

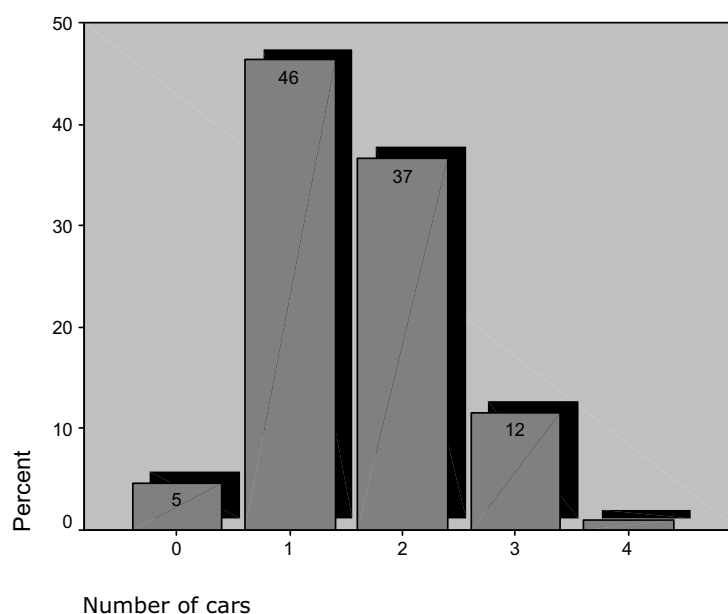
Figure 6.13
Likely journeys on winter Sunday mornings
 Scale - 1:350,000

6.5 Households: travel patterns

6.5.1 Car ownership in the study area equates to 1.6 cars and vans per household.

Some level of car ownership is almost universal; only 5% of households do not own a vehicle and nearly half the households own two or more vehicles, as illustrated in Figure 6.14. There is almost 0.8 of a car per adult. In addition, there are very high numbers of people who have the ability to drive, which comprises 87% of all adults.

Figure 6.14: Level of household car ownership in the study area



6.5.2 The residents of the study villages travel regularly to a bewildering array of some 50 specific destinations for work, college or school purposes. Patterns of travel to work and education are examined below.

Work and education travel: Greater Maiden Newton

6.5.3 People within the greater Maiden Newton study households travelled for work, school or college to 16 specific destinations. This consisted particularly of travel to Maiden Newton (26%), Dorchester (18%) and other locations within Dorset (29%). 9% of people travel to a number of destinations as part of their work.

6.5.4 27% of people travelled less than 5 kilometres to work or school, with a further 5% within 10 kilometres and 39% of people travelled between 10 to 20 kilometres. Only 5% of travel to work or education consisted of journeys of more than 20 kilometres.

6.5.5 Table 6.8 shows the normal mode of travel to work or education for Maiden Newton residents. Half the people drive, with a further 10% getting lifts. Walking constitutes a substantial 18% of journeys. 10% use the bus (including for school). Only 6% use the train regularly for work or school. This represents 6 people in the sample. 2 people apiece use the train to Dorchester and Weymouth, 1 commutes to London (from Yeovil Junction) and one to Winchester (from Dorchester South).

6.5.6 Whilst 30% of journeys to work, school and college are to locations in settlements adjacent to the B-W railway, only 6% are by train.

Table 6.8: Mode of travel to work/ education: Maiden Newton	
Normal travel-to-work mode	Percentage
Car driver	53
Walk	18
Car passenger	11
Bus	10
Train	6
Bike	2
Total	100

Work and education travel: Wriggle Valley Parishes

6.5.7 Residents surveyed in the Wriggle Valley parishes travel to 31 locations for work and education. 22% of these were to the Wriggle Valley parishes, involving a few kilometres of travel or working at home. Other common destinations include Yeovil (19%), Sherborne (11%) and Dorchester (9%). 10% of people travel to a number of locations in the course of their work; the rest are thinly spread between a number of (largely rural) locations.

6.5.8 22% of trips are of less than 5 kilometres and 31% of 5-10 kilometres, meaning half of work and education trips involve journeys of less than 10 kilometres. 5% of journeys are to locations 10-20 kilometres away from the Wriggle Valley, and a 12% travel between 20-50 kilometres to reach their place of work or education. 30% travel to various locations or did not specify where they worked.

6.5.9 Table 6.9 shows the breakdown of travel mode to work or education. 57% of people drive, with another 8% travelling as car passengers. 12% walk, 7% work from home, 15% catch the bus and only 2% catch the train. This represents 5 people in the sample. Of these people, two travel to Dorchester, one to Yeovil and one commutes to London from Yeovil Junction.

6.5.10 Whilst 27% of journeys to work, school and college are to locations in settlements adjacent to the B-W railway, only 2% are by train.

Table 6.9: Mode of travel to work/education : Wriggle Valley	
Normal travel-to-work mode	Percentage
Car driver	56.7
Bus	14.7
Walk	11.8
Car passenger	7.6
Work at home	7.1
Train	2.1
Total	100

Shopping travel: Greater Maiden Newton

6.5.11 More than half of day-to-day shopping takes place in Maiden Newton itself and a further 30% occurring in Dorchester. Almost 50% of households walk to purchase day-to-day purchases, with another 36% households driving. No daily shopping is conducted by train. The location for weekly shopping is divided between Dorchester (65% households) and Yeovil (22%). 80% of households drive for weekly shopping, with the remainder being almost equally divided between bus, walk, lifts and the train.

6.5.12 The majority of destinations for larger purchases are in Dorset, with 1/3 of households visiting Dorchester and 1/3 visiting Weymouth for this purpose. 78% of households travel to towns located on the B-W line. Three quarters of households travel by car to purchase 'larger purchases', however, a sizeable majority of 15% use the train. This tends to be to reach Bath and Bristol.

Shopping travel: Wriggle Valley Parishes

6.5.13 Day-to-day shopping habits in the Wriggle Valley are more complicated, with almost 1/3 of households not making such itinerant purchases. The main destinations for households were Yeovil (20%) Sherborne (20%) and Yetminster (20%). 27% of households walk to make day-to-day purchases and 42% drive. The bulk of households conducted weekly shopping in Yeovil and Sherborne with 90% of households driving to do this. The train is not used by any households for these shopping trips.

6.5.14 Half of households travel to Yeovil for larger purchases, with other important destinations being Sherborne and Dorchester. 10% of households did not answer this question. A wide range of other destinations is also visited across the South and West. 77% of households drive to these locations, with 4% travelling by bus and 9% by train.

Social exclusion

6.5.15 19% of all households reported that a lack of public transport had prevented them from socialising and 13% said that it had prevented them pursuing their hobbies or sport within the last year. 11% of households with people in work stated that a lack of public transport had prevented members of their households getting jobs within the last year.

6.6 Householders: rail travel patterns

Train travel

6.6.1 Train travel does not figure highly for any of the six purposes on which householders were questioned, as illustrated in Table 6.10.

Purpose	Shopping	Leisure	Work	Health	Visiting friends	Education
Within week	3.2	5.1	4.2	0.5	5.6	3.2
Within month	9.3	10.2	4.2	3.2	5.1	4.2
Within year	12.5	28.4	9.7	4.6	15.7	8.3
More rarely	18.5	20.5	10.2	5.1	15.3	0
Never	56	35.8	71.3	86.1	57.9	83.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

6.6.2 The greatest number of households use the train for leisure trips. 65% of households had used the train at some point for such trips and 44% within the last year. The second and third most popular use of the train was for shopping and visiting friends, with 45% of households having used the train at some point in the past for these two purposes. 25% had used the train for these purposes within the last year.

6.6.3 18% of households used trains within the last year for work journeys, 8% for health purposes, and 15% for education. However, more than 70% of the households never used the train for these purposes.

Comparison with household bus use

6.6.4 Results for householders' bus use are shown in Table 6.11.

Purpose	Shopping	Leisure	Work	Health	Visiting friends	Education
Within week	6.5	4.2	3.7	1.4	3.7	9.3
Within month	6.5	4.6	0.9	3.7	1.	1.4
Within year	8.8	8.3	3.7	3.7	3.2	1.4
More rarely	16.2	15.3	5.6	6	12	5.1
Never	<i>61.6</i>	<i>67.1</i>	<i>85.6</i>	<i>84.7</i>	<i>78.7</i>	<i>82.8</i>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Italicised</i> numbers indicate higher % of households giving this answer about bus travel than train travel						

6.6.5 Only a minority of households have ever used the bus for each of the purposes examined and bus travel tends to be undertaken by a lower proportion of households than rail use. The exception to this is education and health travel. Household bus use is also higher than train use for shopping on a weekly basis.

6.6.6 The greatest level of bus use by households is for shopping trips. 38% of households had used the bus at some point for such trips and 22% within the last year. The second most popular use of the bus was for leisure trips, with one third of households having travelled by bus for leisure trips at some point in the past. Only 17% had used the bus for leisure within the last year. Householder use of the bus for other purposes was considerably lower still. Only 10-20% of households have ever made use of the bus for work, health, education purposes or visiting friends.

Weymouth by rail

6.6.7 The proportion of households surveyed who had made visits to Weymouth by train was greater than expected by the researcher and the results are illustrated in Table 6.12. Members of half the households have used the train at some point to visit Weymouth in the summer and a third at other times of the year.

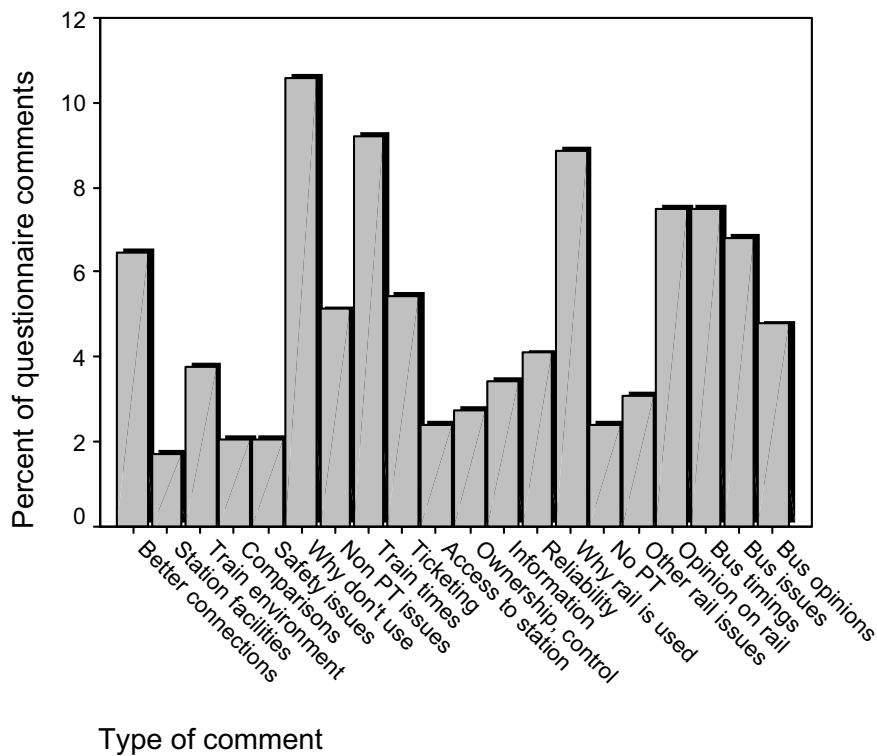
Table 6.12: Use of rail to visit Weymouth		
	Visited Weymouth by train – in the summer	Visited Weymouth by train –at other times
Yes	54%	31%
No	46%	69%
Total	100%	100%

6.6.8 The above results show that more than half of households have used the train at some point for travel to Weymouth in the summer, whereas only a third have ever used the train to reach Weymouth at other times.

6.7 Householder comments on public transport

6.7.1 Householders gave 86 different comments, 73 of which were rail-related. The full range of comments is illustrated in Appendix 9. None of these comments attracted more than 5% of the total comments. The comments fell into various categories and these are shown in the bar chart in Figure 6.15 below.

Figure 6.15: Householder questionnaire comment responses



6.7.2 Table 6.13 illustrates the 'top 10' comments by householders. Three of the 10 most popular comments relate solely to buses. The most popular rail comments concentrated on reliability, cost and the need for a link to the Waterloo line. Again, a substantial numbers of householders emphasised their general satisfaction with rail services.

Rank	Comment	% of comments
=1 2	Bus are few/ need more/ more days of operation	4.8
	Excellent/ General satisfaction with rail and bus	
3	Buses are generally good	3.8
=4	Public transport is important for those who don't drive	3.4
	Wessex Trains don't run late enough	
=6	Train reliability issues	3.1
	Train fares expensive	
	Rail link from B-W line to Yeovil Junction	
	More Sherborne buses needed	

6.8 Householder's opinion and knowledge

Knowledge of the timetable affecting journeys

6.8.1 A question asked households whether they would use the train more for certain activities if more information were known about the timetable. The results are given in Table 6.14. below.

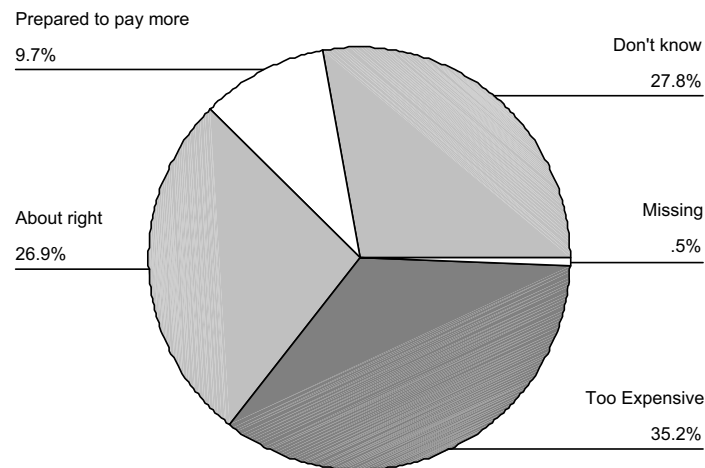
% respondents saying would use train more if knew more about timetable	Bath	Bristol	Weymouth	Yeovil
Shopping	38	28	18	13
Theatre or concerts	20	20	10	7
Other leisure trips	25	19	26	7

6.8.2 If people knew more about the timetable, the largest proportion would make use of the train to visit Bath, for all kinds of leisure trips. 40% of respondents stated they would travel to Bath for shopping if they knew more about the timetable. Bristol and Weymouth would also be popular destinations, for shopping in Bristol and leisure trips to Weymouth. However, increased knowledge of the timetable would not generate significant numbers of leisure trips to Yeovil.

Perception of ticket prices

6.8.3 Figure 6.16 below illustrates the response to a question of opinion of rail ticket prices.

Figure 6.16: Householder opinion of ticket prices



The above chart illustrates that

- Roughly one third feel travel is too expensive
- Roughly one third feel it is 'about right'
- Roughly one third had no idea
- 10% are prepared to pay more for a service that is more convenient for them

Several people stated that whilst local travel, especially on the B-W line, was very reasonable, longer distance trips were expensive.

6.8.4 Almost two-thirds of people who had never used the train had no idea the cost of train travel, and one quarter thought it too expensive, despite having no experience of it themselves.

Finding information

6.8.5 The timetable was the most popular method of finding information out about train travel, and is used or would be used by 55% of households surveyed. 48% would use the National Rail Enquiries telephone line and 40% would find information out from a station. 10% would telephone Wessex Trains, the train operator, and 10% would access their website. 4% would look at the rail partnership's website, heartofwessex.co.uk. 8% did not answer the question- perhaps either because they did not know or because it didn't matter to them.

6.8.6 Other options mentioned included:

- Other websites (trainline.co.uk, railtrack.co.uk, rail.co.uk, Internet search engine)
- Local information points (local shop, tourist office)
- Parish leaflet

Buying tickets

6.8.7 31% of households did not answer this question pointing towards ignorance on how to purchase tickets at the local stations, all of which are unstaffed. 51% stated they would purchase tickets at the station (despite no village stations offering this facility). Dorchester and Yeovil were mentioned as stations visited for ticket purchase. 11% of households stated they would use National Rail Enquiries. Other suggestions included the use of the websites:

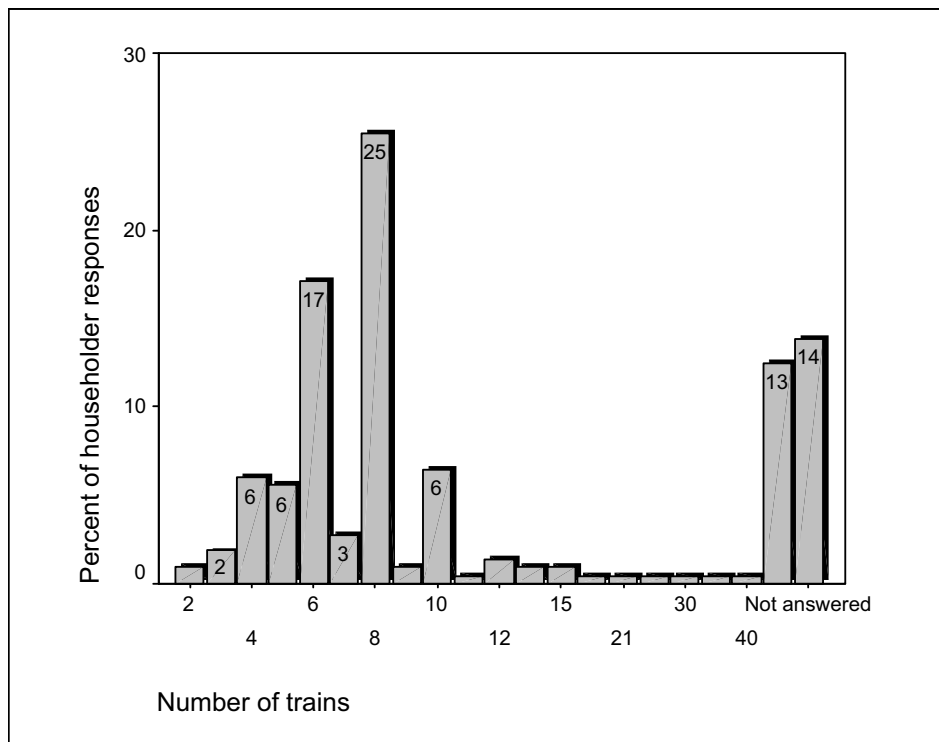
- virgintrains.co.uk
- qjump.co.uk
- trainline.co.uk
- wessextrains.co.uk
- heartofwessex.org.uk

However, neither National Rail Enquiries, nor heartofwessex.org.uk sell tickets, indicating that people appear to be labouring under misapprehensions as to how to buy tickets at all.

Knowledge about the line

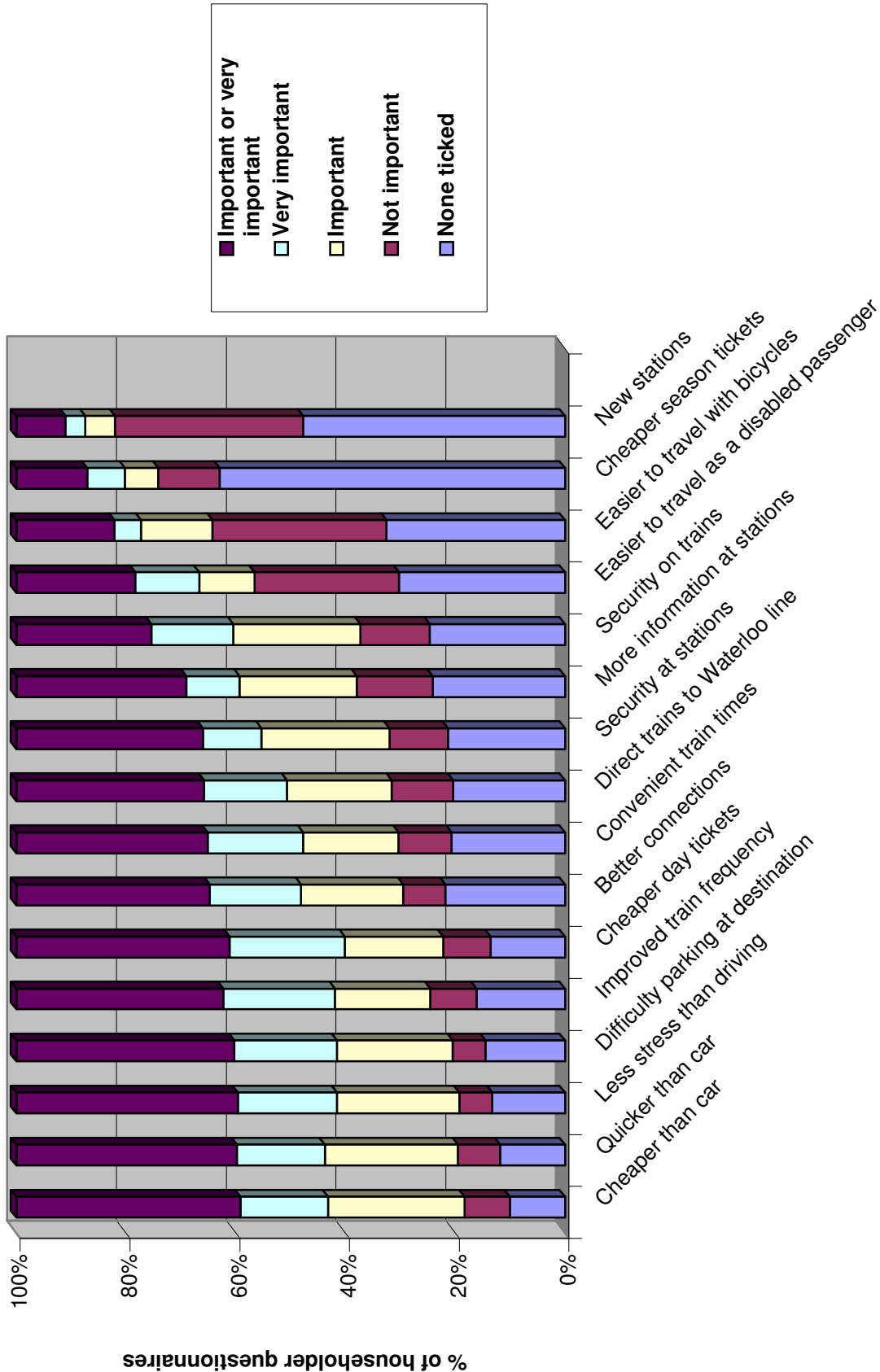
6.8.8 When asked if their household knew train times from their local station, 60% of households replied in the affirmative and 40% in the negative. 3% stated they knew some, not all, of the train times. Figure 6.17 below shows householder knowledge on the number of trains running on the line. 25% of households correctly stated 8 trains. Another quarter of households either did not know or did not answer the question. The remaining half gave estimations ranging from 2 to 40 trains.

Figure 6.17: Number of trains running in one direction on a weekday: householder estimates



What would encourage householders to use the train more often?

6.8.9 Figure 6.18 overleaf breaks down household opinion on improvements necessary to encourage increased train use.



Possible improvement

The four factors which householders classed as most likely to encourage increased use are:

- rail travel being cheaper than car travel
- rail travel being faster than car travel
- rail travel being less stressful and more comfortable than driving
- difficulty in parking in destination

More than 60% of respondents felt these were important or very important issues. It should be noted that these are all generally out of the control of rail operators and are countrywide problems.

6.8.10 The next four most important issues raised relate to the basics of train operation. These are:

- increased frequency
- cheaper day tickets
- better connections
- times which are more convenient for the passenger

6.8.11 Half of households felt that:

- creating direct trains to the Exeter-Waterloo line
 - improved security at stations
 - more information at stations
- were important.

6.8.12 Less than a third of households thought that train security or new stations were important. Making it easier to travel as a disabled passenger or with bicycles and cheaper season tickets were similarly accorded low importance.

What prevents householders making further use of trains?

6.8.13 30% of households agreed with the statement that their '*destination tends to be nowhere near a station*'. Only 11% of households agreed with the statement that '*nothing would make me change [my travel habits]*'.

6.9 Station Audits

6.9.1 As indicated in paragraph 5.5.2, the rural stations along the B-W line are compared against Moreton station. This station, on the Weymouth- Waterloo line, was chosen as a 'benchmark' station. It is considered by the researcher as an example of good practice aided by its location on the busier line to London.

Access

6.9.2 Access of any kind is poor to several of the rural stations examined and this is caused by several factors. Firstly, two of the stations (Thornford and Chetnole) are particularly distant and thus inconvenient from any settlement potentially served. Secondly, there appears to be minimal provision to access the stations by any mode of transport. These aspects will be examined in turn.

6.9.3 For rail passengers walking to the station, access is best at Yetminster, which, by virtue of its village centre location, has footways in either direction from the station. Maiden Newton station, too, is close to the village centre, but the station approach is without a footway and the informal path linking the station with the estates to the east has recently been closed due to development works. Chetnole and Thornford are accessed along narrow country lanes with a blind summit (at the railway bridge) and no verge making pedestrian approach hazardous.

6.9.4 No formal provision is made for securing bicycles at any of the Bristol- Weymouth line stations (nor were any bikes observed). On the other hand, the benchmark site of Moreton has three 'Sheffield stands' and Dorset County Council have paid for cycle lockers to be installed at Dorchester South, amongst other places.

6.9.5 Public transport interchange at the study stations is poor, mainly because bus provision is extremely limited and thus train-bus interchange is difficult.

Maiden Newton has timetables for nearly all village bus services and there is a note explaining that timetables can be obtained from the post office. The 73 bus service, which originally replaced the branch line between Maiden Newton and Bridport, calls at the station four times a day. Chetnole, Yetminster and Thornford have on average 4 buses passing per day, with a handful more in the respective village centre. However the standard information board at the stations states that there are no nearby bus stops (and implies therefore that no service exists).

6.9.6 Taxi information is given on all standard information boards.

6.9.7 Provision for the car is best at Moreton, where 22 spaces are marked out adjacent to the eastbound platform, including 1 space for disabled passengers. At Maiden Newton only two spaces are marked for disabled passengers and the rest of the area is left free of markings. Yetminster, too, has space provided, including one signed for disabled passengers, however there are no marked bays and the rail-owned forecourt appears to be extensively used by customers and workers at nearby workshops. Provision is however non-existent at Thornford and Chetnole, where no off-highway provision is made and the narrow lanes prevent parking on-highway. Since these are the most isolated, this is where easy car access could potentially be most beneficial. Whilst all stations have the BR station logo visible from the highway, only Maiden Newton station is signposted from off-site.

6.9.8 Once again, the ease of reaching platforms is mixed. Yetminster has step-free access to its single platform. Maiden Newton has step-free access to the northbound platform, although the most direct route involves three steps. The step-free route is not signed. The southbound platform is reached via a

footbridge involving about 20 steps up and 20 steps down. This is well maintained and has non-slip materials. Platform access at Chetnole involves descending 23 concrete steps with railings and Thornford requires descent of 36 wooden steps with sturdy handrails and non-slip materials underfoot. Platform access to the latter stations is thus impossible for some people.

Passenger Safety

- 6.9.9 Moreton, as the benchmark unmanned station, is well-lit and has a telephone-based emergency point on both platforms. It does not have CCTV camera coverage. It benefits from a location adjacent to a public house and busy road giving natural surveillance.
- 6.9.10 Several of the Bristol-Weymouth stations are, due to their deep rural nature, isolated and quiet and this may have negative impacts on passenger perceptions of safety. Whilst all the stations have adequate lighting none of them have CCTV or emergency contact points. The two most isolated stations (Thornford and Chetnole) both have working public telephones in their waiting shelters.
- 6.9.11 Maiden Newton's station has been converted for office use but remains empty, thus there is no human presence in the station area. The surrounds of Yetminster station are remarkably busy due to converted railway buildings in use as industrial workshops, reducing the feeling of isolation or exposure.
- 6.9.12 There are few potential dangers presented by the condition of the stations themselves. Maiden Newton's platforms are rather uneven and mossy in places and gates onto the highway are missing at Chetnole and Yetminster.

Environment

6.9.13 Every station has an undercover waiting area and seating available on all platforms. Yetminster and Maiden Newton's northbound platform have no seating within the shelter, and Chetnole and Yetminster have glass missing from the shelter windows. Litter and graffiti is minimal and litter bins are present at all stations and appear to be emptied regularly. The stations are in a generally good condition and have improved markedly over the last 10 years since the last DCC survey. Maiden Newton's station building is attractive, well maintained and listed.

Information

6.9.14 In terms of information about the next train, the benchmark station, Moreton, has a real-time information system for the arrival of the next three trains on both platforms, a tannoy system and telephone-based information point. All the Bristol-Weymouth stations have a information point giving recorded information on train times and delays although these are not as prominent as the type installed at Moreton.

6.9.15 There is a wide range of information on train services generally but it is not uniform. Information available at all stations includes:

- BR logo
- Whole timetable
- Which platform to use or direction of travel
- Sign to explain trains stop on request (the three halts where this occurs)
- National Rail Enquiries contact details
- Traveline telephone number (for South West public transport information)
- Train operator telephone number and website
- Where to buy tickets
- How to complain
- Location of nearest public telephone

Selected stations also had:

- BR logo with station name (Moreton)
- Changes in forthcoming new timetable (Moreton)
- Network map (all except Chetnole and Yetminster)