

# Public Survey and Stakeholder Engagement Report

Luton Local Transport Plan 5



Inclusive Growth

Transport Planning and Policy

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## Introduction

Luton Council is developing its fifth Local Transport Plan (LTP5). This document is a statutory document, which will outline the long-term vision for transport in Luton and connectivity with neighbouring authorities and beyond. Aligned with Luton's 2040 Vision, this plan should be used as a framework to unlock Luton's full potential, attract inward investment, and create a pleasant social and economic environment for living, working and moving around.

The LTP5 is a flexible document so it can:

- adapt when national policies change
- make use of new technologies
- secure funding from different sources, and
- respond to new and emerging priorities.

## Stakeholder engagement process

To ensure transport works for everyone, irrespective of their abilities, financial circumstances and journey purposes, we have developed a comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan. This approach allows a range of stakeholders to provide their views, including:

- Luton council officers and councillors
- Key statutory bodies such as National Rail, the Department for Transport, and Highways England
- Officers from neighbouring authorities and public transport operators
- Local businesses and community organisations, and
- Local residents, people who work or visit Luton.

## Purpose of early public consultation

Traditionally, stakeholders and members of the public would only be asked to provide feedback on a draft LTP. However, the council believes in the importance of involving all stakeholders and the public in the early stages of LTP5 development. This helps us to better understand our community's transport needs and to reach individuals who might not otherwise have the opportunity or ability to provide valuable feedback.

# Stakeholder engagement

Importance was placed on engaging with local people and relevant organisations. We recognised that transport improvements require consideration of the wider context, and we identified four main groups for engagement:

- Luton councillors
- Luton officers who can directly influence transport in Luton
- Young people, through Luton Youth Council and a career event
- Key Stakeholders:
  - National stakeholders directly related to transport
  - Local public transport operators including London Luton Airport Operator
  - Businesses and other relevant organisations

We have engaged with named stakeholders in different ways, mainly through workshops, one-to-one interviews or career events. Each engagement event was specifically designed for each group and adjusted according to their level of understanding of transport, aiming to identify potential issues and opportunities. We also attended additional meetings and other workshops to provide updates on the LTP and ensure that the direction of development is aligned with emerging policies and strategies proposed by Luton Council, neighbouring authorities or sub-national bodies.

## Luton councillors

Through this engagement, we wanted to ensure that all councillors had the opportunity to provide their input during the development stage. We organised three events for all councillors and consulted an informal cross-party group, formed of main party leaders, periodically. The summary of the workshops and events are as follows:

- All councillor events were held four times during this period:
  - Issues and Opportunities workshop on 30/10/2024
  - Vision and Objectives drop-in sessions on 17/02/2025 and 25/02/2025
- Six workshops were held at each stage of development for LTP 5 with party group leaders.

## Luton officers

For Luton officers, workshops were held online, and additional in-person meetings were organised on a one-to-one basis. At each workshop, they were presented with the progress of the development of the document and provided with the opportunity to input into each stage. In total, six workshops were held on the following topics:

- Issues and Opportunities – 29/10/2025
- Scenario Planning: Drivers of Change – 24/12/2025
- Vision and Objectives: Alternative Futures and Objectives – 09/01/2025
- Vision and Objectives: Vision and Long Listing – 06/02/2025
- Vision and Objectives: Short List – 29/04/2025
- LTP Turning Page – 12/08/2025

In addition, all officers had an opportunity to provide early comments during this process, including on a proposed list of interventions and the early draft of the document.

## Luton young people

Young people were engaged in two different ways: through a workshop and through the career event “Let’s Get You There!,” organised by Luton Council at Youthscape. We held an event on 12 February 2025, where over fifty students in Years 10–13 from four secondary schools and one college attended:

- Challney High School for Boys (Year 10)
- Cardinal Newman Catholic School (Years 11 & 12)
- Barnfield College (Years 12 & 13)
- The Stockwood Park Academy (Year 10)
- Challney High School for Girls (Year 10)

We also engaged with Luton Youth Council and ran two workshops with them. In total, two workshops were held on two topics: Issues and Opportunities, and Vision and Objectives: Alternative Futures and Objectives. The aim is to understand young people's views on transport issues and how they perceive these could be addressed.

## Key stakeholders

For key stakeholders, workshops were held online through six sessions, with the same content and themes as those held with Luton officers. The key stakeholders were defined in three groups:

- National and Sub-National bodies: Department for Transport, Active Travel England, National Highways, Network Rail and England’s Economic Heartland
- Neighbouring local authorities: Central Bedfordshire Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Bedford Borough Council and North Hertfordshire District Council
- Large business employers: London Luton Airport, University of Bedfordshire, Luton and Dunstable University Hospital, Luton Town Football Club and Luton BID
- Public transport operators: Govia Thameslink, East Midlands Railway, Arriva, Centrebus, Grant Palmer, Stagecoach and Uno.

## Additional meetings

We have provided regular updates on the progress of the document’s development. This has included liaison with various groups and forums to understand issues and opportunities. This includes discussions with the following groups:

- Climate Change Board
- Local Access Forum
- Local Transport Plan Business Group
- Local transport-oriented groups such as Rail Future and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Community Rail Partnership
- Individual meetings with large businesses.

## The snapshot survey overview

We ran a short online public survey (known as a snapshot survey) that captures public views on current transport issues and opportunities in Luton.

It opened on 22 November 2024 and closed on 5 January 2025. People could also ask for a paper form.

Residents, employees and visitors were encouraged to comment by completing a short online survey.

We undertook several activities to promote the survey. How we promoted the survey:

- A press release was published on the Luton Council website on 22 November 2024
- Luton Council social media:
  - Facebook: 3 posts, with total 792 engagements and 268 comments, and
  - Twitter page: achieving a total reach of 2,778
- E-Luton newsletter and distributed to residents and key organisations on 29 November 2024
- Emails were sent to over 30 organisations and local businesses
- Council's internal briefing system (E-Brief) on 22 November 2024.

## Content of the survey

The survey included five multiple-choice questions, each allowing for optional free-text responses. These questions addressed the purpose and mode of journeys, the importance of LTP5 themes, key transport issues, and suggestions for improvement. In addition, five demographic questions were asked providing single-choice answers.

## Survey results

In total, 630 responses to the consultation were received. All responses were received online, no written responses were received.



## Demographic information

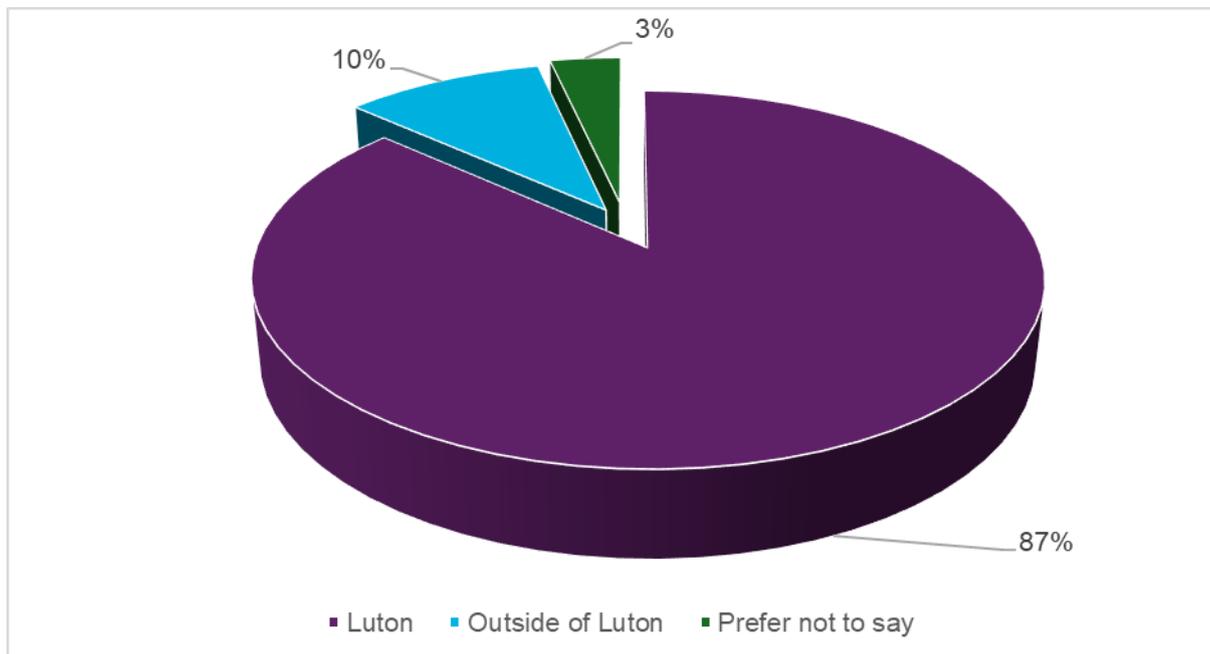
Optional demographic information was collected voluntarily via the online form and was not required to complete the survey.

While not all participants provided this information, the following section presents the demographic characteristics of approximately 96% of respondents who did.

### Where respondents live

A total of 608 people told us where they live, with 22 respondents choosing not to disclose their location of residency.

The majority, 87% of respondents, indicated that they live in Luton, while 10% of responses came from people living outside Luton. The proportion of responses based on residency is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Proportion of respondents by their residency**

A total of 546 respondents, the largest group, indicated that they live within Luton, while 62 respondents stated that they live outside of Luton. Among those living outside Luton respondents indicated they live in:

- Dunstable, including Houghton Regis (16),
- the wider Central Bedfordshire area (18),
- Hertfordshire (17),
- other places such as London, Milton Keynes, and Reading (11).

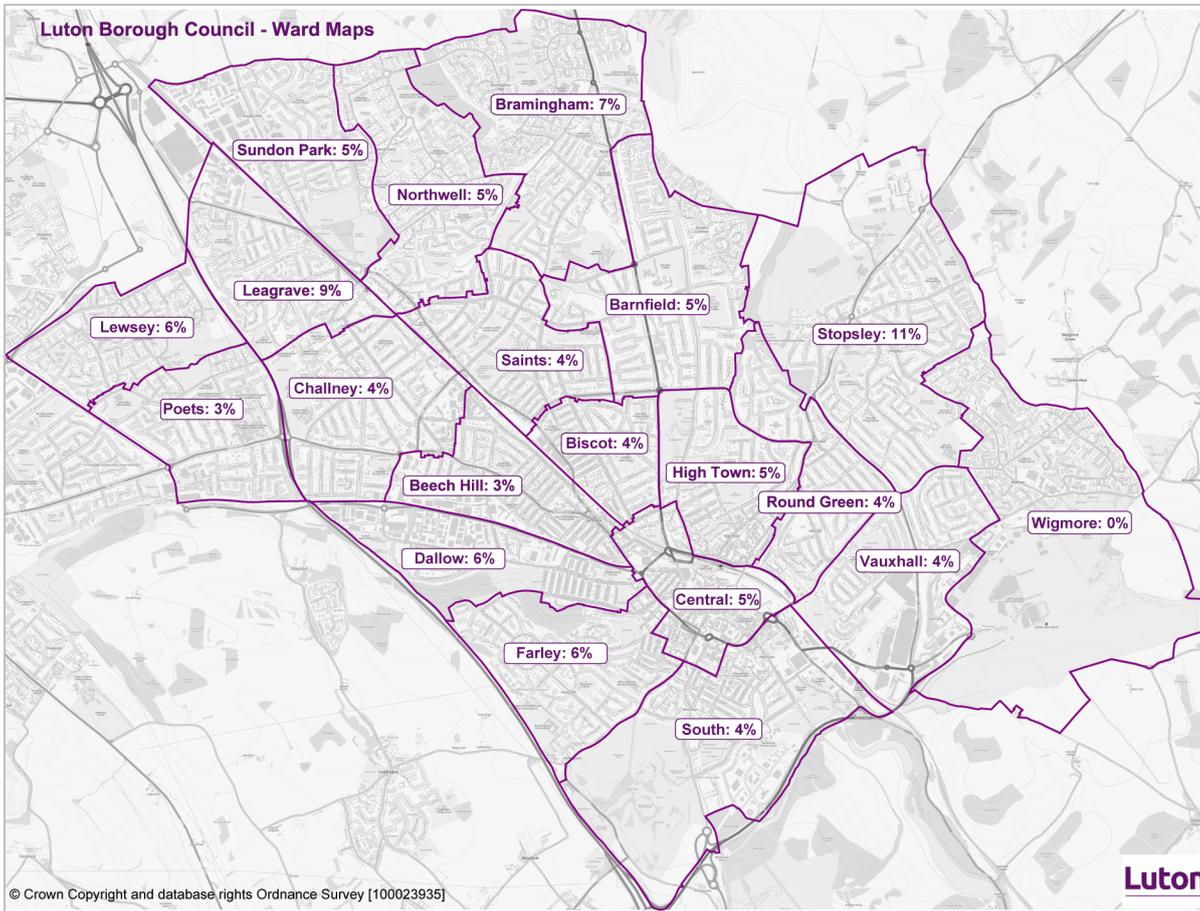
The breakdown of respondents indicating that they live in Luton by their ward is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Response rate by ward**

Ward	Number	Percentage
Barnfield	30	5%
Beech Hill	17	3%
Biscott	24	4%
Bramingham	37	7%
Central	27	5%
Challney	21	4%
Dallow	33	6%
Farley	34	6%
High Town	28	5%
Leagrave	48	9%
Lewsey	32	6%
Northwell	27	5%
Poets	15	3%
Round Green	22	4%
Saints	20	4%
South	23	4%
Stopsley	60	11%
Sundon Park	28	5%
Vauxhall	20	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>100%</b>

The results show that responses were received nearly equally across the town, with the highest percentage of responses indicating that they live in Stopsley (11%), followed by Leagrave (9%). The remaining responses were almost equally distributed across other wards within Luton.

Figure 2 illustrates the geographical distribution of responses, covering all parts of the town and providing a breakdown by wards and broader geographical areas.



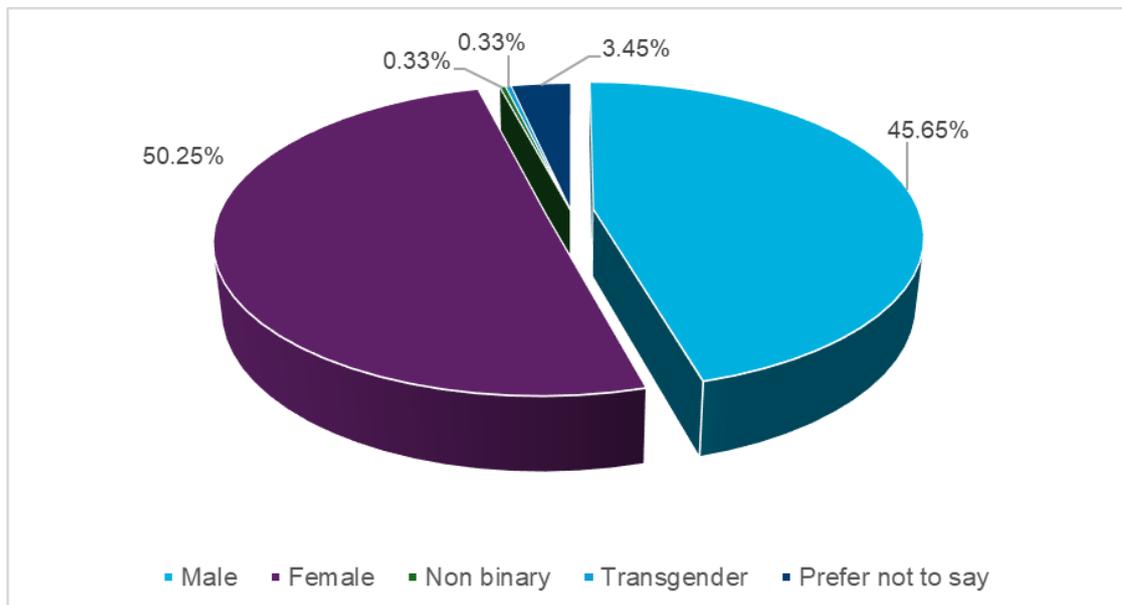
**Figure 2: Response rate by ward**

## Demographics of respondents

Of the 609 people answered the gender question, the results show a relatively even split:

- 50% female,
- 46% male,
- 3% "Prefer not to say", and
- 1% identifying as non-binary or transgender.

Figure 3 shows the gender breakdown of total responses.



**Figure 3: Gender by total responses**

## Age of respondents

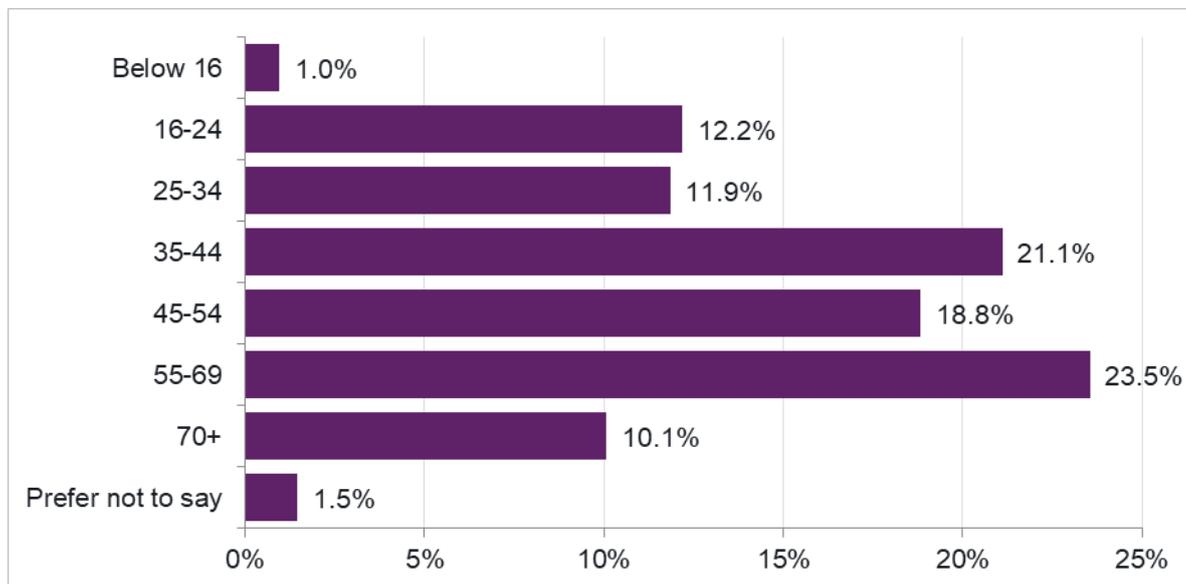
A total of 616 responses were received from all age groups, while 14 respondents chose not to answer this question. Table 2 showing respondents by age group.

**Table 2: Survey respondents by age group**

Age Group	Number	Percentage
Below 16 years old	6	1.0%
16-24 years old	75	12.2%
25-34 years old	73	11.9%
35-44 years old	130	21.1%
45-54 years old	116	18.8%
55-69 years old	145	23.5%
70 years old and over	62	10.1%
Prefer not to say	9	1.5%
Total	616	100%

Over half of the respondents represent the working-age group of 35–69 years, with the highest number of responses (23.5%) received from the 55–69 age group, followed by the 35–44 age group with 21.1%. While acknowledging the low response rate of 1% from younger individuals aged below 16 years, we are engaging with this group through workshops to achieve a more balanced representation of Luton’s population.

Figure 4 shows the percentage breakdown of respondents across different age groups.



**Figure 4: Percentage breakdown by age range of respondents**

## Ethnicity of respondents

In response to the question about ethnicity or cultural heritage, a total of 609 responses were received. Table 3 showing ethnicity breakdown.

**Table 3: Response rate by ward**

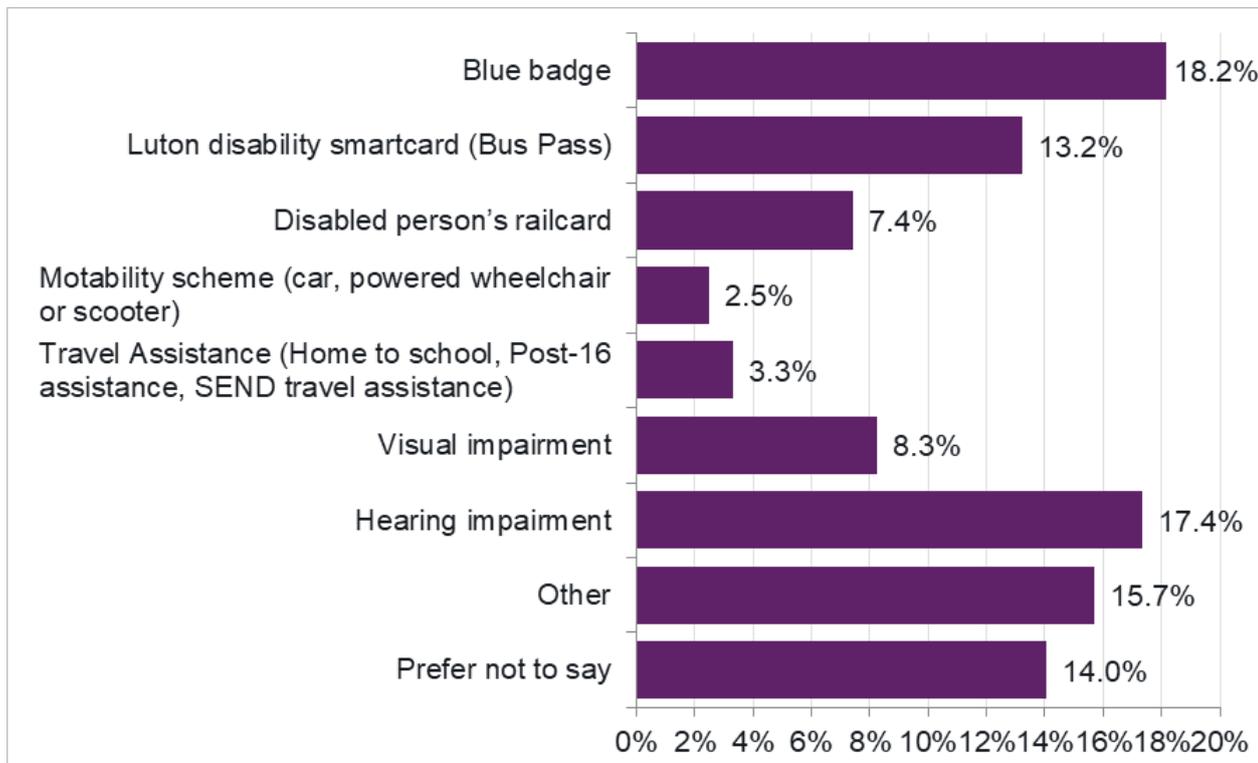
Ethnicity/Cultural Heritage	Number	Percentage
Asian/Asian British – Bangladeshi	19	3%
Asian/Asian British – Indian	40	7%
Asian/Asian British – Pakistani	34	6%
Other Asian	20	3%
Black/Black British – African	20	3%
Black/Black British – Caribbean	25	4%
Other Black	22	4%
Chinese	5	1%
Gypsy/Roma	2	0%
Irish Traveller	0	0%
Mixed White and Asian	16	3%
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	11	2%
Other Mixed	15	2%
White British	284	47%
White Eastern Europe	18	3%
Other White	38	6%
Another ethnic group	5	1%
Prefer not to say	35	6%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>100%</b>

609 people answered the ethnicity question. 47% identified as White British. Asian groups made up 24% in total. Black groups made up 11%. This does not fully match the 2021 Census for Luton. No one identified as Irish Traveller. This is somewhat inconsistent with the proportion for Luton reported in the 2021 Census<sup>1</sup>. No responses were identified as Irish Traveller.

<sup>1</sup> [2021 Census ethnicity language nationality and religion](#)

## Health and disability

Of the 608 responses to the question regarding disability, 16.3% said they are disabled under the Equality Act 2010. Many people reported more than one condition. These respondents were then given a multiple-selection question to indicate which of the following options applied to them, as shown in Figure 5.



**Figure 5: Respondent types by category: access and mobility support**

There were 79 unique responses and 121 responses in total, indicating that respondents often have multiple disabilities. A total of 17 respondents disclosed that they have other disabilities not listed, mainly referring to mental illness or diabetes, while 19 respondents chose not to disclose their disability.

# LTP5 snapshot survey responses

In this survey, we explored:

- The purpose of journeys.
- The transport mode for each journey.
- How important themes are for developing LTP5.
- Some of the biggest transport issues that prevent travelling sustainably.
- Which transport areas of policy within the Luton transport system need improvement.

## Journey purpose

Luton is a town of diverse places and people, with a wide range of reasons for travel. We asked respondents to share insights into their travel behaviours, specifying the modes of transport they typically use for:

- work,
- education,
- shopping,
- leisure journeys, and
- business journeys.

The respondents could pick more than one purpose. The most common were:

- shopping: 34%,
- accessing local amenities and social activities: 24%,
- commuting to and from work: 30%,
- education or school: 9%, and
- business journeys: 3%.

The summary of responses by the purpose of the journey is shown in Table 4.

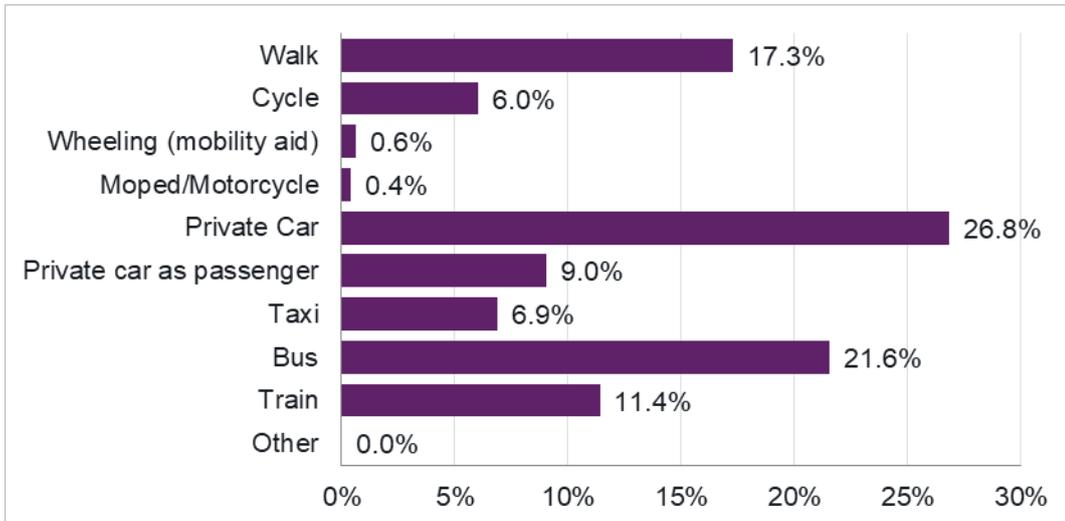
**Table 4: Response by the purpose of the journey**

Journey Purpose	Number	Percentage
Commuting to/from work	362	30%
Education/school journeys	108	9%
Shopping journeys	417	34%
Accessing local amenities	288	24%
Business journeys	35	3%
Total	1210	100%

For each journey, people tend to use the most convenient mode of transport available. Often, a single journey may involve a variety of travel modes. This flexibility allows individuals to optimise their travel experience based on factors such as distance, time, and convenience. Whether it is combining walking, cycling, public transport, or driving, the choice of transport can vary greatly depending on the specific needs of the journey.

### Mode of travel by purpose: commuting to/from work

There were 362 unique responses and 798 responses in total, indicating that respondents are using two or more modes of transport for commuting to work. The summary of responses by mode of transport is shown in Figure 6.



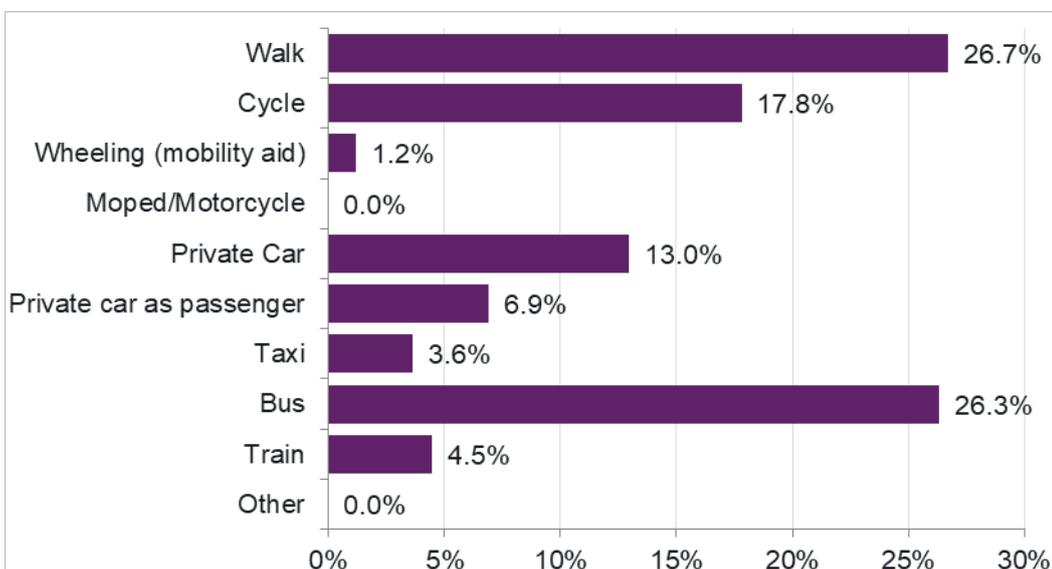
**Figure 6: Mode of travel: commuting to/from work**

The results show that the most frequently used form of transport was:

- the private car (35.8%),
  - as a driver (26.8%), or
  - as a passenger (9%),
- public transport (32%),
  - 21.6% using the bus 21.6%), and
  - 11.4% using the train.,
- Active travel 23.3%,
  - walk (17.3%), and
  - cycle to work (6%).

### Mode of travel by purpose: education/school journeys

There were 108 unique responses and 247 responses in total, indicating that respondents are using two or more modes of transport for the purpose of attending education. The summary of responses by mode of transport is shown in Figure 7.



**Figure 7: Mode of travel: education/school journeys**

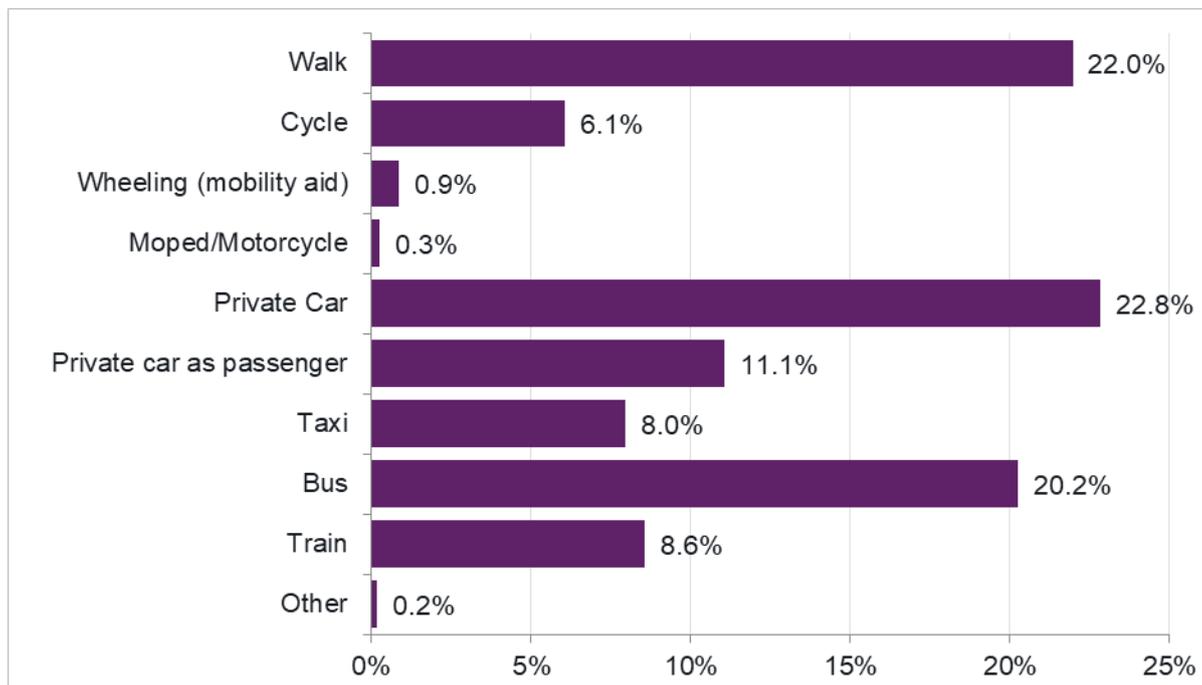
The results show that active travel was identified as the most frequently used form of transport to get to school or college. Many used more than one mode. The results are as follow:

- active travel 44.5% (walk 26.7%, cycle 17.8%),
- public transport 30.8% (bus 26.3%, train 4.5%), and
- car 19.9% (driver 13%, passenger 6.9%).

It is worth noting that only 1% of the younger (below 16 years) population responded to this question, which may indicate that young people going to college or university are aware of the advantages of using public transport.

#### Mode of travel by purpose: shopping journeys

There are 417 unique responses and 1,156 responses in total, indicating that respondents are using two or more modes of transport for shopping purposes. The summary of responses by mode of transport is shown in Figure 8.



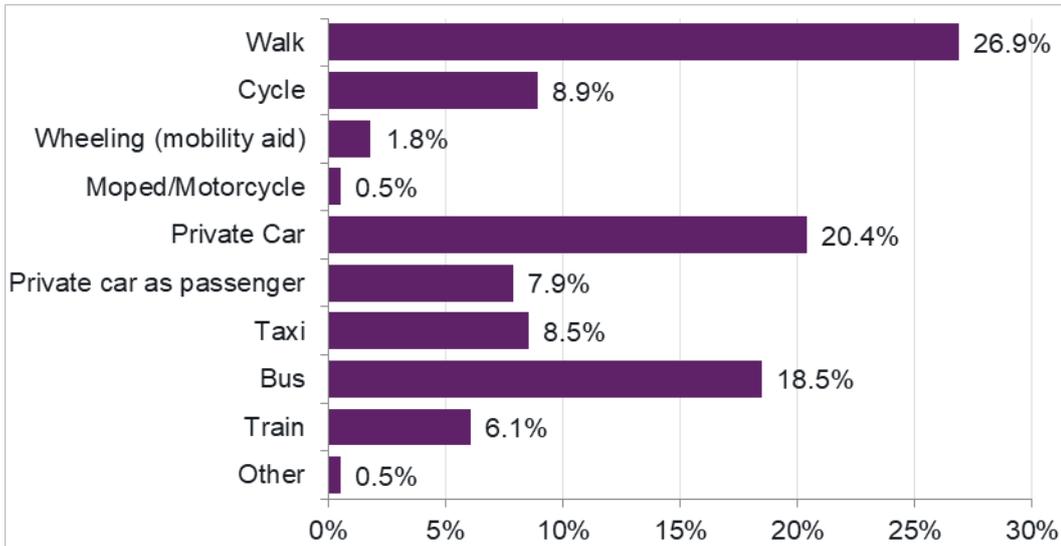
**Figure 8: Mode of travel: shopping journeys**

The results show that the private car was the most common mode of transport for shopping journeys. Many respondents reported using more than one mode. The results are as follows:

- car 33.9% (driver 22.8%, passenger 11.1%),
- taxis 8%,
- public transport 28.8% (bus 20.2%, train 8.6%),
- active travel 28.1% (walk 22%, cycle 6.1%), and
- motorcycles and wheeling were low.

### Mode of travel with purpose: accessing local amenities

There were 288 unique responses and 744 responses in total, indicating that respondents are using two or more modes of transport for commuting to local amenities. This represents the second most frequent purpose for journeys made. The summary of responses by mode of transport is shown in Figure 9.



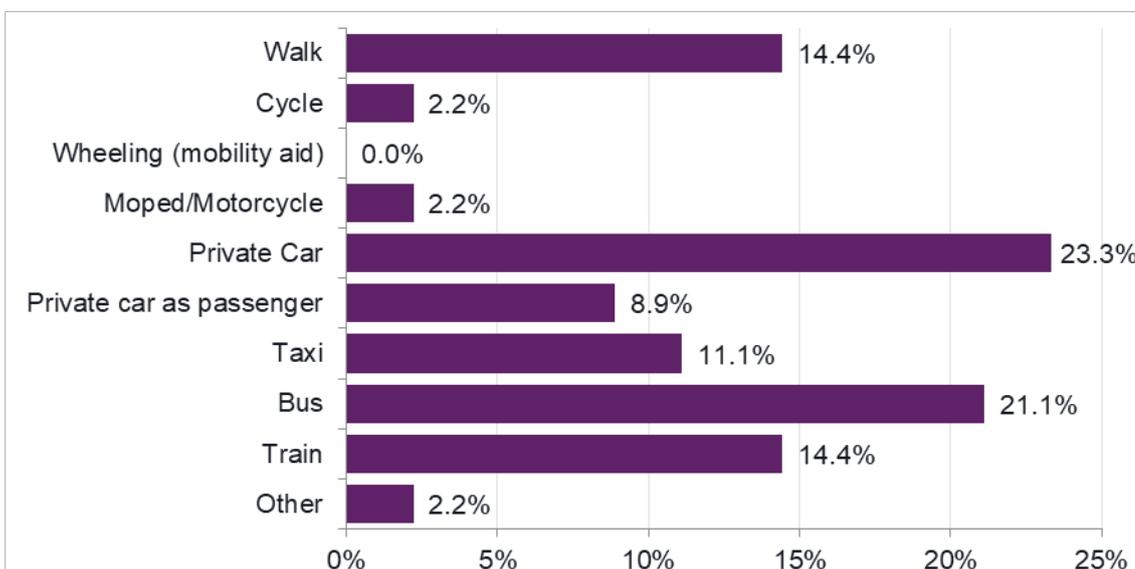
**Figure 9: Mode of travel: accessing local amenities**

The results indicate that the most frequently used forms of transport were as follows:

- active travel: 35.8% (walking 26.9%, cycling 8.9%),
- car: 32.3% (driver 20.4%, passenger 7.9%);
- taxis 8.5%,
- public transport: 24.5% (bus 18.5%, train 6.1%),
- wheeling: 1.8%, and
- Moped/motorcycle: 5.5%.

### Mode of travel by purpose: business journeys

There are 35 unique responses and 90 responses in total, which indicates that respondents are using two or more modes for commuting to work. The results indicate that the most frequently used form of transport was a car (43.3%), either as a driver (23.3%) or as a passenger (8.9%), while the remaining respondents indicated using a taxi (11.1%). The summary of responses by mode of transport is shown in Figure 10.



**Figure 10: Mode of travel: business journeys**

## Conclusion of travel patterns

The results indicate that shopping and social activities are the main reasons to make the journey, accounting for 59% of all trips, while commuting remains a significant factor at 30%.

The heavy car dependence, particularly for work commutes (35.8%), highlights the need for sustainable transport alternatives. However, there is an encouraging use of public transport (32%) and active travel (23.3%) for commuting, suggesting the potential for greater modal shift.

The multi-modal nature of many journeys, with respondents often using two or more transport methods, emphasises the importance of creating an integrated transport network.



## Local transport plan 5 themes

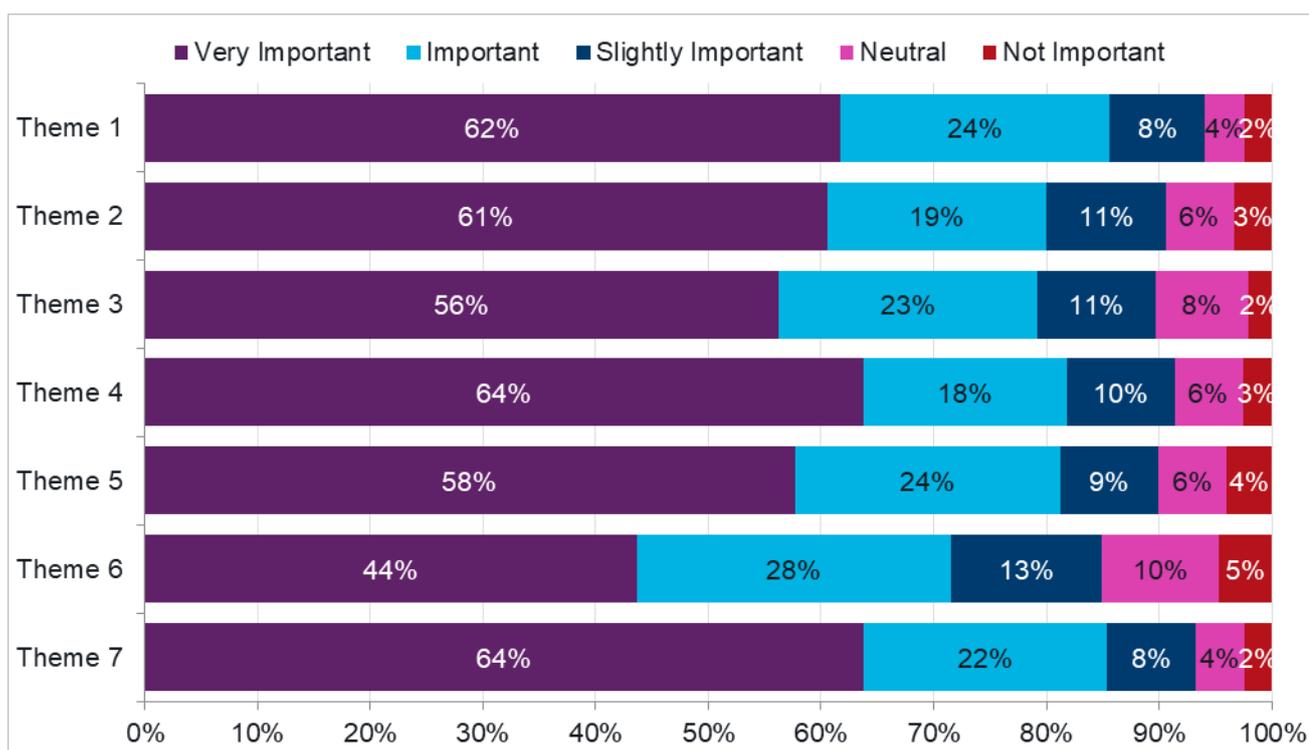
At the start of the engagement process for the development of LTP5, seven themes were identified through discussions with stakeholders. This involved various groups, including:

- local officers,
- elected members,
- key stakeholders,
- representatives from neighbouring local authorities,
- businesses such as bus operators and airports.

We asked respondents to indicate the importance of each theme by scoring them on a scale from “Very Important” to “Not Important.” The themes were:

- Theme 1: Improve sustainable transport (bus, rail, cycling, walking) connections to ensure access to employment and education for everyone.
- Theme 2: Make it easier for everyone to use buses, trains, cycling, and walking instead of relying on cars.
- Theme 3: Create spaces where people feel safe, can stay active, and enjoy a better quality of life.
- Theme 4: Ensure everyone has access to affordable and reliable transport to reach everyday services and opportunities.
- Theme 5: Collaborate with the community to create transport solutions that reflect the needs of everyone in Luton.
- Theme 6: Use technology and innovation to reduce transport emissions and improve efficiency for people and businesses.
- Theme 7: Develop realistic plans that ensure local transport offers good value for money and meets people’s needs.

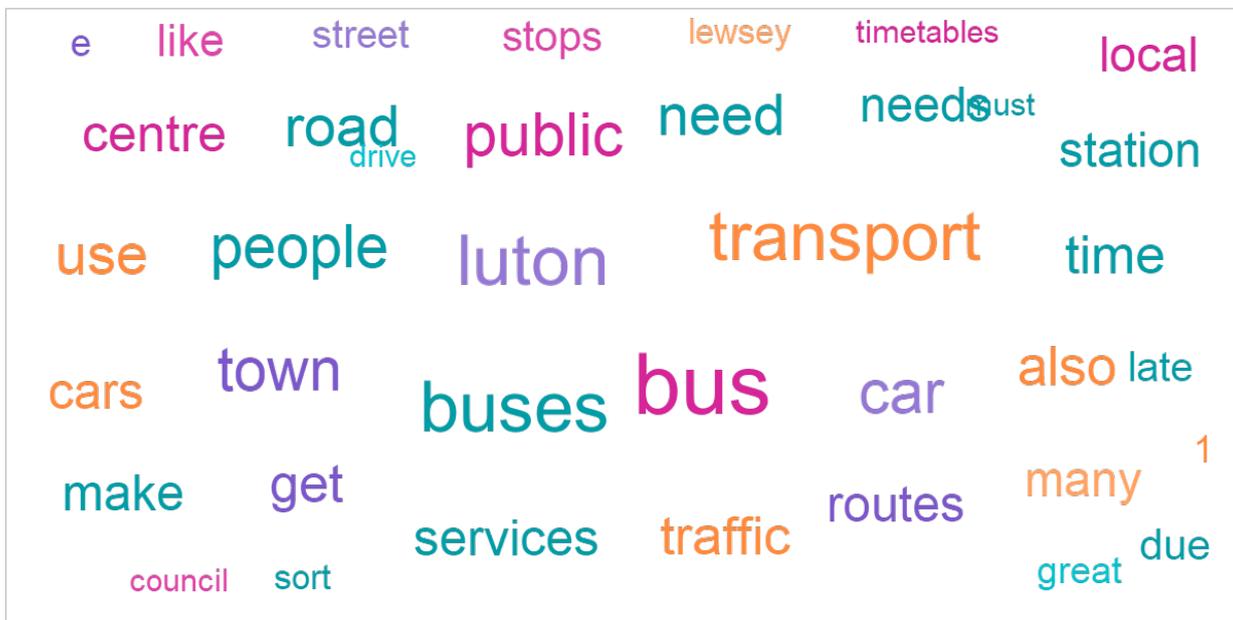
A total of 624 complete responses were received, and the proportion of answers across the different themes is shown in Figure 11.



**Figure 11: Summary of respondents' agreement with proposed themes**

The majority of respondents rated the key themes, with an average of 58% stating that all themes are “very important”. Theme 7 and Theme 4 received strong support, with 64% of respondents selecting “very important” for both. Support for Theme 6 was lower, primarily due to 15% of respondents selecting “neutral” or “not important,” likely restricting from confusion about the meaning of the terms.

Respondents were given an opportunity to provide comments or suggest alternative visions for consideration. Given the wide-ranging nature of the Local Transport Plan, there was a wide range of comments, which we have grouped by theme, as shown in Figure 12.



**Figure 12: Comments on the proposed themes, grouped by coded answer**

The most comments were about buses (including terms such as bus, buses, stops, public transport, timetable, route, and service). This was followed by comments on highway infrastructure, including terms such as road, traffic, street, and car. Other themes mentioned included the town centre, local towns, and the council.

## Barriers of using sustainable transport

The survey allowed respondents to highlight the most significant issues preventing them from travelling more sustainably, such as walking, cycling, or using public transport. A total of 626 respondents answered this question, with multiple selections allowed, resulting in 2,141 responses. The proportion of responses across the different answers per barriers are shown in Table 5.

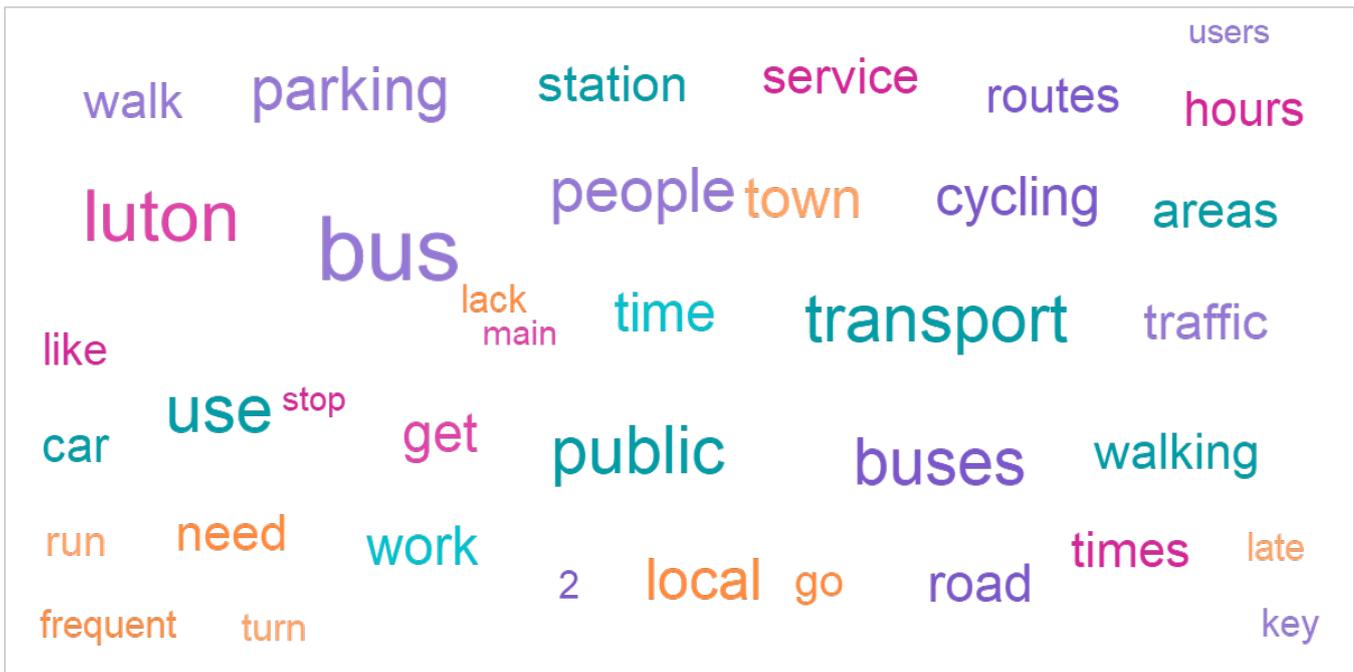
**Table 5: Responses to the barriers**

Barriers	Number	Percentage
Distance is too far	314	15%
Terrain is difficult (too hilly)	96	4%
Lack of good walking and cycling infrastructure	237	11%
Concerns over personal safety	258	12%
Journey time is too long	240	11%
Lack of public transport	252	12%
Poor public transport reliability	299	14%
Poor public transport frequency	326	15%
Public transport is too expensive	175	8%
Lack of accessible transport infrastructure	153	7%
Lack of walking, cycling and public transport information	105	5%
Other	47	2%
Total	2141	100%

Nearly half of the respondents highlighted that barriers to sustainable transport use are directly related to public transport limitations, including issues such as reliability, frequency, high fares, and a lack of public transport options. The top barriers identified are:

- public transport limits: 49% combined
  - poor frequency 15%,
  - poor reliability 14%,
  - high cost 8%, and
  - lack of services 12%,
- distance is too far: 15%,
- journey time is too long: 11%,
- lack of good walking and cycling routes: 11%,
- safety concerns: 12%,
- lack of accessible infrastructure: 7%,
- lack of information: 5%,
- terrain too hilly: 4%, and
- other: 2%.

We provided an option for respondents to provide written feedback on any alternative issues they believe we should consider that are not listed. The most common written responses are shown in Figure 13.



**Figure 13: Comments on the barriers, grouped by coded answer**

The feedback provided in free-form responses by respondents identified various barriers preventing people from using sustainable transport. However, the majority of the responses align with the main barriers already identified in the survey.



# Transport policies opportunities for Luton

We asked respondents to provide an opinion on which policies are needed the most in Luton. This included choosing from 25 options, and describing if additional consideration needs to be given to policies not listed. In total, there were 626 unique responses and 1,515 responses. The proportion of responses per policy outcome is shown in the table.

**Table 6: Transport opportunity response analysis**

Opportunities	Number	Percentage
Cycling and walking	220	15%
E-bike and e-scooter sharing	67	4%
Bus travel	343	23%
Park and Rides	84	6%
Coach travel	27	2%
Rail travel	170	11%
Private hire and taxis	35	2%
Car sharing and clubs	47	3%
Autonomous vehicles and infrastructure	32	2%
Highways improvement and management	122	8%
Parking	137	9%
London Luton Airport	30	2%
Integration of public transport networks	77	5%
Digital connectivity (broadband)	13	1%
EV charging capacity and availability	28	2%
Strategic transport connectivity	32	2%
Freight and logistics	12	1%
Land use planning	18	1%
Accessibility and social inclusion	37	2%
Improving air quality	42	3%
Transport safety and security	54	4%
Access to green spaces	37	2%
Protecting the natural environment	36	2%
Noise pollution	25	2%
Conserving the historic environment	10	1%
Other	69	90%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1515</b>	<b>100%</b>

The results show that, across all but one opportunity, almost half of respondents supported public transport initiatives, including bus and coach travel, park-and-ride schemes, rail travel, and the integration of public transport networks. The second most supported opportunity was active travel, encompassing walking, cycling, and e-biking/e-scooting. Top opportunities:

- public transport: 46% combined (bus and coach, park and ride, rail, better integration)
- active travel: 19% combined (walking, cycling, e-bikes and e-scooters)
- parking and highways also had notable support (parking 9%, highways 8%)

