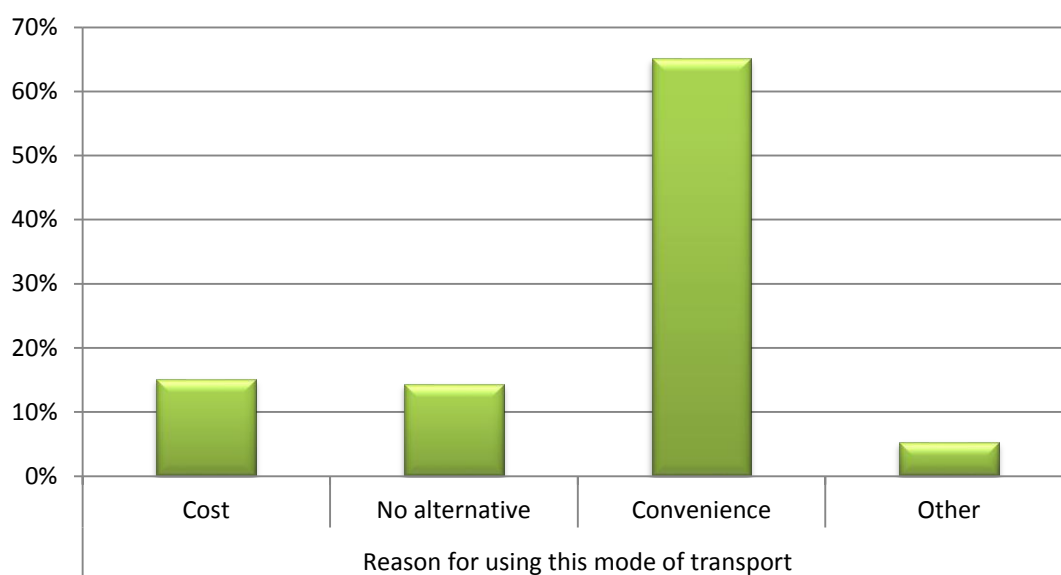


Convenience was clearly very important to respondents when they chose which method of transport to use, with over half of people listing this reason in both Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green – a similar result to the one we found at our previous events. A quarter of respondents in Bexleyheath said that the cost was the reason why they chose their method of transport, compared to 15% in Edmonton Green, while 19% and 14% of respondents in the two locations respectively said that they had no alternative when choosing a mode of travel.

Graph 5 – Reason for choosing a mode of travel to Bexleyheath

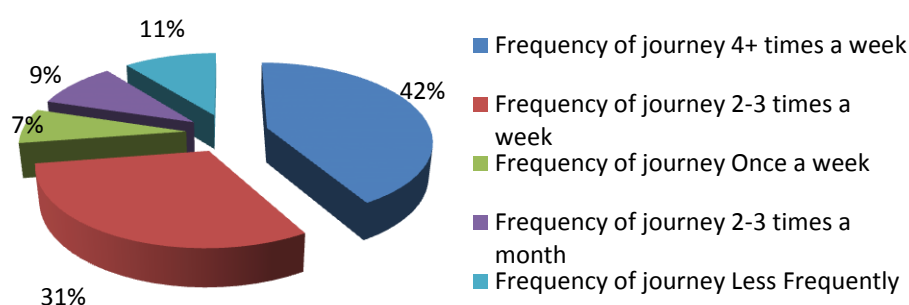


Graph 6 – Reason for choosing a mode of travel to Edmonton Green

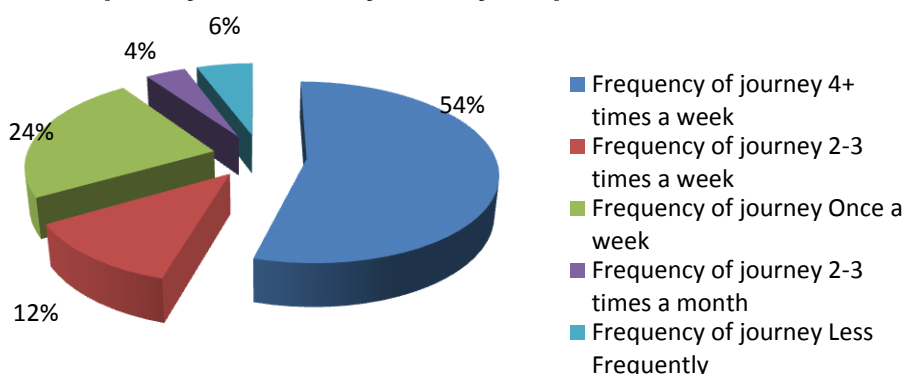


The respondents to our survey tended to be regular visitors to Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green, with 42% and 54% respectively making the journey they made on the day of the event four or more times a week. These findings are broadly similar to responses received at previous events. A higher percentage of people in Bexleyheath (31%) made the journey into the town centre two to three times a week than in Edmonton Green, where 24% of people made the journey once a week.

Graph 7 – Frequency of travel by survey respondents in Bexleyheath



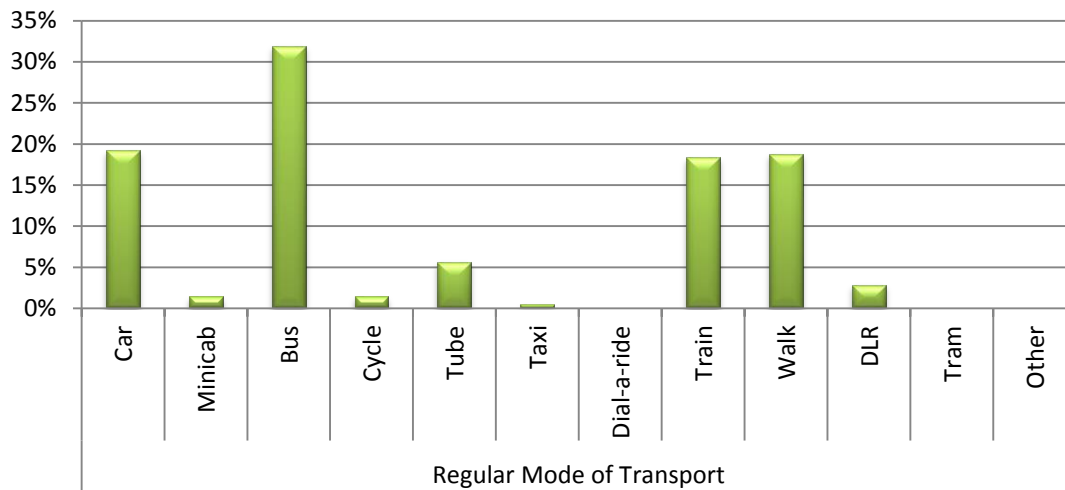
Graph 8 – Frequency of travel by survey respondents in Edmonton Green



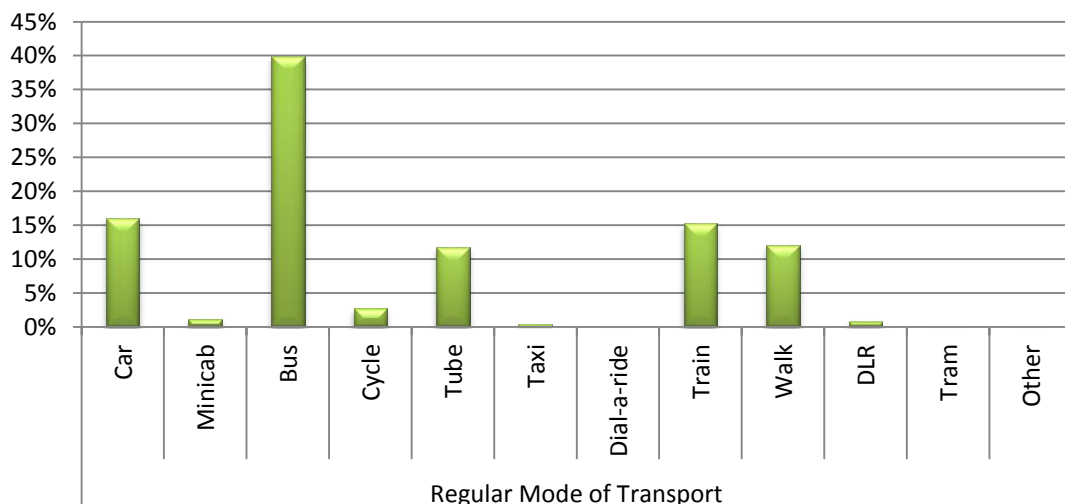
When respondents listed the regular modes of transport they used, the bus was the most popular in both Bexleyheath (32%) and Edmonton Green (40%). In Bexleyheath, a similar percentage of people walked (19%), used the car (19%) or travelled by train (18%). In Edmonton Green, 16% of people used the car, 15% used the train and 12% walked.

In both areas, bus usage was similar to Lewisham, Tooting and Harrow but much lower than Romford and Stratford where around 80% of people regularly used the bus. A similar percentage of respondents regularly travelled by train as in Lewisham, Tooting and Harrow; this was less than half the level in Stratford and Romford.

Graph 9 – Regular mode of transport used by respondents to the survey in Bexleyheath



Graph 10 – Regular mode of transport used by respondents to the survey in Edmonton Green



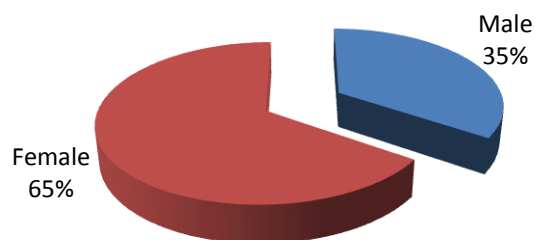
Profile of respondents to the survey

More females responded to our surveys than males (65% to 35% in Bexleyheath and 61% to 39% in Edmonton Green). In Bexleyheath, 32% of respondents were aged between 25 and 60 years old, with 45% of respondents aged between 61 and 74 years old, a much higher percentage than in most other areas we have visited. However, in Edmonton Green 75% of survey respondents were aged between 25 and 60, with 15% aged between 61-74 years old.

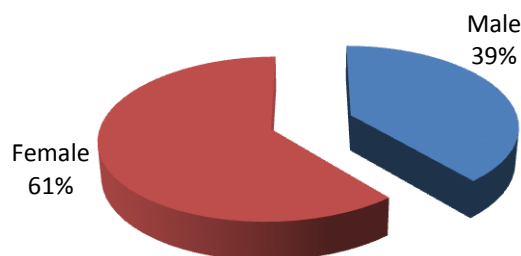
People who filled in our survey in Bexleyheath were predominantly white (92%) but this figure was lower in Edmonton Green at 45%, with 33% of respondents describing themselves as black.

45% of respondents said that they did not travel with children in Bexleyheath, similar to in Edmonton Green (50%) with 32% travelling with children occasionally in Bexleyheath, compared to half this figure in Edmonton Green, 22% of respondents said that they have difficulty walking in Bexleyheath compared to a slightly smaller percentage in Edmonton Green (16%), a similar percentage to all the other areas we have visited except Tooting where the figure was just 5%.

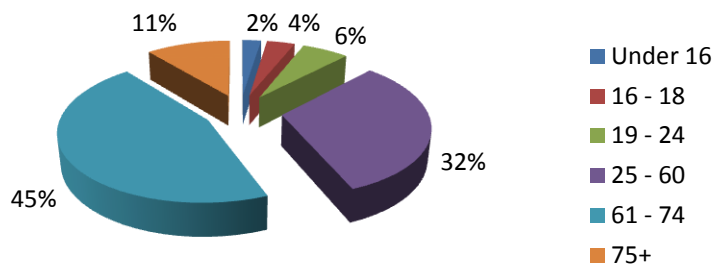
Graph 11 – Gender of respondents in Bexleyheath



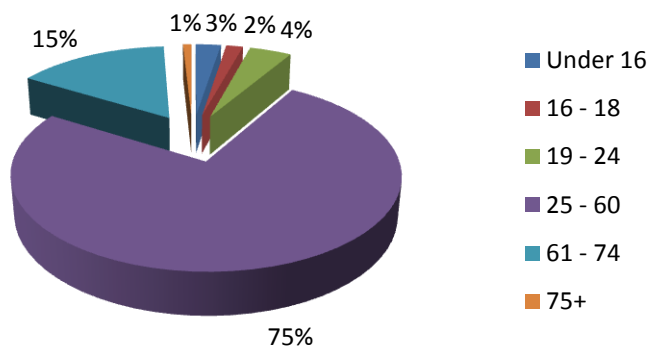
Graph 12 – Gender of respondents in Edmonton Green



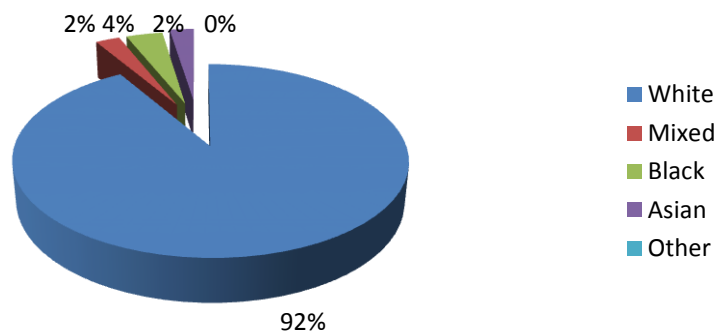
Graph 13 – Age profile of survey respondents in Bexleyheath



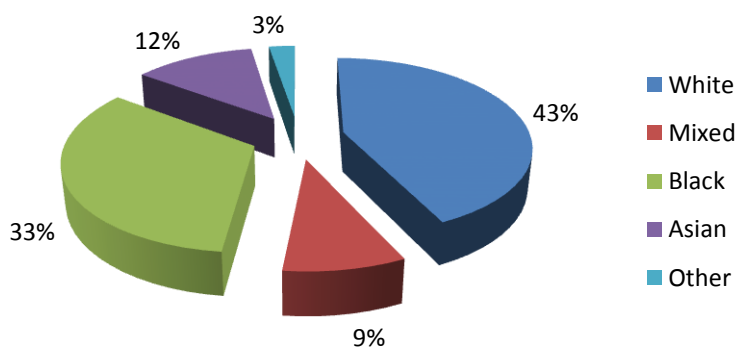
Graph 14 – Age profile of survey respondents in Edmonton Green



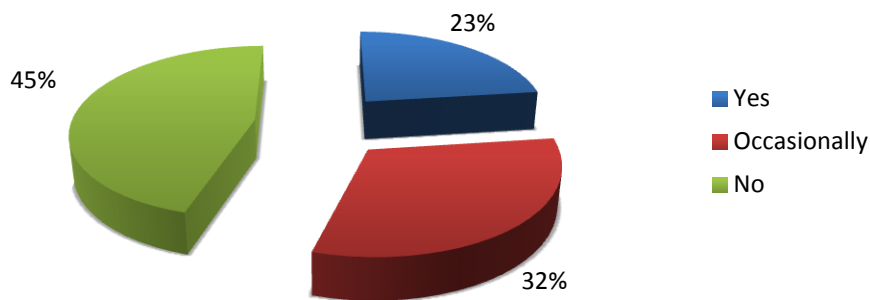
Graph 15 – Percentage of survey respondents by ethnic group in Bexleyheath



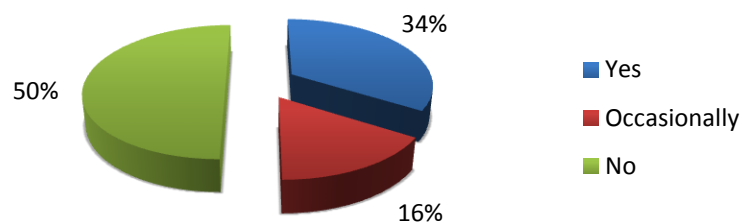
Graph 16 – Percentage of survey respondents by ethnic group in Edmonton Green



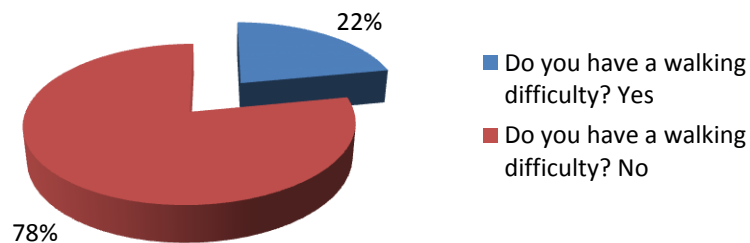
Graph 17 – Respondents travelling with or without children in Bexleyheath



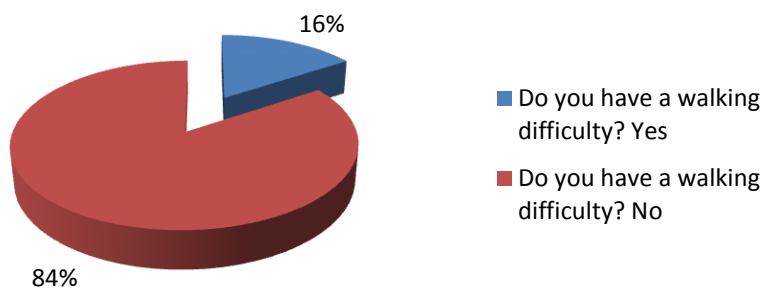
Graph 18 – Respondents travelling with or without children in Edmonton Green



Graph 19 – Percentage of survey respondents who do or do not have difficulty walking in Bexleyheath



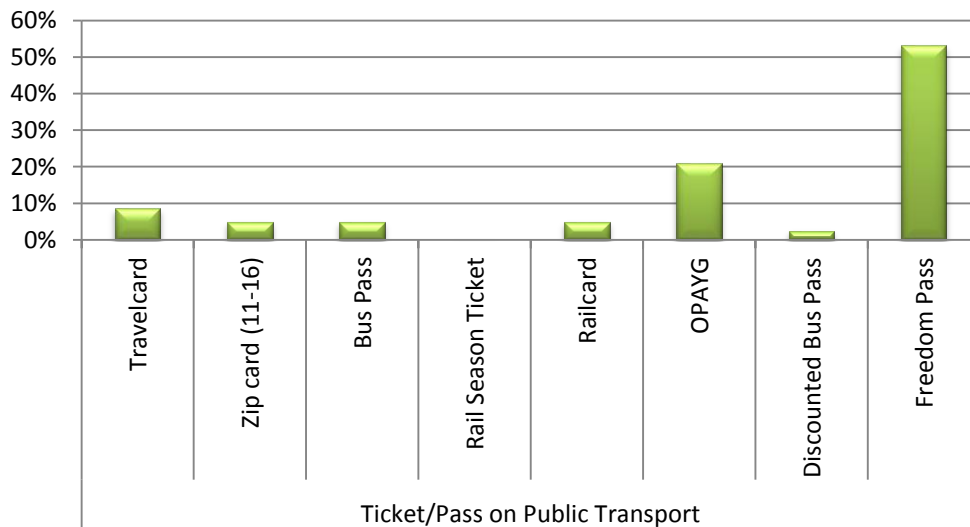
Graph 20 – Percentage of survey respondents who do or do not have difficulty walking in Edmonton Green



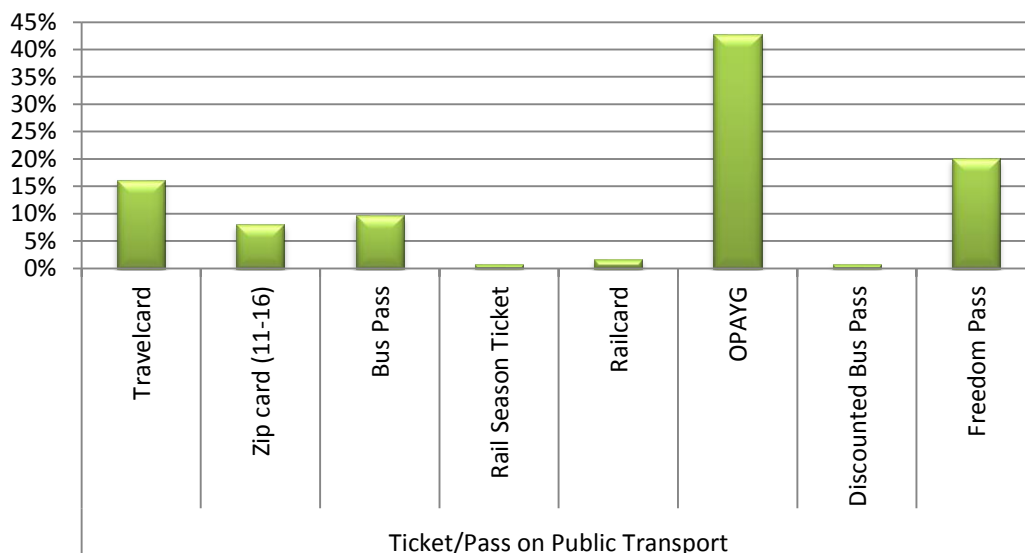
Ticket types used by respondents

Over half the respondents in Bexleyheath said that they used a Freedom Pass, a significantly higher percentage than all the other areas we have visited with the exception of Romford. In Edmonton Green, 43% of respondents were Oyster card users, a similar percentage to most other areas we have visited. Around half this figure (21%) were Oyster users in Bexleyheath, similar to the figure in Romford.

Graph 21 – Ticket types used by survey respondents in Bexleyheath

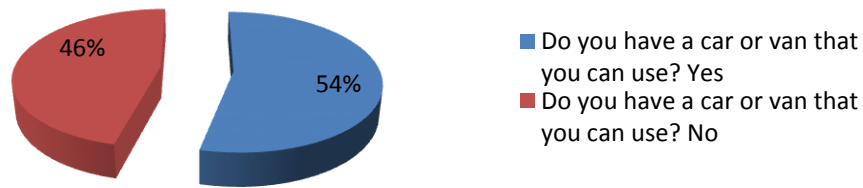


Graph 22 – Ticket types used by survey respondents in Edmonton Green

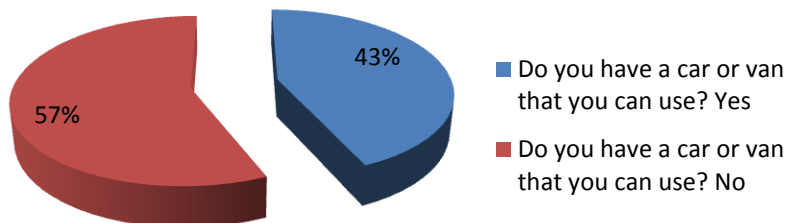


In Bexleyheath, over half of people had access to a car or van, similar to most of the other areas we have held events in. Fewer than half of people in Edmonton Green had access to a car or van (43%).

Graph 23 – Survey respondents travelling who do or do not have access to a car or van in Bexleyheath



Graph 24 – Survey respondents travelling who do or do not have access to a car or van in Edmonton Green



3 General feedback and conclusions

Staffing and resources

Having learned from previous events we have held, the Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green events were much more focused, with fewer staff resources employed at the former (four staff attended for the whole duration of the event and one Board member and another member of staff were there for part of the time) and five staff at the latter (along with seven Board members who attended for some of the time).

The Bexleyheath event cost a total of £255 and the Edmonton Green event cost a total of £240 (plus the staff time mentioned above). The breakdown is as follows:

Item	Cost	
	Bexleyheath	Edmonton Green
Surveys	£25	£25
Oyster card holders, inserts and pens	£150	£50
Expenses on the day	£30	£15
Oyster card for prize draw winner	£50	£50
Courier to take equipment to location		£100
Total	£255	£240

Logistically everything went well although we were not as visible in Bexleyheath as when we have had a bus to use as a regular visible base and having to approach people with clipboards may have made us look like we were trying to get people to sign up or donate money.

General feedback

A large number of the people we surveyed at both events, particularly freedom pass holders, commented that they were happy with public transport in the local area.

Much of the feedback resonated with our transport users' priorities, in particular '*A transport network open to all*', '*Enforcing the rules*' and '*A fair deal for travellers*', with some people complaining about the cost of travel and others complaining about the behaviour of school children on buses. Some transport users raised specific points about particular bus routes.

Survey feedback from Edmonton Green showed that although buses generally go where people want them to go, many people find buses overcrowded, especially users of the 279 and 149 buses, which run along the Lea Valley corridor on Hertford Road.

Our approach to the Edmonton Green event was much more focussed on getting quality responses from residents and visitors to the area, which meant spending more time with individuals than had been the case at previous areas.

Conclusions

The events in Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green gave us the chance to engage with a sample of people in an outer London area which we would not otherwise have had the chance to speak to, including several local councillors.

The feedback we received helps us to keep in touch with the concerns of passengers 'on the ground', and in some cases reinforced points we have seen in the media.

The events also helped to raise awareness of the work that London TravelWatch does, especially amongst people who may not fit the profile of our usual complainants. While the surveys are not statistically significant, they do provide an interesting snapshot of travel patterns in a busy outer London area.

The events have also allowed us to build contacts/raise awareness amongst individuals and groups in the Bexleyheath area which lasted beyond the event itself. A number of people from Bexleyheath found out about us at or because of our user engagement event and are now following us on Twitter. Bexley Council also included a piece in their regular Bexley e-bulletin which is emailed to residents on their email list as well as being available on their website.

Appendix A: A selection of comments made by survey respondents at our Bexleyheath event

Abbeywood services are crowded

Public transport is not good for pushchairs

People using free travel to go one stop

School children crowd bus

Oyster card very expensive and doesn't always work

I find it difficult to walk

Bus Drivers are rude and price of weekly travelcard is too high

Spends £160/month, never has a seat and is late once a week because of trains

The 89 bus is a good service

They shouldn't charge as much for shorter journeys on bus

The 192 bus is not frequent enough

Some buses are too packed/too many prams

There is no access to cheap tickets to London

The 229 bus unreliable

After school buses need supervision and fares are too high

School children only use bus for one stop and bus drivers are afraid to challenge their behaviour. Drivers also drive through stops when there is space upstairs.

More buses on B14 route

Dial a ride helps keep me mobile

Dial a Ride should run a better service but I appreciate the service as it allows me to retain my independence.

I like the new Routemaster and the open tube trains

Appendix B: A selection of comments made by survey respondents at our Edmonton Green event

Doesn't use buses, works in Shepherds Bush and uses train

Cheaper to use the car and quicker

Buses go where they want to go but are frequently overcrowded. Moved one bus stop but not the other for superstore at Tottenham

Palmers Green - 121, 329, W6, buses frequent

Use W6 to Edmonton Green

Bus drivers switch over and leave passengers waiting for a long time

More 279, 349 buses needed at peak times - it can be very difficult to get a bus going up to the Hertford Road

Buses go where I want to go but are frequently overcrowded

279 is overcrowded on Sundays

274 is overcrowded

Happy with service on 149, 349, 279

Buses do go where I want to go but are frequently overcrowded. Fell down twice and driver not helpful. Don't wait but most of the time OK.

Is overcrowding when I use the bus, generally they go where I want.

Not clean, anti-social behaviour

User of car and tube

Buses very overcrowded - have to wait 2 buses, trains overcrowded, but buses go where I want

Wheelchair area on buses overcrowded with prams and babies on laps and drivers not helpful

Buses to school work OK

3 buses to get to work from Hendon to Enfield, public transport is inconvenient and takes a long time

Don't always allow the use of a ramp for pram - especially if busy, can't get on if bus is far from pavement. One unfortunate incident was when a woman got on with 2 children but the doors closed and the driver drove away with the 3rd on the pavement.

Buses have improved over the years; cleaner, reliable as can be I suppose.

Bus will take you anywhere you want to go in London. Reasons I don't use public transport: waiting time, noisy teenagers after school - 20 minutes of pure torture.

Buses only too full occasionally

Buses not bad

275 not reliable - I would like to take bus to work but its starting time does not suit me. I work early in the mornings and I need to go to work by 6am most of the time.

All places connected

Sunday bus service very poor, W6 not frequent

The N6 is not frequent enough

The 279 is overcrowded and 191 takes a long time to come.

Buses are OK

Buses go where I want but are occasionally overcrowded

W8 bus very good

The 192 and W8 are very good.

279, 102, 192, 121, 307 should all be more frequent during school times

279, 249, 149, 191 are overcrowded

I like public transport - will use black cabs only if I can afford.

I travel on the 259 towards Manor House but I find the 279 which goes to the same stop doesn't stop to let people on and they sit behind the 259 and let the poor driver of this route do all the work.

Buses go where I want and are not overcrowded.

I sometimes have to change to get where I want but buses are not overcrowded. Some drivers are not helpful. Problems with W8 bus - when it stops passengers should be let out first. People don't queue. Buses usually go where I want.

Sometimes buses are overcrowded but drivers don't stop.

People occupying disabled seats. Pushchairs: children sitting in a seat.

Buses are really unreliable - last used it a week ago - uses the bus if it helps avoid the congestion charge.

Drivers need to be more patient giving disabled passengers time to get a seat where available.

Buses tend to go where I need, very overcrowded - sometimes can't get on the bus in the morning.

Bus drivers should stop if at a stop if they see someone running for a bus.

Buses should not pull out when a car is overtaking and should not use their horns.

Buses 102,229,141,W4 all OK, not too overcrowded.

Buses are great, go where I want, no problems with any of them

Buses unreliable, cheaper to use motorbike, tube too hot in summer, buses not safe.

Sometimes buses overcrowded, often have to change buses

Wait too long for W6

Buses go where I want but are occasionally overcrowded

Edmonton Station traffic lights don't work on behalf of buses which causes delays as only one bus through at any one time

W8 really good, needs to run more frequently in the afternoon

Can the train tickets be half the price for students as they travel every day, overcrowding at peak, used to travel by bus but it is a nightmare with buggy I work in the QE hospital, SE18. I often have problems with buses full of school children which are overcrowded and leave me at bus stops. There should be buses for the children followed by extra buses for the public going to Woolwich.

Buses are overcrowded during school runs (6.30-9.30am) but they get you where you want to go

Buses are overcrowded and especially in the evening but go where I want to go

Buses are overcrowded. I have to catch four buses sometimes on the way to Waterloo

Buses get me to where I want to go but are occasionally overcrowded.

Doesn't use buses

Too many buses - they get in the way of car drivers

Too many people on public transport, smelly, very busy, dirty

Buses a lot more regular than they used to be. Quite good service in London, rarely wait more than 10 minutes. Can get overcrowded in peak.

Lots of it but costs a lot.

Use my car most of the time.

Buses are frequent, don't go upstairs, too expensive to go to London.

Don't always feel safe on the buses.

Buses are crowded in the peak. Can't always get on 1st bus, drivers won't always stop.

Don't use the bus much but think they're OK.

Buses get me where I want to go and are not overcrowded.

191 very bumpy, no direct route from Enfield Town to Edmonton Green, sometimes overcrowded.

Still with buses cheaper.

Expensive, but train and bus services are good.

149 and 102 long wait of 30 minutes when it should be 6-8 minutes. Buses come all together then often turn short. Traffic can be a problem.

Fares are high. I don't use the tube or the train very much as a result.

Behaviour on buses can be bad.

We are well served in Edmonton N9 though I think it traumatic being on buses with buggies with prams and or secondary children who are very loud and push and shove. I avoid Kings Cross underground as I am disabled and it is not step free. It is miles to walk, often against oncoming pedestrians.

I use W6 less than the W8. The W6 is a hail and ride bus but the drivers only stop at designated stops. Buses also nearly always follow each other at the same time eg 217, 231, 144, 34, 102.

I object strongly to bus drivers who let people on buses for nothing especially W6, W8. I once asked a driver why they let someone on for nothing and they told me to mind my own business.

279 and 349 are good routes but school kids make it overcrowded and hard to get on the bus. Extra bus for Edmonton Green area needed especially rush hours.

Rarely sees Revenue Protection Inspectors on the train, doubts passengers would get penalised for sitting in 1st class without a 1st class ticket. Travel generally too expensive (£170 pm too much). Public transport too noisy, people always eating, dropping food. Always talking on phones, don't let mobiles on LUL. Tube overcrowded, buses OK but would usually walk rather than catch bus.

Buses are good - go to the right places, rarely overcrowded. Don't use trains/underground, would like to be able to afford to use.

Unsuitable lift at station, zebra crossings should be quicker. Countdown has made a huge difference. Forest Road to Edmonton Green is so overcrowded can't get on - morning peak 8 minute wait, lots of schoolchildren 2, 3 or 4 at a time, fine in the school holidays. If 2 buses I use the car because of the hassle factor.

Buses are convenient and cheap but sometimes/always feel that because so cheap people forget it is a public bus and put their feet on the seats/have inappropriate conversations. Have challenged people's behaviour on buses several times but other avoid confrontation. Not brave enough to cycle!

Bus lanes are good but still get vehicles that block them. Buses are quite expensive. Journey is slow so prefer rail/LUL if need to use public transport, not a fan of the bus.

Only use the bus when desperate. Car more convenient. It would be nice if my local rail service was run by TfL so I could use my freedom pass earlier than 9.30am.

I am really happy with the public transport that I use.

I would like a bus on Park Lane, going through N9 9NJ and would like actual bus stops on Haselbury for shelter and times (as I get late at school because of irregular timing of the N6). More W6s on weekdays in the morning.

There should be a service in Park Lane as we live far from bus stops and it is hard with shopping. We need a small bus.

Picketts Lock Leisure Centre is easy to get to from Edmonton Green, but very difficult from Walthamstow and Chingford.

Appendix C: Findings from the previous surgeries

Croydon 17th November 2009 (weekday)

For this event, a bus, provided by Arriva London, was parked in North End between 10am and 4:30pm. This is a central pedestrianised location within the town centre close to shops and the market. Croydon was very busy all the time that London TravelWatch were there and we spoke to over 1,000 people on the day, including a wide range of the travelling public – bus users, motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, as well as tram and rail users. The public were generally positive about transport 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 routing. It was also clear how important people's Freedom Passes were to them.

Romford 5th March 2010 (weekday)

For this event, a bus was parked at the South Street end of the Market Place between 10am and 3pm. 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 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.

At both Croydon and Romford, we found many wheelchair users or mobility impaired people who were not aware that all buses in London were now accessible, or how to use the ramps on buses. Following this, we asked TfL to improve the information they provide to disabled users of public transport.

Stratford 24th March 2011 (weekday)

For this event, we parked a bus outside the rail/underground station, which is next to the bus station and opposite a shopping centre between 10am and 4pm. Stratford bus and train station was very busy throughout the time that London TravelWatch was there. We spoke to over 1,000 people on the day, including a wide range of the travelling public – mainly bus users, but also rail, tube, pedestrians, motorists, cyclist and DLR users. The public were generally positive about transport in their area and the complaints and concerns were usually about specific problems, rather than any over-arching pattern.

At both locations, we found many wheelchair users or mobility impaired people who were not aware that all buses in London were now accessible, or how to use the ramps on buses. We were able to give advice and practical demonstrations (along with the local bus operators) on how to use the buses, especially the ramps. In some cases, people who did not use buses said they would in future.

Tooting 10th March 2012 (Saturday)

This event took place on 10 March between 10am and 2pm. Staff were based inside Tooting Broadway Underground Station and outside the entrance to Tooting College and the Sainsburys supermarket. They were also on hand to talk to passers by outside the station.

A lot of the people surveyed commented that they were happy with public transport in the local area but several respondents said that they thought that it was too expensive. Others said that they would like stations to be cleaner and to have better access for the disabled. Access to hospitals was another issue that was raised by some respondents and safety of public transport late at night was also mentioned.

Harrow 10th November 2012 (Saturday)

This event took place on 10 November 2012 between 10am and 1pm. We were based on a New Bus For London parked in Harrow town centre on Station Road and there were also London TravelWatch representatives outside the St George's Shopping Centre and at the Bus Station near Harrow on the Hill Underground station.

Many of the people we surveyed commented that they were happy with public transport in the local area, particularly freedom pass holders. However quite a few people mentioned the lack of disabled access at Harrow on the Hill station and several people felt that public transport in London was too expensive. Specific feedback on the New Bus for London included the fact that people felt that the ceiling was too low upstairs, the seats at the back of the bus were too high, there was not enough buggy space and the fact that buses are too full after school.

Lewisham 20th March 2013 (Weekday)

The Lewisham Transport Users Engagement Event took place on 20 March between 10.30am and 2.30pm on a New Bus For London parked next to Lewisham Shopping Centre in the middle of the busy market in the town centre. Many of the people we surveyed commented that they were happy with public transport in the local area, particularly freedom pass holders.

Much of the feedback resonated with our transport users' priorities, in particular the 'A transport network open to all' and 'Enforcing the rules' priorities. Issues which came up during the day and were mentioned in a number of survey responses included drivers not pulling up to the kerb to let disabled passengers in wheelchairs board the bus, concerns about fares and fare increases, concerns about anti-social behaviour and a lack of space on board buses for wheelchairs/buggies.

Some transport users raised specific points about congestion on Southeastern services, especially during peak times. Other, more specific issues raised included praise for new/improved walking routes implemented by Lewisham Council and suggestions for improvements to local bus service.

Key details about our previous transport user events					
Location	Day of week/time	Local location eg bus/stand	Questionnaires returned/handed out	Other attendees?	Key things we learned
Croydon	Tuesday 17 th November 2009 10-4.30pm	Bus in town centre	236/1000 (24%)	TfL, bus companies, train operators, Tramlink Press and radio coverage	Issues raised included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passengers didn't know how to use ramps on buses • Bus routing and congestion issues • Lack of awareness about bus accessibility amongst wheelchair users
Romford	Friday 5 th March 2010 10-3pm	Bus in market place	112/880 (13%)	TfL, local operators, the Council Radio coverage	Issues raised included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems with specific bus routes due to roadworks, short turning buses and crowding • Pedestrianisation of part of the town centre has made buses less convenient • Confusion about whether freedom passes can be used before 0930 on weekdays • Lack of awareness about bus accessibility amongst wheelchair users

Stratford	Thursday 24 th March 2011 10-4pm	Bus outside rail/ underground station	111/1000 (11%)	TfL, LB of Newham, rail companies, Transport for All and Bus Users UK,	Issues raised included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness about bus accessibility amongst wheelchair users
Tooting	Saturday 10 th March 2012 10-2pm	A presence inside Underground station and stand outside local college /supermarket (no bus)	212/640 (33%)	Bus Users UK Press coverage	Issues raised included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fares too expensive • Improved access for disabled needed at stations • Safety of public transport late at night • Access to hospitals
Harrow	Saturday 10 th November 2012 10-1pm	New Bus for London in town centre	224/800 (28%)	Arriva bus driver and conductor, Harrow Public Transport Users Association, local councilors Press coverage	Issues raised included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of disabled access at Harrow on the Hill station • Fares too expensive • Buses too busy after school
Lewisham	Wednesday 20 th March 2013 10.30- 2.30pm	New Bus for London in town centre outside shopping centre adjacent to the market	156/560 (28%)	TfL, local bus companies, Southeastern Local blogger attended	Issues raised included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drivers not pulling up to the kerb to let disabled passengers on buses • concerns about fares and fare increases • concerns about anti-social behaviour • lack of space on board buses for wheelchairs/buggies

Bexleyheath	Wednesday 30 th October 2013 during half term 10-2pm	Stand outside shopping centre in the town centre (no bus)	78/130 (60%)	TfL, local councillors	Issues raised included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost of travel • bad behaviour of school children on buses • some specific points about particular bus routes
Edmonton Green	Saturday 22 nd March 2014 10-2pm	Double decker bus outside the leisure centre, near rail station	130/250 (52%)	Greater Anglia, bus station manager, local councilors, council officer Press tweeted about it	Issues raised included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific points about bus routes, particularly overcrowding • anti-social behaviour

